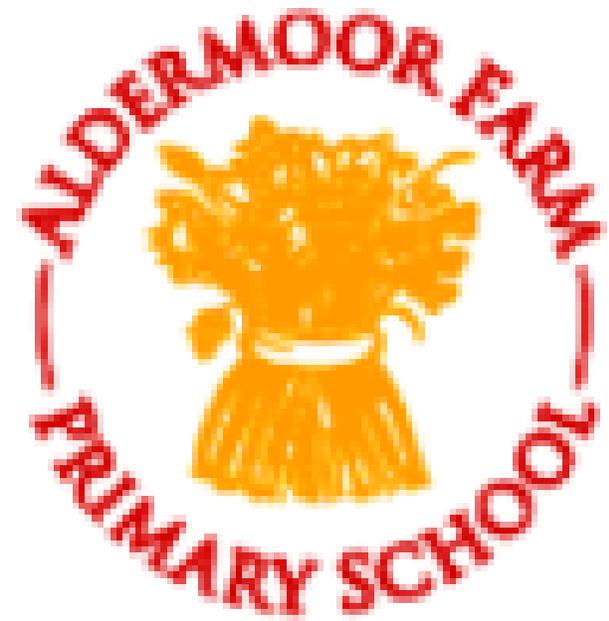# E:safety -Parent Workshop

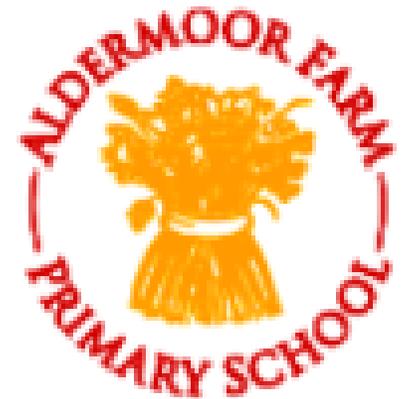## Helping to keep your children safe online

What is the purpose of this session?

Aldermoor Farm is committed to promoting the **safe and responsible use of the internet**. Therefore, we feel it is our responsibility to raise this particular issue as a growing concern, due to the increase in inappropriate use of Skype, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and other texting sites.

We understand that it is increasingly difficult to keep up with the ways our that our children are using new and ever changing technologies. Our children are **immersed** in a society that has become **dependent** on powerful computers, including smart phones, iPads, interactive online games and virtual communities.

Websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Skype, WhatsApp, Snapchat, to name but a few, offer fantastic opportunities for communication and social connections. However, they are created with an audience in mind. This is especially relevant for sites such as **Facebook** and **Instagram**, which are specifically for those **over 13 years old**.

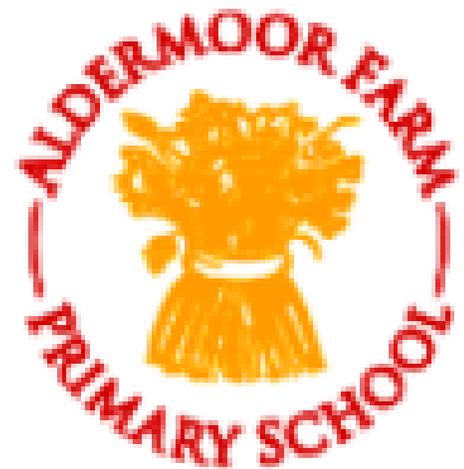**Many of the issues that have been brought to our attention recently have involved the use of:**
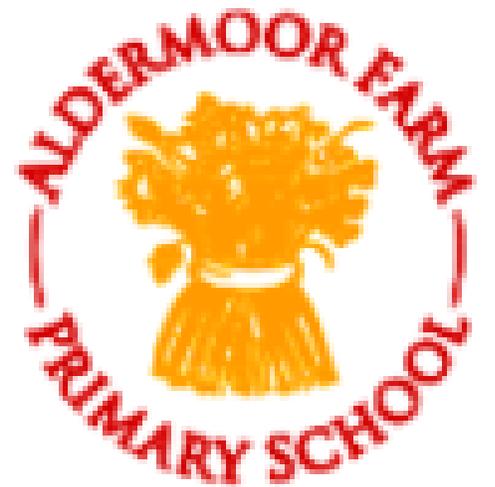
Tik Tok

Facebook - a social networking site. **You are required to be at least 13 years old before you can create an account.**

WhatsApp – An instant messaging app for smartphones. **The user agreement requires users to be age 16 or older.**

Skype - a video and messaging app. **You are required to be at least 13 years old** before you can create an account.

TiK TOK

- TikTok is a video-sharing app. Users can upload and share short videos of themselves lip-syncing to songs or acting out comedy sketches, and add special effects. They can gain followers ('fans') and browse other people's videos. You may have heard of the app by its previous name: Musical.ly. Everything that was on Musical.ly is now on TikTok. If your child previously had a Musical.ly account they will be able to access their content on TikTok. The age recommendation is 13 and above. However, you don't have to prove your age when creating an account, so younger children can still use it easily. It's most popular with under-16s.

Sexting

- **What is Sexting?**
- Youth produced sexual imagery is the sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles, social media and internet. Sexting can also be thought of to include words or text type messages.
- Making, possessing and distributing any imagery of some under 18 which is "indecent" is illegal. **This also includes an image of yourself if you are under 18.**
- **What is Indecent**
- Incident is not specifically defined within legislation, however if the image contains a naked person, a topless girl, displays genitals or any sex act then it is deemed to be indecent.   It can also include overly sexual images in young people in underwear.
- **The Law**
- It is an criminal offence to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children (sexual offences act 2003)
- A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18
- A young person is breaking the law if they:
- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.
- All offences of youth produced sexual imagery must be reported as a crime.

What are the implications?

Children are often creating 'groups' to which others are joining. This means that all information is shared with anyone who is in the group, so privacy is lost and in some cases strangers have been added to the group.

What are the implications?

- Many sites use 'targeted' advertising and therefore your child could be exposed to adverts of a sexual, or other inappropriate nature, depending on the age they stated when they registered.

- They may have lied about their age to get an account, making them appear older than they are, increasing this risk.

- Young people may accept friend requests from people they don't know in real life which could increase the risk of inappropriate contact or behaviour. The general rule is, if they aren't friends in real life, they shouldn't be 'friends' online.

What does this mean for you?

- Primarily, these occurrences and reported incidents of misuse of social media sites happen at home, after school hours, when children have access to web sites that are blocked in school. With this in mind, and in response to concerned parents who have asked for advice regarding internet safety, we feel it important to point out to parents the risks of unregulated use of such sites, so you can make informed decisions as to whether to allow your child to have a profile or not and when and how to monitor their use, particularly at night time. **We strongly advise a device free bedroom policy after bedtime to allow for uninterrupted sleep and rest.**

Key point:

Although **we cannot govern matters occurring out of school hours,** which is parental responsibility, we will take action (such as reporting under age profiles) if a problem comes to our attention that involves the safety or wellbeing of any of our pupils, including reporting the use of inappropriate images of young people to the police, as this is a legal matter. This also refers to inappropriate text messages.

Tips:

Should you decide to allow your child to have an online profile we strongly advise you:

• Check their profile is set to private and that only their friends can see information they post.

• Monitor your child's use and talk to them about safe and appropriate online behaviour such as not sharing personal information and not posting or messaging offensive/inappropriate messages or photos.

• Monitor your child's use of language and how they communicate to other people, ensuring profanity is discouraged.

• Have a look at advice for parents on the social media sites.

• Set up your own profiles so you understand how the site works and ask them to have you as their friend on their profile so you know what they are posting online.

Tips:

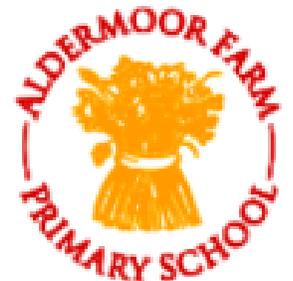Make sure your son/daughter understand the following rules:

Always keep your profile private.

Never accept friends you do not know in real life.

Never post anything which could reveal your identity, including photographs wearing school uniform, where possible.

Never agree to meet somebody you only know online without telling a trusted adult.

Always tell someone if you feel threatened or someone upsets you.

Our support

Through lessons provided at school, assemblies, guest speakers, and PSHE lessons, we do our best to provide our children with the awareness and knowledge they need in order to recognise and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful behaviour and to respond appropriately.

<u>Our support</u>

We recommend that all parents visit the CEOP 'Think U Know' website for more information on keeping your child safe online at www.thinkuknow.co.uk.

Other useful sites are www.net-aware.org.uk and www.getsafeonline.org

'MM Guardian' app - upload to parents and child's phone. Shows all apps/messages/time of day/location child has been on phone.

School Website for further information on our E-Safety policy