Dear Parent / Carer,

Re: Use of social networking sites – E-Safety

It has come to our attention that a number of children throughout the school have social media profiles on sites like Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram.  We all enjoy using technology and have fun online, but we also want our children to keep safe and act responsibly.

Chapel End Primary School is committed to promoting the safe and responsible use of the Internet and as such we feel it is our duty to raise awareness of this particular issue. Websites such as Snapchat, Instagram or Facebook offer amazing communication and social connections, however they are created for those over 13 years of age. Possible risks for children under 13 years using social media sites include:

- Instagram and Facebook use "age targeted" advertising and therefore your child could be exposed to adverts of a sexual or other inappropriate nature, depending on the age they stated they were when they registered.
- Children may accept friend requests from people they don't know in real life which could increase the risk of inappropriate contact or behaviour.
- Language, games, groups and content posted or shared is not moderated, and therefore can be offensive, illegal or unsuitable for children.
- Photographs shared by users are not moderated and therefore children could be exposed to inappropriate images or even post their own.
- Underage users might be less likely to keep their identities and profiles private.
- Social networking sites do not verify the identity of its members, therefore if your child can lie about their age or who they are online, so can anyone else!

We feel it important to point out to parents the risks of underage children using such sites, so you can make an informed decision as to whether to allow your child to have a profile or not.

Should you decide to allow your child to have a social media profile we strongly advise that you:

- Check their profile is set to private and that only friends can see information that is posted.
- Check that they know each of their friends personally.
- Monitor your child's use and talk to them about safe and appropriate online behaviour such as not sharing personal information and not posting offensive messages or photos.
- Set up your own profile so you understand how the site works and ask them to have you as a friend on their profile so you know what they are posting online.
- Make sure your child understands the following rules: Always keep your profile private; Never accept friends you don't know in real life; Never post anything which could reveal your identity; Never post anything you wouldn't want your parents to see; Never agree to meet somebody you only know online without telling a trusted adult; Always tell someone if you feel threatened or someone upsets you.
- We recommend that all parents visit the CEOP Think U Know website for more information on keeping your child safe online www.thinkuknow.co.uk