

St Matthias Church of England Primary School

Wordsworth Rd, London N16 8DD

Tel: 0207 254 1148 • Fax: 0207 275 9215 • Email: admin@st-matthias.hackney.sch.uk

Executive Principal: Sian Davies • Headteacher: Lucy Blewett



Friday 7th May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, more and more children these days have access to more online content through personal mobile phones, laptops, tablets and games consoles. This is why, now more than ever, it is so important to remind our children of the best ways to stay safe online – whether this is when browsing the internet, playing games or talking to their friends.

Our children know the importance of not sharing personal information, not speaking to strangers and speaking to a trusted adult but there are some things that aren't as obvious for our children. As we cannot always be aware of what our children are doing online, we can do the following:

Know the minimum age requirement for different apps

There are many reasons as to why there are age restrictions on apps and websites and these are all to make sure children are safe. On all of the apps mentioned below, anyone can send messages even if they are not 'friends' or 'following'.

- TikTok – 13 years old
- Instagram – 13 years old
- Snapchat – 13 years old
- Twitter – 13 years old
- YouTube – 13 years old (not YouTube Kids, which has restrictions)
- WhatsApp – 16 years old
- Roblox – a child of any age can create a Roblox account but there are stricter settings for children under 13

Please visit www.internetmatters.org/ for more information.

Ensure children know what to do if they see anything inappropriate or something that makes them feel uncomfortable

We can't always control what the children see online, as hard as we might try. That is why they need to know what to do if they see something that makes them uncomfortable. Remember that all apps and websites have a report button that they can use if they come across inappropriate content.

- Always tell a trusted adult if they see something that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Block people/ apps
- Report people/ apps

Monitor conversations

Children are able to talk to people through the majority of social media platforms e.g. TikTok, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. Depending on settings, they could be talking to friends, to strangers or to strangers pretending to be their friends. Even if a child is in a WhatsApp group chat, there might be others in there who they don't know. It is so important that you know who the children are speaking to and that they are never communicating with people unless they know them in person and know it is them who they are talking to.

Set screen time limits/ monitor screen time on devices

The majority of devices will allow you to set screen time limits on a child's device so that they are only using their devices at appropriate times.

- On an Apple device:
 1. Go to settings – screen time
 2. Tap turn on screen time
 3. Tap continue
 4. Select this is my child's device
 5. Set up app limits
 6. Tap use screen time password
 7. Enter your Apple ID
- It is slightly trickier to do this on an android; however, you can check screen time for different apps:
 1. Go to settings – digital wellbeing and parental controls
 2. Look at the chart that says screen time

There are many things we are already doing to ensure our children are safe online, both in and out of school, and the things mentioned in this letter are just some of them. If you'd like to know more about how to keep children safe online, please visit the following websites:

www.saferinternet.org.uk
www.internetmatters.org/
www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers
www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Ms Martin

Deputy Head Teacher