

The De Montfort School

UNLOCKING YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL

Four Pools Road, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 1DQ | Telephone: 01386 442060



26 October 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to draw your attention to our serious concerns regarding the abuse of certain forms of social media by some of our students.

Our main current concern is the misuse of Instagram, where some students, especially younger students, have been either posting or following posts which are extremely derogatory towards staff. This, I am sure you would agree is completely unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. Naturally given the seriousness of this matter, we have been liaising closely with the Police.

Up to now, our policy has been to allow all students to have phones to and from school for safety reasons and for our older groups to have freedom of use during designated social time. Some students also use their mobiles to actively support their learning.

So, it with great sadness that we have to write to you about this misuse as the vast majority of our students do not abuse the privilege of using their mobile phones. **However, we cannot allow the misuse of Instagram to continue, and if it does not stop with immediate effect, we will have to ban any use of mobiles without direct supervision at TDMS.**

To make our expectations absolutely clear to our students, we have held special assemblies. We ask that you immediately and strongly reinforce our message about the importance of using social media appropriately. **Please do check regularly what your child is doing on social media.**

Our students have been informed that if we find any evidence of their **posting or following** an inappropriate message there will be a serious sanction. In this event, you will be informed concerning what we have found and we would ask that you equally take action in the form of removing their access to that social media. We will also inform the Police as this represents a breach of the Malicious Communications Act.

Please note that there are advisory policies regarding all the social media forms, in particular regarding what is

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age appropriate (eg <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>). For Instagram this is 13 and our concern is that there are large numbers of students under 13 who are following Instagram.

As another measure to support our drive to address the misuse of social media we will be running a **parents' e-safety session** early next half term (date to be announced). We will also be including some direct information sessions for our students in our SE period on a Wednesday.

Naturally we want to work closely with our parents to help protect our staff and our students from any abuse of social media, so please do contact us if you think there are other support mechanisms we could be putting in place.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Nichols', written in a cursive style.

Guy Nichols