

17 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

The purpose of this letter is to clarify our position on the misuse of social media and behaviours that follow. We know from our discussions with other local schools that this issue extends further than St Edmund Arrowsmith and you have probably seen many cases being reported in the media.

I can assure you that if any aspect of ICT is misused in school on our equipment, or if there is any misuse of our email system either in or out of normal school hours, then due to the sophisticated filters in operation, we will identify and address this misuse. Fortunately, this type of misuse is incredibly rare and this is helped by the fact that students are not able to access social media sites in school as they are blocked on our network.

Indeed, most of the inappropriate use of the internet is done from home or on students' mobile devices during evenings, weekends and holidays. Staff at school have no jurisdiction to deal with this and we are limited in what we can do to investigate this. The responsibility for monitoring a child's use of social media, or the internet in general, lies with parents/carers. We strongly encourage you to discuss issues around this with your son or daughter.

**Young Minds** have produced a brilliant resource on how to approach these conversations that can be found here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-social-media-and-the-internet/>

If your son or daughter is the victim of inappropriate of social media or internet use then we strongly recommend that you as a parent/carer report the matter to both the website developer and to the police. As stated earlier, unless an issue manifests itself during the normal school day, staff are not able to address this.

In recent weeks, the fallout from social media misuse has spilled into school life and this has resulted in some students displaying unkind and in some cases threatening behaviour towards others. Moreover, many students have been both victims and perpetrators of this. It is imperative that students take responsibility for their own behaviour and tell a member of staff if there is an issue rather than responding in kind.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding anything I have outlined in this letter then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

*A Reardon*

**A REARDON**  
**Senior Learning Coordinator (Y10)**