Gooseberry Parent

Instagram

What is Instagram?

A free, online photo and video sharing website. Registered users can upload and share photos and videos with others. Instagram can be downloaded as an app and used on digital mobile devices. Users can edit and apply filters to their photos and videos, as well as rate and comment on the photos of other users.

Key Features of Instagram to be aware of

- The Instagram app can be downloaded through Google Play or the Apple App Store.
- To upload and share photos and videos, users need to register using an email address or mobile phone number.
- Photos and videos can be shared either publicly or privately, using the app's privacy settings.
- Registered users of Instagram can add digital 'filters' and 'stickers' to modify their photos and videos, as well as 'hashtags' which link their media to similar media uploaded by other users.
- Direct messages between users can be sent using the Instagram Direct feature. As well as text messages, users can send photos, videos, profiles and posts seen in feeds to other users.
- Users can create 'stories' which allow them to add effects and layers to their videos and photos, and share them as a story with others.
- Users can connect their Instagram accounts to other social media accounts, such as Facebook and Twitter, enabling them to share content across multiple platforms.

Enjoying Instagram safely and managing the risks

- **Signing Up** –Encourage your child to keep log in details and passwords secure and share them with you. Users must be aged 13 or older to register. Be aware, Instagram **does not** verify age, making it relatively easy for younger children to set up accounts.
- **User Names** – Encourage your child to choose an original and creative user name that avoids giving away their own.
- **Privacy Settings** - Encourage your child to set their account to 'private', so that their content can be viewed by only those they have selected, such as family and close friends. Other users can send a request to follow a private account, which users can either allow or ignore. Ignoring and deleting requests from unknown persons can help reduce the risk of problems.
- **Uploading Photos** – Encourage your child to think carefully about which photos they want to post. Remind them that even though they can delete them at a later stage, there is nothing to prevent other users from saving their photos to their own devices. Ask your child to show you the photos they want to share before they post them. If they are uncomfortable doing so, think about why they might be hesitant.
- **Comments** – Remind your child that they can delete any unwanted comments on their photos and block any users who post upsetting or bullying comments. Having trusted friends can help reduce the risk.
- **Location Settings** – Encourage your child to turn location settings to off, so that their location cannot be revealed to others.
- **Followers** –Ensure that all followers are personally known to your child and encourage them to block and delete unwanted followers. Encourage your child to communicate with a trusted adult if worried.
- **Sharing Information** – Encourage your child to keep personal information private, this includes adding a mobile number. Check their bio, as this can be viewed by anyone.
- **Reporting** – Accounts set up by under 13s can be reported to Instagram, who will investigate and then delete the account. This will not prevent another account being set up.

Share photos with friends and family on Instagram…but do it safely!