Icknield High School
Raising the achievement of all

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IKD

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Important Online Safety Information for Parents and Carers

At Icknield High School, we remain fully committed to safeguarding our students, both in school and online. As you are aware, we operate a zero-tolerance approach to mobile phones in school. In addition, when students use school technology, robust monitoring and filtering systems are in place. These systems immediately alert the school to any concerning searches or activity, enabling us to take prompt action and provide appropriate support where required.

Many social media platforms already require users to be at least 13 years of age. You may also be aware that the UK Government has announced plans to introduce restrictions on social media use for children under 16, alongside strengthened age-verification measures and additional safeguards designed to protect young people from harmful content and online risks. These measures are expected to come into effect in 2027.

Whilst technology offers significant benefits for learning, communication and entertainment, it also presents risks that require ongoing vigilance from both schools and families. Across the country, including at Icknield High School, we continue to see concerns arising from the misuse of mobile phones, social media and messaging platforms.

These issues can include cyberbullying, inappropriate communication, exposure to harmful or distressing content, the sharing of explicit images, online exploitation, and conflicts that originate online but have a significant impact on students' wellbeing, relationships and learning in school. Unfortunately, dealing with these matters often requires considerable time and resources, diverting staff from their primary purpose of supporting children's learning, wellbeing and educational progress.

If you have chosen to provide your child with a mobile phone or other internet-enabled device, you play a vital role in ensuring that it is used safely, responsibly and in an age-appropriate manner. Children require guidance, supervision and clear boundaries online just as they do offline. As parents and carers, you have both the right and responsibility to understand how your child is using their device, who they are communicating with and which platforms they are accessing.

Regular monitoring, supervision and open conversations remain some of the most effective ways of keeping children safe online. We strongly encourage and expect parents and carers to:

- Regularly check their child's device and online activity.
- Know which apps, games and social media platforms their child uses.
- Ensure privacy and security settings are enabled and regularly reviewed.
- Make use of parental controls where appropriate.

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MATHSHUBS ENIGMA
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anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/uab

- Monitor group chats and messaging platforms.
- Have regular conversations about online behaviour, digital responsibility and online safety.
- Set clear expectations regarding screen time and device use.
- Report harmful content or inappropriate activity directly to the relevant platform.
- Contact the police where there are concerns about criminal behaviour, threats, exploitation or where someone may be at immediate risk.

Supporting Positive Digital Wellbeing

Research and experience continue to show that excessive screen time can negatively affect sleep, concentration, emotional wellbeing and mental health. We therefore encourage parents and carers to:

- Agree appropriate screen time limits with their child.
- Establish device-free times and spaces within the home.
- Remove mobile phones and electronic devices from bedrooms overnight.
- Encourage regular breaks from screens.
- Promote a healthy balance between online and offline activities.
- Model healthy and responsible technology habits as adults.

Reporting Online Concerns and Criminal Behaviour

If your child experiences online bullying, harassment, threats, exploitation, fraud, the sharing of indecent images, hate-related abuse, grooming, coercion, or any other potentially criminal activity, parents and carers should report the matter directly to the police or the relevant online reporting service.

The school should also be informed where there is a safeguarding concern or where an issue may impact a pupil's wellbeing, attendance, behaviour or engagement in learning. However, it is important to recognise that schools do not possess the legal investigative powers available to the police and other statutory agencies. Our role is to safeguard and support students, assess risk, apply school sanctions where appropriate, and work in partnership with families and external agencies to promote pupil safety and wellbeing.

By maintaining clear boundaries, providing appropriate supervision and encouraging open communication, we can work together to ensure that young people enjoy the many benefits of technology whilst remaining safe, responsible and resilient online.

Enclosed with this letter is additional guidance, together with details of organisations and support services that can provide further advice and assistance to parents and carers.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep all students safe.

Yours faithfully



Mr King-Mand
Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)