



# St Edmund's Girls' School Salisbury

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SBy/esk  
11<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 7 Students

## **Use of Social Media**

As the parent of a teenage girl myself, I am well aware of the influence that social media has on the lives of young people. I also appreciate that whilst social media can be used for effective communication and for entertainment, it is easily possible for young people to misunderstand the responsibility they have to themselves and to others with its use.

It has come to our notice recently that there have been a number of instances where social media is being used in a negative manner. Some girls are seemingly of the belief that it's acceptable to be unpleasant to others on line or that it's all right to use abuse or mild threats if you are not speaking to someone face to face, or if, as on Snapchat, the comments 'disappear' quickly. Some unpleasant online behaviour is spilling into day to day life in school and it has the capacity to make some girls' lives very unhappy.

I would be very grateful if you, as parents, could be as vigilant as possible so that we can all encourage our daughters to be safe on line and in school, treating others as we would want to be treated ourselves, with respect and courtesy. In my experience as a parent, it is easy for 11 or 12 year olds to be swept up in a group chat with others where the on line conversation, frankly, gets out of hand. We do as much as we can in school to put across the dangers of such on line behaviour and we expect all our students to abide by our core values of respect, responsibility and resilience. Safe on line behaviour is a theme returned to in both curriculum and tutor time. Our Pastoral team and Jenny Moss, our link Police Community Service Officer, all provide advice and guidance as necessary to students. As a parent, please encourage dialogue with your daughter regarding on line activity and should you have a serious concern, do report any incident to the police. You may find these websites helpful:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

[http://www.net-aware.org.uk/?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=&utm\\_campaign=201511+o2&utm\\_content=nspcc](http://www.net-aware.org.uk/?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=201511+o2&utm_content=nspcc)

The issues of young people and well-being linked to on line activity are, of course, of national concern. Just this morning, the NSPCC Chief Executive, Peter Wanless was quoted in relation to the work of Childline, 30 years old this year:

'It is clear from the hundreds of thousands of calls and emails Childline receives that we have a nation of deeply unhappy children. The pressure to keep up with friends and have the perfect life on-line is adding to the sadness that many young people feel on a daily basis.'

I believe that here at St Edmund's we have a school full of happy and well-adjusted girls, but I do want to make sure that we all work together to keep them that way.

If you would like to discuss these issues with me I would be very happy to do so. Do please contact me via email ([sbusby@st-edmunds.eu](mailto:sbusby@st-edmunds.eu)) or by telephone.

Yours sincerely

**Sarah Busby**  
**Headteacher**