



December 2024

Dear Parents,

As the school Christmas break approaches, many children are excited and possibly hoping that Santa may bring a present such as a new device, game, App, permissions or even extended screen time!

Whilst we all understand the fun that a new game / device may bring, it is only right that I write to remind us all of the sad (but inevitable) risks that unfortunately, now come as standard as the trade-off for giving our children access to these.

Sadly, we know that unkindness online and from behind a screen is really distressing and damaging for our children, yet vast amounts of primary aged children (and older Stopsley children are included in this too) are drawn into behaving in a way online that they simply would not do in person face to face.

I write to remind parents that the social media platforms that some of our children are on, eg: WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tiktok, Instagram, etc, are all aged rated for 13 years and over.

As a school, we have seen and heard from parents that on occasions, there have been online situations where children are getting themselves into 'online unkindness' (which can quickly escalate into something more serious). This tends to be the case more with Year 5 and 6. This then affects the children in school, through their friendships, emotional wellbeing, stability and resilience, and of course it affects their learning - with lost learning time and with teachers needing to investigate and address what has happened.

I would urge all parents who allow their children to use these social medial platforms, to make sure there is sufficient adult supervision, parental controls in place and that they check their child's phone daily. There are filters that parents can put on devices to stop their child being added automatically into 'Group Chats' without their knowledge or permission. There are Apps out there to help you monitor your child's phone. Please consider the above.

What are the risks of social media for children?

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/> (use this link to click and expand each of the below settings)...

- Oversharing
- Sharing their location
- Talking to people they don't know
- Sending or receiving inappropriate content
- Unrealistic sense of body image or reality
- Obsessive focus on likes or comments

Included in this newsletter are some links to areas of information that parents might find helpful and beneficial, such as: supporting a child with depression or anxiety, parental mental health, dealing with bullying, talking to children about race and racism. I have included a link to current, national conversations and news items across subjects such as: poverty, domestic abuse and grooming. These are from the NSPCC from over this past year.

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/?source=ppc-brand&_gl=1*1ssvhj7*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=Cj0KCQiAx9q6BhCDARIsACwUxu5b9WzBUE3iknP5eYb10jZVIFT2SXdf6gmFMTH07J-LTKmUlrPn3HkaAoV8EALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2024/?source=ppc-brand&_gl=1*mx6q*_up*MQ..&gclid=Cj0KCQiAx9q6BhCDARIsACwUxu5b9WzBUE3iknP5eYb10jZVIFT2SXdf6gmFMTH07J-LTKmUlrPn3HkaAoV8EALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

Christmas Time

Christmas is a busy time of the year. It is extremely fun but it comes with pressure and even higher than usual costs, which can all take their toll on any one of us. The NSPCC have created a 'Festive Parenting Quiz' with helpful, reassuring practical advice, hints and tips and resources for parents who may be under pressure about a range of family topics during the festive season...

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/christmas-parenting-quiz/?source=ppcbrand&_gl=1*hbnhej*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=Cj0KCQiAx9q6BhCDARIsACwUxu5b9WzBUE3iknP5eYb10jZVIFT2SXdf6gmFMTH07J-LTKmUlrPn3HkaAoV8EALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

<https://lutonfoodbank.org.uk/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.myblackdog.co/>

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

<https://bedsdv.org.uk/>

On behalf of our pastoral, family and safeguarding team at Stopsley, I wish you all a safe and restful break, and that you get to spend lovely time with friends and family. We look forward to seeing you all in the new-year!

With my very best wishes,

Ms Mann

Safeguarding, Trauma, Pastoral Wellbeing Lead

