Our Lady's Bishop Eton is committed to promoting the safe and responsible use of the Internet by our children and as such we feel it is our responsibility to raise the concern that it has come to our attention that some children at Our Lady's Bishop Eton have Facebook profiles. We feel it is important to point out to parents the risks of underage use of such sites so that parents can make an informed decision as to whether to allow their child to have a profile or not.

If a child registers on Facebook implying they are 18 or over, there are **no** automatic safeguards applied to their profile.

If a child registers on Facebook as 13,, which is the permitted minimum age to use the site (Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act US.), whilst there are special safeguards in place for those users who register as under-18; possible risks for children under 13 using the site may include:
- Facebook use "age targeted" advertising and therefore your child could be exposed to adverts of an inappropriate nature, depending on the age they stated they were when they registered
- Children can accept friend requests from people they don't know well which could increase the risk of inappropriate contact or behaviour
- Language, games, groups and content shared on Facebook is not moderated, and can therefore appear to be offensive, illegal or unsuitable
- Photographs shared by users are often neither moderated nor restricted and therefore children could see inappropriate images. They can even post their own.
- Underage users are less likely to manage their online privacy well.
- Facebook could be exploited by bullies and for other inappropriate contact
- It is important to remember that if your child can lie about who they are online, so can anyone else.

Should you choose to allow your child to have a Facebook profile, we strongly advise you:
- Help your child to make their profile safer by having appropriate privacy settings in place. Details of how to do this can be found at http://www.connectsafely.org/pdfs/fbparents.pdf
- Talk to your child about safe and appropriate online behaviour such as sharing personal information or posting offensive messages or photos
- Think about installing the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) application from www.facebook.com/clickceop on their profile. This places a CEOP "Report Abuse" button on their Facebook page and has been known to deter potential offenders .
- Get yourself up to speed with the latest guidance and advice. Try www.facebook.com/help/?safety=parents or Connect Safely/iKeepsafe "Facebook Guide for Parents" http://www.connectsafely.org/pdfs/fbparents.pdf
- If you need to play a more active role in your child's online life, you may want to set up your own profile to understand how Facebook works. You may even want to agree with your child to be "friends".
- Make sure your child understands the following guidance:
  - Keep your personal information under control; think, "Would I tell this to a stranger?"
  - Be careful what you share with online "friends" as you may not know all of them well
  - Use "friends lists" to help manage what information you share with whom
  - Be careful what you post; it says a lot about you.
  - Never agree to meet somebody you only know online without telling a trusted adult
  - Always tell someone if you feel threatened or someone upsets you

Parents should be aware that there are also many social networks designed for a younger audience. These can act as useful and safe environments for children to learn how social networks operate and to build up their online resilience and skills.

There is also a wealth of free online resources for parents with information on keeping your child safe online, including the following:

- www.childnet.com/kia/parents
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- parents.vodafone.com

OLBE SAFEGUARDING TEAM