

## APPAA 'WhatsApp' Usage Guidelines

APPAA maintains a 'WhatsApp' Group for the parents/carers in each year group. This is intended as a forum to ask questions about immediate issues, such as when homework is due, and for class representatives to remind parents of events and activities, as well as deflecting unnecessary questions away from the teachers. To keep everyone safe and happy on the group, the Committee has compiled some polite rules and etiquette that will be common across the school groups.

### Points to note:

The group is run by parents for parents. It should not replace or substitute communication by or with school for relevant matters.

- The posts in the group chat are opinions of the individuals, not the group as a whole and not that of the school.
- The group is intended for the parents and carers of children in the specific year group only.

### Please DO use the chat for:

- Immediate questions about school business, e.g. what date homework is due in.
- Reminders about school and APPAA events - e.g. meeting times, bake sale dates, donations for school fair
- Lost property notices
- Sharing and swapping relevant stuff - e.g. spare uniform, costumes for dressing up days etc.
- Relevant community notices - e.g. family events in the local area that may be of interest
- Sharing information about school that may be useful to others e.g. if you join for school lunch one Friday you may want to share the experience with others, or your child's experience at after school clubs to help others decide if it is right for them

### Please DO NOT use the chat for:

- General casual chats - we are pleased that there is a lively, friendly parent community at school, but there are in excess of 60 people in some of our groups, so a little banter can soon escalate to a huge amount of messages. Then important messages get lost, which makes the group ineffective and daunting to the more infrequent users. We ask you to consider carefully what you post and how it comes

across to others.

- School notices on behalf of school (unless specifically requested to help in the case of emergency or urgency e.g. school closed due to plumbing failure). Whilst the forum can be used to remind people of school events and business, it should not be used as a replacement for school communication, on behalf of the teachers or the office for example. If a teacher wishes to communicate something to all parents in a class or year group, school should communicate that via the formal channels. As a significant number of parents and carers are not represented on this group, information will not be distributed as intended.
- Posting private information about your child e.g. Medical records, school report, or comments on other peoples' children
- Posting photos/videos of the children at class events, outings etc. In order to safeguard children, and on request of the school senior management, please do not publish these sorts of photos/videos to the WhatsApps groups, however well intentioned, as some parents do not consent to images of their children being published on social media.

## **Etiquette**

On behalf of APPAA Committee, there will be a moderator reviewing the posts for each year group (usually one or more of the Class Reps). Rude or inappropriate posts will not be tolerated. The APPAA moderator will contact anyone who uses the forum inappropriately and offenders may be removed from the group.

- Do not ask unnecessary questions that may be answered on the newsletter or school website or in the school handbook, please do check these sources first.
- Do not answer a question unless you really do know the answer as guesses just confuse, and no one needs to know if you also do not know the answer!
- If you need to privately message anyone in the group, remember that you can view the group members by tapping the group name and scrolling down. It would be helpful if all members had a meaningful name and photo on their WhatsApp profile to aid identification.
- Do not post adverts, religious or motivational 'meme's', political statements or anything that may be deemed offensive or is irrelevant to the school year group community.
- Please remember that any other 'unofficial' Priory parent WhatsApp groups are not the responsibility of APPAA
- Please remember that any messages or images etc. that are added to this group chat, like any social media, are in the public domain, so we request you are mindful of what you post.

We hope that all parents and carers who are not yet part of it will decide to join their child's year group WhatsApp group – for it to be truly successful, it should span entire parent community! Contact your Class Reps to be added to the group. Give it a try - if you are not sure, you are always free to change your mind!