



April 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

Following our Online Safety update in February, we are writing to you about our concerns around some children's use of social media platforms outside of school and the impact this is having on them at home and in school.

Unfortunately, issues around the use of these sites and apps, particularly WhatsApp, continue to be brought to our attention. We remain concerned about the negative impact this is having on the mental wellbeing of many of our children, across all year groups. As part of our normal school curriculum, we do deliver regular reminders about online safety either as full lessons or discussions within lessons. Our school website has a range of online safety information for parents at [Online Safety | Westacre Middle School](#).

So that parents are fully aware of these restrictions, we would like to share the following diagram as a reminder about current legal limits on the age somebody can have social media accounts:



There are many reasons for these restrictions, including maturity levels of children at middle-school age and how young people can cope mentally with the various risks and issues that do come with social media. You may be aware that many governments around the world are currently exploring how children use social media and what further restrictions should be put in place. The UK government is currently carrying out a national consultation, which you can take part in at [Growing up in the online world: a national consultation - GOV.UK](#)

Due to the legal age restrictions on these social media platforms, the main advice we can give to our children is that they should not be using them. However, if parents wish to discuss ways of keeping safe on social media with their children, the parent safety guides available at [Online Safety | Westacre Middle School](#) will be useful (the WhatsApp parent guide is also attached alongside this letter). If parents do allow their child to access social media sites, we must point out it is not appropriate for school staff to be using learning time to sort out issues that have happened via these sites. However, when groups set up by children or parents name Westacre or individual class names / teachers, we will need to share our concerns with those involved. We would ask for parental support in ensuring that any group chat names used by children or parents do not reference any links to school, as this would not be fair on those individuals or classes and could lead to us having to share any content with the police.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

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