



Ripon Road, Bushbury Lane, Wolverhampton, WV10 9TR  
Tel: 01902 556486  
Headteacher: Mrs R Nash

**Bushbury Lane Academy**

Email: [Office@bushburylaneacademy.co.uk](mailto:Office@bushburylaneacademy.co.uk)  
Website: [www.bushburylaneacademy.co.uk](http://www.bushburylaneacademy.co.uk)

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25<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

### Online Safety and Social Media – Important Update

We want to make parents aware that, due to rising concerns linked to online activity, we have had to bring forward our annual Police intervention programme. These concerns are not isolated and are increasingly impacting pupils' wellbeing and school life.

#### Key issues we are seeing:

- **Roblox/Fortnite** – This platform is aimed at children aged 13+. If an account is created by a parent and the correct age is entered, the system applies safeguards to protect younger users. Unfortunately, we are finding that older siblings often set up accounts for younger children without these protections, exposing them to inappropriate material.
- **Snapchat Groups/What's App groups** – We have been advised that some pupils in Key Stage 1 are sharing information with pupils in Key Stage 2, and the language used has not been appropriate. Children are being added to groups without their consent. Pupils have a right to say 'no' and can leave a group and block a group particularly if it is not age appropriate.

Although these incidents occur outside school hours, they are having a significant impact in school. We are increasingly dealing with:

- Friendship breakdowns caused by online conflict
- Issues involving inappropriate pictures or language
- Peer-on-peer abuse that carries over into the classroom
- A high amount of staff time diverted from curriculum teaching to resolve online problems, pupil conflicts and safeguarding pupils
- Extremely vulnerable pupils are accessing harmful content due to algorithms that push similar material after one accidental click (e.g., searching for an item or using a word with dual meaning, leads to repeated related adverts being sent to your child)

#### Why this matters:

Online safety is now one of our top safeguarding priorities. These issues are causing serious knock-on effects, including safeguarding risks, confrontations in school, and peer-on-peer abuse.

/Continued...





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### What parents can do

While we cannot tell you how to parent, we can guide you. Here are some practical steps if you decide these online platforms are for your child:

- **Set up accounts yourself** and ensure the correct age is entered
- **Use parental controls** on devices and apps
- **Monitor online activity regularly** and talk to your child about what they see and share
- **Encourage open conversations** about online safety and respectful behaviour

### Helpful resources:

- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

Working together, we can keep children safe online and help them make positive choices. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Mrs R Nash  
Headteacher

Miss Dunkley  
Designated Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead

