

Ref: JAS/VAR

14 February 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

E-SAFETY and the Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones

We would appreciate your time in reading this letter as there are important messages about your child's safety.

We take the safety and health of our students seriously at Horndean Technology College and we are always grateful for the support that parents and carers provide to support us in enforcing our high standards and expectations. We will always use our e-mail message service to inform you of any issues that you should be aware of at that point in time that may affect your child's safety. I am sure that all of us want to protect our children, support them so they make the correct and right decisions concerning their behaviour and equip them with the necessary skills to be responsible citizens in the future. Our comprehensive Tutor, PSHRE programme and our Assembly schedule ensures that we educate students, give them time to reflect and guide them to make informed decisions.

The week beginning 24 February has a national E-Safety focus. Technology has brought many advantages to society and the way in which we live our lives but it has also brought problems and increasing concerns such as sometimes sending unkind texts and posting pictures of each other that are degrading and malicious. Throughout the year we regularly highlight safe behaviours to students but in the E-Safety week we emphasis the benefits and dangers associated with technological devices and social networking. From cyberbullying to social networking, each year Safer Internet Day aims to raise awareness of emerging online issues and chooses a topic reflecting current concerns. Safer Internet Day aims to create both a safer and a better internet, where everyone is empowered to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively. The key message for the 2020 campaign is 'Together for a better internet'. By celebrating the positive power of the internet, the Safer Internet Day slogan of "Together for a better internet" encourages everyone to join the movement, to participate, and to make the most of the internet's potential to bring people together. In the week commencing 24 February each Year Group will attend an assembly promoting safer internet use and be provided with Tutor work to support the key messages. We are very proud to announce that we have begun work with Hampshire's Police and Crime Commissioner to set up our own Cyber Ambassador Scheme. The main aim of the scheme is to skill-up a small number of students within HTC on key on-line safety issues. These informed students then pass on their learning and offer helpful support to their peers promoting good digital citizenship and civility.

We would ask that you support our drive to ensure that our young people are safe on line by taking time to ensure that you as parents/carers know what your children are accessing on line, whether they are using their mobile phones and devices responsibly and not sending unkind messages or sharing images of other people. **It is illegal to share images of other people on line without permission.** Students should never share personal information or contact details with anyone they do not know. Equally students need to be aware that what they do on line is recorded and becomes their digital footprint. If a person's digital footprint proves to be derogatory then it could jeopardise career and education choices in the future.

Many parents are concerned that their children are not socialising and communicating sufficiently in person with the rest of the family and their friends. As a parent I share these views too, whilst technology has its benefits there are also many other activities that young people can embrace and enjoy such as sport, the outdoors, the joys of reading, drama, the arts and many more activities that challenge us and give us the opportunity to socialise and meet people.

We ask that all our parents/carers support us in our campaign to keep our young people safe and happy. Attached to this letter is the **Statement from the Governing Bodies and Headteachers from the Havant Federation of Schools** which has been issued previously about how we will respond to issues that arise from the use of social media.

We thank you for your support and co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J A Summerfield
Headteacher