

26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

## **E-Safety**

I am writing to you to raise your awareness of the issues surrounding the use of social media and sharing of self-generated explicit images, also known as 'sexting'. As we approach another break from school in the form of the Easter holidays, young people will potentially be spending more and more time on social media platforms and using technology. In 2020, 70 percent of 12 to 15 year olds claimed to have had a social media account. In the vast majority of cases, students are just communicating with friends but in some instances, they are also communicating with people they have never met before. Through chat or online conversation, messages can come across very differently from face to face interactions, this also includes sending and receiving inappropriate images. Nationally, Childline has reported that 5 percent of young people report having a sexual image shared following a relationship break-up.

As a school, we are constantly making students aware of the vulnerable situations they could end up in. We are requesting your support as there are more and more cases nationally where students are being contacted by people they do not know. This can lead to students finding themselves in situations which are inappropriate, due to naivety.

Can you please check the following:

- That your son/daughter's social media account profile is set to "private"
- That your son/daughter actually knows everybody on their social media friend lists
- That your son/daughter is not publicly displaying their Snapchat username/code on any sites
- That they are not making offensive/racist/inappropriate comments regarding others

There are a number of places that you can seek practical advice regarding the issues above:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/sexting>  
<https://www.dorset.police.uk/help-advice-crime-prevention/personal-safety/yp-students/sexting/advice-parents/>

If you have any concerns about your child please make contact with our safeguarding team via the main office ([parents@holbrookacademy.org](mailto:parents@holbrookacademy.org)) and request a call back. I would like to thank you in advance for your support in safeguarding our children.

Yours sincerely,

George Anstee-Parry  
Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead