



13<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Have you ever had emails or text messages encouraging you to reply or to share information? There is a good chance that these are from organised crime groups and you should NOT reply. This sort of activity is called 'phishing' and it is an increasingly common problem.

The criminal's goal is to convince you to click on the links within their scam email or text message, or to give away sensitive information (such as bank details).

These messages may look like the real thing but are malicious. Once clicked, you may be sent to a dodgy website which could download viruses onto your computer, or steal your passwords.

We know there are criminals trying to take advantage of people's worries during Covid-19 to do this. They are also actively targeting young people in the hope that they will be tempted by the promise of something mysterious, or perhaps illegal, and share bank details or other information.

Luckily there is a branch of the police dedicated to investigating this sort of activity, the National Cyber Security Centre. You can easily report messages to them.

- Text messages should be forwarded (free of charge) to 7726
- Emails should be forwarded to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)
- If you have had money stolen via this type of online fraud you can report it directly to here: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

I would encourage you to do this, and to talk about it as a family so that your children also know how to respond and protect themselves. If you report a message or text the NCSC will look into it and take prompt action. This year alone, they have stopped 45,000 scams and 90,000 fake websites which gives you a sense of just how common this sort of crime is.

There is a great deal of additional advice and guidance if you need it on their website too: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/information-for/individuals-families>

Citizens Advice also have a dedicated Scams Advisor telephone service you can call: 0808 250 5050.

Kind regards,

S Dennison

Scott Dennison  
Online Safety Lead

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "d.c.", is positioned above the printed name of Donald Cumming.

Donald Cumming  
Deputy Headteacher