

16 November 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Internet Safety

Our children live in world dominated by social media; the likes of Twitter, Facebook and Snapchat are a large part of their lives. They access these, by and large, through their mobile phones.

However, there are times when children can be encouraged, or think it is proper and correct, to share images which are inappropriate. Worse still, these images once sent may never disappear. Even Snapchat images which should vanish within a set period of time can be captured from the screen. And, once an image is sent, the young person no longer has control as to whom it will be shared with.

The sending of naked, semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others is called 'Sexting' and this can be a very distressing and difficult topic to talk to young people about. However, having these discussions with your child will help to safeguard them from making a mistake that may follow them for a long time. Starting that conversation off can be a challenge, though I hope this letter may give you such an opportunity.

The law states that creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

The NSPCC Website (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/>) has lots of helpful tips and information on this topic which you may find helpful. I would really advise that you find some time to read the whole of this website and click on some of the links for advice and guidance. In all cases, prevention is better than trying to deal with the aftermath.

There are also a set of useful, short videos on the Thinkyouknow website at <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Nude-selfies-a-parents-guide/> which you may find useful.

Yours sincerely



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