



## **LYNGFORD PARK PRIMARY & NURSERY**

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Headteacher: Mr N Arnold

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Kim Barratt

*'Believe. Achieve. Be Proud.'*

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2025**

Dear Parents

### **Online Safety Act – Updated March 2025**

I write with some essential information regarding online updates which have been recently released by the Government. We must continue to do our best to protect our own children in the every-changing world of online technology.

As parents, we have 2 choices to make: ignore and simply trust your child **OR** protect proactively, which require honest conversations, checking and sharing. We are aware of the positive elements online activity can bring; Facetiming / messaging friends and family members who live far away is such a wonderful way to communicate.

However, sadly, we are living in an age where online abuse and malicious activities thrive. We must do all we can to safeguard our children and community.

Parents must ensure they and their children remain safe, and parents must take responsibility for their child's online activity and be accountable for inappropriate activity. Whilst some children may decide to post things online, if they are using a platform they are not legally allowed to use, the child and the parent run the risk of prosecution. Poor choices can have consequences... a 'joke' or 'harmless banter', if not received in that way, runs a high risk of punishment.

**We all know, once something is sent online, it cannot be removed and can be reused.**

What is the legal age of someone allowed to use Whats App?	16 (raised in 2025)
What is the legal age of someone allowed to use Facebook?	13

### **Online Safety Act – Updated 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

The Online Safety Act 2023 is a new set of laws to protect children and adults online.

The Act aims to put a range of new duties on social media companies and search services, making them more responsible for their users' safety on their platforms. The Act will give providers new duties to implement systems and processes to reduce risks their services are used for illegal activity, and to take down illegal content when it does appear. The Act will tackle serious aspects such as self-harm and harmful algorithms. The Act will help to safeguard everyone.



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### **Criminal offences introduced by the Online Safety Act 2025:**

- encouraging or assisting serious self-harm
- cyberflashing
- sending false information intended to cause non-trivial harm
- threatening communications
- intimate image abuse
- epilepsy trolling

These new offences apply directly to the individuals sending them, regardless of age but if the child is using a social media platform illegally and the parent has given this consent, the parent may also be prosecuted.

Despite it being out of school time, we have had to manage several inappropriate online incidents in recent years, including What's App group messages, snapchat issues and voice notes. These incidents negatively impact on children, and they bring their concerns into school.

**As a school, we have made the decision we will reset from today, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2025.**

No historic events will be addressed, but from today, any inappropriate online activity reported to us, with evidence, may result in it being passed to the police and they will help us resolve the situation. We must do our best to safeguard everyone. You will wish Lyngford Park School & Nursery continue to be vigilant, curious and proactive in all we do. Thank you for your support.

If you wish to discuss any of these aspects, please contact the office to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for your support.

*Nick Arnold*