

Headteacher: **Mr A Herbert**

Clifton with Rawcliffe Primary School
Eastholme Drive, Rawcliffe,
York YO30 5TA
T: 01904 555230
E: admin@cw.r.pmat.academy
W: www.cwr.york.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers

We just wanted to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers of the importance of monitoring your children's use of social media. We have become aware of some issues and concerns over the use of Instagram by some of the children in Upper Key Stage 2.

Instagram has a minimum age limit of 13, but we do know it will be relatively common for children younger than this to be using it, and other social media platforms. We would suggest that this is a decision families should be making and that parents and carers regularly monitor how their children are using social media, whatever their age.

The best advice is to engage with your children about their use of social media. Talking to them and supporting them with privacy settings for example can help reduce issues around sharing information and help to keep them safe. Talking to them about their use of Instagram or Snapchat can help identify any abuse or offensive or hurtful chats early and so protect them from any potential harm. The NSPCC has produced a simple and helpful set of 4 rules for parents about supporting their children's use of social media:

1. **T**alk about staying safe online
2. **E**xplore their online world together
3. **A**gree rules about what's OK and what's not
4. **M**anage your family's settings and controls

Having a TEAM approach helps to ensure parents and carers are supporting their children and keeping them safe from harm. Here is the NSPCC link:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

This link to Internet Matters is also a useful website for parents and carers and there are some really useful guides for parents with children of different ages:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/social-media-guides-parents/#1502101167373-126caa32-467b>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/esafety-leaflets-resources/>

Staff in school have spoken to all the children recently about keeping safe online. We do this regularly and keeping safe is a huge part of our curriculum with links to Computing and to our PSHE programme. We take this very seriously and we suggest parents and carers also develop some strategies to ensure their children are able to use social media positively and safely.

Andy Herbert, Headteacher