

# Edward Peake C of E (VC) Middle School

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25 November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you because we are seeing an increasing number of pupils in year 6 distressed by content being shared on WhatsApp.

WhatsApp is a chat application which can be used on a mobile phone or tablet and lets you send messages, images and videos to friends. You can have both one to one or group conversations.

This letter is to make you aware that your child may be using WhatsApp and you should be mindful that the minimum age for WhatsApp is 16 years of age as set out in the terms and conditions listed by WhatsApp.

The following information is taken directly from the WhatsApp website ([www.whatsapp.com](http://www.whatsapp.com))

*If you live in a country in the European Economic Area (which includes the European Union), and any other included country or territory (collectively referred to as the European Region), you must be at least 16 years old (or such greater age required in your country) to register for and use WhatsApp.*

- *If you live in any other country except those in the European Region, you must be at least 13 years old (or such greater age required in your country) to register for and use WhatsApp.*
- *Creating an account with false information is a violation of our Terms.*
- *Registering an account on behalf of someone who is underage is also a violation of our Terms.*

Like yourselves, we are also very aware of heightened pupil anxiety at the current time and several pupils have also highlighted the following examples which are adding to their anxieties:

- Messages arriving at all times of the day, with many arriving in the evening and into the early hours of the morning.
- Some children are unable to keep up with the volume of messages (in the hundreds) being received.
- Worries about inappropriate content.



It is very difficult for the school to become involved with investigating this as it occurs almost exclusively outside of school on private devices, but it would be remiss of us not to draw your attention to an issue which is affecting increasing numbers of children.

Can I please ask for your support and request that you discuss this with your children and carefully consider monitoring or even removing access to WhatsApp and other social media services from your children, for the good of their mental health and well-being. For more information regarding WhatsApp or any other online applications please visit [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk) for in-depth information supplied by the NSPCC.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Coverdale'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Mr D Coverdale  
Head of Year 6