



**South Benfleet
Primary School
(Academy Trust)**

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Headteacher Mr DJ Carver

25th September 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian,

"If you would not like to receive it do not send it"
Keeping children safe in our digital world

Along with all schools, we have recently been in conversation with Essex Police about digital safety and social media and we are now writing to explain our joint School/Police thinking regarding Facebook and other digital media.

Things to remember:-

- There has been massive growth in the usage of digital communication and social media- phones, emails, text messaging, Xbox live, Facebook, etc. This is both positive and exciting but also poses new risks.
- Sometimes digital devices are used inappropriately- the audience when this happens can be huge- it's impossible to take back an unwise comment, picture or video!
- Inappropriate use of digital devices could in some circumstances be an offence under the Telecommunications Act, Malicious Communications Act, the Protection of Children Act or the Criminal Justice Act. In some schools the Police have been involved with complaints about the misuse of digital and social media.
- Children under 13 **should not have** Facebook accounts, the school will not support the use of this or similar sites for students under 13 years old.
- We would request that parents do not send Facebook friend requests to staff.
- Any video/photographs that you take in school are for private viewing only and should not be shared publically via facebook/you tube or similar sites as stated in our ICT Acceptable use policy.
- Children need to be **supervised online** as well as having an understanding/maturity to realise the implications of using digital communications.
- Clear boundaries need to be set for online/ digital devices.

- The school will teach appropriate E safety with a particular emphasis on older children in years 5/6. Safeguarding is very important to us.
- The school uses a filtered internet service- at home most people don't automatically use such systems- please explore if your internet provider has a filter option and consider using it.
- The school cannot control home use of digital communications but will endeavour as appropriate to deal with problems and issues. In extreme circumstances we may involve the Police.
- Be wary of web cams on all devices- e.g. on ipads / tablets, laptops, phones etc. as in some circumstances these can be used to watch device users.
- Children should never share personal information or photos / video online and be warned never to meet people they have encountered online.
- Children should not have mobile phones or similar communication devices in school. The only exception being some Year 6 pupils, where parents have written in with specific reasons why the child may need a phone. *Where such cases are agreed* then phones need to be switched off, named and handed in. No phones in bags drawers etc.
- Chats, conversations, and other messages that you believe to be private can be hacked into, screen printed and shared with other users, or forwarded to people outside of friendship groups, this can cause problems, accusations of bullying etc.

We would urge you to read and discuss the contents of this letter with your child (or the age relevant parts) to ensure they fully understand the implications of it and know how to keep themselves safe from inadvertently committing criminal acts or becoming a victim themselves.

If you would like further advice on how to keep your child safe on the internet, we would recommend you visit the Child Exploitation and Online Protection website at – <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/browser-safety/>

Thank you for your support and understanding,

Yours sincerely,

DJ Carver
Headteacher