



Edgewood Primary School

Building skills and values for life

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Social Media and Online Safety

Today it has come to our attention that many of our Year 5 and 6 children have active and often unprotected Instagram accounts. We were informed there was an issue this morning and staff looked to see what information was being posted on Instagram by children at our school.

In 5 minutes, it was found that anyone could find open and completely public accounts with children's full names, pictures (many of which that were taken in bedrooms), where children live and even more pictures posted to over 60 public sites revolving around whether someone is 'Hot or not' or similar. All of this was found without any difficulty. It is also easy to link to the friends of those children as many name-check each other in the public sections of their page. Some children also had multiple accounts, up to 10 in one case.

Instagram say that users should be 13 years old which means none of our children should have a page on there. This is a common age-limit for social media, such as Facebook, as children are often not mature enough to understand the danger sharing information with unknown people via the internet can cause. For WhatsApp the age limit is 16.

We have reports in school that paedophiles and others use many social media (especially such as Instagram and Music.ly) to follow, see and download pictures of children and even communicate with them. If your child is on these sites then they are exposing themselves to risk.

Today we have shown all of Year 5/6 a video from CEOP highlighting that sharing information like this online is akin to inviting a stranger into your house and divulging personal information to them. It is not a comfortable video to watch and usually we would have informed parents first but, due to the widespread nature of these issues, we felt we needed to show it to the children as soon as possible to keep them safe. The link to the video is https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/Films-to-watch-with-your-children/Jigsaw_original/ and I encourage you to watch it now. There are also many links on the NSPCC and safer internet sites.

Staff have said as part of our E-Safety work with the children that if you wouldn't tell a stranger something or give them your address or give them a picture of yourself then why would you post that information online where it can be taken?

We will be following this up with workshops for parents and further work with all children to ensure that our children are as safe as possible in this modern, online world.

Yours faithfully,

Ed Seeley



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