

February Newsletter 2024

www.stpatricksannaghmore.com

Dates for your Diary Term 2!!

Thursday 1st February

'Friends of Annaghmore' Meeting
7:00pm.

**EVERYONE more than
welcome!!**

Thursday 15th - Monday 19th February 2024 (inclusive)

Mid-Term Break
SCHOOL CLOSED.

(Re-opens Tuesday 20th February
for all.)

Sunday 25th February Primary 7 Confirmandi Service of Light

7:00pm St Patrick's Church
**Parents & Sponsors should attend
with their P7 child.**

Tuesday 27th February Confirmation Practice In Chapel with P7 ONLY 10:00 - 12:00pm

Wednesday 28th February Adults ONLY Adoration in Chapel

St Patrick's 8:00 - 8:30pm

Thursday 29th February Confirmation Practice In Chapel with P7 & Choir 10:00 - 12:00pm

Confirmation for Clonoe Parish

Saturday 2nd March 2024
3:00pm
In St Patrick's Church, Clonoe

Monday 18th March 2024

School Closed for St Patrick's Day
Holiday.

Friday 29th March - Friday 5th April 2024 (Inclusive)

Easter Holidays
Early closure for 11:00 am:
Thursday 28th March 2024
School re-opens Monday 8th April 2024
for Term 3.

Tuesday 5th March 2024 First Confessions

for P4 Pupils
7:00pm
St. Patrick's Church, Clonoe

First Holy Communion for all Primary 4 Pupils of St Patrick's PS

Saturday 11th May 2024 11:00am

St Patrick's Church, Clonoe

**All P7 pupils have received a copy of
the Admissions procedures for
transferring to Post Primary
education in September 2024.**
**P7 Parents, please ensure you have
received this at home!!**
This an online process for parents.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices.

Please note that it is against school policy for any child to bring in a mobile phone, i-pad, DS or any electronic device to school. They are too expensive and precious a gift to run the risk of them being broken or going missing. ***The school will not accept any responsibility for such item if brought in.***

If discovered, they will be taken to the office for safe keeping and sent home at the end of the school day. Children who received watches from Santa with phone facility and photograph facility built in to them should not have these devices in school but leave them safely at home each day.

**All visitors, Parents & Guardians to the school are respectfully requested to switch off or silence phones while at the school
Please do not take offence if asked to do so.**

Traffic outside the school

Please ensure when parking, that residents are not blocked into or out of their drive ways in the mornings or at pick-up times in the afternoon. A sincere 'Thank You' to all parents who are supporting the appeal to always leave clear access at the school gate when parking.

Energy Drinks and Bars.

It is against school policy and ethos of Healthy Eating to give any pupil energy drinks or bars at any time to bring to school.

Not only are all pupils at Primary school underage for these, but they seriously damage their ability to focus, concentrate and to learn in class.

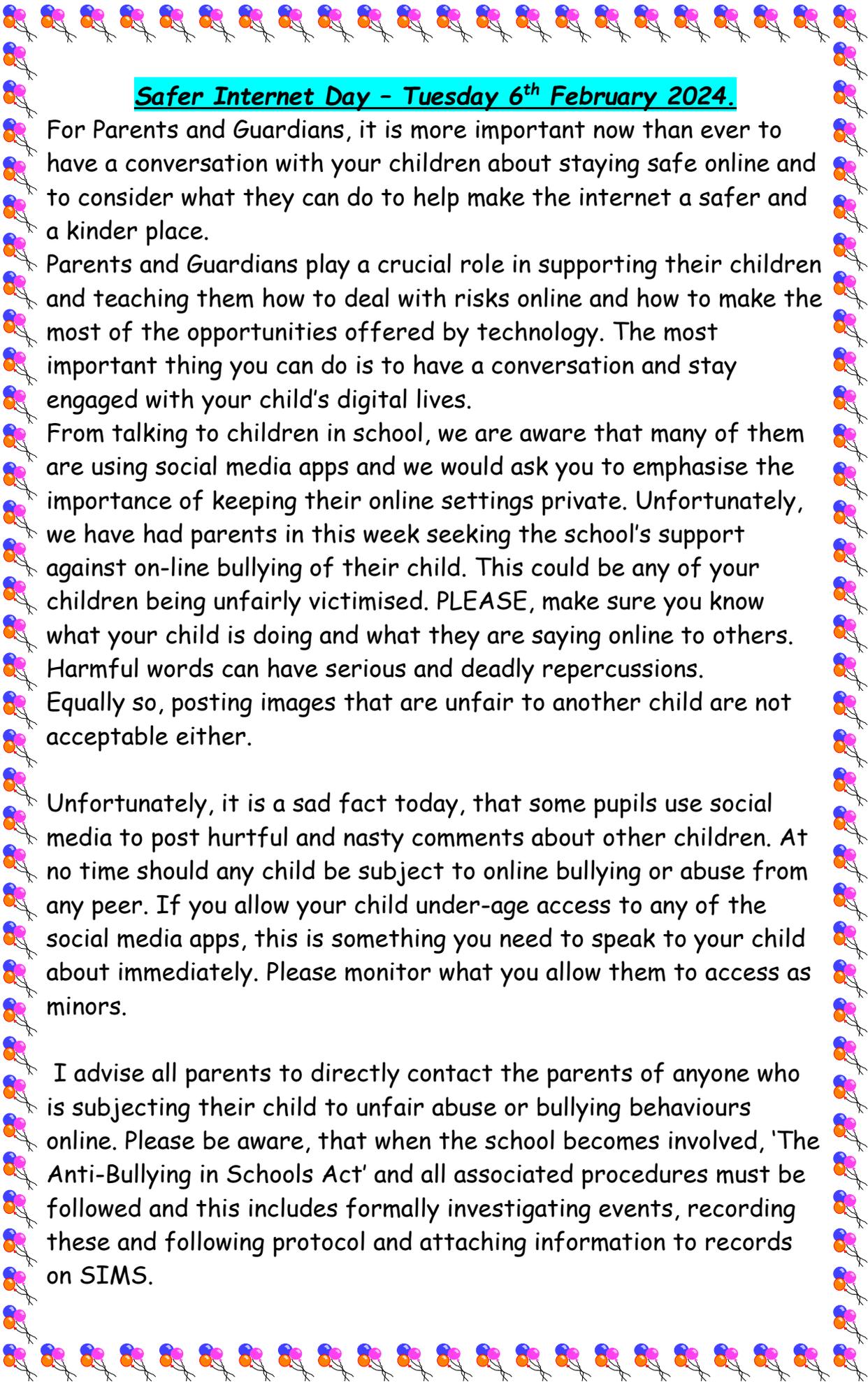
The personality changes that such items bring about are very concerning for any child given such drinks or bars by any adult.

No matter how 'watered down' they may be, they do not promote any positive results in children in Primary school. If found in school, they will be confiscated immediately.

Thank you all for sharing a zero tolerance for these drinks and bars in schools.

Grandparent & Special Someone Coffee Morning.

It was an absolute pleasure to have all these special people in our school on 26th January. The children simply loved having you here for the morning. We thank you all sincerely for the important role you play in the daily life of our school and in the lives of our families.



Safer Internet Day - Tuesday 6th February 2024.

For Parents and Guardians, it is more important now than ever to have a conversation with your children about staying safe online and to consider what they can do to help make the internet a safer and a kinder place.

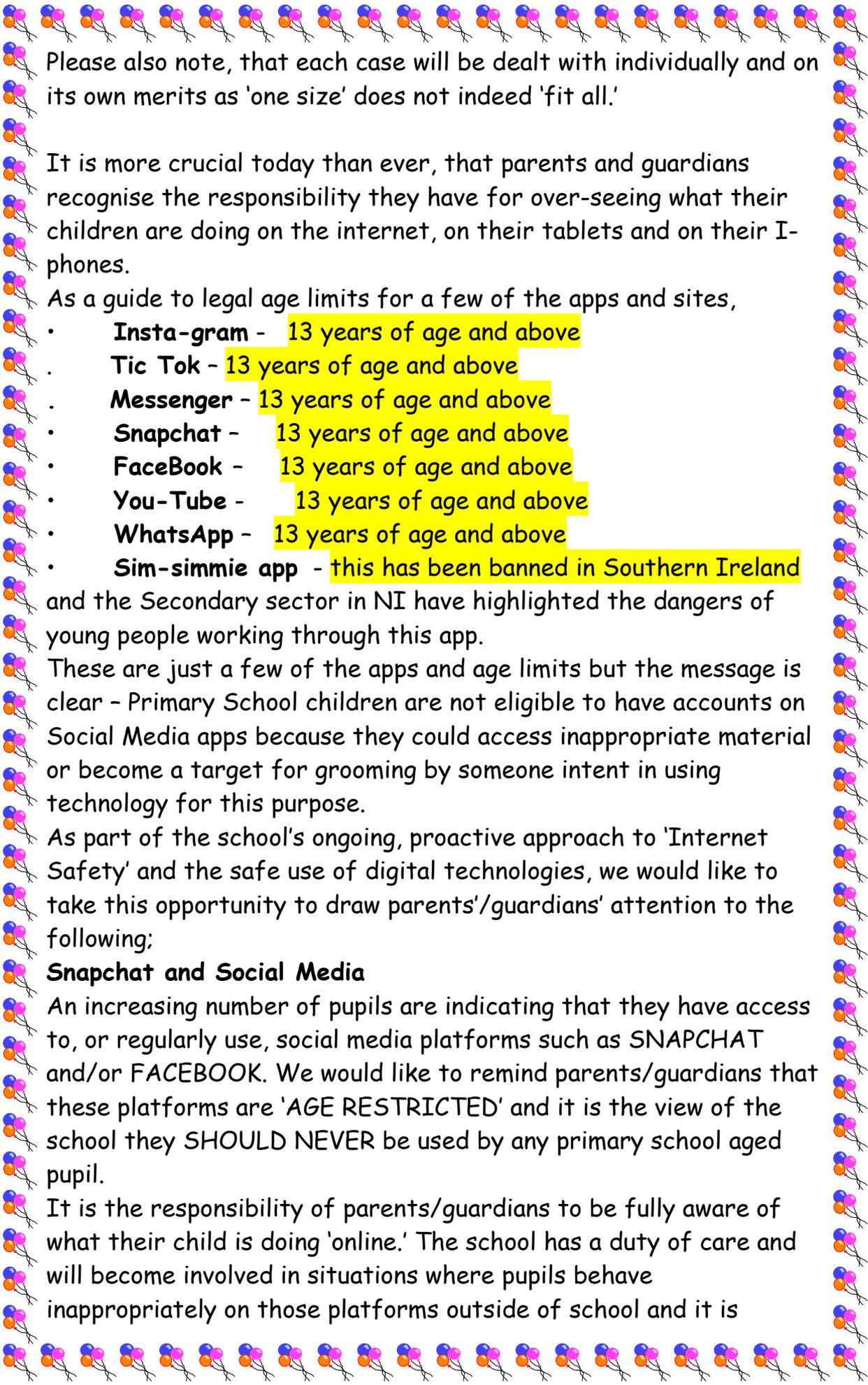
Parents and Guardians play a crucial role in supporting their children and teaching them how to deal with risks online and how to make the most of the opportunities offered by technology. The most important thing you can do is to have a conversation and stay engaged with your child's digital lives.

From talking to children in school, we are aware that many of them are using social media apps and we would ask you to emphasise the importance of keeping their online settings private. Unfortunately, we have had parents in this week seeking the school's support against on-line bullying of their child. This could be any of your children being unfairly victimised. PLEASE, make sure you know what your child is doing and what they are saying online to others. Harmful words can have serious and deadly repercussions.

Equally so, posting images that are unfair to another child are not acceptable either.

Unfortunately, it is a sad fact today, that some pupils use social media to post hurtful and nasty comments about other children. At no time should any child be subject to online bullying or abuse from any peer. If you allow your child under-age access to any of the social media apps, this is something you need to speak to your child about immediately. Please monitor what you allow them to access as minors.

I advise all parents to directly contact the parents of anyone who is subjecting their child to unfair abuse or bullying behaviours online. Please be aware, that when the school becomes involved, 'The Anti-Bullying in Schools Act' and all associated procedures must be followed and this includes formally investigating events, recording these and following protocol and attaching information to records on SIMS.



Please also note, that each case will be dealt with individually and on its own merits as 'one size' does not indeed 'fit all.'

It is more crucial today than ever, that parents and guardians recognise the responsibility they have for over-seeing what their children are doing on the internet, on their tablets and on their I-phones.

As a guide to legal age limits for a few of the apps and sites,

- **Insta-gram** - 13 years of age and above
- **Tic Tok** - 13 years of age and above
- **Messenger** - 13 years of age and above
- **Snapchat** - 13 years of age and above
- **FaceBook** - 13 years of age and above
- **You-Tube** - 13 years of age and above
- **WhatsApp** - 13 years of age and above
- **Sim-simmie app** - this has been banned in Southern Ireland

and the Secondary sector in NI have highlighted the dangers of young people working through this app.

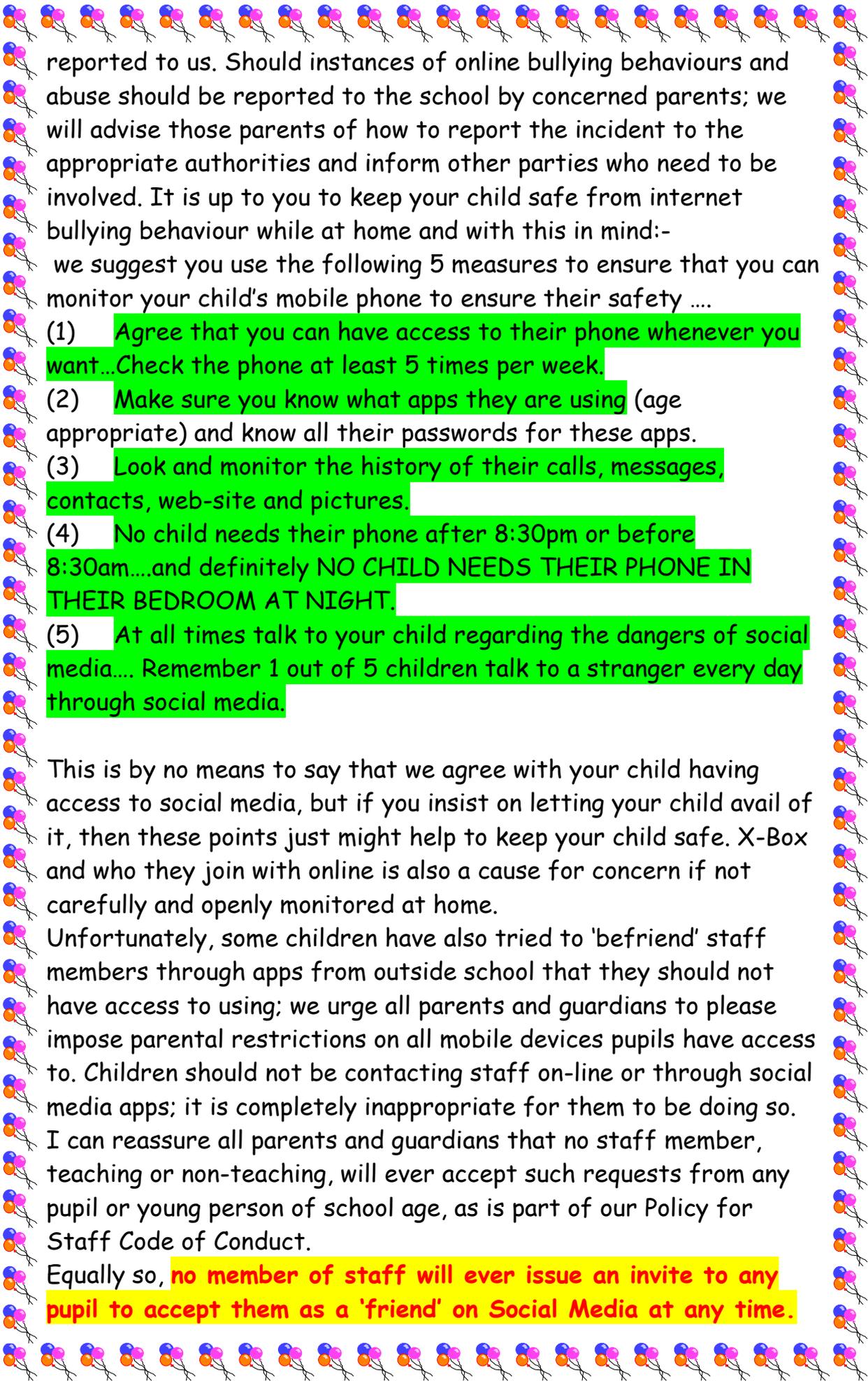
These are just a few of the apps and age limits but the message is clear - Primary School children are not eligible to have accounts on Social Media apps because they could access inappropriate material or become a target for grooming by someone intent in using technology for this purpose.

As part of the school's ongoing, proactive approach to 'Internet Safety' and the safe use of digital technologies, we would like to take this opportunity to draw parents'/guardians' attention to the following:

Snapchat and Social Media

An increasing number of pupils are indicating that they have access to, or regularly use, social media platforms such as SNAPCHAT and/or FACEBOOK. We would like to remind parents/guardians that these platforms are 'AGE RESTRICTED' and it is the view of the school they SHOULD NEVER be used by any primary school aged pupil.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to be fully aware of what their child is doing 'online.' The school has a duty of care and will become involved in situations where pupils behave inappropriately on those platforms outside of school and it is



reported to us. Should instances of online bullying behaviours and abuse should be reported to the school by concerned parents; we will advise those parents of how to report the incident to the appropriate authorities and inform other parties who need to be involved. It is up to you to keep your child safe from internet bullying behaviour while at home and with this in mind:- we suggest you use the following 5 measures to ensure that you can monitor your child's mobile phone to ensure their safety ...

(1) **Agree that you can have access to their phone whenever you want...Check the phone at least 5 times per week.**

(2) **Make sure you know what apps they are using** (age appropriate) and know all their passwords for these apps.

(3) **Look and monitor the history of their calls, messages, contacts, web-site and pictures.**

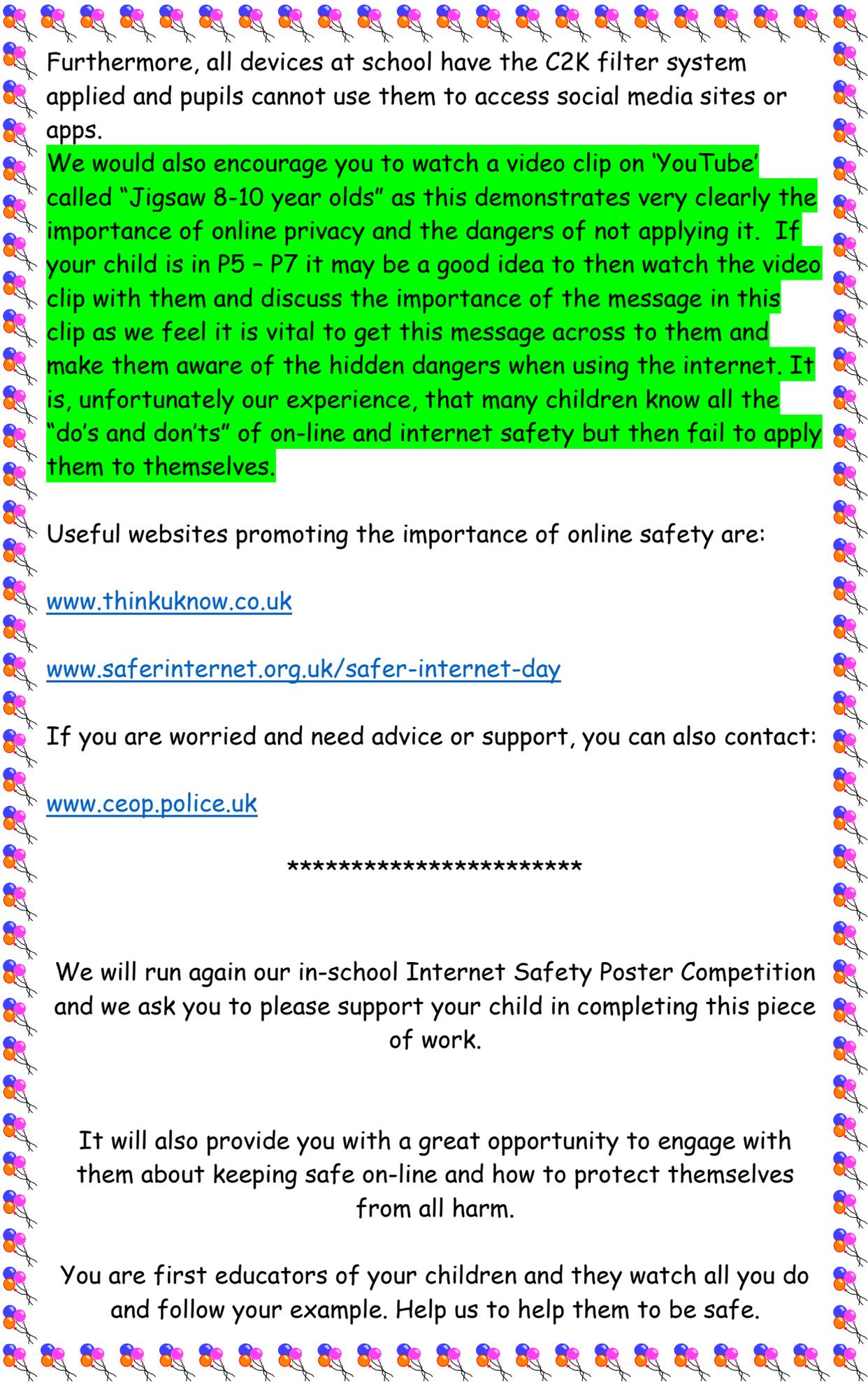
(4) **No child needs their phone after 8:30pm or before 8:30am...and definitely NO CHILD NEEDS THEIR PHONE IN THEIR BEDROOM AT NIGHT.**

(5) **At all times talk to your child regarding the dangers of social media... Remember 1 out of 5 children talk to a stranger every day through social media.**

This is by no means to say that we agree with your child having access to social media, but if you insist on letting your child avail of it, then these points just might help to keep your child safe. X-Box and who they join with online is also a cause for concern if not carefully and openly monitored at home.

Unfortunately, some children have also tried to 'befriend' staff members through apps from outside school that they should not have access to using; we urge all parents and guardians to please impose parental restrictions on all mobile devices pupils have access to. Children should not be contacting staff on-line or through social media apps; it is completely inappropriate for them to be doing so. I can reassure all parents and guardians that no staff member, teaching or non-teaching, will ever accept such requests from any pupil or young person of school age, as is part of our Policy for Staff Code of Conduct.

Equally so, **no member of staff will ever issue an invite to any pupil to accept them as a 'friend' on Social Media at any time.**



Furthermore, all devices at school have the C2K filter system applied and pupils cannot use them to access social media sites or apps.

We would also encourage you to watch a video clip on 'YouTube' called "Jigsaw 8-10 year olds" as this demonstrates very clearly the importance of online privacy and the dangers of not applying it. If your child is in P5 - P7 it may be a good idea to then watch the video clip with them and discuss the importance of the message in this clip as we feel it is vital to get this message across to them and make them aware of the hidden dangers when using the internet. It is, unfortunately our experience, that many children know all the "do's and don'ts" of on-line and internet safety but then fail to apply them to themselves.

Useful websites promoting the importance of online safety are:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day

If you are worried and need advice or support, you can also contact:

www.ceop.police.uk

We will run again our in-school Internet Safety Poster Competition and we ask you to please support your child in completing this piece of work.

It will also provide you with a great opportunity to engage with them about keeping safe on-line and how to protect themselves from all harm.

You are first educators of your children and they watch all you do and follow your example. Help us to help them to be safe.