

MADELEY SCHOOL

Online Safety

This quick guide to online safety is designed to support parents and carers of our Year 7 and 8 students. We hope you find it useful.

Growing Concern

As a school we are dealing with a growing number of online safety incidents which are happening outside of school in the evenings and weekends. Online safety is a challenge for any parent or carer and for us as a school. Much time is spent supporting our students in understanding the importance of online safety, strategies to keep themselves safe, what the signs might be and what to do if they are targeted.

However, what we are supporting our students with, the issues they bring to our attention, including you as parents and carers, are happening on platforms they should not be accessing due to their age restrictions. We know this is a huge concern due to the lack of regulation on these sites, it is widely discussed in the press and changes to the way in which social media platforms are allowed to operate has now come into place due to the online safety bill. However, much more still needs to be done to keep children safe online.

We wanted to make you aware of the common sites your child might be accessing and what the age restrictions are:

Social media apps: age ratings and features

Platform	Age rating	Features
Facebook	13+	Newsfeed to share text, photos & videos, instant messaging, marketplace, friends, likes and comments.
Instagram	13+	Photo & video sharing, livestreaming, stories, DMs, hashtags.
Snapchat	13+	Photo & video messaging, snaps, location sharing.
TikTok	13+	Making & sharing short videos, lip-syncing.
Twitter	13+	Tweets (text with restricted character count), photo and video sharing, hashtags.
WhatsApp	13+	Messaging, friends, photo sharing.

Our Year 7 students will be having an assembly on Tuesday 21st May, which will be focusing on how we treat others on social media platforms and how to protect themselves and report concerns if they are targeted.

We are in the process of redesigning our website, in the coming weeks, please access our safeguarding and online safety page for additional support and resources you might find useful as parents and carers.

Practical tips to help minimise the risks your child might face

It's good practice for apps and websites to have safety advice and well-designed safety features which can make a real difference to how safe your child will be when using them. Work through safety and privacy features on the apps that your child is using, or might use. Make sure they understand the point of these and how to use them. Don't be put off by believing your child knows more than you: the tools are actually quite easy to manage.

- Ask them to show you which social media apps they use and what they like about them. Talk about how they use them and what makes them so engaging.
- Explain how you can use privacy settings to make sure only approved friends can see posts & images.
- Check if any of their apps have 'geo-location' enabled, sharing their location unintentionally.
- Show them how to report offensive comments or block people who upset them. • Check 'tagging' settings so that when others are posting or sharing photos online, your child's identity is not revealed. Also, get people's consent before sharing photos or videos.