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Thursday 10 March 2022

Dear Parent

March Safeguarding Update

I hope you and your family had a restful half term in preparation for a busy but exciting term. I also hope that you found last month's safeguarding update helpful and would welcome any feedback on topics that you would like more information on.

Snapchat

This month we will focus on the topic of child safety on Snapchat. Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as 'Snaps'), and text messages. The 'Stories' feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once. Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds and stories disappear after 24 hours. The minimum age to use Snapchat is 13, but it is easy to sign up if any younger.

There are a few safety issues with this App such as a high risk of children being exposed to sexual content, fake news and issues with location sharing. Therefore, we suggest reading the attached factsheet so you can talk to your child/children about keeping them safe.

Student Mental Health

Throughout February we have been delivering all-staff training on diagnosing and supporting students with their mental health. As a teacher who has worked in schools for many years, this time of year seems to be a peak time for some students needing mental health first aid. Therefore, it is important that we identify the early signs, and work with our students and families to offer support early.

Mrs Emmett our senior head of inclusion and interim Head of Year 10 has worked hard to secure an Ormiston Families Mental Health and Wellbeing supervisor to be in school once a week to train, supervise and build a strong team of Wellbeing Ambassadors who will take the lead on working with their peers on promoting Wellbeing in our Academy and Community. We are currently recruiting Wellbeing Ambassadors and would welcome new members from all year groups. Please ask your child/children to see Mrs Emmett if they are interested or would like more information.

If you would like further information on how to support your child with mental health, there are many websites now available. One we often signpost parents to is www.youngminds.org.uk. This Charity gives advice to children and parents about various topics including how to access help for your child and local services available.

Ukraine Conflict

I am sure you will be aware of the concerning events unfolding in Ukraine. As with all major news events, there is a potential for fake news and misinformation to reach our children and compound concerns that they already have. Last week we identified that some disinformation (false information that is shared to deliberately cause harm) was circulating, so we asked all form tutors to educate students around this in their tutor time.

If you feel your child would benefit from some extra support from us as they are particularly anxious about the conflict, please do contact their form tutor so we can ensure they are supported.

Finally

As always, please do contact reception and ask for the designated safeguarding lead if you have any issues around your child's safety that you would like to discuss. Please also get in touch if you would like information on a different topic that I have not included in this month's update.

I look forward to writing to you next month on more topical safeguarding issues.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen Seath".

Helen Seath
Vice Principal

Attached:

- Parent Guide – Child Safety on Snapchat