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Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Baldwin BSc (Hons) NPQH

22nd April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Inappropriate conduct on WhatsApp group

I am writing to address an important matter concerning the inappropriate conduct that was brought to our attention this morning regarding the 'Swalcon' WhatsApp group. I want to express my gratitude to those parents who reached out to the school regarding this issue.

Upon reviewing the messages on one pupil's phone, it is evident that the use of profanities, threats, and unkind behaviour displayed by multiple children is completely unacceptable. I have had a discussion with the children involved, emphasising that online platforms such as WhatsApp are not private and their interactions can be viewed by adults. We treat social media conversations with the same level of seriousness as face-to-face interactions on the school playground as part of our safeguarding protocol.

During our conversation, the children admitted that the language and tone used online were not reflective of how they would communicate face-to-face on the playground. It is crucial to acknowledge that social media can pose dangers as individuals, even adults, might use these platforms to hide behind screens to express hurtful sentiments. Although our children are not old enough to be on WhatsApp, this incident serves as an opportunity for monitoring and education.

As a preventive measure, all children involved will be required to leave the 'Swalcon' group today. Large online groups can often lead to conflicts and instances of miscommunication, potentially causing children to say things impulsively that they do not truly mean. If your child wishes to continue using WhatsApp, I encourage them to engage in one-on-one conversations with their peers and kindly request that you continue to supervise and monitor their online interactions closely.

Your support in guiding our children through this matter is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs V Baldwin
Headteacher