



CATALYST

Somers Heath

Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, Essex RM15 5LX
Telephone: 01708 853397 E-mail: admin.shps@catrust.org.uk

WhatsApp Groups and Online Safety

13th October 2025

Dear parents and carers,

We are writing to you today to raise awareness about an issue which some Year 5 parents have raised with us: the use of WhatsApp group chats. While WhatsApp can be a useful tool for communication, it also presents risks that we feel all parents should be aware of.

Many children are now part of group chats that include classmates and children from other schools. Unfortunately, these groups can sometimes become platforms for inappropriate language, exclusionary behaviour, bullying, and the sharing of unsuitable content. Even when children are not actively participating, they may still be exposed to messages that are not appropriate for their age.

We strongly encourage all parents to regularly check their child's device and monitor their use of messaging apps such as WhatsApp. This includes:

- Reviewing group chats for inappropriate messages or images
- Discussing with your child what is and isn't acceptable online behaviour
- Ensuring your child knows how to leave a group or block someone if they feel uncomfortable
- Reminding them that anything shared online can be screenshotted and shared further

Please also be aware that WhatsApp's minimum age requirement is 13. While we understand that many children use the app with parental permission, it is important to consider whether they are emotionally equipped to handle the dynamics of group messaging.

We are committed to supporting our pupils in developing safe and respectful online habits, and we appreciate your partnership in this effort. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Curtis
Head of School

