



Ref:EEM/SocialMobile/lw
6 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you to clarify the school's approach to the misuse of social media and mobile phones. With an increasing number of children having access to mobile phones, issues with the misuse of these devices including social media, video technology and messenger platforms is increasing.

If mobile phones are misused on the school site or by sharing unacceptable images, video or unkind comments outside of the academy, we will identify and address this misuse. This includes any invasion of staff privacy by sharing or making personal comments about staff members. As you are aware, mobile phones are not to be seen or heard on school site. This results in a two-hour SLT detention and the phone is confiscated until the end of the school day.

If a learner uses their mobile phone on the school grounds to photograph, film or communicate in an inappropriate way, the device will be confiscated and held securely on site for 5 days and the device will need to be collected by a parent or carer. If the evidence is requested by police or if the incident constitutes a criminal offence, the Academy will cooperate fully in providing any evidence at Police request. It is important to note that fortunately this type of misuse is rare. In fact, most inappropriate use of the internet or social media takes place during evenings, weekends and school holidays. If your child is a victim of inappropriate use, we strongly suggest that you report this to the social media platform and the police.

The responsibility for monitoring a child's use of social media or the internet in general, must lie with their parent/s and carer/s. We strongly encourage you to discuss issues around this with your child and also to carry out regular checks on their social media/messenger apps to safeguard them. Please note that the legal age limits for Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and TikTok can be found here: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/age-restrictions-on-social-media-services>. Recently, WhatsApp have announced a change to their terms and conditions and users need to be 16 to access their service.

To support you and your child our academy will continue to:

- Educate your child about safe internet use and the dangers of inappropriate use of social media and the internet.
- Monitor the use of all forms of ICT in school hours and deal with anything deemed inappropriate.
- Refer anything that we believe could be defined as, or could lead to, a safeguarding issue to the appropriate external agencies.
- Support parents with advice on how to tackle inappropriate use, either by their own child or by others.

I hope that you find the information in this letter helpful, and we can continue to work together to keep all of our children, safe and well.

Yours faithfully

Mrs E Edwards-Morgan (Principal)



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