



**CRESTWOOD**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

TNH/JSS

25 January 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Young people's use of the internet has increased dramatically in recent years, with 96% of 9-16 year olds using the internet daily. Young people use the internet for a wide range of purposes, from completing school work, communicating with friends to watching videos and playing games.

Social networking sites have played a huge part in changing the way young people interact with others and they use them as a platform to learn, share views and demonstrate their creativity.

As a school, we are very aware of a number of apps where users post anonymously - Kik, Omegle and Sarahah. As a school we would encourage extreme caution in using apps such as these. There have been reports through Hampshire's Safeguarding Board and concerning stories in the media where using such apps have exposed children to:

- Bullying online (cyberbullying)
- Sharing too much information
- Vulnerability to predatory adults (grooming)
- Sharing videos or photographs that they later regret
- Exposure to age-inappropriate material
- Risk of identity theft

We would ask you to discuss with your child the potential risks associated with using such apps and would recommend that, if your child has any of them, to delete. Please ensure that you close/cancel the account within the app prior to deleting the app. If only the app is deleted without the account being closed, children can still be messaged/sent images as the app is linked to snapchat.

**Crestwood Community School**

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We would also recommend finding out what sites your child is using and learning about them. We would also suggest you follow some prudent tips when tackling the issue with your child.

- Don't let their social media usage become a secretive topic. By keeping the conversation going and talking about the dangers, it will help your child understand about the dangers and know you are there to support them.
- Establish usage 'rules' or guidelines so you can monitor their usage and what they post. Ensure they share no personal information which could lead to them being tracked by a predatory adult.
- Be aware of privacy settings. Make sure that your child has their settings set high, so just their real friends can access their profiles.
- Teach your child about evaluating information and being critically aware of information found online.
- Talk about the risks associated with meeting online "friends" in person.

For further information please visit:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-are-using-social-media>

If you have any concerns or want to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact me on 02380 649606 or via email at [tim.nash@crestwood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:tim.nash@crestwood.hants.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely

Mr. Nash  
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Designated Safeguarding Lead

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