



Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to start by saying thank you for the support shown so far this academic year. It is not easy getting to know such a large year group and I do hope that as time goes by I continue to get to know both students and parents to ensure the best experience in school.

As I hope you have noticed I will always be honest and transparent when anything needs my support. As a school we want to form an environment where our students are able to flourish, be happy and become well-rounded individuals, set with the tools to excel in later life.

In order to create the above environment, there is a need for school and home to work collaboratively. I am writing today to ask for your support and to inform you of some concerns regarding social media outside of school, specifically the platforms Snapchat and WhatsApp.

As I'm sure you're aware Cyber-bullying is a type of bullying which can involve the victim being harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted via the internet, social media or by mobile phone. Unfortunately, there have been reports of this occurring throughout the year group. This has been in the form of sending pictures with derogatory language/abuse over the picture, which have then been shared with multiple people. We have also been informed of group chats where abusive language is being used by many students. As I'm sure you'll agree, these actions are entirely unacceptable and can have lasting effects on anyone involved. If any student is found doing the above inside of school, they will be sanctioned, which may involve suspensions. Additionally, if as a parent or carer you feel that your child is being targeted in this way, you are well within your rights to contact the police if you decide this is necessary.

In addition to this, we are aware of a current trend where vaping is being glorified online. This has been linked to students across the country from year 7 all the way to year 11. This week there was a clear message in assembly from Mrs Ridsdale around the unknown dangers and how only now are we starting to see the negative impacts these can have on the individual.

Within this day and age, we are constantly trying to keep up-to-date with the way teenagers communicate with each other. At The Emmbrook, we have delivered mass education on the above in the form of the RSE curriculum and assemblies, however we still have an ongoing battle against online abuse and dangerous behaviour. We need a collective approach regarding this important topic, and I'm reaching out for your help and support. I know we will never be able to eradicate our students' use of social media and I would not want to do this due to benefits it can bring, but discussing with young people the choices they make online and the implications they may have on others will hopefully help them to be safer online.

Although I'm sure this already occurs, we would also urge you to take the time to regularly monitor your child's phone, internet devices and any social media accounts that they may have, if they are at the legal age to hold one.

Thank you for your ongoing support in working with us and for the important work that we all do to ensure that our children behave in a way that is safe, respectful, and lawful. We would ask that you discuss the content of this letter with your child.



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Kind regards

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