



Working to keep your children safe in  
partnership with  
**Ashford Park Primary School**



### **Important messages from Marilyn Hawes', Freedom From Abuse**

Following Marilyn Hawes' recent information sharing sessions with pupils, staff and parents, I wanted to share a few of the important messages that arose from conversations with the children in years 3, 4, 5 and 6:

- Nobody under the age of 18 should have a personal YouTube account.
- Children should not be on Whatsapp as messages are encrypted and the police cannot help them if they become victims of online abuse via the app.
- All online 'friend requests' from people they do not know and trust in 'real-life' should be deleted. Some children boasted of having over 100 friends or friend requests online.
- Turn off online chats on Fortnite and similar apps – these can be used to groom children.
- Grand Theft Auto is rated 18+ and is highly inappropriate for children: characters are physically and sexually abused in the game.
- All children and adults to check the length and strength of passwords – at least 12 characters. The harder passwords are to crack, the safer your online data and information will be. People actually make money by working out and selling passwords – children's passwords are often easier to guess due to common likes and interests.
- Adults to set safety settings on all devices.
- Recommendation to download a two-step verification app – an effective way to keep information safe online.
- Children have been advised to 'block and report' all suspicious or abusive content or behaviour via the platform and report to their parent or carer.
- If they are using Snapchat, they must have 'ghost-mode' on so that they cannot be located by strangers.
- When you sign up for apps like Snapchat and Instagram, you agree to their 'Terms and Conditions' which means that they own the photos that you upload to the apps.
- Turn off 'location services' on devices otherwise children can be tracked by strangers.
- Smart TV – check if there is a webcam on top.
- Cover webcams with a plaster or you can buy webcam sliders to do this.
- Copyright photographs as this makes it easier for the Internet Foundation Watch (IWF) to remove them from online platforms. 'Report, Remove'.