Monks Orchard Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers

Cyberbullying and Internet Safety

Despite sending out a number of letters over the last couple of terms, we are still getting complaints, almost daily, from children and parents about children sending and posting abusive and insulting messages on various social media sites.

We know most of you keep a very close eye on your children's use of social media and the various apps they have on their Smart Phones and tablets. We do lots of work in school around staying safe online and cyberbullying, but ultimately we cannot control what your children do or see online when they are not in school. It is impossible for the school to stop the cyberbullying that is happening at the moment on its own - we can only do it with your help.

So, we are asking all parents and carers to take some simple actions to make sure your children are safe online.

1. Remember: you have chosen whether or not to buy your child a smart phone or tablet and you pay their bill. All phones and tablets have parental control settings. It is your responsibility to make sure your child's device is set up so that they cannot purchase or access inappropriate apps or sites.
2. Talk to your child about why they go online, what apps they use and what they use them for.
3. Find out about the apps your child is using. It is very easy to post and access inappropriate material on most social media apps. This is why the vast majority of them should not be used by children under the age of 13. You would be shocked by some of the videos, images and messages your children can access online.
4. Explain to your child that what they post online can be seen, saved and used by others. They must think before posting.
5. Never respond or retaliate to abusive messages or posts.
6. Block users who post abusive messages.
7. Save, take a screen shot or print abusive messages you see or receive.
8. Always report abusive messages or posts to the service provider and, if appropriate, to the police via the CEOP website (ceop.police.uk).

If you want further advice there are a number of useful websites you can access:

Report-it.org.uk
childline.org.uk
bbc.co.uk/webwise
safe.met.police.uk

Do please act on the advice in this letter, as we will only be able to tackle this growing problem if we all play our part.

Thank you.

The staff of Monks Orchard Primary School