



# Ashley Junior School

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Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: WhatsApp – Year 5 issues**

It has come to our attention that many of our Year 5 children are using WhatsApp for group chats outside of school. Please note that:

- the **minimum recommended age** for using WhatsApp is **13 years old**. All AJS pupils are deemed too young to appropriately manage this form of communication;
- the app offers end-to-end encryption, which means that messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient in one-to-one chats, or all members if it is a group chat. Not even WhatsApp can read them.

We have been made aware that a large group of Year 5 children have clearly demonstrated they are not emotionally mature enough to use social media like WhatsApp; they have sent messages that are inappropriate and hurtful on group chats, some of which have contained hundreds of messages in volume at any one time. Year 5 pupils have also been exposed to content and language that is extremely derogatory and totally inappropriate.

*If you choose to give your child access to a mobile device, it is your responsibility to monitor their use of apps, not our school staff. We will not be held responsible for managing the actions and consequences of children's inappropriate use of personal mobile devices outside of school, but fully acknowledge that these issues can have a very damaging social and emotional impact on pupils when they are in school. We suggest that parents make contact with one another to manage issues that occur that are of concern, in order to reach a resolution.*

We recommend that you:

- read the information guide about WhatsApp, from one of our monthly Online Safety Newsletters: [www.ashleyjuniorschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=736&type=pdf](http://www.ashleyjuniorschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=736&type=pdf)
- discuss the appropriate use of social media with your child;
- if you choose to allow your child access to above-age apps, regularly check your child's use of social media to ensure they are participating respectfully;
- explain to your child how to block people and leave a group, and how to respond to inappropriate comments or content.

Thank you for your help with these matters.

Kind regards.

*Charlie Bartolomeo*

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Headteacher and DSL