



Fairmead School – Online safety

What Is WhatsApp?

WhatsApp is a social messaging app from Meta that is used by over 2.7 billion people every month. It lets users message others via their mobile network, WIFI network, WhatsApp Web or their broadband network.

Users can send text, voice and video messages, make voice and video calls and share information and documents.



Did you know?

The minimum age for WhatsApp is 16.

What are groups?

WhatsApp groups are normal chats that include multiple users. Anyone can add your child to a group unless you [change their group privacy settings within the app](#). Just like one-to-one chats, users can send text, video, images and more. These chats are end-to-end encrypted as well.

Settings to manage who can see information:

There are four settings to manage what information is shared:

- **Everyone:** This option will show your information to all users.
- **My contacts:** Only your contacts can see information about you.
- **My contacts except...:** Users can choose to hide their information from individual contacts.
- **Nobody:** No content will be shown to any user. Your child can change this setting to “My contacts” so that only their contacts are able to see this information. However, you should monitor who they add

[WhatsApp privacy settings & parental controls | Internet Matters](#)

No. 1 – WhatsApp (October 2023)

Parent and carers support



WhatsApp Groups - Top Tip!

Change group privacy settings

If your child uses private groups in WhatsApp, remind them that they should only be joining groups with people they know from school or clubs. They should not add people they meet online.

They can manage who has the ability to add them.

To manage this:

Step 1 – From the main screen, tap the 3 dots in the right corner and then **Settings**.

Step 2 – Go to **Privacy** and scroll down to **Groups**. Tap on it and set to **My contacts** or **My contacts except...**

Note: your child can still be invited privately. This only stops automatic adds.

5 tips to keep children safe on WhatsApp:



- 1- **Review Privacy Settings-** WhatsApp has a range of privacy and security settings to keep users safe. Work with your teen to customise groups, app access, live location and more to help them take ownership.
- 2- **Customise Contacts-** Show your child how to report and block unwanted contacts. Also, talk about reasons they might need to take those actions. Then, work with them to add their friends and family. Review and talk about their contacts regularly.
- 3- **Talk about personal information-** Make sure your child understands what personal information is. This could include their full name, where they live, what school they go to and questions about their family members. Remember that questions like their mother's maiden name, pet's name or similar topics might indicate someone is searching for security details. Talk about the importance of keeping that information private on WhatsApp.
- 4- **Show them where to get support-** If something goes wrong or they see something worrying on WhatsApp, make sure they know to come to you, and talk about other sources of support.
- 5- **Check in regularly-** Once you've done all of the above, check in with them regularly to review settings and how they use WhatsApp.
Remind them that these reviews and chats are about their safety, not about your trust in them. If they wonder why it's necessary, make sure you give them the time to help them understand.

