



16 November 2016

Dear Parents

As you may be aware, 'sexting' amongst young people has become an increasing national concern and focus. In response to this, the Government has recently published guidelines on 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges'. The document is detailed and comprehensive and outlines not only the definition of 'sexting' and the law surrounding it, but how schools must respond and the consequences of this for individuals involved - where incidents must be referred to the police.

As this issue could potentially have implications for your child, I wanted to draw your attention to it and I have included the link to the guidelines below. It is important that you read this carefully.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551575/6_2439_KG_NCA_Sexting_in_Schools_WEB_1_.PDF

What you should do:

- Please read the document carefully.
- Have an age appropriate conversation with your child about 'sexting', and an explicit conversation about the very real implications for them if they participate and are reported. This could also have a detrimental impact on their future.
- Revisit the conversation little and often. Unfortunately, as smart phones and social media are here to stay, this dialogue must also be at the forefront of your child's mind.
- I cannot legislate for all families. All parents have different views on privacy but I can only recommend that, when it comes to the safety of your child, you check your child's phone on a regular basis.

As I understand that these discussions may be sensitive; I have included some further resources below that you may find useful in approaching and managing them.

What we will do:

- Through House assemblies we will focus on factual information and this will include: what it is; how it is most likely to be encountered; the consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images; the risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.
- Educate students about the law and the implications for them if they participate in this type of behaviour (including criminal records and future DBS disclosures).
- Reinforcement of this message in smaller groups, where needed.
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of our wider PSHE curriculum. This will include specific learning on the strategies and skills required for:
 - Managing specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images or the receipt of such images.
 - Seeking support (including who to tell, what to say, what to do, what not to do and where to get support from within and outside of the school).



Resources parents could highlight to their children

1. ChildLine have created Zip-It, an app that provides witty comebacks in order to help a young person say no to requests for inappropriate images -
<https://www.childline.org.uk/Play/GetInvolved/Pages/sexting-zipit-app.aspx>
2. There is information on the ChildLine website for young people about sexting:
<https://childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/>
3. The Safer Internet Centre has produced resources called 'So You Got Naked Online' which help young people to handle incidents of sexting -
<http://childnetsic.s3.amazonaws.com/ufiles/Files%202015/SYGNO%20Booklet%20-%20version%202%20May%202015.pdf>

Please feel free to make contact if you have further questions.

Yours sincerely

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