



Ripon Grammar School

14 May 2024

The use of mobile devices and internet safety

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The responsible use of mobile devices is an important part of keeping children safe. As a school, we ensure that students are provided with up-to-date knowledge on how to use mobile phones responsibly. Students are educated through assemblies, our PSHCE programme and I.C.T lessons to ensure they understand the potential risks of social media, internet usage and group chats.

It has been brought to our attention that there is a WhatsApp group chat named *Year 8 Grammar*. This WhatsApp group chat has over 60 members of the year group in it. Recently, an inappropriate video was posted to this group chat, which was offensive in nature. Therefore, we would like to encourage a discussion between yourself and your child on their use of mobile devices. Please see below some advice:

- ensure you have frequent conversations with your children regarding technology and social media: it is best if they feel confident asking their parents or teachers for help if they see something upsetting or problematic.
- explore support like [Childline | Childline](#) and <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>
- be aware of how online behaviour is reflected in the school's behaviour policy: communications with staff and peers should be as respectful and appropriate online as in person.
- make sure children are aware of potential risks like phishing and fraud, especially when using public wi-fi where security is less stringent.
- be aware of location settings and other privacy settings and check them regularly.
- consider using parental controls such as Qustodio
- revisit the law on sending explicit images or malicious messages- it is an offence for an under 18 to take an explicit photograph or send it even if it is of their own body.

If you require further support, please refer to our E-safety Protocol which offers guidance on the safe use of the internet: <https://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/documents/E%20Safety%20Protocol.pdf>

We would also like to remind you that our school policy does not permit mobile phones to be used on site except for the following reasons:

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Headmaster: Mr Jonathan M Webb, MA

Address: Clothholme Road, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 2DG



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- Phones are allowed on site to enable communication regarding travel arrangements between students and parents, particularly in view of the distances some students travel to school.
- At all other times, for contact with parents, permission must be sought from a member of staff; this should take place only in exceptional circumstances and in a discreet area of the school.
- Students should visit Reception prior to seeing the School Health Worker in the case of illness. Students will not, usually, be able to use phones in the medical room.
- Students should take care when using phones before and after school, particularly when crossing the road; students should be aware that phones can be a distraction and should be used with care. Other electronic devices are not permitted on site without permission, including iPods, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.
- Photography and filming is not permitted on school site at any time of the school day (unless prior approval has been sought).
- Students are reminded that all electronic devices are banned from public examinations and infringement of these rules will lead to disqualification from at least the examination being taken and possibly all other examinations taken during the same session (e.g. all GCSE examinations).

Yours sincerely,

Miss L Anderson
Head of Year 8

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