



## March 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing following an increase in concerns about **non-school related issues that are impacting on our students and their education**. Social media platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram have had widespread impact on the way in which we communicate and express our thoughts and opinions. Social media has many benefits for us both as individuals and as communities; many schools including Farnborough Spencer Academy are exploring how we might use social media to engage even more closely with parents and students.

Unfortunately, we are experiencing an **increasing number of situations where social media has been used inappropriately by students**. We live in a society where we are proud of our right to freedom of speech and would not wish to suggest that this should be curtailed in any way. However, there are occasions, **when things said on social media** may constitute harassment, bullying or intimidation.

There have been a growing number of situations where we have had to deal with students using social media to be unkind to others. What starts as something seemingly harmless, can quickly get out of control and become extremely unpleasant. Whilst things are most likely to have taken place off the school site and outside school hours, **the resulting 'fallout' in such situations can have major implications in the Academy**.

If you have concerns that your child might be on the receiving end of hurtful social media posts, or playing a part themselves, please talk to us. Some recent examples of poor social media have caused school staff to spend a disproportionate amount of time trying to manage issues and situations. We would much prefer if this time could be focused on our students' education.

In order to support with this, Farnborough Spencer Academy is a mobile free zone. Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones at school. They should be turned off and put away while they are on the school site. If you need to be contacted in an emergency situation, the Academy will contact you directly.

We would also like to remind you that any person posting offensive or inflammatory material could potentially be committing a criminal offence. As well as contacting us, you can also report via the app's reporting device and you may want to inform the police yourselves. While we will always try and support, we are limited in the action we can take to sanction or control content posted online.



At Farnborough Spencer Academy, we aim to live by our staff and student pledges. These give us clear guidance, and it's true that many of our students do not follow this guidance in their interactions online. Students do not always show respect and kindness for each other online. They do not always lead by example. Where social media usage impacts on the running of the academy and the welfare of our students, we will always seek to take action if we are able.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Smith  
Executive Principal



## Guidance for families

The following apps can be used by parents to protect and monitor their child's mobile phone usage. We would urge you to consider these as part of keeping your children safe online. Some are paid for, and some are free.

1. FamiSafe iOS Parental Control - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/famisafe-parental-control-app/id1385417904>
2. Bark Parental Control for iOS - <https://www.bark.us/>
3. Boomerang iPhone Parental Control - <https://useboomerang.com/>
4. NetNanny iPad Parental Control - <https://www.netnanny.com/ios/>
5. Mobicip iPad Monitoring App - <https://www.mobicip.com/>
6. Kaspersky Safe Kids Parental Control - <https://www.kaspersky.co.uk/safe-kids>
7. Mobistealth - <https://www.mobistealth.com/>
8. Qustodio iOS Parental Control - <https://www.qustodio.com/en/parental-control-apps-comparison/>
9. ScreenTime Parental Control - <https://screentimelabs.com/>
10. OurPact - <https://ourpact.com/>

We can also recommend resources and reading from National Online Safety – they provide resources and guidance for parents and schools. Their site can be accessed here - <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>

Parents of children aged 11-14 can complete an online course for free - <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/courses/os-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-11-14>

Parents of children aged 14-18 can complete an online course for free - <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/courses/annual-award-in-online-safety-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-14-18-international>

