



Elms Bank
School & College

Excellence for All

8 November 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Importance of monitoring phones, tablets, gaming and social media devices

We hope this letter finds you well. At Elms Bank we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our students, both in the classroom and online. As technology continues to play a larger role in our children's lives, it is more important than ever to ensure that they are using phones, tablets, iPads, and gaming devices safely and responsibly.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of regularly monitoring your child's online activity. Whether they are on social media platforms, playing online games, or simply browsing the internet, these digital spaces can sometimes expose children to risks such as inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online strangers.

We are aware that there are some "Elms Bank" WhatsApp groups circulating and whilst no concerns have been raised, we are aware that the age range of students in the groups ranges from year 7 to year 11. The minimum age for WhatsApp in the UK is currently 13 years old.

We have also been made aware of two current trends which are on the rise:

'Cam go.' 'Cam go' does not require a sign up and can be accessed from Google. It is an app that puts you in touch with random strangers. As well as sharing video and photograph, there is a chat facility. This is also known as 'Chantingly.' A parent in Greater Manchester has discovered messages which have exposed children to indecent images and requests to remove their own clothes.

The 800 Club. The aim of this chat is to reach 800 members. It currently stands at around 600. Within this group unknown members have shared far right imagery such as the swastika, nude imagery in the form of gifs, inappropriate and offensive language and children are being asked to divulge personal details, such as their age.

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Here are a few practical ways you can help safeguard your child:

- Check and Monitor Devices Regularly: Make a habit of reviewing your child's phone, tablet, or gaming device to check for any inappropriate content or unfamiliar applications.
- Set Time Limits and Boundaries: You can set app restrictions or use built-in parental control settings to limit screen time and restrict access to age-appropriate content.
- Discuss Online Safety: Have open conversations with your child about the potential dangers of the internet, and ensure they know how to report anything concerning.
- Recommendation is for computers/devices to be in a shared space in the house and not in pupils' bedrooms
- We also encourage you to make use of the resources available on the Elms Bank E-Safety page, which provides useful information on social media platforms and how to help protect your child online. On this page, you will find downloadable guides for popular social media apps, helping you understand their features, privacy settings, and how to keep your child safe while using them.

To access these resources, please visit our E-Safety Page at <https://www.elmsbank.co.uk/key-information/esafety/> or contact the school if you have any questions.

Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us provide a safe learning environment for our students, both at school and at home. We appreciate your efforts in keeping your child safe online.

If you have any concerns or would like more information, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gemma Parkes', written in a cursive style.

Gemma Parkes
Headteacher