



WhatsApp Guidelines for Parents and Carers

Class WhatsApp groups are a very useful and efficient way of communicating to the whole class. The aim of using WhatsApp is to send messages to the entire group, which are relevant to school and helpful for the group members to know, e.g. information about PTA events, collections for teacher gifts, and class parent socials.

Messages in the class WhatsApp groups come from parents and carers in their personal capacity or are sent on behalf of the PTA. **The school neither sends nor monitors messages on WhatsApp.**

WhatsApp groups are meant to be useful, interesting and help build a sense of community and support within classes. We encourage you to join in and positively participate if you wish. However, the PTA would appreciate it if parents/carers would note the following guidelines when using class WhatsApp groups.

<p>Purpose of the platform</p>	<p>The WhatsApp group is a facility for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the class representative to post information or requests deemed appropriate for the parents, whatever that may be. • members to ask questions or make inquiries about issues or events that other parents might be able answer. This should be kept to an absolute minimum.
<p>What sort of messages should I post?</p>	<p>Post messages that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant for the whole group and • about school related issues <p>Before posting, ask yourself if it might be better suited to a smaller group of parents in a separate friends' group.</p>
<p>What should I avoid?</p>	<p>Please think before you post. Avoid using the platform as a medium to air any concerns or grievances regarding a teacher, child or parent in the class or school or give opinions on current affairs. Please think about how your post could come across, and about how you would feel if you were on the receiving end.</p> <p>If you have any concerns about your child at school or in relation to another child, you should contact your class teacher. If your concern remains, you should contact the school's Deputy Headteachers or Headteacher.</p>

	<p>Please avoid posting in anger. Consider whether someone could be upset by your comment and whether there is a better way to respond to the situation.</p> <p>We have a diverse school community with many different nationalities, languages, faiths, ethnic groups, socio-economic backgrounds, amongst others, and families may be very different from one another. Please be respectful of this.</p> <p>If someone asks a question and you don't know the answer, please wait for someone who knows the answer to reply rather than post, 'don't know'.</p> <p>Post your message in one single chunk of text, rather than post every word or sentence in a new message.</p> <p>'Thank you' messages are lovely but not required. If you wish to send them, please send them directly to the person concerned.</p> <p>Switch to private messages if you want to have a one-one-one conversation.</p>
<p>What to do if you feel a post is inappropriate</p>	<p>At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately. This includes: abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils or other parents, posting defamatory or libellous comments, using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children, or threatening behaviour.</p> <p>Please be assured that we will not tolerate inappropriate posts. If someone makes an inappropriate comment, please contact your class rep or a senior staff member at school. PTA class reps will refer inappropriate posts to senior school staff and can remove the offending member from the group. The WhatsApp group administrators have every right to take this action when needed.</p> <p>You can always choose to leave a WhatsApp group – and no-one should make a judgement about that decision.</p>
<p>Helpful hints</p>	<p>If you are not sure about your post, please ask yourself these questions beforehand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is this relevant? ● Is this necessary? ● Is it true? ● Is it helpful? ● Is it kind? ● Is this a good time to post? i.e. not late at night or very early in the morning.

By virtue of being a group member, you accept these conditions and agree to abide by them. You can of course leave the group at any time. As we are all human, the occasional reminder of the expected etiquette will be brought to your attention when the need arises.