



# The St Philip Howard Catholic High School

## ESAFETY NEWS

### Summer 2014

**Many students use social media without incident, however if you have serious concerns that your child may be a victim of cyberbullying or is being sent inappropriate messages, you should contact the police.**

Welcome to the first St Philip Howard Esafety newsletter. As summer holidays begin and our students enjoy leisure time, we would like to keep you informed about how many young people use social network sites, the risks they face and how to keep your child safe.

The **London School of Economics** has just published research into young peoples' online use trends, noting that some risks are increasing: including cyberbullying and exposure to harmful user-generated content. However, the good news is that thanks to lessons in esafety, fewer children have had communication with strangers and children are reducing their number of online contacts.

The message from the UK Internet Safety Centre is that we all continue to educate young people about staying safe online, particularly about cyberbullying and access to harmful user-generated content.

Online risks: 2010 to 2013	2010	2013
Received sexual messages	12%	> 4%
Spoken to strangers online	27%	> 17%
11-12 year olds using Facebook	50%	> 25%
Over 300 social network contacts	16%	> 10%
Been cyberbullied	8%	< 12%
Seen self-harm websites	6%	< 17%
Seen pro-anorexia websites	8%	< 14%
Seen hate messages	13%	< 23%

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**We wish our students a happy and safe summer break!**

Alison Baker  
Assistant Headteacher  
i/c Esafety Matters

## Latest Social Media and Instant Messaging Trends:

With so many new apps or websites used by young people to IM (instant message) each other; it can be hard to keep up. It's important for parents to know how these work, and how old your child should be to use them. At St Philip Howard we work hard to reinforce esafety and appropriate online behaviour, In West Sussex we are concerned about the misuse of sites such as Instagram, Kik and Snapchat.

Please talk to your child about what is and is not appropriate to share online and the dangers of sexting: with most of these apps they can send images or videos free of charge. Ensure they know to tell you if they receive bullying messages or images that are inappropriate, they should also block the user. There are also some basic rules to discuss: not using your real name on your profile when it is available publicly, never adding your location to your messages or photos, and never accept a follower or friend who you don't actually know in real life.

### Anonymous social media apps

#### Whisper

- What is it?

Described as being like Facebook, but anonymous, Whisper is a social media app which allows users to post snippets of information anonymously to another user or group of users using images from the app and creative fonts.

- What are the risks:

Whisper allows users to respond anonymously to other anonymous 'whispers'. Users are able to comment on or like other Whispers, as well as receive private messages from other users. Users can share their location.

- What else should I know?

The app is rated 17+ so children under that age should not be using it.

#### Yik Yak

- What is it?

YikYak describes itself as a 'local bulletin board' for sharing information and connecting with others in your area without having to know them.

- What else should I know?

The app is rated 17+, is free to download but has in-app purchases. To help prevent Yik Yak being used to cyberbully it has a 'geofencing' option: you can request access to Yik Yak to be banned in a certain area.



## Secret

- What is it?

Secret is an anonymous social media app allowing users to share 'secrets' using words and images. When you post a 'secret' it is delivered anonymously to your Secret contacts, who can view, like, and comment on your post. If a friend likes your secret, it will be shared among their friends so secrets can spread.

- What are the risks of Secret?

The app accesses your contacts list to find out who your friends are but there are no names or profiles displayed on the posts. You can see how many friends you have on Secret but you won't be able to see their identity. All posts are encrypted so that not even the team behind this app know who is posting.

## Other Social Media Apps

### Ask.Fm

- What is it?

Children must be 13 to have an account on **Ask.Fm**.

Once you have joined, you can be asked questions anonymously.

- What are the risks?

The site is often used to ask inappropriate questions or post sexual comments which are visible to the public as you have no control over where information can appear. If your child is on this website there are no restrictions about the content they are seeing, so keep a close eye on what your child is doing online and talk to them about the dangers of posting personal information.

- What you should know:

You can change whether you allow people to ask you questions anonymously in your privacy settings and block users who ask inappropriate questions or appear to be bullying. Talk to your child about how to do this and make sure they are aware of the "report abuse" button.



### WhatsApp

- What is it?

**WhatsApp** Messenger lets teens send text messages, videos, photos, and short audio messages to one or many people. Messages can only be sent to smartphone users who also have WhatsApp. Once you install the app, it checks your address book to see if anyone else you know is already using WhatsApp, and connects you automatically.

- What are the risks?

There are ways to send messages anonymously so it is always essential to make sure you talk to your child about what is and isn't appropriate to send and receive.

- What you should know:

You have to be over 16 to use WhatsApp.

## Snapchat

- What is it?

**Snapchat** is a free app where you can take a picture or video and send it to friends.

- What are the risks?

The image isn't permanent, and it feels spontaneous. This doesn't mean the image can't be captured by the receiver by taking a screenshot. Once you have set up an account, anyone who knows your username or phone number can send you a message.

- What you should know:

You must be 13 or over to use Snapchat. You can configure Snapchat to accept only messages from "My Friends" list in the settings menu: You can block users via the Menu button. If a child receives inappropriate photos or is being harassed, contact [safety@snapchat.com](mailto:safety@snapchat.com). You can delete the account if you have the username and password. If your child won't give you his or her password, you can submit a deletion request.

## Instagram

- What is it?

**Instagram** is a photo editing and sharing "app" which allows users to edit photos taken on their phone and post them to Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. The photos are open to the public. You must be 13 or over to use the site.

- What are the risks?

Photos can go anywhere and can be browsed at [Instagram.com/username](http://Instagram.com/username). You can make a profile private: users send a request to connect to you.

- What you should know:

Ensure that the photo sharing is set to "Private" as this will prevent the photos being available to the general public. Work with your child to select a profile picture. Avoid using an actual photo, rather choose an image which represents your child's interests. Turn off the Geo-tagging or Location of photos so that even if a photo goes out publicly, hopefully no-one will know where your child is!

## Kik

- What is it?

**Kik Messenger** is a free smartphone messenger application that allows users to send texts, pictures, videos and sketches. Kik uses a wireless connection or mobile data to send and receive messages.

- What are the risks?

Kik is a popular application amongst young people of all ages. Issues arise when this app is used to transmit messages or photos that are menacing, harrasing or offensive. It has been used for inappropriate "sexting."

- What you should know:

The age classification for the messenger function is 13. Kik has a feature called 'Kik cards' which allows users to find images, videos and play games. This is restricted to users 17 years and older due to the inappropriate nature of some of the content available.

**For more Esafety information, see:**  
<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk>