



Dalmain Primary School

Grove Close
Brockley Rise
Forest Hill
London SE23 1AS

11 June 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Online safety Newsletter No 10

Welcome to newsletter no 10!

It has come to our attention that over the recent weeks some issues have come up when children are on WhatsApp at home. I thought I would like to use this week's newsletter as an opportunity to again share information with you on WhatsApp to enable you to help your children keep safe. Please read below, even if you think you know about WhatsApp - you might see something that you are not aware of.

A lot of issues on WhatsApp come from children disagreeing or being unkind. To help your child with these you should help them to build up their resilience, which in turn will help them know how to resolve issues when they arise. How to do this has been covered in past newsletters.

When letting your child use Social media, please keep in mind: if your child normally has problems with other children in social settings e.g. play dates, in the playground, then these will also happen online.

WhatsApp: What parents need to know about the instant messaging app



If your child uses WhatsApp Messenger, there are a few simple steps you can take to keep them safe online.



With more than one billion users, WhatsApp Messenger is the most popular messaging application in the world. If you haven't used WhatsApp yourself, it's important you know how it works and what it does, in order to keep your kids safe. For more e-safety advice on issues like Cyberbullying, social media, sexting and more visit [Internet Matters](#), a not for profit organisation dedicated to keeping children safe online.

How WhatsApp Messenger works

WhatsApp allows your child to send a message to anyone they've added to their WhatsApp contacts. Both the sender and receiver need a WhatsApp account in order to use the service. The free app is available for Android devices, iPhones and iPads, BlackBerry handsets, Windows Phone devices or Nokia phones.

When your child downloads the app, it goes through the contacts stored in their phone and lets them 'add' people who also have the app so they can send messages to each other.

One of the reasons WhatsApp is so popular is that it sends messages over the internet using wi-fi or data, instead of using your phone's text message or pay-as-you-go-allowance. That means it's much cheaper than text messaging, and even free if you're connected to wi-fi.

You can use WhatsApp to send photos, videos and web links. Another advantage over text messaging is that you can message people in groups, so the same message is delivered to multiple people at the same time, and at no extra fee. You can name the groups too, so you can have one for 'School friends' or 'Family', for example.

When a message is sent, WhatsApp sends a 'read receipt' to the sender so they can see if the message has been delivered and whether the person you are sending it to has watched the video or looked at the photo you attached.

What do the ticks next to WhatsApp messages mean?

- Grey tick: Message has been sent
- Two grey ticks: Message has been delivered
- Two blue ticks: Message has been read

Is WhatsApp secure?

WhatsApp recently enabled end-to-end encryption, meaning that every message can only be read by the sender, the recipient, and anyone else in the group if it's a group message. It basically makes the service more secure from hackers.

Can you make calls using WhatsApp?

Yes, you can also make phone calls through WhatsApp. Again, it uses the internet instead of your mobile's data connection, so it can work out much cheaper than making a normal phone call if you are on pay as you go. It'll also save you minutes from your allowance.

Connecting with people on WhatsApp

Once your child opens WhatsApp on their phone, they can go to the **Contacts** section and add people. They can also create Groups which they invite people to join, and be invited themselves.

By default, WhatsApp shows people the last time your child used their WhatsApp account and whether your child is online right now. They can also set a status message to let people know where they are and what they're up to.

Does WhatsApp Messenger have an age limit?

Yes it does. Users in Europe have to be at least 16 years old - in April 2018, this was raised from 13 due to new privacy regulations that came into force.

Issues you should watch out for

Stranger danger: The main hazard for your child is being contacted by someone they don't know. But because WhatsApp only lets you converse with people in your phone's contact list (or whose phone number you already have), this is much less of a danger than on social networks. It is possible for someone to spam your child, in which case they'll receive a message from an unknown number. If this happens, WhatsApp gives them the option to block them.

Location sharing: If this option is switched on, any images and videos your child shares will include a map showing the location where they were taken. This could reveal where you live and potentially put your child at risk.

Bullying: As with any method of communication, your child is at risk of being bullied, being pressured into sending personal photos and of being exposed to explicit images or photo themselves.

Can you delete WhatsApp messages?

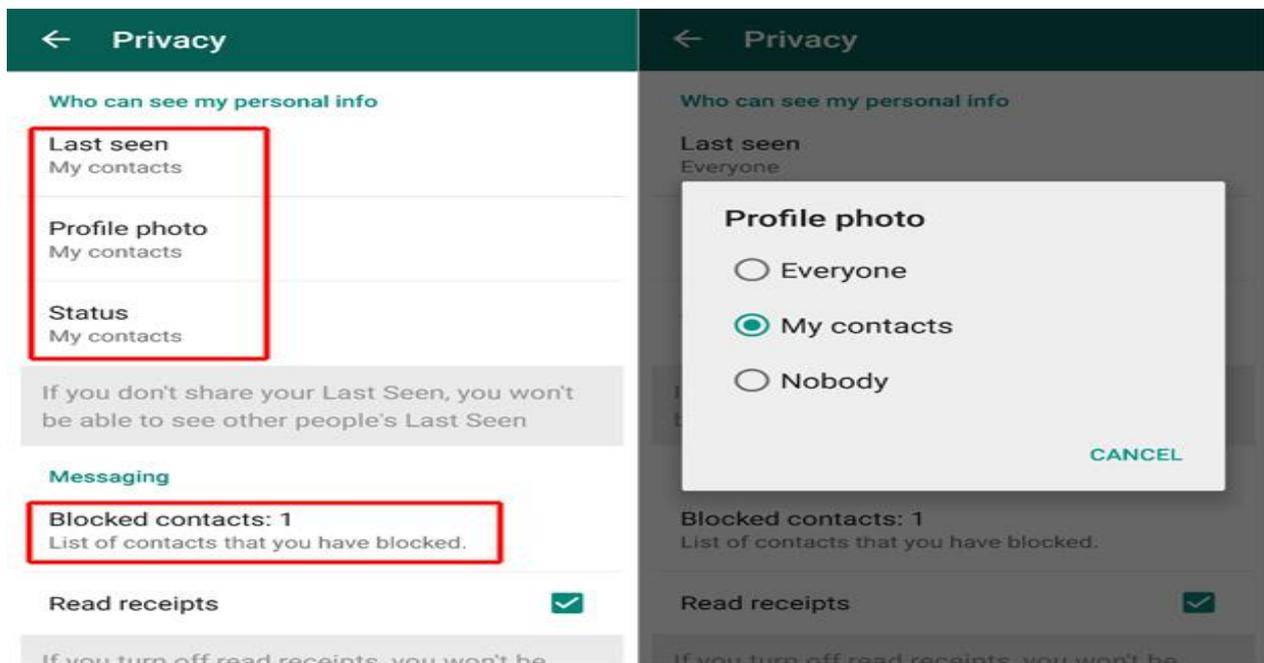
Thanks to a recent update, you can now delete a message before the sender has read it - as long as you act within seven minutes of it being sent.

Hold the message you want to delete, click **Delete - Delete for everyone**.

This feature is a useful safeguard for anyone, but it's really important to talk to your child about the kind of messages they are sending. As with any Social network, messages can be quickly shared, so they need to think carefully about the consequences.

Tips to stay safe on WhatsApp

1. Stop strangers seeing your child's status: Select **Settings - Account**, and then **Privacy**. Under **Status**, change it from **Everyone** (the default setting) to **My Contacts**. That way, only people they know and trust will be able to see when they last used WhatsApp. Change **Profile Photo** and **Last Seen** to **My Contacts** too.



2. Turn off location tagging: If switched on, any images and videos your child shares through WhatsApp will show where they were taken on a map, potentially alerting dangerous people to their whereabouts. To switch it off, you'll have to go into the phone's main settings.

3. Delete, block or report unknown or nuisance users: If your child starts receiving unwanted or harassing messages, they should block them which means they won't be able to contact your child.

- **iPhone: Settings – Account – Privacy – Blocked.** Click 'Add New' and select a contact.
- **Android: Menu – Settings – Account – Privacy – Blocked Contacts.** Tap 'Add blocked contacts' and select a contact.

You can also report abuse, so WhatsApp can ban accounts it believes violate its terms.

4. Report spam: Spam messages trying to extort money can be sent via WhatsApp, just as they can via email. Reporting and blocking said messages will keep your child – and others – safe. When your child receives a message from an unknown number they will be given the option to report it as spam.

5. Talk to your child: Make sure your child knows they can talk to you if they encounter any problems, such as bullying and abuse. Talk to them about the consequences of sharing personal photos and videos, explain that once a photograph has been sent, it can easily be shared, so they need to think carefully.

As always, please remember:

If you're worried that a child is at risk of harm online, you should call the police. Children can make a report to CEOP at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>.

If you have any concerns at all as well as reporting them online, please alert us to them as well so we can look into them / investigate any site issues, this will help us safeguard other children and possibly alert other parents to potential issues. Please email us at admin@dalmain.lewisham.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Woodhall
Safeguarding & Behaviour Lead