



NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE

Headteacher: Ms H Marriott MA, NPQH
Church Hill Walthamstow London E17 9RZ
Telephone: 020 8509 9446
Email: info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk
Website: www.wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers

I wanted to write to you to express my concern about an incident which took place in school last week where students filmed themselves and others during a lesson and posted the video on social media. This is the first time that we are aware of this happening in our school. Whilst the matter has been addressed with a significant sanction, the situation has understandably been very challenging for the students and their families. The purpose of my letter is to prevent this from happening again.

I want to remind you, as we will be reminding students, that if phones are brought into school they must be checked in to the front office. They cannot be used under any circumstances during the school day, whether for messaging, phoning, filming or for any other purpose.

The world of social media is attractive to teenagers, and it is easy for them to be drawn in to the 'drama' of filming and posting videos online, without thinking of the consequences. There are often consequences for those who are the subject of videos, particularly where harmful or abusive language has been used, as well as for the reputation of the school. Students may not realise the impact of such postings on their digital footprint. Neither do they have the maturity or understanding to navigate the online world, leading to potentially unsafe behaviour and situations.

Schools are places of learning. Anything which adversely affects student learning, or teachers' ability to facilitate that learning, cannot be accepted. Although my primary aim is always to consider student safety and learning, I also have to protect our staff. Teachers and support staff have the right to work in our school without feeling vulnerable. Students have the right to feel safe in school and not to have their learning disrupted. We know ourselves the power of smartphones and social media platforms: they are deliberately designed to be addictive and distracting. This is at odds with students' ability to learn, study and interact in school and in lessons. Please support us in maintaining a safe, calm and learning-focused environment.

What can parents do?

- Ensure that your child either does not bring a phone to school or stores it in the front office.
- Check your child's social media regularly so that you have confidence that they are safe online.
- Talk to your child about this letter and ensure that they understand the consequences of mis-using social media and phones in school, as well as the potential harm for students and teachers.





Although we cannot monitor students' use of social media – this is the responsibility of parents and carers - the school will always act to protect our reputation and will counter any unsafe or harmful behaviour, We know that when you work with us towards the same goal and when you articulate your support for the school's actions, it is always so powerful and this allows us to focus on our core purpose, which is to educate your children. Thank you, in advance, for your help and support and for reinforcing the importance of our ethos and expectations, both in school, out of school and on social media.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Marriott', written in a cursive style.

Helen Marriott

Headteacher