

25 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

It has recently been brought to our attention that a small number of Year 7 and Year 8 students are participating in WhatsApp group chats where some comments and language being used are unkind, inappropriate and, in some cases, contain offensive or abusive language.

While these conversations are taking place outside of school hours, they can have a significant impact on students' wellbeing, friendships and experiences in school. We are asking all parents and carers to speak with their children about their online behaviour and to regularly monitor their social media and messaging activity.

We encourage families to remind children that the same standards of respect, kindness and good conduct that apply in school also apply online. Students should never post messages, images or comments that could upset, intimidate or embarrass others.

To help keep children safe online, WhatsApp provides a number of parental controls and privacy settings, including:

- Restricting who can add your child to group chats.
- Controlling who can see profile photos, status updates and last-seen information.
- Using privacy settings to limit contact from unknown users.
- Blocking and reporting inappropriate behaviour.

Parents may find the following resources helpful

- [WhatsApp Safety Centre](#)
- [NSPCC Guide to Social Media and Messaging Apps](#)
- [Internet Matters Parent Guides](#)

It is also important for parents and carers to be aware that certain online behaviours may constitute criminal offences. This can include harassment, threats, hate-related comments, the sharing of indecent images, and the sending of malicious or abusive messages. If you become aware of concerning content involving your child, we strongly recommend that you do not delete the messages. Where you believe a crime may have been committed, or where the content is threatening, abusive or harmful, this should be reported to the police via 101 or, in an emergency where there is an immediate risk of harm, via 999.



We know that most students use social media responsibly, but group chats can escalate very quickly and messages sent online can have serious consequences for both the sender and the recipient. We encourage all parents and carers to have regular conversations at home, active parental oversight remain the most effective way of helping young people stay safe online.

Thank you for your support in reinforcing these important messages.

Kind regards,

Mrs K Gray and Miss K McCarron (Heads of Orion and Apollo school)

