



9 March 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to raise awareness of the latest Social Media Snapchat bullying 'craze' dubbed 'Letter X' to hit our young people.

This is when a group of children identify a target, and bombard the recipient via abusive messages. A 'group' is created on Snapchat, up to 16 people can be added in whether they want to be or not. All participants can then send messages which every other group member will see. However, after a 24-hour period any messages, pictures or videos are deleted by default. Snaps sent to the group can also only be opened and replayed just once by each recipient, and last for a maximum of 10 seconds, depending on the how long the user wants it to be played, for between one and 10 seconds. This is making it near impossible for children to report the abuse without proof and again, once the snap is opened within 24 hours it disappears completely.

You may already be aware of the significant increase in situations arising from abuse of social media having to be managed by schools.

Whilst social media can be a wonderful communication tool, it can also be used for malicious purposes, causing untold upset to both children and their parents and carers. This is sometimes because children are being given access to social media accounts below the required age limit, and also because people tend to say things in electronic communication that they might not say in a face to face interaction.

I am asking for your support in monitoring your child's access to, and use of social media as the school is limited in what it can do to curb interactions taking place beyond the campus. Threatening or abusive behaviour is an offence, and is a police matter.

Do please talk to your children about the potential dangers of social media, and further help can be found at www.kidscape.org.uk

Thank you, as ever, for your support in this matter.

Mr M Antram
Headteacher