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Headteacher: Mrs J Narraway

24th October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) has had widespread impact on the way in which we communicate and express our thoughts and opinions. There are clearly many benefits for us both as individuals and also as communities.

We have been made aware of some children using social media to be unkind to others. What starts as something seemingly harmless takes no account of how those on the receiving end might feel nor does it recognise how quickly things can get out of control and become extremely unpleasant. Newchurch has zero tolerance towards bullying and hate crimes.

Whilst things are most likely to have taken place off the school site and outside school hours, the resulting 'fallout' in such situations can have major implications for harmonious relationships within school and a resulting negative impact on a pupil's wellbeing as well as teaching and learning.

We live in a society where we are proud of our right to freedom of speech and would not wish to suggest that this should be curtailed in any way. There are occasions however, when things said in the virtual world are at best unhelpful and, at worst, may constitute harassment, bullying or intimidation which could ultimately lead to Police involvement. If postings are considered to be threatening or discriminatory then the Police may become involved and have the authority to seize mobile devices and contact service providers. From the age of 10 years old children can be prosecuted.

In order to keep our children safe, please could I ask that you monitor your child's use of social media and the guidelines regarding the age of users:

WhatsApp – 13 years, soon to move to 16 years

Facebook – 13 years

Instagram – 13 years

Tic Toc – anyone under the age of 13 must have approval from parent or guardian

Snapchat – 13 years

Today, Mr Singleton and I have provided curriculum support to the children in Year Six about the responsibility of all children to keep themselves and others safe. We are also organising some talks for them from the PCSO and during anti-bullying week we will be looking more at the impact of social media.

To conclude, whilst our children may be more knowledgeable in using modern communication technologies, it is the partnership of schools and parents that can help them to use it wisely, safely and



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responsibly. Let's work together to combat this misuse of social media. A good website to look at is:
<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Many thanks in anticipation of your continued and valued support.

With kindest regards,



Mrs Jayne Narraway

Head Teacher



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