



Eckington School

a specialist engineering college

Respect Progress Succeed

Headteacher: P Cummings, MA



Engineering

Dear Parent/Carer,

Do you know about your child's life online? (Facebook, e-mail, texting etc.)

The issue

We are finding increasingly that we have to unpick what has been said by students about other students on Facebook and through text messaging. Students believe that their online lives are less well known by adults, and to some extent they are right – many parents when contacted about abuse online are completely unaware of the abuse.

The school's response

We will continue to take disciplinary action, ranging from detention to external exclusion, over issues started online that spill into our school, particularly where students take matters into their own hands.

Advice to parents/carers

Even if you think you know what they are doing online:

- Teach your children how to protect themselves
 - Have them set their privacy settings to the highest levels possible
 - Encourage appropriate language in their online lives
 - Discuss what makes pictures posted online appropriate
 - Tell them to be selective over who they add as "friends"
 - Have them keep evidence and then block both abusive comments and the person making them
 - Tell them never to give out their own or others' personal details
 - Ensure they are not making friends online with adults, including members of staff
 - Have them inform a member of staff at school if appropriate
- Set time aside to have them share their online communications with you
- Insist that your children share with you usernames and passwords for social networking sites
- Invite your children to browse their online account(s) with you present
- Limit the amount of time your children spend online for social reasons

Ask your children about their online lives and really listen. Avoid judging them for things they or their "friends" might say – but do encourage them to reflect on what they or their "friends" say and to avoid getting involved in abusive comments.

Never get directly involved, as a friend or otherwise, in online discussion yourself. There is legislation that protects young people from online discussions with adults and you could be paid a visit by the police if you do contact a minor online.

Read further information on: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/ and on the reverse of this letter.

In summary

Eckington School recognises that our students have lives online. We wish to emphasise that students should stay safe. We train our staff in this and teach our students through ICT and pastoral sessions how to stay safe. We work in line with safeguarding and child protection guidance and legislation.

With your support, we will be able to keep your children sheltered from the damaging aspects of social networking. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Yours faithfully,

E Knutsen
Assistant headteacher

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Headteacher



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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