

MBA/JSK
18 November 2021

By email only

Dear Parent/Carers

I write to ask for your continued support.

You may have seen in the news about the misuse of social media accounts by students and the negative impact that this is having on teachers. It has, sadly, been reported to us that a minority of students across our Trust have made TikTok videos and Instagram accounts made with images of SET staff.

As you would expect we continue to do all that we can to identify the students involved in creating these accounts and images. This activity is illegal and although we offer e-safety training, some of our messages are not being acted upon.

You may believe that your son/daughter would not be involved in such activity but please remember that following an illegal account or sharing images (whether your child created them or not) is a serious issue. Aside from the potential illegality, these actions are not in line with our 6Cs and are neither kind nor compassionate.

Parents and carers should already be aware that social media sites should not be used by under-13s, yet we regularly see that Year 7 and 8 students have such accounts. These accounts can be used to bully others and 'phones can be used to download illegal or inappropriate content. Please may I remind you that you have a responsibility for the actions of your child and would invite you to consider the following:

- Ensuring your child (if under 13) does not have access to social media accounts where the age range from the provider does not permit this.
- Speaking to your child, whatever their age, about the contents of this letter and the risks they are placing themselves at if they continue to follow or create such accounts.
- Sitting with your child, if needed, to look at the contents on their 'phone. I do of course appreciate that we do look to foster a sense of trust and responsibility and as such some parents/carers may feel this is not appropriate. Only you will know the right thing to do here.

Our first concern is the welfare of our students and what it is they are accessing on their 'phone, but I am also concerned about our colleagues.

Parents and carers will be aware of the recruitment crisis across the country and no teacher deserves to be subject to this mistreatment.

As a responsible employer we will always take appropriate steps to look after and protect our colleagues.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mark Barrow', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Barrow
Chief Executive Officer

