## 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2024

## Online Safety - Mobile Phones & Apps

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you about the increased and problematic presence of pupil mobile phones in our school.

One of our primary concerns is the increase of group chats, Snapchat, and TikTok, which can pose serious challenges to the well-being of our young people. Group chats, while intended for communication, often become platforms for cyberbullying, gossip, and inappropriate sharing of content. The instant and widespread nature of these chats can lead to the rapid dissemination of misinformation and rumours, that can negatively impact the school atmosphere.

Snapchat and TikTok, popular social media platforms among our pupils, present additional concerns. The fleeting nature of Snapchat messages may encourage impulsive behaviour and can be a source of distraction during class time. Furthermore, TikTok's viral challenges and trends may inadvertently expose students to inappropriate content or encourage participation in potentially harmful activities.

By implementing a no-mobile-phone policy, we aim to create a focused and secure learning environment where students can concentrate on their studies without unnecessary distractions or exposure to potential harm. We kindly request your support in reinforcing this policy at home and encouraging responsible technology use. We will be asking pupils to hand their devices in at the start of the school day, we will keep them safe, and they will be returned before the pupils leave for home.

Please find attached to this email several parent / carer guides designed by nationalonlinesafety.com that will further inform you about Snap Chat, Tik Tok, Screen Grabs and also Group Chats — I would urge you to read through the guides in order to keep your child as safe online as possible. I would also recommend you visiting the National Online Safety website where you will find a range of resources that you may find of interest.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in maintaining a safe and productive educational environment for all our students.

Best Wishes,

**Gavin Hosford** 

Headteacher

