



Dear Year 6 Parents & Carers

I am writing regarding an incident that you may well be aware of that happened after school on Tuesday 10th November, and additional issues that we have become aware of since investigating what happened.

The first incident involved a fight between two Year 6 boys. It occurred whilst still on the school grounds, and was watched and cheered on by a large group of Year 6 peers. This was both shocking and highly embarrassing, especially as many other parents and children from other year groups were leaving at the same time. The fight was filmed by a few Year 6 pupils on their phones, and then placed on various social media sites for the world to see.

Having investigated this, it would appear that neither boy wanted to fight, but they felt cajoled into it over some time by 'friends' who wanted something to video and place online. It appeared planned, and indeed, had been 'rehearsed'. We had some very kind parents share WhatsApp conversations involving Year 6 pupils that supported the idea that this was planned, and that even went on to suggest fighting at alternative venues.

Another video came to light during our investigations that involved a child videoing a teacher, as the class were being disruptive and disrespectful. This was again shared on social media.

Clearly, we have spoken to the class and particular individuals at considerable length today. We have reminded them about our expectations of them, about their position as role models, about the need to show respect, about the stupidity of fighting, and about the dangers and potential illegality of videoing and posting on social media. We have sanctioned those involved, including those who encouraged the fight and those seen and heard in the classroom video misbehaving. We have sanctioned those misusing WhatsApp – inciting and/or being unkind. We have sanctioned most seriously those who chose to break every online safety rule going by filming and posting quite shocking things.

You can be reassured that we have done what we can and will continue to do so to stop such things happening again. You can help us though. Ultimately, much of this comes down to the children's use of social media on their phones. We can do more to ensure the children follow guidelines on having phones in school, and will. But we cannot monitor what they are writing and sending to each other. You can. Do you know which apps your children are using? Do you regularly monitor who they are talking to and what they are saying? We have seen some really shocking things being said by Year 6 pupils, especially on WA, that parents had no idea about. Please do ensure you are confident what is happening in your child's social media world.

As a reaction to what has happened, some pupils have lost the privileges of being able to walk to and from school independently, and/or of being able to bring a mobile phone into school. I have told those involved who they are. Revoking both privileges will hopefully be temporary, as long as they regain our trust. I will be texting parents separately to let you know if your child is one of them. Please excuse the fact that I don't have the time to call all of you individually to explain why, but there are quite a few. Please also feel free to email me to ask any questions you may have or seek clarification.

Thanks in advance for your support.

Mr Clarke