A Short Stay School (medical)
Home & Hospital Tuition Services
Bilston Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 2QJ

Headteacher: Mr S Pritchard-Jones
Telephone: 01902 632 719
www.shepwell.co.uk Twitter: @ShepwellSchool

Shepwell School

"Believing is Achieving"

Tuesday 25th February 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you to clarify elements of the school's policy on the misuse of social media. We know from our discussions with other head teachers and senior colleagues, that this is a nationwide issue. You have probably seen many cases reported too in the media. Recently, we have been made aware, by both pupils and parents, of several incidences of the misuse of social media, sometimes by our pupils and other times where our pupils have been the victims of misuse.

I wanted to assure you that if any aspect of ICT is misused in the School on our equipment, or if there is any misuse of the School email system either in or out of normal school hours, then, due to the sophisticated filters in operation and monitored by an external agency, we will identify and address this misuse. Fortunately, this type of misuse is incredibly rare and this is helped by the fact that pupils are not able to access any social media sites on our network. Indeed, most of the inappropriate use of the internet is done from home or on pupils' mobile devices during evenings, weekends and holidays. **Staff at the School have no jurisdiction to deal with this, and cannot investigate it.**

It should be noted that in many cases a child may put themselves at considerable risk due to the misuse of social media accidentally. E.g. giving personal details, publishing photographs, etc. to a 'friend' who then distributes this information more widely. They need to be fully aware of this risk.

The responsibility for monitoring a child's use of social media, or indeed the internet in general, must lie with parents/carers. We strongly encourage you to discuss issues around this with your children and I have placed a document containing advice intended to support you in this process on our website. In addition to this document, we have also put links to other websites containing further advice around children's use of ICT on our School website.

If your child is the victim of inappropriate use then we strongly recommend that you as a parent/guardian report the matter to both the website developer and to the police. As stated earlier, unless an issue manifests itself during the normal school day, our staff are not able to address this.

However, to support you and your child the School will:

- Continue, through our British Values curriculum, assemblies, activity days, National Online Safety accreditation and website, educate pupils of the dangers of inappropriate use of the internet
- continue to monitor the use of any form of ICT in normal school hours and the use of the school email system at all times, and will deal with anything deemed inappropriate
- refer anything that we believe could be defined as, or could potentially lead to, a Child Protection issue to the appropriate external agencies
- continue to support parents with advice on how to tackle inappropriate use either by their own child or others

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Whole School Community Approach to Online Safety Training

We have subscribed to the National Online Safety Certified School Programme to ensure that we implement an effective approach to online safety and that we meet the statutory online safety duties in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)' guidance.

As part of our accreditation we are now able to offer parents a free annual online training rather than us inviting parents to attend a workshop at Shepwell. We hope that the online training package will be more convenient for parents and carers. If you do not have internet access at home you are more than welcome to arrange to come into school and use our computers.

About The Course
Annual Online Safety Course for Parents & Carers (2019-20)

Introduction
Online safety in schools is of paramount importance. As the online world evolves, so do both the online risks facing our children and the relevant legislation, both statutory and non-statutory, which directs and guides how schools should meet their online safety requirements.

The role of Parents and Carers
The first line of defence in keeping children safe online are parents and carers. Online risks do not start and stop at the school gates and encouraging and supporting parents to become involved in their child's online safety at home will ensure they are receiving the most complete protection they possibly can.

What you will learn
Delivered wholly through video, you will learn about a wide range of online dangers across three main areas:

Unsafe communications
Online relationships; fake profiles; online bullying; online grooming; child sexual exploitation; sexual violence & harassment; sexting and live streaming.

Effects to mental health, wellbeing and lifestyle
Online vs offline identity; social media & mental health; device addiction; online challenges; overspending; online gambling and radicalisation.

Managing online information
Online reputation; age-inappropriate content; fraud (online); fake news; targeted advertising; personal data and the dark web.
You will learn about each online danger, what the risks are around each danger, potential signs and what parents, carers and trusted adults can do to help ensure their children stay safe online.

In a separate letter I will send you further information about the course and how to access this valuable training opportunity.

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I am keen to find out what you think of the school and will be in touch again very soon to share news of a parent event and a link to a parent survey. In the meantime, if you have a pressing matter, please do not hesitate to contact me via reception. I will try my best to respond to queries and concerns as quickly as possible. If I am not available, please leave a message and I will get back to you.

I look forward to a continued positive working relationship with yourselves in further developing Shepwell School and by working together, I trust that we can keep all our pupils safe and well.

Kind regards

Stephen Pritchard-Jones

Mr S. Pritchard-Jones
Headteacher