

# SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



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Dear Year 7 Parents,

Congratulations on a successful first couple of weeks of Year 7. I am very impressed at how seamlessly the boys have settled into the demands of the classroom, made new friends and learnt the school routines. It has been a pleasure to get to know the Year group and I have had numerous teachers come and tell me how wonderful their Year 7 classes are.

### **Break Times and Clubs**

Year 7 have use of their own astro turfed area during break and lunchtime. They can now, in addition, use the rest of the school's playground and fields at their leisure at these times.

We are really encouraging boys to attend as many clubs as they can as this really helps with making friends, socialising, and keeping your son occupied for the lunch break. Your son will be issued with a 'club card' which they will be encouraged to get signed on completion of the club session and form tutors will keep track of what they are spending time doing. Collectively as a form group we will celebrate the groups each term that have spent the most time attending extra-curricular activities. I have attached the Autumn Term extra-curricular timetable for you to look over.

Lastly, it has been fantastic to see lots of the boys starting to attend the many sports clubs on offer. As a reminder, it would be a good idea for students to eat the bulk of their lunch at break time or buy something portable/cold from the canteen at break time so they do not miss training.

### **Homework**

Most homework will be set on SatchelOne and teachers will explain in the description when the work is due and how to hand it in. If there are issues accessing this, your son should go to the ICT hub to get further help logging in. Your son should not spend more than 20 minutes on a piece of homework (unless they really want to).



### **Behaviour Tracking and Data**

Please do keep an eye on your son's **Go4Schools** page as this will show his Sanctions and Rewards from the moment they are set. I am proud to say that currently the Year group are in the lead for positive behaviour points, well done for getting all of those House Credits!

### **Library**

We have a fantastic space where your son can work before school (from 8am) break times and after school (Monday-Thursday 4.30, Friday 4.00). Year 7 also have a fortnightly structured library lesson with their English teacher. We have plenty of workspaces and computers that can be used for completing homework, reading etc. Your son can also access our "e library". This is available on the "VLeBooks" tile on RM Unify and it has many fantastic resources and books to read. Lastly, every Tuesday lunch time, we are excited to have our resident Therapy Dog in and students are welcome to come along to meet him.

### **Lost Property**

We already have had many lost items in year 7 this year. To help us with the challenge of getting these items back to their owners in the future, we ask that you can check that all items of uniform, PE kit, lunch boxes and pencil cases are labelled. We have a lost property in reception and stray PE kit is often left outside of the PE office. Your son should also use his locker where possible to stop extra bags and belongings being left in classrooms and on their lunch area.

### **WhatsApp**

We are seeing an increase in boys misusing WhatsApp. WhatsApp requires a minimum age of 16 but relies on the honesty of the child and family to adhere to the age restrictions. If you have decided together with your child that they can begin to use it, then it is important that you support them to do so safely. I have attached a pdf to the end of the letter and the website below is a useful guide and reminder in how best to support your son. We would recommend keeping an eye on your son's phone use and ask him about the apps/programmes he is using. Please check they are age appropriate as lots of the apps vary.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/helping-your-child-with-whatsapp>

### **Contacting us**

For any general school queries please email [enquiries@shsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@shsb.org.uk) and we will aim to respond as soon as we can. For absences, please email [attendance@shsb.org.uk](mailto:attendance@shsb.org.uk). If you have a pastoral request or query for KS3 (year 7-9) specific then you can email [KS3admin@shsb.org.uk](mailto:KS3admin@shsb.org.uk).

Many thanks,



Mrs H. Rivers  
Leader of Year 7



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

### DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

### ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

### LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.



### EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.



### REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.



### LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; If they leave a second time, it is permanent.



### THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.



### DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone.' However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.



### CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.



## Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks; a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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