Dear parents/carers,

This guide on social networks, apps and online games has been put together to help you to ensure that your children are safe when using such programs from home. It includes the age ratings identified in the Terms of Use of the apps. Please ensure you supervise children when they're online and turn on parental controls and filters. Links to the E-safety websites can also be found on our school website **www.stmarymagdalenemk.co.uk** in the Parents: Useful Links section. Further E-safety advice can be found in the Parents: E-Safety link.

The information used to make this sheet is from the NSPCC Net Aware website. For the latest guidelines for 39 of the most popular sites, apps and games please refer to **www.net-aware.org.uk/networks**. There is also an app version and you can even sign up for newsletters to keep up to date with information and any changes. Another site which has reviews for many more apps, games, websites, movies and TV shows albeit with American ratings is **www.commonsensemedia.org**

Many social media accounts and other apps require a lot of personal information to set them up. Sharing such information is dangerous and it could be viewed by many people. The first step when using any social media is to check the **privacy settings** and set these to the highest possible level of security and privacy.

Many phones and apps (including almost all of the major social networks) such as WhatsApp, SnapChat, Facebook Messanger and Twitter have **location sharing settings**. This means that the exact location of users can be broadcast to others. This information could be used to put users in danger. Settings menus can often be used to turn this off.

If you are worried about online abuse, or the way someone has been communicating online, let CEOP know. Many sites have a CEOP button you can click or you can visit **www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/**

If you are being bullied, or you are not ready to make a report to CEOP, you can talk to Childline anonymously online or on the phone - No worry is too big or too small. The Childline website can be found at **www.childline.org.uk/**

childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk
0800 1111

13+

Facebook and Messenger

Risks identified by children include:

- Talking to strangers, or having strangers view their profile.
- Lack of privacy and a feeling that anyone can find and add them.
- Adverts and pop-ups which aren't appropriate for young people.
- Coming across disturbing or upsetting videos.
- Hackers.

13+

YouTube

Risks identified by children include:

- Some videos don't contain age appropriate content.
- Mean comments on videos.
- Adverts, these can be annoying and sometimes inappropriate.

There is a **'You Tube Kids'** app that helps to filter content unsuitable for children. There is also a **'BBC iplayer Kids'** app that does the same.

13+

Instagram

Risks identified by children include:

- Strangers following or talking to them, particularly adults.
- Bullying, especially people posting mean posts or pictures.
- Hacking and fake accounts.
- People screenshotting and sharing their pictures and videos without permission.

13+

Snapchat

Risks identified by children include:

- Strangers adding you.
- You can't control what you see when you open a Snapchat from someone else.
- People can screenshot your Snapchats and then share them.

13+

WhatsApp

Risks identified by children include:

- Being contacted by strangers.
- Random people being able to see your profile picture.
- There are some scam messages.

13+

Twitter

Risks identified by children include:

- People can tweet anything – some of this content isn't suitable.
- Fake and scam profiles and spam bots.
- Some people are rude or mean.

13+

Skype

Risks identified by children include:

- Random people adding them or calling them.
- Adverts.

13+

Twitch

Risks identified by children include:

- Adverts.
- Because it's live you don't know what you're going to see.
- The comments can be offensive and there is bullying/trolling.

13+

Musical.ly

Risks identified by children include:

- Hackers.
- Strangers following them and adding them.
- A lack of strong privacy settings.

7+ 13+

Minecraft: Pocket Edition

PEGI 7+. Minecraft's Terms of Use give a minimum age of 13.

Risks identified by children include:

- People can be rude and mean, especially if playing with strangers.
- Having to kill animals in the game.

8+

ROBLOX

Risks identified by children include:

- In-app purchases.
- Being able to talk to strangers.
- People you don't know adding you.

7+ 13+

Clash of Clans

PEGI 7+. Clash of Clans Terms of Use give a minimum age of 13. Risks identified by children include:

- Talking to strangers.
- The fact that some players are mean, rude or violent.
- In-app purchases which encourage you to spend money.

18+ 13+

Call of Duty: Black Ops Zombies

PEGI 18. Call of Duty's Terms of Use give a minimum age of 13. Risks identified by children include:

- It has violent and gruesome scenes.
- Adult and offensive language used by players.
- Hacking.

PEGI: These are European age ratings for computer games. The ratings have nothing to do with the difficulty of the games. Games such as **Grand Theft Auto** have an extreme and disturbing level of violence, they also include a range of adult-only themes. There is a reason why these games are rated 18+ and it is to help protect children! Information can be found on the back of the game box, or on **www.pegi.info**

Games that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy character and/or non graphic violence towards human-looking characters or recognisable animals, as well as videogames that show nudity of a slightly more graphic nature would fall in this category. Bad language in this category must be mild and fall short of sexual expletives.

This rating is applied once the depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as would be expected in real life. More extreme bad language, the concept of the use of tobacco and drugs and the depiction of criminal activities can be content of games that are rated 16.

The adult classification is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence and/or includes elements of specific types of violence. Gross violence is the most difficult to define since it can be very subjective in many cases, but in general terms it can be classed as the depictions of violence that would make the viewer feel a sense of revulsion.