



27 March 2019

Dear Parent & Carers,

Social Media

I am writing to you regarding increasing concerns I have over the use of social media amongst a few of our Lower School pupils. Whilst the majority of students behave responsibly, there are occasions when misuse can lead to online bullying or malicious comments about the School or staff, which is the reason for me writing.

As parents and carers, I appreciate you will talk regularly to your son or daughter about the potential risks of social networking, how they can stay safe online, set rules about what they can and cannot do, and agree boundaries as to how they should behave online.

I also know that the issue of managing mobile phone and social media use is not an easy one. Social media has many benefits and internet use more generally can be an important part of learning. However, I would strongly recommend you look through the website below, which discusses practical ways of dealing with the challenges, either to reinforce what you already do, or to help with some practical strategies.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

From my point of view the advice regarding time limits, no phones in bedrooms and parental access to mobile phones is especially relevant. Some young people are sending messages until one o'clock in the morning and this is both bad for their own health and wellbeing as well as that of the recipients. There is a growing body of evidence linking social media use to poor mental health, not to mention the obvious lack of sleep, which then impacts on performance in the classroom.

I would also draw your attention to the minimum age requirements for social media apps - in most cases, it is 13 - because again I have seen some of our younger students make poor decisions about what they post, which highlights the reason why there are age restrictions.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to email me and I will do my best to answer them.

Yours faithfully,

Mr J L Stubbs
Assistant Headteacher