

GAMING



MINECRAFT



Social Media

We recently surveyed pupils on what social media platforms they were familiar with, or actually use. A vast number of children from Y2 upwards use online gaming as well as other social media apps. This is a very recent report from the NSPCC:

www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/social-media-age-limit

More than half of parents unaware of age limit on social media

New figures suggest parents don't know if their children are old enough to use social networks like Facebook or Snapchat

Shockingly, 1 in 5 parents think that there are no age requirements at all for social media. Some sites can be a dangerous place for younger children, potentially exposing them to bullying, inappropriate content or grooming. But they can also provide important support networks for younger people.

For your information, these are the age requirements for some popular social media platforms, all of which children in our school use:

Twitter: 13 years

Snapchat: 13 years

Facebook 13 years

Pinterest: 13 years

Instagram: 13 years

WhatsApp: 16 years

Vine: 17 years

Yellow - Make new friends: 12+

YouTube: 18 years (although children aged 13-17 can sign-up with parent's permission)

The **Musically** app is particularly popular among our pupils. On the App Store the following information is given:

Musically App: rated 12+

[Rated 12+ for the following:](#)

Infrequent/Mild Sexual Content and Nudity

Infrequent/Mild Cartoon or Fantasy Violence

Infrequent/Mild Profanity or Crude Humour

Infrequent/Mild Mature/Suggestive Themes

Infrequent/Mild Alcohol, Tobacco, or Drug Use or References



Have you checked what games or social media platforms your child is accessing? Do you know what sort of content might be accessible to your child? Is it age appropriate?

If your child has access to a social network -- whether they are 6 or 16 -- here are some ground rules that work for many parents:

Know what apps your child is using Have your child use your app store account or an account linked to your email, so you'll be notified when an app is downloaded. Consider making a rule, at least until they're older, that they can't download an app or sign up for an online account without asking you first.

Do your homework Parents should research the app/game and check what advice is out there about the potential dangers, particularly if the app has an online chat facility. What might appear to be an innocent children's game can be abused by people who may use bad language and post inappropriate content.

Use privacy settings Privacy settings aren't fool-proof, but they can be helpful. Take the time to learn how privacy settings work on your child's favourite sites and apps, (usually in "About Us" or "Privacy Policy".) Teach them how to control the information they make public or private. You should check privacy settings regularly, since sites' policies often change.

Avoid strangers Tell your children that people aren't always who they say they are online. Explain that if someone they don't know talks to them, they shouldn't respond and should let you know.

Tell your children to think before they post Remind them that everything can be seen by a vast, invisible audience (otherwise known as friends-of-friends-of-friends), and, once something's online, it's hard to take back.

Be a friend and follower Each family will have different rules, but, especially for younger children, it's a good idea for parents to have access to their children's devices and social media platforms, to be sure that what's being posted is appropriate. Parents can help keep their children from doing something they'll regret later. It might not be your child that is posting something inappropriate but a random stranger that is also using that platform.

Keep private information private Don't share your home address or other sensitive information online.

Be respectful of others Children may use social media to mis-behave because they feel anonymous and that their actions are consequence-free. Make sure they understand that the Internet is a giant community that works best when everyone respects each other.

You control your child's device Parents should be vigilant of their child's use of the internet: it is not a good idea to allow your child to take their device to bed with them. It can distract them from sleeping and you have no idea who they are interacting with.

The following websites have really useful information for parents regarding children and social media use:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/>

<https://www.common sensemedia.org/social-media>

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

<https://h2bsafetycentre.com/h2usethis/>

If something has happened online that makes you feel worried this website advises how to report it:

<https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>