

SGR/JDA/OSL

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PARK HALL
ACADEMY

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HEADTEACHER: MR DPK BURGESS BA HONS

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Online Safety

We work very hard to try and ensure the safety of all of our pupils through a thorough programme of education which encompasses a variety of issues that can present a threat or danger to our young people in their daily lives. Our greatest challenge at the moment is educating children about the dangers of on-line activity and inappropriate use of social media. On-line safety remains a focal point for much of our work both in the curriculum and also in our assemblies and form time activities, however, it continues to be an area that presents a vast array of issues and challenges.

We would like to inform you about two important programme's that were launched on Monday 4 July which have been designed to help professionals keep pace with, and protect children from the changing landscape of risk. They are both free to use and we believe, will be valuable in helping schools and social care providers keep children safe. We feel these may be useful resources and points of information to enable you to support your child and help to ensure that you and your family are safe and protected on line:

THINKUKNOW

Thinkuknow is an award-winning on and off-line safety programme for children and young people, professionals and parents that has been developed by the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command.

Delivered through a network of 100,000 qualified professionals across the UK, Thinkuknow provides accurate and informative, age appropriate advice and guidance about relationships, sex and internet safety to help prevent children and young people from becoming victims of abuse or exploitation.

The programme's innovative and engaging films, cartoons, websites and lesson plans aim to help teachers, youth workers, police officers and health professionals to explore difficult and sensitive issues safely with children and young people.

Resources for parents and carers can be downloaded at www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

PARENT INFO

Developed by CEOPs and internet parenting charity, Parent Zone, Parent Info provides up-to-date, expert information for parents on a range of concerns they may have about children and young people, which is designed for schools to post on their own website www.parentinfo.org.

From advice on how much sleep a teenager needs to information about relationships, sex and internet safety, Parent Info provides a range of content that can easily be hosted on a school's website.



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

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In addition to signposting you towards these two new resources we would also like you to speak to your child and consider with them some of the following points:

1. Their use of Social media – Instagram at present is one of our most widely used forms of social media:

- Do you have access to your child's accounts? Do you monitor them closely?
- Have you seen the list of contacts that they follow and satisfied yourself that they are appropriate? Do you know who is following your child?
- Does your child have ghost accounts that you are unaware of? We were recently alerted to a trend amongst some children to have a 'cleansed' account but then set up others on which they follow content and make contacts which they do not want to be monitored.
- Most of the disputes and friendship issues we see in school involve an increasingly large measure of online conversation – unguarded and hurtful comments – often misunderstood – due to the immediacy and apparently 'victimless' (because the recipient cannot be seen) nature of modern online communication.
- I have attached a link here to a document entitled 'A Parent's guide to Instagram' (not a Park Hall publication) to further inform you http://www.connectsafely.org/wp-content/uploads/instagram_guide.pdf

2. Their use of the Internet on mobile devices without supervision.

- Is it really necessary for your child's phone to be internet enabled?
- Is their data allowance/internet access limited to the kind of activity you think is appropriate for their age?
- Do they need to access the internet when they are out with you or their friends in person? Is there adequate provision for them to access the internet at home in a safe and supervised environment and time allowed at home for their chosen online activities?
- Our policy on use of the internet in school is clear to students and a 'Stay Safe On the Internet' information page appears on page 10 of the student planner. These may be useful guides for a conversation with your child about your expectations of their use of the internet on devices to which you subscribe.

Thank you for your continued support, especially in tackling this ever growing area of concern around online safety. Our children are growing up in a world where social media is a huge part of their lives; the challenge for us as adults is to ensure that our children are effectively educated in staying safe and making sensible choices whilst using social media and the internet.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Gregory
Deputy Headteacher