

29th January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Social Media use outside of school

I am writing to advise you of a few concerns regarding children's use of social media outside of school during evenings and weekends.

A minority of students are using social media platforms such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Instagram inappropriately. I understand that this has included use of unsuitable language, unkind comments, sharing unkind images or memes, and students using their phones as late as midnight. This behaviour is not in line with our ethos or values.

Most Social media apps are for children aged at least 13 years or older. If you do allow your child to access social media, we ask for your vigilance - online interactions require supervision and support. What is right will vary from family to family, but some strategies that are known to be successful include:

- Monitoring your child's phone for apps that are downloaded
- Enacting parental controls on phones and consoles
- Reviewing the messages your child sends on platforms and apps – making monitoring a routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal areas and not alone in bedrooms) and times your child has access to devices
- Encouraging your child to share or discuss with you what they are doing online

As a school we are responding to this with additional teaching during Computing, PSHE, assemblies, and in 1:1 conversations and teaching opportunities as they arise.

We are unable to regulate the online access students have outside school. If an issue of cyberbullying is reported to us, we have a duty of care to inform the parents of the children involved and may enforce consequences. Ultimately, we recommend negative incidents are reported to the police and the app developer; the bill payer for the device is responsible for the use of the device.

We post weekly online safety guides from National Online Safety in our Bulletin which can be a really useful way to keep up to date with new trends and apps. All weekly guides can be found on our website [HERE](#) (please scroll to the bottom of the page); please also find some helpful websites below:

- **Young Minds**
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/social-media/#Talkingtoyourchildaboutsocimedia>
- **Internet Matters**
<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/ukcis-social-media-guide-for-parents-and-carers/>



Principal – Ms Catrin Green

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- **Safer Internet**
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/social-media-guides>
- **Think You Know**
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/parents-guide-being-social-online/>

Thank you for your co-operation; if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Uddin
Assistant Principal



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