



Clacton County High School

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations, Transforming Lives

Our Reference CTALET9/lh

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Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: INFORMATION ON NEW BUILD & IMPORTANT ADVICE

As you will be aware, for many months now, there has been some disruption to the school site due to the completion of a brand-new build being erected on the school playing field, just adjacent to the recreation field. I am delighted to inform you that we are almost at the completion of this project and the current plan is for the building to be handed over to the school either late this term or early next term, when we return in January.

We are very excited about the extended facilities this will provide for our students, which will include six classrooms and a huge 4-court sports hall. I have been visiting the site regularly throughout the build and I can report that it looks amazing and it will be a significant asset to the school and local community. You may have also noticed that we have been able to secure some additional land so that despite such a large new building, the available field space for our students remains virtually the same.

Whilst having this opportunity to write to you, I wanted to share some advice and guidance in regards to social media platforms.

On the whole, we all use social media responsibly to communicate and engage with others, but it is very important that as parents we monitor our children's personal usage. The use of WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tik-Tok and other similar messaging services and the decision to allow a child to create an account must be a well-informed decision. Taking a few moments to talk to your child about the use of the messaging services, advising them to consider how they communicate with others is vitally important in building and maintaining friendships and relationships. As a parent myself, I appreciate the challenges around monitoring online activity, but my advice is do not be put off by feeling intrusive, it is wholly acceptable for you to look through your child's communications, especially for younger students.

You may have noticed in the national press, that there has been a recent upsurge of children using images of both staff and other children, without permission on social media platforms. Sadly, it has come to our attention that some students at our school have been making and posting short videos online with the aim of humiliating either staff or other children. Any such content on the TikTok app, or other social media sites, will be reported to the police and other agencies. I am writing to ask for your support in underlining the message to our students that such actions and behaviour will not be tolerated and that the school will be robust in investigating and responding to such actions; this could jeopardise their place at CCHS.

Students must not upload photos or videos in the name of their school, or with school staff/students in them, and I must advise you that we will seek to defend and protect staff and students who are the victim of cowardly and hurtful online postings; working with the police and other agencies as necessary. In school we take a tough stance on harmful communications, but ultimately it is our duty as parents to monitor online interactions to ensure our staff, and young people, stay happy and safe.

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Cyberbullying is a particular problem, often via the most popular social media platforms accessed by young people. National Online Safety have produced a useful parent/carer guide about Trolling and Online Abuse, as part of their [#wakeupwednesday](#) series of publications – [Download a copy here.](#)

The National Online Safety team have also created a multitude of useful guides to help parents understand the world online [See more National Online Safety Guides on our website](#) - new guides are published regularly. [Just follow this link to sign up, allowing access to all their information guides.](#)

The online opportunities are both exciting and destructive. For teenagers this will be their first opportunity to access mobile data and social media. Joining secondary school often substantially expands children's sphere of contacts and they are naturally eager to get to know as many new people as possible. Therefore, it is important that we know who our children are talking to and what is being said, as parents it is our responsibility to both protect them and ensure that they are acting responsibly online. Negative comments or photos posted online can be devastating for some young people, impacting on both their education and personal well-being.

Moving to offline advice; we have received reports from the police that some teenagers are gathering before and after school in play parks specifically designed for children up to the age of 12. Most teenagers are just meeting up together, even so this can come across as quite intimidating for young children and members of the public, however there have also been some reports of damage and rudeness. As it is now getting dark early, please make sure you know where your child is at all times and whom they are socialising with. There is a free app available called Life 360, a family sharing app, and this is a good way to know where your child is and when.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this letter. I know that there is a lot of information to take in, but the greater knowledge we have the more able we are to protect our children.

Stay safe and well.

Kind regards

Chris Taylor
Head of School