

3 December 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your support over this first term. As I am sure you are aware, we have been working hard to keep students in school and safe relating to the Covid 19 restrictions and government guidelines.

One thing I would like to bring to your attention is the use of mobile phones by students outside of school. As you know mobile phone use is prohibited in school, but students are allowed to keep them switched off and in their bags. I have had many conversations with parents/carers regarding WhatsApp groups and the use of inappropriate language students have been using. Whilst this is an outside school issue, I feel it is important to raise it so we can have conversations with individuals and promote positivity within our community.

As of May 2018, WhatsApp's minimum age of use became 16 years old if you live in the European Union, or a country that has adopted the GDPR, as the UK has. This therefore means that students should not be using WhatsApp as a medium of communication but even more so, be involved in WhatsApp groups. Parental guidance on WhatsApp can be accessed from this website <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>

I would further discourage students from being involved in any other social media platform groups and relay the old message of 'If you do not have anything nice to say, then say nothing'.

In the next few Personal Development lessons, Year 7 students will be learning about different social network platforms, their advantages, disadvantages and potential harm to young people. This will support them in knowing how to use these platforms appropriately and how to protect themselves.

Finally, the Year 7 team and I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and hope that you are able to spend the time with loved ones.

Kindest Regards

Robert Ward

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