

18th June 2018



Dear Parent/Carer,

What Parents need to know about the use of anonymous Social Media Apps.

We are writing to inform you of the dangers of two anonymous social media apps that have come to our attention. These apps are known as 'honesty' apps as they encourage their users to post anonymous comments about other people online.



Sarahah

Sarahah is a messaging app that encourages anonymous comments. Since launching last June, it has grown into a giant social-networking app among teenagers around the world. Users sign up for Sarahah either on the website or by downloading the app which is free. All communication on the app is anonymous and private. The app never reveals the identity of those who send comments to users - meaning those who have received comments or messages are unable to respond.



ASKIP

ASKIP allows users to message anonymously. It is possible to respond to messages but the app will not reveal the identity of the messenger. It launched in November 2017 and since then has become very popular with teenagers globally. The app can be downloaded for free. This app uses a phone number as a sign up tool, it does not require the user to enter any personal details. All communication on the messenger tool is completely anonymous.

Neither Sarahah, Askip or any other anonymous Social Media Apps are suitable for use by young people. Young people should always know who they are communicating with. Both apps require users to create a username which is often posted on snapchat and Instagram profiles. Any person with access to these profiles or knowledge of the username can then contact a young person directly and anonymously. Apps that allow anonymous comments are worrying as they are misused by people who wish to harm young people. These apps are exploited by adults who wish to establish inappropriate relationships with young people and they are misused by online bullies who will send abusive, discriminatory or upsetting messages. In almost all cases it is impossible to trace the source of the messages.

In the interests of your daughter's safety, **we advise that you do not permit your daughter to use either of these apps.** Please discuss this with your daughter and ensure she is not using these apps. If she is using these apps, we would recommend deleting them from her devices. The following links will provide you with further information about how to support your daughter to keep safe online.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Internet-matters-Parent-Age-Guides-14.pdf>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Internet-matters-Parent-Age-Guides-11-13.pdf>

If you need any further support, please contact your daughters form tutor or Year Coordinator.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S. Gachi
Assistant Headteacher