



TIMBERCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL
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February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to share some information about children's use of social media and to explain how we support pupils in learning to use the online world safely and responsibly, following the request during our Parent Forum.

Many children today are exposed to social media, online games, and messaging platforms at an increasingly young age. While these can offer opportunities for friendship and learning, they can also present challenges, especially for primary-aged children who are still developing the skills to recognise and manage risks online.

Legal protections and school role

In the United Kingdom, there are **laws and regulations designed to protect children online**. The **Online Safety Act**, which became law in 2023, places legal duties on social media companies and other online services to keep children safe. Under this law, platforms must use **age-assurance measures** to help prevent children from accessing harmful content such as pornography, content encouraging self-harm or suicide, and other age-inappropriate material. They must also provide ways for children and adults to report harmful content and take action when problems are brought to their attention.

Separately, data protection rules mean that many social media services set their **own minimum age limits**, typically **13 years old**. This is because sites often need **parental consent** before processing the personal data of children under that age.

The law also requires platforms to consider **age-appropriate experiences** for children and apply protective safety features such as stronger moderation, safer content recommendations, and clear reporting tools.

How we support children at school

At school, we take online safety very seriously. Through our Computing and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) lessons, pupils learn practical skills to stay safe online. These include:

- Understanding **privacy and personal information**
- Respectful communication online
- Recognising and reporting inappropriate or upsetting content
- **Age-appropriate use of technology**



These lessons are delivered in a way that is suitable for each year group and are revisited as pupils grow. To further enhance our curriculum we facilitate personal development workshops throughout the year with a focus on staying safe online.

We also encourage children to feel confident talking to a **trusted adult** if they see something worrying online or if they feel uncomfortable with an online interaction. We will always listen and support them.

Working together at home

Parents and carers play a vital role in guiding children's online behaviour. We strongly encourage families to:

- Be aware of **age limits** on social media platforms and to support children in following them
- Talk regularly with children about the apps and sites they use
- Use **parental controls** where appropriate
- Keep devices in shared family spaces where possible

Working together helps children learn positive habits and stay safe.

If you would like further information or advice about online safety, including **official guidance for parents**, please read our Timber Weekly newsletter which includes information for parents in our Online Safety section, where we share links to reliable resources that can help you support your child at home.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our children grow into safe, responsible, and confident digital citizens.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Cartwright
Head of School