



BELFAST MODEL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Principal: Ms P Stuart, B. Ed, PQH NI, M. Ed

8th November 2021

Dear Parent / Guardian

It has been brought to my attention that some accounts on TikTok have been used to post and share videos, images and comments which may cause offence to school staff. This issue has been reported to staff by a significant number of students, who are concerned that they and their school are being presented in this manner. I have viewed some of the content myself and it is totally inappropriate and unacceptable.

The law around this matter is clear. Students should not be posting or sharing videos, images or comments about any person on any social media platform, without that person's explicit expressed consent.

Communications Act 2003

127.

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if s/he-

*(a) sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or
(b) causes any such message or matter to be so sent.*

(2) A person is guilty of an offence if, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another, s/he-

*(a) sends by means of a public electronic communications network, a message that s/he knows to be false,
(b) causes such a message to be sent; or
(c) persistently makes use of a public electronic communications network.*

I have reported this matter to Mrs J Weir, Chair BOG and to PSNI. Work is being done in the background to identify the persons behind these user accounts.

In the meantime, please discuss the safe and appropriate use of social media with your daughter. If she has any of the recent TikTok videos, images or comments saved to her phone, I would strongly advise that she deletes them immediately and does not share them, even on a 'private' account.

As parents, many of you have had to deal with the negative impact of social media in relation to your own daughter. We are all aware of how toxic social media can be, if not used appropriately. As a school, we will continue to guide the students in how to use the Internet and social medias platforms appropriately, safely and within the Law. Please remind them of this simple rule, 'Don't be mean behind the screen'.

I wish to thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,

Paula Stuart
Principal

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