



# The Annunciation Catholic Junior School

Archdiocese of Westminster London Borough of Barnet

Headteacher  
Mrs C Minihan

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Dear Parents/Carers,

The Annunciation Catholic Junior School is committed to promoting the safe and responsible use of the internet and as such we feel it is our responsibility to raise this particular issue as a growing concern, due to the increase in inappropriate use of WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok and other sites. Many of the issues that have been brought to our attention recently have involved the use of:

- **WhatsApp** - An instant messaging app for smartphones. The user agreement requires users to be **age 16 or older**.
- **Instagram** - an online mobile photo sharing, video sharing and social networking service which enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms. You are required to be **at least 13 years old** before you can create an account.
- **TikTok** is a social media platform that allows users to express themselves through singing, dancing, lip-synching and comedy videos that can be shared with others. There are only two privacy settings on the app: Private: only the creator can watch their videos and Public: anyone on the app can see their videos. You are required to be **at least 13 years old** before you can create an account.

In recent online safety lessons at school, some pupils voiced that whilst parents 'follow' them on these apps, **some parents aren't aware that there are ways to manipulate the settings so that a child can set it so that a parent can only view content the child wishes them to view.**

We understand that there is only so much control we have on what the children access at home but we urge you to be extra vigilant of your child's use of social media in its many different and ever growing forms. Additional information about WhatsApp (and other apps) can be found in the leaflet attached.

**We strongly advise a device free bedroom policy after bedtime to ensure safety and allow for uninterrupted sleep and rest.**

Many thanks

Mr. Doherty

Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead