



Interim Executive Headteacher: Mr Luke Welsh
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Important Message from Mr Welsh – Online Safety Concerns – PLEASE READ!

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is very rare that I need to write a letter like this to my parents but it is my statutory duty, as Executive Headteacher, to ensure the children in my care are safe both in and out of school, as well as on and off line. Furthermore, two sets of our school parents have asked for this information to be shared with the wider school community.

Over the past two weeks, the Senior Leadership Team have had to deal with three significant, separate and equally serious safeguarding situations, which have all related to children's safety online, **outside of school hours**, especially when using a range of apps. **Two of these concerns have involved the police.**

Our children, here in our school have been involved in extremely vulnerable situations, including:

- The sending and receiving of threatening messages via WhatsApp, including comments such as 'why don't you go kill yourself?'
- The viewing and sharing of explicit pornographic imagery on TikTok.
- The viewing and sharing of 'nudes and semi-nudes' – a criminal offence and is classed as breaking the law.
- The sharing and viewing of indecent images on the app 'Omegle', a website advertised via TikTok. (*Note: Omegle is a website that pairs random strangers for live text or video chats and has the slogan 'Talk to Strangers'. Anyone can use this website and therefore poses a significant risk of child exploitation and ability to watch 18+ adult content*)
- Our children sharing their own photo, whilst wearing their NJA School Uniform, with strangers on various platforms, including TikTok, Snapchat and Omegle.

So, as you read the above list, I ask you one question – Do you know what your child is doing online? Do you know what apps your child is accessing? Do you understand how to check and filter your child's internet use? Do you know how to keep your child safe online? Do you know if your child is talking to strangers or sharing the correct information, including photographs?

If you have thought 'no' or 'hesitated' then **please act now**.

Our school website contains a wealth of websites which contain useful information and weblinks designed to help parents with navigating apps, websites and devices and this can be found at <https://normantonjunioracademy.org/our-academy/online-safety/>.

Tuesday 7th February is also Safer Internet Day and we will be sharing further information too.

If you would like to speak to one of the Safeguarding Team for specific advice, questions or queries, then please do not hesitate to speak to us at this week's Parents' Evenings or book an appointment via the school office.

Many thanks for your continued support and please take the time to talk to your child about how to behave online.

Kind regards,

Mr Welsh (Interim Executive Headteacher)