



28<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you to clarify the school's approach to the misuse of social media. With an increasing number of students having access to technology, issues with the misuse of social media by school age children are increasing. To minimise incidents in school we have a zero tolerance on the use of mobile phones on the school grounds.

If any aspect of ICT is misused in the school or using our equipment we will identify and address this misuse. Fortunately, this type of misuse is incredibly rare and this is helped by the fact that students are not able to access any social media sites on our network.

Indeed, most of the inappropriate use of the internet is done from home or on students' mobile devices during evenings, weekends and holidays. This makes it very difficult for schools to investigate and take action.

The responsibility for monitoring a child's use of social media, or indeed the internet in general, must lie with parents/guardians. We strongly encourage you to discuss issues around this with your child. It is also worth noting the age limits for Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Snapchat and TikTok, further information regarding these can be found on our recent newsletters and our website: <https://www.sharplesschool.co.uk/pastoral-support/>.

If your child is the victim of inappropriate use then we strongly recommend that you, as a parent/guardian, report the matter to both the social media service and to the police. However, to support you and your child the school will:

- Continue, through PSHE and assemblies, to educate students of the dangers of inappropriate use of the internet
- Continue to monitor the use of any form of ICT in normal school hours and the use of the school email system at all times, and will deal with anything deemed inappropriate
- Refer anything that we believe could be defined as, or could potentially lead to, a Child Protection issue to the appropriate external agencies
- Continue to support parents with advice on how to tackle inappropriate use either by their own child or others

I hope that you find this information useful and by working together, as outlined in this letter, I trust that we can keep all our students safe and well.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C. Wood  
Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour, Safety and Ethos)

**Headteacher Ms A. Webster:** [headteacher@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@sharplesschool.co.uk)

**Admin Office:** [office@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:office@sharplesschool.co.uk)

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