

October 2024

Dear parents/carers

We are writing to all Year 7 parents to discuss social media use among Year 7 students. While we encourage friendships and communication, some concerns have been raised. There have been reports of inappropriate language and some students feeling intimidated by certain posts within group chats. One specific group called "Year 7" includes students from our school and others in Hillingdon. We kindly request your support in removing this app/group from your child's phone.

**Safety first:**

- Remember, WhatsApp has a 13+ age restriction.
- We teach children online safety and responsible communication ("Think before you send!"). However, online activity still requires adult oversight.

**How you can help:**

- **Monitor:** Check your child's browsing history and installed apps.
- **Open communication:** Discuss online safety with your child.
- **Emphasise kindness:** Remind them to treat others respectfully online.

**Misunderstandings and evidence:**

- Messages can be misinterpreted.
- Once sent, digital content is difficult to erase.

**What to do if upset:**

- Instruct your child not to delete upsetting messages.
- Take screenshots for evidence.

Our Safer Schools Office can access online conversations, even deleted messages, if needed to investigate incidents. Keeping children safe online and offline is our shared responsibility. We encourage open communication and collaboration to ensure our students use technology responsibly.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [parents@uhs.org.uk](mailto:parents@uhs.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

**J Churchill**  
**Vice Principal**