



# Filey Junior School

Widening horizons and reaching our potential whilst respecting the world and each other,  
within a happy, healthy and positive learning community

## Newsletter 08 - 8th February 2019

### Internet Safety Special

It's Safer Internet Week! And, as a result, the children have been spending Reflection Time discussing the use of the internet, social media, mobile phones and other technologies. As always, this type of discussion has raised some interesting and important discussions and possible concerns regarding children's use of online technologies. We do, of course, advise and teach our children about the advantages and possible dangers of online communications but we also need to ask parents to stay vigilant. We would like to draw your attention to some of the most common issues we have identified, but before we do we are pleased to share some exciting technology related news with you.

**School Parents' App:** We are launching a new version of our School App next week. This will provide you with a much easier way to keep up with everything happening at school, let you receive notifications and important updates as well as reporting absences and giving access to the school diary and other information. The app will run on all smartphones (Android or Apple) and next week, you will receive a text message inviting you to install the app and giving you a username and password. The app is free to parents and we're aiming to get everyone on board as this will help us cut costs associated with traditional communications. If you have any problems installing the app, please let us know and we will be happy to assist. Please note, the app will ask you for permission to make calls, messages etc. This is simply to allow us to send you notifications and for you to be able to communicate back to us - there are no charges for these messages.

**Use of social media:** Children in school are using a range of different platforms and, although they need to be 13 years old to create accounts, are posting and reading a wide range of material on these platforms. You will have seen this week, a number of cases in the news regarding images and content on these platforms which are contributing to young people's mental well-being, in some cases with tragic outcomes. Additionally, we have been made aware of several children having accounts on Instagram, Facebook, Youtube etc. and having several hundred 'friends'. These are obviously not all known to the children and, in some cases, these have been accounts held by much older adults. Please monitor your child's potential use of these platforms.

**Inappropriate content:** We have a number of children reporting that they have seen inappropriate images and other content whilst online. This can be very difficult to manage but your internet service provider should be able to offer advice on setting parental restrictions on content. It is worth noting that whilst children are using their Chromebooks and school accounts, the content they can access is both filtered and audited. Whilst we do not claim this system to be fool-proof, it is a very good safety-net but we would still ask that parents monitor their child's use.

**YouTube:** It's here to stay and many children spend a lot more time watching YouTube than traditional television. Please be aware, however, there is a lot of material aimed at adults on YouTube and children can be influenced or upset by some of these. We are also aware of many children having their own YouTube accounts and posting videos of themselves, their homes, their school uniform etc. in these videos. This obviously raises concerns around privacy. In addition, children posting videos are making themselves vulnerable to comments posted by others. Often these comments can be very negative and aimed toward the child but, in some instances, can be quite suggestive and ask for children to post further videos of a more explicit content. Again, please monitor your child's use of this service and be advised that children should be over 13 years of age to have a YouTube account which allows them to post videos and comments.

**Mobile Phones:** Many children now have phones for pleasure and for emergency situations. When used appropriately, these can be a very valuable and useful part of modern life. We have, however, had an increasing number of children involved in fallouts and other inappropriate use, particularly when using WhatsApp where a number of children join a group. Please also remember that children must have a signed Mobile Phone Agreement if they need to bring phones into school.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding online safety, please let us know. The following website is also very useful for parents. <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>