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Online Safety – Social Media and Age-Appropriate Games

Dear Parents/Carers,

Over recent weeks, it has come to our attention that many children are using social media platforms (such as TikTok) and playing online/computer games above their age rating. While these platforms can be fun, social and creative, they can also have harmful effects. As with any social media, regular posting of photos and videos can expose children to negative reactions and harsh comments.

Under children's privacy rules, most social media platforms (including TikTok) set a minimum age of 13 to hold an account. We are also aware that some children appear to be accessing platforms through a parent's account without supervision. In a few cases, pupils have described very large public follower lists, which increases the risk of unwanted contact and exposure to inappropriate content.

We are sharing the reminders below to help you keep your child safe online.

What we ask for your support in the following:

- Check age ratings before your child uses an app or plays a game.
 - For games, use the official PEGI guidance: <https://pegi.info/>
- Supervise use and keep devices in shared family spaces where possible.
- Set up parental/family controls to manage age limits, screen time and in-app purchases.
- Review privacy settings so accounts are private and location sharing is off by default.
- Talk regularly about who they interact with online and how to mute, block and report.

Clear, trusted guidance:

- PEGI (game age ratings and symbols): <https://pegi.info/>
- NSPCC TikTok safety settings (Family Pairing, private accounts, restricted mode, comments, DMs, screen time): <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/child-safe-settings-tiktok/>

You can also find helpful links on our school website under Key Information → Safeguarding.

If you have any concerns or would like advice, please contact our Safeguarding Lead.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D. Owen-Taylor

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