The Weald
community school
and sixth form

6 November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

WhatsApp Groups

We have recently become aware that some students are again being added to large WhatsApp groups by people they do not know. These groups, with names such as *'Add the World'*, *'Add Everyone in the UK'* and *'Add Everyone You Know'*, can contain hundreds of unknown contacts.

We are also aware that some of these individuals are then attempting to contact students directly through private messages or adding them to further groups.

Although this may initially seem like harmless fun or an opportunity to make new friends, it can expose young people to unwanted contact from strangers and potentially inappropriate messages or content.

What are we doing?

We will be speaking to students about staying safe online during tutor time. We will remind them of the importance of not engaging with strangers online and encourage anyone who has received unwanted contact to speak to their parents/carers or a member of staff at school.

We have also informed our School Police Liaison Officer and shared our concerns with other local schools so that awareness can be raised across the wider Horsham community.

What can you do to help?

Please take a few minutes this evening to speak to your child about this issue and check their WhatsApp privacy settings together. In particular, we recommend changing their group privacy settings to prevent strangers from adding them to groups.

How to change group privacy settings on WhatsApp

1. Open **WhatsApp** on your phone.
2. Go to **Settings**:
    - **Android:** Tap the three vertical dots in the top-right corner, then select *Settings*.
    - **iPhone:** Tap in the bottom-right corner, (your profile picture)
    - Select **Privacy**.
3. Tap **Groups**.
4. Select **My Contacts**.

This means only people saved in your child's phone contacts can add them directly to WhatsApp groups.

We would also encourage you to remind your child:

- Never to share personal information, photographs or their location with people they do not know.
- Not to respond to unwanted messages from strangers.
- To leave groups and block or report anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable.
- To speak to a trusted adult if they receive any messages that worry them.

Where can you find further support?

For further advice and guidance about keeping children safe online, please visit the NSPCC website. If you have any concerns about your child's online safety or would like additional support, please do not hesitate to contact the school. Thank you for your support in helping us keep our young people safe, both in school and online.

Yours faithfully,



Mr S Catt
Deputy Headteacher