



Ferndale Primary School and Nursery

Headteacher: Mrs Evans

Ferndale Primary School and Nursery - Wiltshire Avenue
Swindon - Wilts - SN2 1NX

Thursday 1st October

Dear Parents and Carers,

Important Notice: E-Safety, Mobile Phones and Online Communication

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Ferndale, keeping our pupils safe — both in school and online — is our top priority. We are writing to share some important information and reminders regarding mobile phone use, online communication and e-safety, following some concerns that have recently arisen within Year 6.

It has been brought to our attention that a number of Year 6 children are using WhatsApp, and that a group of children have created a Year 6 group chat. Unfortunately, some of the conversations within this group have included unkind comments towards other children, and this has now begun to spill over into school.

We have also been made aware that a small number of pupils in Year 6 have been using their phones in the school playground. As you will understand, this presents a serious safeguarding concern.

As a result, we have spoken with both Year 6 classes about e-safety, mobile phone use and online communication. We have reminded the children that what they say, share or post digitally can have a real impact on others, just as it does face-to-face.

We discussed the importance of being **kind, respectful and thoughtful** in all online communication, as well as knowing what to do if something makes them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

Mobile Phone Procedure

To ensure the safety and privacy of all children and staff, we are reinforcing our mobile phone procedures across Year 6.

From Friday 2nd October 2026:

- Any Year 6 child who brings a mobile phone to school must **hand it in to Mrs Witherington or Mrs Uzzell as they enter the school building each morning.**
- Phones will be **stored securely during the school day** and returned to children at home time.
- Phones switched off while on school premises and when handed to staff.
- Children should not use mobile phones on school grounds, this includes the playground before and after school.

This procedure applies to **all Year 6 children who bring a mobile phone to school**. We would appreciate your support in reinforcing these expectations with your child.

Supporting E-Safety at Home

We recognise that helping children to navigate the online world safely and responsibly can be challenging. As children become more independent online, it is important that they understand that their online behaviour has real consequences and that they know how to respond if something concerns them.



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We kindly ask that you take some time to:

- **Check your child's phone and privacy settings.**
- Talk with your child about **how they communicate online**, particularly within group chats.
- Remind them about the importance of **kindness, respect and responsible online behaviour**.
- Discuss the potential impact of sending, sharing or forwarding messages, photographs or comments about other people.
- Remind them that they should **not join in with, encourage or share unkind comments** about others.
- Reassure them that they can always come to you, or to a trusted adult at school, if they experience anything online that concerns or upsets them.

You may find it helpful to know that **WhatsApp's terms and conditions state that users must be at least 13 years old to have an account**. We understand that families may make different decisions regarding access to online platforms and, where children do use them, we encourage close supervision and regular conversations about safe and responsible use.

Useful E-Safety Resources

There are several websites offering practical advice and guidance for parents and children:

- **Childnet:** www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers
Practical advice on setting boundaries, privacy settings and positive online behaviour.
- **Internet Matters:** www.internetmatters.org
Step-by-step guidance on parental controls and age-appropriate advice for managing children's online activity.
- **NSPCC – Online Safety:** www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
Guidance on discussing online safety with children and what to do if you have concerns.

Thank you for your continued support in working with us to safeguard all children at Ferndale. By working together, we can help our children to be **safe, confident, kind and respectful — both online and offline**.

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like further advice about e-safety, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards

Mrs Rouse
Head of School