



Midsomer Norton Primary School

An inclusive, community school in the heart of Midsomer Norton.

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'Part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership'

Midsomer Norton Primary School From the Head of School

Date: 23rd April 2026

Urgent Notice: Safeguarding and Online Safety (WhatsApp)

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you today to raise a matter of significant concern regarding the use of **WhatsApp** among our pupils.

While we understand that many children use messaging apps to stay in touch with friends, we have recently been made aware of several large group chats involving children in year 5 & 6. Unfortunately, these groups have been found to contain **explicit language, explicit and racist images, inappropriate media, and in some cases, instances of cyberbullying.**

The 13+ Age Requirement

We would like to formally remind all parents that the minimum age requirement for WhatsApp in the UK and Europe is **13 years old.**

As a primary school, none of our pupils meet this age threshold. These age restrictions are in place not to limit children's social lives, but because the platform lacks the robust moderation and child-safety filters found on platforms designed specifically for younger users. Children younger than this do not have the maturity to judge the appropriateness of content and the effects on their mental health and wellbeing.

You will be aware that there is current discussion within the UK whether social media should in fact be banned for all under 16s.

Our Recommendations for Parents

The digital world can be difficult for children to navigate without adult supervision. To ensure your child's safety and well-being, we strongly urge you to:

- **Check Your Child's Phone:** Regularly review their messages and group memberships. Children often find themselves added to large "broadcast" groups where they may be exposed to content sent by people they do not know.
- **Discuss Online Conduct:** Remind your child that "digital footprints" are permanent. Anything they post, share, or even "like" in a group chat can be saved and shared further.
- **Set Boundaries:** Consider implementing "tech-free" zones or times (such as keeping phones out of bedrooms at night) to prevent unsupervised late-night messaging.
- **Utilize Parental Controls:** Ensure privacy settings are high and that your child knows how to "Block" and "Report" inappropriate content.

Moving Forward

While these incidents often take place outside of school hours, the emotional fallout invariably impacts the children's focus and happiness during the school day. We take our safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and will continue to educate our pupils on E-Safety through our curriculum.

However, we cannot do this alone. Your vigilance at home is the most effective tool in keeping our children safe.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter and for your continued support in keeping our school community a safe place for everyone.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Biss

Head of School