



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

16<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians

As I'm sure you will be aware, the exposure to various social media software, apps, websites, online games and other media is ever growing. As a result, in school, we are spending an increasing number of hours investigating potential eSafety risks, incidents of inappropriate messaging and online bullying.

In particular; more recently there has been a rise in the number of concerns we have had in relation to WhatsApp. Some of the images and messages we have seen being sent between pupils have concerned me.

We feel that it is important that you, as parents, know the different types of concerns we are dealing with on a day to day basis. Below we have outlined just a few of the 'issues/concerns' that have arisen relating to WhatsApp and other social media apps such as Snapchat and Facebook:

1. We have seen numerous incidents where children have posted inappropriate comments; the language used has been inappropriate and has resulted in issues between children being brought into school.
2. On-line cases of alleged 'bullying' have increased with children using social media to target others. All of this is happening out of school time. We have had to deal with incidents that have occurred in the early hours of the morning, on weekends and during school holidays.
3. Children have been using WhatsApp at inappropriate times with some evidence showing that some children have used WhatsApp and other apps in the early hours of the morning when they should be asleep.
4. We have seen many incidents when children are sharing homework on various apps so that they can copy the work from each other. This obviously is not helping them learn and therefore will have a direct effect on the progress they make in school.

**WhatsApp is a Social Media app designed for children aged 16+; this means that none of our children in years 7-10 should be using it; the minimum age to start using Facebook and Snapchat is 13.**

We understand that there is only so much control we have on what the children access at home but we urge you to be extra vigilant of your child's use of social media in its many different and ever growing forms. Although we are constantly educating children about the importance of using the internet safely, we do not have the resources or the jurisdiction to resolve every issue that takes place out of school hours.

**The school will therefore not be dealing with inappropriate material posted on-line out of school hours, if we are made aware of such incidents, we may report in to organisations such as CEOP or the police.**

In order to maintain the safety of the children, it is vitally important that we work together to raise awareness and increase understanding of the potential dangers in this area.

Yours sincerely

R. Saran  
Assistant Head