



St. Ninian's HIGH SCHOOL

Scoil Ard Noo Ninian

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HEAD TEACHER Mr C. J. Coole

Our REF: JWH/LK/Year 7 Online safety

28th January 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE : Year 7 Online Safety

Over recent weeks, we have become concerned about the online activities of some of our Year 7 students. We have had to investigate several incidents of online bullying, much of which has been taking place in a 'WhatsApp' group chat entitled 'Bemma 2024/25'. The majority of the comments and messages are happening outside of school hours, sometimes very late at night.

We would like to make it clear that the school does not condone the use of 'WhatsApp' by our students and any chats using the school's name have no official links to us.

As a school we have significant concerns after being shared several weeks' worth of messages in this group chat and have already delivered an assembly to all Year 7 students this week about their online conduct. We have reminded them that the age requirement for 'WhatsApp' is 13, so we would not expect anyone in Year 7 to be using this platform at all. We have advised all students to leave this group immediately and have spoken directly to the students responsible for setting up the group and their parents. We have also informed students about recent changes to law on the Isle of Man relating to telecommunications and that many of the messages and comments we have seen would fit the definitions below, taken from the legislation:

'...Sends a message ...that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character'

'...Sends a message .. with the intention that it causes harm to another'

We strongly advise all parents to routinely monitor their Year 7 child's mobile device use and particularly if they are using 'WhatsApp'.

We were horrified by the foul language, extreme insults and name calling, threats of violence and in some cases, indecent images that we found.

We will be in contact over the next few weeks regarding the relaunch of the Isle of Man's Safer Schools App, which is a tool that parents and young people can access for support around online behaviour and safety. In the meantime, please find below a link for an information leaflet which we hope you will find useful in guiding any conversations you might have with your child.

https://snhs.sch.im/site/uploads/pages/196/_media/20250128_b4105de7/Shareable_Group_chats_ZM.pdf

Thank you for your support

Yours faithfully

Miss White

Deputy Head Teacher

Live to Learn
Learn to Live