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Social Media

Dear Parents and Carers,

In Stage 3 this term students have been learning about the internet, cyber bullying and social media.

Most social media websites and apps require that children be **13** to sign up. This is due to the **Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**, which prevents companies from collecting certain information from children under 13.

Aside from this, 13 is generally the age when children start developing a broader understanding of the world around them and, along with that, a better sense of what's appropriate to share online.

If your child is expressing interest in joining a social network, discuss the pros and cons with them and please make sure **you are aware of everything that they post on their sites.**

We have had a number of incidents this year where children have been posting or accessing inappropriate images, or making inappropriate comments to others across social media. These issues have then been brought to school and created conflict between students.

If you and your children do decide to set up social media accounts please make sure you are **aware of everything your children post of view.** Here are some suggested rules you may like to put in place.

Tell your kids to think before they post. Remind them that everything can be seen by a vast, invisible audience (otherwise known as friends-of-friends-of-friends), and, once something's online, it's hard to take back.

Have access to your children's pages: It's a good idea for parents to have access to their kids' pages, to be sure that what's being posted is appropriate. Parents can help keep their children from doing something they'll regret later.

Keep private information private. Don't share your home address or other sensitive information online.

Be respectful of others. Children may use social media to act out because they feel anonymous and that their actions are consequence-free. Make sure they understand that the Internet is a giant community that works best when everyone respects each other.

Use privacy settings. Privacy settings aren't foolproof, but they can be helpful. Take the time to learn how privacy settings work on your kids' favorite sites and apps, and teach your kids how to control the information they make public or private. Encourage them to check privacy settings regularly, since sites' policies often change.

Mr Keast

