

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Subject: Digital Risks and Maintaining a Respectful Community**

As we continue to implement our stricter phone policy this term, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. The majority of our students have responded exceptionally well to reducing their online activity during the school day.

However, in our increasingly digital world, we remain vigilant regarding the content students may encounter outside of school hours. I am writing to bring two specific, concerning trends to your attention so that we can work together to protect our children.

### **1. Risks Associated with the 'Yandex' Search Engine**

Following my previous communication in April via Satchel, I want to reiterate the risks associated with the search engine **Yandex**.

- **The Concern:** Yandex has the capability to bypass standard parental controls and filters.
- **The Risk:** This may allow children to access content that is age-inappropriate or harmful.
- **Action for Parents:** We encourage you to check your child's devices and browser history to ensure this search engine is not being used to circumvent the safety measures you have put in place at home.

### **2. Social Media Trends and the Use of Racist Slurs**

We have become aware of a troubling trend on social media where certain "influencers" say that Black people have the authority to give permission to others to use the 'N' word, often referred to by children as having a "pass", which in turn may lead to white pupils asking black students for permission for these 'passes'.

- **Our Stance:** At Langtree, we want to be absolutely clear: **the 'N' word is a racist slur and will be treated as the same as a swear word at Langtree.** It is never acceptable to be used in a social context. Under no circumstances will we permit students to use this language toward others.
- **The Concern:** This trend risks "normalising" racist terminology. While we have not heard this used within the school building, we are proactive in addressing it to ensure it does not enter our community.
- **Our Approach:** If a student uses this word, our first priority is **education**. We will talk to the child to help them understand the historical weight of their words and the impact they have on our community. However, repeated use will result in **formal sanctions** and direct discussions with parents.

### **Working Together**

While it is disheartening to address these trends, I am encouraged by how our school community continues to raise these concerns with us. Our goal is to ensure our children understand the importance of respecting others and the necessity of protecting themselves against harmful online content.

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our students safe.

Kind regards  
Ms Burman  
Deputy Headteacher