



NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE

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Dear Year 8 Parents and Carers,

Year 8 are a fantastic year group and we are usually very proud of their behaviour and learning. Sadly, I have to write to you for the second time this year about issues stemming from their misuse of social media at home which is affecting school life, behaviour and learning.

We have been alerted by parents and students that a Tik Tok account has been created where students have posted unkind, harmful and abusive statements about students in year 8. Not only is this completely against our school values but is also a mis-use of social media and is a crime under the Communications Act 2003. These selfish and offensive messages have not only impacted the wellbeing of the students named but have also caused disruption during social time when students have been questioning or reacting to rumours about who is responsible. I am concerned not only for those students directly affected, but our whole school community.

What have we done about this and what is planned?

We have already asked for the original Tik Tok site to be removed and this has been actioned. However, someone has now set up another account with a similar name and has shared this.

We are talking to students and parents to gather more information about who is responsible.

We will be holding an assembly with all year 8 students this afternoon to explain why this is both harmful and illegal, to ask for information and to warn students of the consequences if this continues. I believe our students to be highly responsible and therefore I am convinced that students will come forward and share information with us. This has always been the case with similar incidents in the past.

Once we have more information, we will investigate this incident with urgency. The usual sanction for misuse of social media is an external suspension which remains on the student's school record.

What are we asking from parents?

- Please check your child's phone tonight, including Whatsapp groups, Snapchat and Instagram, as well as Tik Tok, and ask them for any information.
- Talk to your child about our values of compassion and kindness and the importance of always behaving respectfully to others.
- Remind them about the legal consequences of mis-using social media.
- If your child has been affected, please discuss this with them and reassure them. Please contact the school if you or your daughter feel that they need support from our wellbeing team.
- Contact the school immediately on [info@](mailto:info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk) if you have any information to share with us.
- If you are concerned that your child may be involved, please let us know. As well as being concerned for the welfare and safety of students in year 8 who are affected, I am also concerned



for the perpetrator(s) and why they feel the need to harm and abuse others. It will be important to provide this student with support, as well as a serious consequence.

As a school community, we take great pride in how responsibly our students behave and how well they work together for the common good. This includes acting with integrity – always doing ‘the right thing’, rather than being ‘bystanders’ in relation to harmful, unsafe or irresponsible behaviour.

We know that when you work with us towards the same goal and when you articulate your support for the school’s actions, it is always so powerful. Thank you, in advance, for your help and support.

Yours faithfully

Helen Marriott and Leanne Wood