



Dear parents/carers,

At the start of the week, we promised we would update you regarding the incident that occurred at the weekend. We would like to remind you that any incidents where our school values are undermined and pupil's safety may have been put at risk, then robust action will be taken. In this specific situation, we were able to gain further information that has allowed us to deal with the perpetrators and so eliminate any further issues. The victims and their families feel fully supported with the actions that have been put into place.

We would like to remind all pupils and parents that if any issues occur both in or out of school, they must be reported to a member of staff in line with our 'telling school policy'. We will as always ensure that a thorough investigation takes place and where our concerns are sufficient; we may also screen mobile devices.

At DEC we uphold our responsibility to all members of our community and follow our powers to sanction poor conduct regardless of when and where it occurs. We expect everyone to uphold our values at all times.

### **Our mobile phone policy**

On our website, there is a copy of our mobile phone policy together with the Department for Education's guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

Some of our newer parents have been surprised with the level of action we take to ensure pupils are safe online, including their own mobile devices. If we believe that a young person has acted in an unsafe way, or in a way which undermines the values of our school then we may confiscate their phone. Where our concerns are sufficient, we may also screen the phone. This includes any instance where their mobile phone has been found to be switched on in school.

### **Why do we do this?**

- a. We want to protect children from the negative effects of un-monitored social media and smart phone usage
- b. We want all children to have time at school to enjoy freedom from social media and the pressures it brings
- c. We want to make sure that no child is exposed to inappropriate material or contact with unknown persons online
- d. We want to be confident that no one is ever photographed or videoed when in school



We ask and expect parents to support us in our safeguarding work – the easiest way to do this is to routinely check your child’s phone. Parents should have pass codes and access to their child’s apps. No matter what your child’s age, they are still a child and you should check their phone.

We have plenty of examples where unmonitored social media use negatively affects mental health, leaves pupils vulnerable to predatory people online, or at worst results in them making unsafe decisions such as sending inappropriate personal pictures via social media apps.

None of us want to think or suspect the worst of our young people but until they are adults, we all have to work together to monitor, teach and talk to them about how to use technology and social media safely.

We say to pupils all the time: once you have put something on social media, it is there forever. Think before you act.

A useful article on one issue, sexting, can be found at:

<https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/sexting.htm>

We are confident that you will feel reassured of the outcome and as mentioned in the text sent out at the start of the week, at DEC we will never tolerate conduct in or out of school which undermines our values or makes anyone unsafe.

If you have any questions in regards to the incident or any other issues then please feel free to make contact with myself or your child’s Head of House.

Yours faithfully,



Mr W. Ali  
Deputy Head Teacher



Mr M. Dunn  
Head Teacher