

## **E Safety Guide for Parents**

The Internet and Social Media have become a regular part of everyday communication with others, particularly for our students. There is a multitude of social media mediums that our students use. Below is some useful information for parents/guardians.

### **Social Media Age Limits**

*50% of parents are unaware of the social media age limits (source 17th March 2017 NSPCC )*

- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter; Tumblr, Reddit, Secret, Snapchat, Pinterest, Habbo, Google+ – AGE LIMIT 13 YEARS OLD
- Linked in – AGE LIMIT 14 YEARS OLD
- What's App – AGE LIMIT 16 YEARS OLD
- Vine – AGE LIMIT 17 YEARS OLD
- You tube, Wechat, Kik, Keek, Foursquare, Flickr - AGE LIMIT 18 YEARS OLD, but 13 to 17 years old with Parental permission.

### **Sexting**

When people talk about sexting, they usually mean sending and receiving:

- naked pictures or 'nudes'
- 'underwear shots'
- sexual or 'dirty pics'
- rude text messages or videos.

They can be sent or received from a friend, boyfriend, girlfriend or someone the child has met online. Sexting can easily happen. Things can go wrong – even when the student didn't mean for them to.

Sexting is covered in our Lower 6<sup>th</sup> & Intermediate Tutorial Programmes. However some students are not aware of the dangers of sexting, or the legalities surrounding it.

A young person is breaking the law if they:

- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

Students must not 'like' or 'share' a picture they receive. This is also a criminal offence.

### **Useful Information**

- "Catfishing" is the name used by offenders to lure young people into harm on social media and on line gaming
- Musical.ly – highly dangerous and greatly accessed by paedophiles in disguise wanting more videos of dancing
- Instagram now rated the worst app causing mental health issues
- SnapChat earns your child 'streaks'. This is a darkly ingenious way to keep your child engaged. They gain points every time they communicate and lose them if they don't reply. SnapChat is highly pervasive into the child's psyche. SnapChat also reveals where your child is located, unless it is switched to "ghost mode".
- 'On line Gaming' is a real and present threat and easily becomes an addiction.

## Useful Apps

- Parents can download GALLERY GUARDIAN. If you are contracted to your child's phone it sends an alert of inappropriate images
- Parents can download OUR PACT an app allowing you to switch off the apps on your child's phone, and to a schedule
- Parents access CIRCLE WITH DISNEY – you can manage all devices in your home, setting time limits and turning off individual apps.
- Young people can download FOREST helping them to control their own screen time. They plant a seed and a forest grows in the app, the more time you spend on your phone less trees grow. Proving popular with young people to help focus during exam times.

## Phones and Bed Time

- 9 out of 10 young people are exposed to blue light just before bedtime
- 50% of teenagers are not getting enough sleep for good health and study
- Under 25's on average are likely to check their mobile phone 32 times a day
- Young people need a digital blue screen detox 90 mins BEFORE going to sleep
- 48% of youngsters check their phones having gone to bed
- 10% of young people will check their phones 10 times during the night.

## Text or Internet Codes:

These codes are used to send messages out quickly, hoping that most of them are not understood by supervising adults:

- **LMIRL**- let's meet in real life
- **IMEZRU** - I am easy, are you?
- **TDTM** - talk dirty to me
- **SORG**- straight or gay
- **NIFOC** - nude in front of computer
- **182** – I hate you
- **WTTP** - want to trade pictures
- **MIA** – talking about Bulimia
- **KMS** – kill myself
- **420** - marijuana
- **XTC** - ecstasy
- **MOOS** - member of the opposite sex
- **AITR** - Adult in the room
- **MOS** - mom over shoulder
- **POS** - parent over shoulder
- **PIR** - parent in room
- **PAL** - parents are listening
- **PAW** - parents are watching
- **ASLP** - Age, sex, location, picture
- **A3** - Anytime, any place, anywhere
- **COBRAS** - Come on by right after school
- **9** - Parent watching
- **99** - Parent no longer watching
- **NP** - nosy parents or no problem
- **143** - I love you
- **LOL** - Laugh out loud

## **Advice & Guidance for Parents**

- Encourage dialogue with your children on Social Media etc. Remind them of the importance of their 'social footprint' i.e. if someone looked them up online, what would that person find out? – Hopefully positive info.
- Discuss some of the dangers of the social media apps they are using, in particularly sharing personal information (including images) with people they do not know.
- Discuss with them if they know what Sexting is, and the Law related to it.
- If appropriate, use 'settings' for particular apps.
- Set an example with your own phone/tablet/social media.
- Limit screen time.
- Try to keep screens in a public place – avoid them going into bedrooms.
- If your child is becoming socially withdrawn and showing signs of anxiety - **ACT!**
- Agree no screens at mealtimes; no screens at bedtime.
- Do not link credit/debit cards to your children's app.
- LESS time on screens means less absorption of inappropriate content, advertising messages, inane celebrity gossip; bullying and sexualisation.
- Screen time addiction is a recognised health condition.

**We can't change the world of screens BUT we can help young people navigate a healthy path, and use the Internet for the excellent platform it is, when used responsibly.**