

15 January 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

E-Safety for Parents and Students

You may be aware that last year, we held a parents evening on working with young people to keep them safe online, with specific reference to social media. The details and guidance sheets from that event are still available on the school website

http://www.theweald.org.uk/page_viewer.asp?page=Internet+Safety&pid=225.

This year we would like to develop our work with students and parents even further. Many of our students have access through their phones, laptops, computers to the social networking sites that they find so interesting and engaging. There is no doubt that many of these sites provide valuable opportunities for young people, however, it is also true that used without appropriate guidance or safety measures in place they can place young people in positions that are more vulnerable than they would choose in the real world.

We have explored with students the safe and sensible ways to use sites like Facebook, and many have adapted and improved their use of it in the light of this guidance. I attach to this letter a basic advice sheet on Twitter. As more young people engage with this particular programme, and follow the schools own account (twitter@theweald), it would be very useful to ensure that you have discussed this at home in support of guidance we will be giving at school. The following link is to the guidance that Twitter themselves offer for parents, teachers and young people, this is also worth a look, although there is little more valuable than following your son/daughter on Twitter yourself so that you are included in their posts or occasionally sitting down with them to look at it together.

<https://support.twitter.com/articles/470968-safety-tips-for-parents>

Furthermore, as a way of assisting discussion and understanding I would strongly recommend the following video programme <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/Parentsold/> it is 25 minutes long, so requires a slot of your time but is well worth it as an aid to family discussions as it outlines ways of talking to your son/daughter about safety online, provides useful advice and signposts other sources of information or help.

In addition at each subject consultation this year we will provide the opportunity to ask questions and seek advice on e-safety face to face, we will signpost where this will take place clearly on the day. In school we of course, continue to offer advice and guidance through assemblies, PD lessons, tutor time and the help of our peer mediators who were great on e-safety during anti-bullying week and continue to be available for students all year. Remember that if your son/daughter is concerned by anything online it should always be reported to the provider; encourage them to keep records of anything that concerns them so it can be printed off if necessary.

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If your son/daughter feels they are the subject of bullying within the school context or by someone from the school community there is a wealth of ways in which this can be reported:

- In person (to Form Tutor, Head of House)
- By email (help@theweald.org.uk)
- By text (weald 81400)

As previously stated, once we know about a problem we act fast to help resolve it, if we do not know about it we cannot help. What is important is that we continue to work positively together in the best interests of our young people, we continue to value and feel very proud of the incredible support we receive from our parents to continue this work.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss any aspect of this letter in more detail.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C Barlow
Deputy Headteacher