Safe and responsible social media use: Students

It can be common at the start of the academic year to see an increase in social media activity and the problems that can arise owing to unsupervised or uncontrolled use of social media by teenagers.

Most social media apps are for pupils 13 years and over. WhatsApp users must be 16 years old. If you do allow your child to access social media, we ask for your vigilance. Just like their interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support. What is right will vary from family to family but some strategies that are known to be successful include:

- Monitoring children's phones for the apps that are downloaded
- Enacting parental controls on phones and consoles
- Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps – make monitoring part of a daily/weekly routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices, introducing an appropriate cut off time before children go to their room each evening
- Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing.

Whilst we appreciate the benefits (and prevalence) of these forms of communication, students can struggle to interact effectively in school and may find it difficult if any problems or conflict arise as a result of online dialogue. We ask for your support in dealing with this as this is happening outside of school. We do not permit the use of mobile phones anywhere or at any time in school for these reasons.

Please click on the link for information on how to support child in using social media responsibly: Thinkuknow: is my child ready for social media?

Parents and social media

Unfortunately, we have noted recently that there has also been an increased number of incidents where parents and carers have used social media to:

- Complain about individual members of staff or the school
- Make inappropriate comments about members of staff or students
- Make false claims about events in school
- Use inappropriate or derogatory language about the school and its aims

At Colne Valley High School, we want our students to grow into respectful young people who understand how to communicate in a respectful and constructive manner, both online and offline.

Our Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct sets clear expectations for parents about how we expect them to behave online and offline. We expect parents to abide by these guidelines so that you can help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use and communication for our students. This includes voicing opinions about the school in a way that respects the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our staff whilst modelling to our young people how to address differences of opinion or how to raise concerns.

There may be times where, as a parent, you don't agree with something the school is doing. We welcome your feedback and the opportunity to address any concerns you may have. The most appropriate way to raise concerns is directly with the school. Airing complaints or negative opinions on social media doesn't help the school to address issues in the most constructive way.

You can call the school and speak to a member of staff or book an appointment to speak with the Principal or another member of staff face-to-face.

We appreciate your help in providing a supportive, respectful environment for all of our students, parents and staff.