



SWINEMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Carers,

A letter from the Head Teachers of schools in Beverley and surrounding district.

We have every sympathy for parents and carers as they try to navigate the “virtual world” in which their children and teenagers exist. It is a minefield of traps and dangers. This is heightened through the mobile phone.

There are many benefits. Parents and carers can keep in contact, even track their children when they are out with friends or journeying to and from school or friends’ homes.

We cannot un-invent social media and the world of the internet. Why would we want to as it makes all of our lives more efficient, more productive and enriched.

Social Media however was never designed for children. Children and young teenagers are not mature enough or emotionally developed to cope with some of the consequences of it. Despite regular reminders and inputs from teachers and specialists in the field, the children forget themselves. We feel for them. As a society we have given them tools which alone they cannot deal with, BUT can, if properly supervised by their parents and carers.

Many of you will be astonished by the language the children use and or have read on various social media platforms, but frankly far worse is the meanness, sexist, misogynistic, discriminatory and even racist comments they make.

However, as much as we all build and reinforce in our schools a strong ethos and values, it often seems to disappear once a phone is in the hand. The fact is, however, that the children **are** the delightful caring people we all know and love, but can easily lose their way in this virtual, unreal world, which quickly bites back and becomes very real indeed.

Our advice is simple: as a parent you are the adult. Make it clear that if your child is to have a phone, you maintain responsibility and must and will check all that goes on in their online life. If a child attempts to stop your access, then confiscate the phone. Obviously, you will gradually reduce this monitoring as the child moves to maturity and your child is expected to be able to keep themselves safe and accept responsibility for their life and actions.

If you would like further advice or support, please look on the school’s website or contact the safe-guarding team at the council.

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