

Newlands Girls' School

Courage Commitment Compassion

Headteacher: Miss J. Capon



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Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to you to ask for your support.

It has been brought to my attention that there has been some unpleasant activity on social media, including both Snapchat and fake 'news' TikTok accounts (and we work hard to get these taken down as soon as we are aware of them) which are using the Newlands name. This sort of behaviour is having a negative impact on students, teachers and staff in our school and community.

Whilst the majority of the content is farcical, staff and students' names are being used inappropriately as part of the 'fake news' stories, which have caused upset in particular to our students. The language and tone are wholly inappropriate, especially at a time of year which should be filled with joy and happiness.

We are doing our very best to identify the students involved in creating these accounts, but this proves tricky as they are often under false identities. This activity is illegal and could result in prosecution as malicious communication. Although we educate our students in e-safety information in all sorts of ways, some of our messages are not being acted upon.

We would ask that you have a conversation with your daughter. Ask to see her TikTok and Snapchat accounts. Discuss the content and challenge anything inappropriate. Aside from the potential illegality, these accounts are not compassionate or kind, nor are they in keeping with the ethos that we promote as a school.

This needs to be a team effort. At school we address how to use social media positively, but we need your help at home too. Next year we will be running an information evening for parents and I am working collaboratively with other schools in relation to mobile phone use, but this must be a parental responsibility too. More immediately, this week's pastoral programme at school will focus on the harm caused by toxic influences which in some year groups will have a focus on social media.

Please can we work together to stamp out unkind and unpleasant online activity. We will sanction students in school if we have the evidence to do so. We know this will be a tiny minority of students, but I also know that how pupils behave behind the anonymity of a phone screen, can be very different to how they behave in person. This is something I will always seek to challenge.

Thank you for your support with this.

Yours sincerely

Miss Jo Capon
Headteacher



We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

