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30th September 2020

To: Parents/Carers of Yr 7 and 8 students

Dear Parents/Carers

Social Media

We have become increasingly aware of students in Years 7 and 8 using social media platforms such as Snapchat and WhatsApp to form large groups for communication purposes, either for chat or call functions.

Following a recent investigation, it has become clear that the topics discussed within some of these groups, the use of language and general behaviours are not appropriate for the age of students included, or in some cases any age.

We appreciate that for some individuals these platforms form a necessity in communicating with family members etc. I would, however, like to highlight that guidance stipulates WhatsApp usage is not appropriate for anyone under the age of 16, whilst Snapchat requires users to be 13 years of age.

As a college we are unable to support in matters arising on these social media platforms outside of college. However, should incidents of bullying of a more serious nature undermine the safeguarding of students within the college environment, we will be forced to invoke our behaviour and sanctions policy.

Apart from our immediate concerns around the specific actions and communications of students within these groups, it is also evident that for some students communications can run late into the evening and begin in the very early hours. This is compromising students' preparedness for college and their ability to concentrate and focus throughout the school day.

Thank you for your support in this matter. Further information and guidance can be found here: <https://parentinfo.org/article/whatsapp-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Mawby'.

Lee Mawby
Vice Principal