

2 April 2014

Dear Parents

We are becoming increasingly concerned with pupils' use of social networking, on sites such as Instagram, Facebook and SnapChat. The Year Offices are having to deal with an increased number of incidents of cyber-bullying, Pupils are bringing their grievances into school and this causes a higher level of tension and anxiety between friendship groups and individuals feel isolated and vulnerable. It has also, at times, influenced direct confrontations between pupils in school. It has a detrimental effect on pupils' ability to learn when they cease to feel safe and secure in school.

Please be aware of the sites that your children use and monitor their activity, especially on social networks. Some content, such as posts, comments and pictures are offensive and inappropriate and cause distress, misunderstandings and further bullying.

Please remind your children that it is a criminal offence (Protection from Harassment Act 1997) to bully someone on the grounds of ethnicity, race or sexuality and that people can be prosecuted for Cyberbullying (Malicious Communications Act 1988) and for 'Sexting' (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We know that pupils at Springfield have been both perpetrators and victims of the above offences and that considerable unhappiness and fear have been caused as a result.

If in any doubt, the E-Safety Quick Link, available on the school's website, provides advice and guidance for parents and pupils about being safe online.

Yours sincerely

Helen Summers
Deputy Headteacher