

## Advice from our Federation about Social Networking and Mobile Apps

We know that many of our pupils have **social networking** accounts and associated **mobile apps**. We wanted to give **some advice** about this. Please contact us if you have any concerns or need any more information.

### My child does not have any such accounts...

The terms and conditions for many of these accounts say that you have to be **13 or older**.

If you are **younger** than this (**all** pupils at our schools), you can only join by falsifying your date of birth, which is a breach of the terms and conditions.

Anyone under the age limits who joins these networks is presenting themselves as **older than they are**.

Some other people join these networks and pretend to be younger than they are **specifically to gain access to children**. This could put your child at **significant risk**.

These networks are **blocked** for pupils at our schools, so children cannot access or join them while they are at school.



**Any family's use of their own computer is essentially a private matter.**

**However**, if **any** use of Facebook, other social websites or mobile apps attacks either another pupil, another pupil's family or any member of staff at any of our schools, or if Facebook, other social websites or mobile apps are used to make derogatory comments about our schools, **we will take very serious and immediate action**.

**This will involve the police and the city's legal department. It may lead to civil or criminal action against you or your child. In such cases, we will also work with the social networks to close down children's accounts.**

### My child has a social account which I know about...

If you have allowed your child to join one of these networks in breach of their terms and conditions, this means you are taking **full responsibility** for their account and everything they do with it.

We advise that:

- you look regularly at your child's account including the **friends** they are making and **what they are writing**
- you use the **Click CEOP Safety Centre**. This is the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre and gives advice to educators and parents.



- if **you** are on any of these networks yourself, **particularly Facebook**, be friends with your child – whether they like that or not – so you can monitor activity
- you know their **log on** details and **password** and they have not changed it
- you check they do not have a **second, alternative profile** which you don't know about
- children don't use computers and other mobile devices unsupervised

### I don't know if my child has any of these accounts...

This is potentially **very risky**.

This means your child may have joined without you knowing at a friend's house or on your computer – **or on their mobile phone** - without you knowing. They can't join or access these accounts at school.

It means that you don't know who they are **talking to** and who they are **sharing information with**.

If you are unsure about your child's use of **social sites** and **mobile apps** or the computer generally, please use the **ThinkUKnow** website – [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Work through some of the activities with your child so they know about **appropriate behaviour** and how to **stay safe**.