

# Preparing Your Child for Group Chats

## For Parents of Primary School Children

There are age restrictions in place for all messaging sites and these should be adhered to. Here is a helpful list of things to address to maximise online protection and reduce online vulnerability, whilst protecting the wellbeing of your child.

Reviewing these conversations every 3-4 months as a minimum is highly recommended.

Things to raise	Add date here	Add date here	Add date here
Discuss <b>phone fatigue</b> with your child. Once your child is part of group chats, they need to learn to deal with the distraction of alerts, messages, responses and emotional involvement.			
Lay firm <b>ground rules</b> for group chats - they should not be adding friends without asking for permission/consent first.			
<b>Check your child's phone</b> - regularly. They might not like it but they're too young to have access to group chats without supervision. You can explain that when they are older, they'll have more independence.			
Children should know that with any Wi-Fi-powered device, you should assume that <b>nothing is private</b> . Children need to be aware that it is always possible that everybody can see them, talk to them or hear them. It's a piece of technology that's open to the world and in theory anyone can be 'virtually' in the room.			
If your child is not on the group chat, they are less likely embroiled in <b>the hysteria of when it goes wrong</b> . Dealing with FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) is important because they need to learn to filter what and what not to be part of - this can be very stressful for primary-aged children because they don't have the maturity to deal with making such decisions.			
Based on your family values, discuss your opinion of bad language and <b>how you want your child to respond</b> when they are part of a discussion where content is unfair or is offensive to a child that they know. As a digital citizen, your child has a responsibility to call out anything unkind or hurtful through a trusted adult.			
<b>If either you or your child don't feel comfortable with the whole group chat scenario, or if you don't have time to regularly check the group chats of your child, say 'not yet' to group chat apps and review it again when it feels right.</b>			