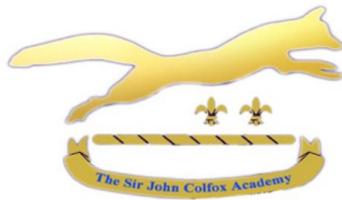


# The Sir John Colfox Academy



## ***Inspiring Learning, Achieving Excellence***

Headteacher: Mr Adam Shelley MEd, BSc Hons, PGCE, NPOH

7 May 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

### **Year 7 Updates**

It has been fantastic having the Year 7 students back in school since the March return and it has been brilliant to see the effort and enthusiasm they have shown towards their learning.

Inevitably and understandably, students are now in a period of re-adjusting to the routines and expectations of school life. As part of this re-adjustment, I particularly hope that we can work together to help and educate our young people in how to behave in an appropriate manner when communicating with others both in person and online. This is the reason for my letter to you today.

### **Language use**

Students need to recognise that the polite language used in class and more formal settings, must also be replicated amongst their peers during social times, on their way to and from school and online. When in school uniform, our students represent our school and its values in the wider-community. It is never acceptable to use insulting, homophobic or abusive language in any situation. As a Gold Rights Respecting school, our students understand and are regularly reminded of the importance of this.

### **Internet safety and the use of social media**

The school community understands that during the past eighteen months in particular, social media platforms have enabled our students to stay in touch with their friends. This is one of the many benefits of modern technology. However, the content of some of the messages routinely posted and shared by students is highly inappropriate – there are examples of abusive language, insults, inappropriate images and other offensive and extreme phrases. This content is potentially disturbing to any student who is part of the group, leaves children at risk of potential bullying or exploitation and normalises the use of extreme, violent and explicit language between peers and this is resulted in some of the language concerns I have referenced above in school.

Any content that an individual shares online can be captured and saved, even when using Apps such as Tik Tok. If the school believes that any inappropriate content has been posted or shared by students and we become aware, then we will make contact with all parents involved and seek advice from our Safer Schools Police Team.

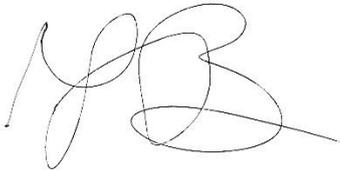
## How Parents Can Help

Parents should be aware that Apps such as Whatsapp, Tik Tok and Snapchat carry age restrictions in order to protect all users - these vary between Apps but the minimum age for Whatsapp is 16, and for Snapchat and Tik Tok are 13. Snapchat is a particular concern because users are encouraged to share their locations when posting content. This means that their locations are disclosed to other members of the chat group.

We advise parents/guardians to be monitoring their child's social media activities in order to help them to make informed decisions about what they post and who they talk to. We also recommend that parents activate age restrictions on Wifi at home (BT, Sky etc. all offer this function).

We understand that many parents and students have been dealing with a different and challenging set of circumstances over the last eighteen months. The information and advice above is designed to keep students safe both in school and online; please contact the school if you would like to discuss any of this information in more detail. There is further information for parents on our safeguarding page on the school website <https://www.colfox.org/safeguarding/#>

Yours faithfully



Mr N Bartlett  
Head of Lower School