Online Safety Concerns

Over the past few days, we have been made aware of some online safety concerns which we want to share with parents as we know that the games/apps concerned are popular amongst children of primary school age.

Sarahah App

We understand that this is an app which can be linked to other social media accounts such as Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook. The app allows users to leave anonymous comments and messages. Clearly, misuse of a facility such as this could lead to rather upsetting messages being untraceable. Many parents are concerned that this app will encourage cyberbullying.

There are currently no age restrictions published for this app. However, the iTunes app store recommends users should be 17 years old to download it.

Roblox

ROBLOX is a user-generated gaming platform where users can create their own games or play games that other users have made. There is also the option to chat to other players.

A primary school in Kent have recently carried out a survey with children from their lower age groups and were shocked at the amount of children who told them that they had friends within the game who their parents did not know about. Many of the children had received messages from people that they did not know and most of these children said that they had not told their parents about these messages. There have also been reports of inappropriate content being easily accessible within the game.

Snapchat

We understand that a lot of our children have access to a Snapchat account. It has come to our attention that some children are using inappropriate language within this app and we would like to remind parents that Snapchat does have an age restriction of 13 years old.

There are many ways in which parents can prevent any of these or other online safety issues occurring. Please ensure that privacy and security settings on all devices and games that your children have access to are appropriate for their age. Talk to you child about what they are playing and viewing and if you have any concerns at all, stop them from using/playing it and report the issue.

Lots of useful information for parents is available online at:
www.net-aware.org.uk and www.nspcc.org.uk