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Principal: Mr Ian Cooper

**July 2023**

Dear Parent/Carers

Recently, we have had a number of parents report concerns to us about content which they have seen on their child's phones. Some examples of this are inappropriate images/videos of a sexual nature, including nudes sent and received by students, videos which promote self harm and suicidal ideation, images which have been edited or filtered to misrepresent the original photo and other distressing online content.

We invited our PCSO in to deliver an assembly to the Y7s and Y8s on online safety as a means to support the students in understanding the dangers which they can be exposed to when given access to social media and the internet.

From the NSPCC website, this is the position regarding nude images. The law says that creating or sharing sexual images or videos of a child under 18 is illegal, even if the person sharing is a child. This includes:

- Sending sexual messages to a child, often called 'sexting'.
- A child taking an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- Sharing an explicit image or video of a child, even if it is shared between children of the same age
- Having, downloading or storing an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave them permission for it to be taken.

There are many risks associated with sharing nudes and these include losing control of the image, risk of blackmail and bullying or experiencing online sexual harassment. Whilst it is illegal for anyone to exchange nude or semi-nude imagery of a child, the legislation is there to protect children from abuse.

Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

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The internet can be a helpful support tool for students who are experiencing mental health concerns or worries. However some sites can pose additional risks where students can witness distressing content which promotes self-harm or suicide. Some sites encourage students to take part in challenges which could cause harm, often seen on TikTok.

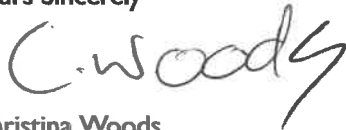
We are asking for parents/carers to support us in trying to keep students safe online and this can include using parental controls to limit internet access, creating a filter to block certain apps or content and discussing the use of passwords and how these should not be shared with other people.

If you and your child can have an ongoing open dialogue about their life online where you encourage them to seek your advice if they find themselves in a difficult situation.

Should you have any concerns, please let the school know.

The NSPCC contains lots of helpful information for parents/carers. Please use the link below for additional information <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Yours Sincerely



Christina Woods

**Lead Learning Manager**

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