



## THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

IRE/MLC

22 November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

### Social Media Awareness

Some of our Year 7 children are beginning to use social media apps. As parents will know, use of social media is one of the biggest factors contributing to the epidemic in mental health problems in young people. Unsupervised, use of social media can literally destroy lives. It certainly has the potential to make children very unhappy. If you choose to allow your child to have access to a smart phone, and choose to allow them to download social media apps, it is really important that you take responsibility for monitoring whether it is being used properly - schools cannot do this for you.

We are already seeing the negative effects of the use of social media within Year 7. 'Tutor group WhatsApp' groups are a particular cause for concern, with the app being used for inappropriate conversations and victimisation, leading to lots of upset.

A more appropriate alternative for students that wish to discuss work and other school related matters would be to use the comments section in their various Google Classroom streams. They have a Google Classroom for each one of their subjects and their tutor group. In many cases they will also have one for their extra-curricular clubs.

Excellent advice on setting up online parental controls can be found [here](#). Additionally, the following apps can help you monitor your child's devices and social media:

<https://families.google/familylink/>

<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304>

We would like to remind you of the following age restrictions on major social media apps:



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w: [www.mountbatten.hants.sch.uk](http://www.mountbatten.hants.sch.uk) Company No. 07560175

It is also worth noting that TikTok is raising its minimum age for livestreaming from 16 to 18 next month.

The school are aware that there are other areas of concern online, beyond social media. Gaming is an example of a medium that has the potential to pose a significant threat to the wellbeing of our children. If this relates to your child, please take the time to click on the relevant link(s) below if they use one of the more popular games consoles:

<https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/apps/family-settings-app>

<https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/>

The Mountbatten School is committed to protecting our students online and are members of National Online Safety (NOS). This gives parents and carers access to a whole range of fantastic resources to support you support your child, some of which can be seen on the school website [here](#).

Following this link, you can also find out what NOS is in more detail, including how to sign up and what support is offered as part of this. We strongly recommend joining the large majority of parents and carers who already make use of these invaluable resources.

Yours sincerely

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