

Mission Statement Motto: *Building relationships with God and each other, working hard in faith and hope to give our best in all things*

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Monday 4th December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Year 2 and Year 5 SNAPCHAT Incident

We are writing to you with regard to Snapchat, which appears to be popular with a large number of children in the Year 5 class, but also with younger children in the Year 2 class also using Snapchat.

We feel that whilst some parents may be aware of the nature of these apps, others may not fully understand their purpose and how children are choosing to use them. Additionally, we believe it is important for you to be made aware of the impact these apps are having on pupils in school. Snapchat is one app that, on the surface, may seem innocent enough, but can be extremely harmful. Snapchat is a messaging app that allows users to send pictures, videos and text messages to a selected group of recipients.

According to Snapchat's own Terms of Service, users are supposed to be age 13 or up, and users under 18 have to verify that they're using the app with a parent's permission. That means that, technically, children aged 9 and 10 should not be using Snapchat at all, let alone children aged 6 and 7.

Unfortunately, some children are not using them responsibly and this has caused problems within friendship groups and led to some unpleasant behaviour both in and out of class. Children have mentioned, in class, images and videos they have used the app to send unkind messages and videos to one another which has caused a great deal of distress.

The recommended age for the Snapchat app is 13 because the provider assumes that children younger than 13 are not mature enough to use the apps responsibly, and yet a large number of our pupils are regularly accessing them. Recent evidence shows that children are not being safe or responsible.

Should you choose to allow your children to access these apps, we would urge you to monitor their use closely and check videos, messages and pictures that are being sent and received on a daily basis. 'mSpy' is just one of many tracking apps that provides parents with clear insights into their children's smartphone activities. With mSpy parents can supervise calls, text messages, GPS location, installed apps, instant messages, browsing history and other activities on their children's device. The parent must download the software onto their child's phone first. Once it is installed, they can see the messages on their own device. We would highly recommend parents use a tracking app!

Attached to this letter is a parents guide to Snapchat. The school's website has links to parent guides for a variety of E-safety issues. Should you wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Westrop
Assistant Head Teacher - Inclusion

