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Church of England VA Primary School

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Dear Parents

Safeguarding Alert to Parents

It has come to our attention that children as young as KS1 are online gaming at home. This may mean that your child has online "friends" who are unknown to parents. We would urge you to check your child's online account if they have one as they could be making contact with people unknown to either themselves or you. We do talk to the children at school about the potential, dangers of online "friends" and not accepting on face value the person they are communicating with is a child of their own age. We would also ask parents to check their child's 'in game' message inbox from time to time to check if they have been receiving inappropriate messages.

Roblox, an online game which your children may play could involve them communicating with unknown "friends" online and seems to have caused concern for some parents.

Reminder: Facebook and Instagram requires account holders to be aged 13+
We are aware that several children at this school do have their own online accounts.

The two excerpts below from NSPCC Keeping Your Child Safe online may be helpful to you.

What are parental controls?

Parental controls are software and tools which you can install on phones or tablets, games consoles or laptops – and even your home broadband.

You can also use them to help you block or filter the content your child sees when searching online. And family-friendly public WiFi can help when you're out and about.

Parental controls are also available to help you to:

- o plan what time of day your child can go online and how long for
- o stop them from downloading apps they're too young for
- o manage the content different members of the family can see.

So whatever your child is doing online, there's a way that you can help keep them safe.

Explore sites and apps together

Talk about what might be OK for children of different ages. Ask your child what sites or apps they like. Write a list, and look at them together.

Be positive about what you see, but also be open about concerns you have: "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here".

Talk to your child about what you think is appropriate – but also involve them in the conversation. Ask what they think is OK for children of different ages – they'll feel involved in the decision-making.

Be aware that your child might talk about friends who use apps or visit sites that you've decided aren't suitable. Be ready to discuss your reasons, but recognise that they may not agree with you. Listen carefully for the reasons why.

Go through a final list of sites you both agree are OK, and work out when you'll next discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Teresa Osborne
Headteacher