MGL

FAITH PRIMARY ACADEMY

ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

GROUP CHATS AND INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE ONLINE

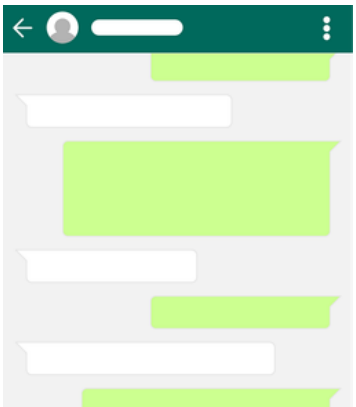
ISSUE 20

GROUP CHATS

Group chats are a great way for friends to stay connected, but they can sometimes be used for unkind or inappropriate messages and targeted bullying.

Most messaging apps have age limits, for example, WhatsApp and Snapchat are 13+. Children under 13 shouldn't be using them. If they are, it's important to help them use these apps safely.

Remind your child that messages sent online have the same impact as words said face-to-face. Group chats can also allow name changes, which can lead to impersonation or anonymous bullying. Keeping conversations open at home about online behaviour can make a big difference.



SEEING AND USING INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

One common risk online is the use of inappropriate language. On platforms aimed at older teenagers and adults, strong or offensive language can be very common. Children might start using words they hear without fully understanding what they mean.

It's important to remind children that just because language is used online doesn't make it acceptable. Some words are considered offensive because they can hurt people. Children who repeat words they've seen online may unintentionally cause harm.

To reduce exposure, make sure your child is using age-appropriate apps and websites, and turn on filters and parental controls where available. Clear expectations about respectful language help children understand that certain words are not okay to use.

WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT GROUP CHATS?

- **Know the apps** – Make sure your child is using age-appropriate platforms.
- **Check privacy settings** – Encourage your child to keep their accounts private and review who can message or add them.
- **Stay involved** – Ask your child to show you the group chats they're in. This helps you spot any bullying or inappropriate behaviour early.
- **Model good behaviour** – Show them how to communicate respectfully online.
- **Leaving vs staying** – If the chat is unmoderated or risky, leaving is often the safest. Talk through this with your child so they understand the reasons.