



Dear Parent/Carer,

November 18, 2021

I am writing to ask for your support.

Social media is now a part of everyday life and, while it has many benefits, it is also open to abuse and misuse. We are aware of Tik Tok videos being created using images of staff or referencing school staff in an inappropriate manner. Some of the references are sexualised and the language and tone used is wholly unacceptable and upsetting for our staff, who are professionals, working selflessly to educate the children of Meden school.

We are working hard to identify all of the students involved in the creation of these videos. This activity is illegal and could result in prosecutions as malicious communication. We have provided our students with numerous online safety lessons, assemblies and information, though it appears that these important messages have not reached all students.

It is worth remembering that following an illegal account or sharing offensive videos (whether your child created them or not) is a serious issue. Ignoring the fact that this behaviour is illegal, these videos are neither kind nor compassionate and do not tie into the ethos we promote.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the main social media sites should not be used by under 13s. These accounts can also be used to bully other students and phones can be used to download illegal or inappropriate content. You have a responsibility as a parent for the actions of your child, so I would ask you to consider the following:

- Ensuring your child (if under 13) does not have access to social media accounts where the age range from the provider does not permit it.
- Speaking to your child, whatever their age, about the contents of this letter and the risks they are placing themselves in if they continue to follow, share or create these videos.
- Sitting with your child and looking at their phone with them (the accounts they follow, the content they download, and the nature of any messages they are sending to other students). I understand that we all want to trust our children and allow them some privacy and you may feel uncomfortable doing this, but it will enable you to reinforce the need for online safety and prevent any issues of bullying or illegal activity escalating.

Our first concern is the safety of our students and what they access, but I am also concerned about the hard working and dedicated staff of Meden School. Staff, like children, have the right to attend a work place that is calm and safe where they are respected as individuals. Our staff do not deserve to be the subject of these videos, when they devote so much to our community, and I would ask you to ensure that your child isn't one of those creating and sharing these videos. If further sanctions are necessary, or the police need to be involved, then I will take appropriate action to protect our staff.

Yours faithfully,

David Penman
Assistant Headteacher