

14 May 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

Unfortunately, we have had cause to speak with a high number of students across all year groups in recent weeks as it has been brought to our attention that many pupils are having significant problems with online chats and other communications with their peers which are taking place throughout the evenings and weekends.

These problems all relate to children not making the healthy choice to be respectful to others and act in the online world as they do in the real world. Whilst these incidents are happening outside of school, they can and have impacted in the following ways:

- o They pose a threat or cause harm to another pupil.
- o They could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- o They adversely affect the reputation of the school.
- o The pupil is identifiable as a member of the school.

As you all know, our primary responsibility in school is children's safety and well-being. The schools Behaviour Policy does enable us to take action if online activity impacts as described above, and over the last few weeks a high number of staff have taken much time to resolve and deal with the repercussions which has taken them away from the core business of teaching and learning.

We have spoken at length to the children and would encourage you to do the same at home. We appreciate that the very large majority of the children do have independent access to a mobile phone or other online devices, however, as you are aware, the person paying the phone bill is ultimately accountable for any online abuse, harassment, bad language and disrespectful behaviour.

Please can we encourage you to make it your 'mission' this weekend to talk to your child about what apps they use and how they are used to ensure that you are sufficiently aware of how your child is behaving online. Perhaps we could suggest, as a minimum: setting parental controls; considering the age ratings for apps your children are using; telling your child that they should only type something that they would be prepared for you to read or another child's parent to read; regularly checking your child's phone and making bedtime a phone free zone. These small actions will make a big difference, not just to your child, but to our school community and we thank you for your support in this.

In turn, we are investigating resources to better assist parents in how to address the challenges of the online world and we will continue to share these with you.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully



Mr Peake
Behaviour and Safeguarding