



# St. Michael's C.E. (Controlled) Junior School

Church Lane East, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3SS

Headteacher: Mrs Steph Tyler

*Inspired by Him, we serve the community of St Michael's by creating an inclusive learning culture where all differences are respected, where courage is shown to face and overcome adversity, and resilience is embedded in our journey to success so we can be the very best we can be.*

9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents,

We have become aware that increasing numbers of children in Year Six are using the messaging app WhatsApp to communicate with each other, sometimes in large groups.

You may, or may not, be aware that WhatsApp has an age rating of 16+ due to the fact that there are no options for parental controls. The messaging platform allows users to send messages, images and videos and the child's location can also be shared with others. What we have found from discussing e-safety with the children is that they often don't realise the implications of sharing images through a messaging App; media shared in a message can be downloaded by every member of that chat or group if they so wish. We have discussed with the children yesterday the implications that may arise from this.

To help inform your decisions about whether your child should be using WhatsApp I have attached a parent guide for Whatsapp and a link to the NSPCC website for online safety which has some information for setting up further controls within the App if you wish to explore these further.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/whatsapp/>

The school website also contains links to websites and parents guides which keep you up to date with security controls and age restrictions for many other platforms too.

<https://www.stmichaelscejunior.co.uk/curriculum/internet-safety/>

As the children learn, they explore new technologies and keeping up to date with changes can present challenges to always ensure that we are keeping the children safe whilst they are online. In school we regularly discuss e-safety but please ensure that you also have these discussions routinely at home. The NSPCC website also has an option to sign up to a regular newsletter which is designed to keep parents informed of new platforms and any changes to existing ones.

If you wish to sign up the link is: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/newsletter/>

We hope that you find this information useful and please speak to your child's class teacher if you have any further concerns.

Kind Regards,

Mrs Bundy  
Deputy Headteacher

