



Leeds
Safeguarding
Children Board

Mark Peel, Independent Chair

3rd Floor
2 Great George Street
Leeds
LS2 8BA

Contact: Mark Peel

Tel: (0113) 3950297

Email: mark.peel@leeds.gov.uk

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Dear Headteacher

There are reports in the media today about an e-safety incident involving primary age children from Leeds. Just to be clear, the incident did not take place in school or through an 'app' approved by school, but was reported to the school by concerned parents. The incident is now being investigated by West Yorkshire Police.

This incident has highlighted a number of safeguarding issues raised recently about smartphone 'apps' including Live.ly, ooVoo, and music.ly amongst others. These apps are supposed to only be able to access contacts on the user's phones, but it appears that quite quickly unknown individuals are able to join group chats. Therefore, these apps are not safe for children to use as there is a significant risk of inappropriate contact by unknown individuals.

In light of the issue above, schools may be contacted by concerned parents / carers. Our advice for schools is for them to advise parents to ensure that their children do not have access to such apps on their phone and to check that all appropriate privacy settings are switched on, to make sure that children are protected when using any internet site. If a child experiences or expresses concerns about online activity, it must be reported to the police using 101 and <https://ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>. Wherever possible, a screen shot or a mobile phone picture of the concern should be taken for reporting purposes.

It would be useful if school staff could also remind children and young people about staying safe online.

There is some useful information on the LSCB website about online safety with some useful tips for parents here <http://www.leedslscb.org.uk/Parents-Carers-Wider-Family/Keeping-children-safe-online>

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Mark Peel
LSCB Independent Chair

