



Online Safety News

Summer T6 2019

**Etwall Primary
School**

WhatsApp



What is WhatsApp?

WhatsApp is a mobile messaging app, which allows users to exchange messages using existing phone contacts without having to pay text message fees. WhatsApp Messenger is available on most mobile devices including iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Windows Phone and Nokia. WhatsApp users can create groups and send each other unlimited images, video and audio messages.

Does WhatsApp have any age restrictions?

Primary children should not be using WhatsApp because, as of May 2018, WhatsApp's minimum age of use is **16 years old**.

Should I be concerned about WhatsApp as a parent/carer?

When your child is using WhatsApp, there are many potential risks, including posting inappropriate selfies, spending too much time on social media, chatting with strangers (even though children are only able to talk to existing contacts in their phone, this does not mean that they are not communicating with somebody they have not met face to face) and inadvertently sharing their location. For advice on how to minimise these risks, please visit

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/social-media/>

Online Bullying/Cyberbullying

Due to the fact that WhatsApp has a group chat function (which means that children can chat with hundreds of people in one conversation stream), young people are being bullied through the forwarding of messages etc.

The school would like to take this opportunity to remind you that we take online bullying very seriously and will take action/intervene, where appropriate, in online incidents that take place beyond school.

The NSPCC and O2 are working together to help parents to keep their children safe on social networks – and their top tips include:

- Changing privacy settings and turning off location sharing. For tips and support in doing this, call the O2 NSPCC Online Safety Helpline on 0808 800 5002 or make a face-to-face appointment with an O2 guru in-store (available even if you're with O2).

- Talk with your child about what they like to do online.
- Download the O2 NSPCC Family Online Agreement from their Share Aware page so you can agree rules and boundaries with your children about online safety.

**NSPCC Online Safety
Helpline
0808 800 5002**

If you have not yet started a conversation with you child about Online Safety, here are some talking points to get you started:

- Which sites and apps can be used and by who? When is it/isn't it OK to use the internet? Meal times, bedtime, family visits?
- Do your children have to ask for permission to download games, apps, or spend money online?
- What parental controls will you use, and when and how will you use them?