



RE: Social Media Conduct

15th March 2022

Dear Parents & Carers

Online communications play an important role in keeping children safe at Denton Community College. We can only be successful in keeping children safe if we all work together to ensure that online messages regarding safety are informed, accurate and consistent with advice given to the College by the appropriate authorities. It follows that all members of the College community should also behave responsibly when posting about safety issues online.

Unfortunately, it has been brought to our attention that some members of our community have recently been using Facebook as a forum to complain and/or be abusive about the College and/or members of staff/parents or children in the school community. We are all of course entitled to have our own views and opinions, and the College is always happy to receive questions or comments from any member of the College community, whether about the ways we seek to keep our pupils safe or any other concern individuals may have. Unfortunately the posting of inaccurate and misleading messages about the College's safety policies or practices could contribute to pupils failing to follow the procedures specifically developed by the College keep them safe. Similarly, gratuitous comments and complaints about individuals are also a serious matter, and both issues should concern us all. Sadly, a number of postings on the recently established Facebook page fall into these categories; they are both misleading and potentially harmful. Consequently, we are in the process of obtaining legal advice and consulting with the Police to address both this misuse of social media, as well as the statements made against Denton Community College and our school community.

We understand that it is not possible for the College to please all parents all of the time, and that there will be occasions when individuals may wish to complain or question our policies or practices. For those wishing to raise concerns or seek clarification regarding issues we have published clear advice about how this can be done on the College website. As a professional organisation we will not tolerate the on or offline publication of ill-informed, inaccurate and possibly libellous comments, as well as the unofficial use of any branding or materials to which the College holds the copyright. As already stated legal action has been sought regarding these issues and consequently, we will be contacting those responsible for the recent series of ill-judged and misleading posts to ask that these comments be removed immediately

This incident reminds us all how important it is that all members of our community understand that the use of technology (including social networking, mobile phones, games consoles and other websites) to deliberately threaten, upset, harass, intimidate or embarrass someone else could be viewed as cyberbullying or harassment. Cyberbullying is just as harmful as physical bullying and is therefore not tolerated at Denton Community College. We take all instances of cyber-bullying or harassment involving any members of our community very seriously as we want all members of the community to feel safe. Posting threatening, obscene or offensive comments online can potentially be considered as a criminal offence and can therefore have serious consequences, hence our contact with the police and instruction of our legal counsel.

Any complaints should be made using the correct and official channels, so we can work together to help resolve any legitimate concerns that parents may have. The [Complaints Policy](#), [Anti-Bullying Policy](#), [Social Media Policy](#) and other relevant policies are available on our website via the information section or upon request.

While we are aware that it is only a very small part of our large and vibrant College community that have precipitated this letter, we would like to take this opportunity to ask all parents to think carefully about the information and comments they post online, remembering the potential impact and implications posting such content may have on you and your family as well as other members of the College community. All of us need to work in partnership to promote

HEADTEACHER: Mr G Rule

responsible internet use. Your own role in modelling positive and responsible online behaviour for your child is a crucial part of their broader learning about how adults behave in a civilised community. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those parents and carers who have offered their support over the last week regarding these matters, many of whom felt unable to challenge the posts directly on social media however their correspondence has been greatly appreciated by the College.

If parents wish to discuss this matter further, or have any other safety concerns then please do contact the school via info@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk.

Thanking you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Greg Rule
Headteacher
Denton Community College



Prof. Mel West
Chair of Governors