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Dear Parents and Carers,

I have been made aware that some aspects of school life are being discussed on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Of course, these sites are fun and help us keep in touch with friends and family, but they can also be used to spread rumours and gossip which can be very harmful, especially in a close community or a school. I would, therefore, make the following pleas to you all:

- Don't put something on a site that you would not say face to face to the person concerned.
- Naming other children, or placing photographs of other children without consent on social networking sites, may be deemed a 'safeguarding' issue.
- Remember that the things that you say on a site are published and could be used in a court of law.
- If you think you have a complaint about something at school, please come in and discuss it. We are more than happy to listen to your views and comments and to try to sort out problems as they arise.
- Sometimes you may feel comments are harmless, but they may be inappropriate and disparaging to the individual involved: teacher unions and Local Authorities provide guidance for members about 'cyberbullying' or harassment of school staff.

Where necessary, we do seek advice from the Local Authority Solicitor and have no hesitation in reporting defamatory comments to the Police.

To many of us, the social networking world is something of a double-edged sword and is a growing problem in schools. I would always urge you to use discretion and caution when discussing any aspect of school life on sites such as these.

Thank you for your understanding.

Kind regards

Mrs Lisa Telling
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