

13<sup>th</sup> February 2023

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**Principal: Lorraine Taylor**

Dear Parents/Carers,

You will no doubt be aware of photo-sharing apps such as Snapchat, where users can share photographs of themselves and send messages, which are time limited in how long they can be seen. Though the age for use is 18, users from 13 can access the app with consent and supervision from an adult – this protects our children from parts of these applications only intended for adults. We have experienced a number of concerns with pupils' use of Snapchat outside of school; we urge you to have an active role in your child's use of it.

However, it is important to update you that Snapchat also has a group feature, where users can be added to a group, with images shared which can be seen by all. In some of these groups, which young people in schools around the local area are a part of, we have been made aware that indecent material and images have been shared. In accordance with our obligations, we have contacted the police, and are working with them to keep our pupils safe. We would like to encourage you to speak with your child, to make sure they are not part of such groups.

We would like to remind parents and carers that it is the obligation of the parent, until the age of 18, to monitor their child's use of social media. We, as the adults, need to be the ones to teach our children how they responsibly use such apps, to make sure that their mental health is looked after, their safety is guarded, and that they do not possess material which may be incriminating to them, as young people.

There is information on this link to support with parental controls for Snapchat.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/snapchat/>

There is information on this link to support with parental controls for other social media platforms too. <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/>

Thank you for your support of Hartshill Academy and our HART values.

Yours sincerely



Lorraine Taylor  
Principal