



**'Kind, Respectful, Best'**

**Brookland Federation**  
**Brookland Junior School**

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**Executive Headteacher – Mrs M. Barton**

**Head of School - Mr A. Pugh**



Tuesday 3rd February 2026

**Online Safety: Mobile Phone And Social Media Use Outside Of School**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you because we have some growing concerns regarding the children's use of mobile phones and social media outside of school, which has been highlighted in the news recently and is a real issue for young people across the country. We are aware that the majority of our older children have access to mobile phones and therefore feel that this is an important message for these children.

Unfortunately, it has come to our attention that there are groups of pupils using social media and messaging apps to be persistently unkind about each other over platforms such as Snapchat, WhatsApp and TikTok. We understand that this has included both sharing unkind comments about pupils and sharing unkind images or memes of the pupils. This is leading to a lot of upset spilling into the school day and means that we are currently spending a significant amount of time sorting out such problems, which could be more effectively spent on teaching and learning activities.

Furthermore, the online behaviour does not align with our ethos or values as a school, teaching the children to be kind, respectful and the best that they can be. However, it is also important to note that this behaviour is not seen for every child using devices online and there are many who use such apps respectfully.

As we are sure you can understand, it is our duty as a school to raise awareness and to educate the children about the dangers of inappropriate online activities. The legal age recommendation for using most social media apps, such as Snapchat and TikTok, is 13 years and over- and is 16 years old and over for the use of WhatsApp. If you do allow your child to access messaging/social media apps, we ask for your vigilance in checking your child's phone/devices on a regular basis, and we thank you for your ongoing support with this. Just like children's interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support. Some strategies that are recommended by online safety charities and are known to be successful with the children include:

- Monitoring their phones for the apps that are downloaded
- Turning on parental controls on phones, laptops and consoles
- Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps – making monitoring part of a daily or weekly routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices
- Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing online, encouraging them to screen-shot any messages or online content which concerns them- before deleting or blocking

As the online issues are happening outside of school, we are asking for your continued partnership in dealing with them. We are very limited in what we can do in school and unfortunately, if the situation gets to the stage where social media is being used inappropriately and to a significantly concerning level, the school will have to report underage usage straight to the company. This will involve citing the accounts being used for minors and attaching the screenshots of inappropriate comments, soundbites and pictures sent. In extreme cases, the police may be asked to support with any concerns.

To reassure and support you, we have formed a close relationship with our local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) who advises parents and carers to report any malicious communication to the police by calling 101. Please encourage your children to raise any concerns about messages and/or images being sent to them, to you as their trusted adults.

As a school, we are responding to this with additional teaching of online safety during computing, PSHE and wellbeing lessons, and in 1:1/small group conversations and teaching opportunities as they arise. We always advise the children to show their trusted adults at home when they receive inappropriate, or unkind, content so that they are safe online. When we are made aware of any online incidents, we will always inform all parents and carers of those involved.

Thank you for your continued support in helping the school overcome the challenges of inappropriate mobile phone and social media use. It will help keep all of the children safe online and help them to maintain their focus on their learning, which is so important in helping them achieve their academic potentials. It will also help to support the children's social, emotional and mental health.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Pugh

Head of School and Online Safety Lead