



THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
Rock Road
Storrington
West Sussex
RH20 3AA
Headteacher: Mr L. McDonald
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs E. Hopkins
SENCOs: Mr L. McDonald & Mrs R. Stender

Tel: 01903 740176
Email: office@thakehamps.co.uk
Web: <http://www.thakehamps.co.uk>

'At Thakeham we CARE'

28th November 2024

Dear Families,

Online Safety – Particularly When Using Apps

It has come to our attention that many of our children are using different social media platforms such as TikTok /Discord /WhatsApp and Snapchat particularly.

While some of these platforms are great for socialising and can provide a creative outlet for your child, **it can also have some harmful effects**. Like with any social media platform, posting videos and pictures regularly leaves your child open to negative reactions, content beyond their age of understanding and harsh comments. **With this in mind and in accordance with children's privacy laws, TikTok and such other sites provide an age limit starting from users being 13 years-old to get their own account.** No pupils at Thakeham Primary School are of this age.

Further, we have been made aware that some pupils in our school are using these apps to flag that they have concerns about their mental health and are doing so within chat groups. We cannot stress enough the importance of ensuring our young people know how to reach out and ask for help in the **right way**. Please talk to your children and let them know that it is okay to want and ask for help. They should feel comfortable talking to their safe adults about their mental health. We tend to find these 'safe adults' are their family or in school, their class teaching teams. Alternatively, children can access support by calling the following numbers or using the chat options on the following websites:

- NSPCC CHILDLINE: 0800 11 11
- Police: call 999 or 101
- NHS: call 111
- Email school on: dsl@thakehamps.co.uk
- Use circle time or the class worry boxes to ask for help





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In school, we can support in many ways. For example, we:

1. Have our school counselling team comprised of our Thoughtful Practitioner and our two ELSAs.
2. I am a trained Senior Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead.
3. Our teachers can support via PSHE and RSHE lessons and in their roles as Safe Adults.
4. We have circle time in Beatles and Wonder Class where pupils can feel safe sharing worries.
5. We have worry boxes in Marley and Franklin. Pupils can confidentially share things they would like to discuss with the Safe Adults.

Please see below link and extracts from the NSPCC about TikTok and Snapchat. We have also attached several help sheets to this letter/email:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/child-safe-settings-tiktok/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/is-snapchat-safe-for-my-child/>

We know that you know your child best. But, if you ever need support or guidance, please feel free to reach out. You can email me directly at head@thakehamps.co.uk.

Best wishes,

Will McDonald
Headteacher

