



# Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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11th December 2023

Dear Year 7 Parent/Carer,

## **Subject: Ensuring pupils' Online Safety and understanding age restrictions on social media apps**

As we navigate through the digital landscape, ensuring the safety and well-being of our pupils online is of the utmost importance. With the increasing use of social media platforms and various online applications, it is crucial to address the issue of age restrictions and the significance of safeguarding our children online.

We understand that the internet offers a wealth of opportunities for learning and connectivity; however, it also presents potential risks, especially for young users. Hence, we would like to highlight the importance of being mindful of the age restrictions set by social media platforms and other online services.

Recently it has been brought to our attention that some Year 7 pupils are using an app called 'talk.chat'. This app has an age restriction of 18+ and users are able to speak to strangers.

Age restrictions exist for a reason – to protect the emotional and psychological development of children and to ensure their safety in online environments. Many popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and others have minimum age requirements for users. It's vital to note that these restrictions are in place to safeguard young individuals from exposure to inappropriate content, potential cyberbullying, and other online threats.

We strongly encourage you to have conversations with your daughter about the responsible use of the internet and social media. Emphasise the importance of abiding by age restrictions and help them understand the potential risks associated with accessing platforms that are not meant for their age group.

Moreover, we recommend supervising your daughter's online activities, setting appropriate privacy settings, and establishing clear guidelines for their internet usage. Encouraging open communication with your child about their online experiences will help create a safer and more supportive online environment.

At Bishop's, we are committed to educating our students about online safety through our curriculum. However, we believe that a collaborative effort between the school and parents is essential in ensuring our students' safety online.

*"Pupils flourish and support each other to succeed"*

Please do contact me if you have any concerns or queries regarding your daughter's online safety or if you need further guidance on how to navigate these issues effectively.

Thank you for your continued support in fostering a safe and secure learning environment for our students, both in the physical and digital realms.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'T' followed by a flourish.

Miss T Lawrence  
**Head of Year 7**