

Essex County Council

Mountnessing C. of E. (V.C) Primary School

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Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be fully aware, the internet has become a powerful tool to connect and to share ideas and opinions. In recent years, social networking sites such as Facebook have grown in popularity and many people use them to communicate with family, friends and others.

The vast majority of people who use social networking show respect in their communication with others and this is something that we must encourage to show our children that we are positive 'digital role models'. However, like other aspects of society, there are people who disregard the rules set and will use social networking sites to cyberbully, harass or stalk others.

Recently, there have been a number of high-profile cases in the media where people have used the internet to intimidate and bully others. These have been investigated by the police and, in some instances, have led to criminal prosecutions.

As a school, we encourage parents to support us with the education and wellbeing of their children and if at any time, parents feel that they have any issues regarding their child's education, they should make an appointment with me. As a community, we should all frown upon the use of social networking sites by parents to criticise and make unsubstantiated comments about the school or any members of staff.

We do not want to go down the line of having to send out legal letters from solicitors to parents about untrue and damaging comments made on social networking sites.

Current laws such as the 1988 Malicious Communication Act, 1997 Protection From Harassment Act and 2003 Communication Act all can be used to protect people from malicious and threatening posts on the internet.

In light of this, I am updating the current 'Home-School Agreement' to include a section about the complaints procedures in school and I would be grateful if you could read, sign it and return it to school when they are sent out. I am also arranging a parent's session on eSafety to help us support our children in the online world and I would be grateful for as many to attend this as possible. More details with dates and times will be sent out nearer the time.

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards,

Headteacher

Chair of governors

