



# Wycombe High School

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Dear Parent

As you may be aware, students at Wycombe High School do not have access to social network sites, such as Facebook and MSN at school. Indeed communications via "forums" can only be made as part of our VLE (Moodle). Such 'forums' have an academic focus and are closely monitored. Our school network is tightly controlled to prevent inappropriate access to internet based social network sites. You will also be aware that students in Years 7 -11 are not allowed mobile phones in school, further restricting access to the internet and of course texting.

I am however becoming increasingly concerned about the inappropriate use of such social network sites at home. Facebook is designed for older age groups; it is not suitable for younger children or young people not yet able to use it sensibly. Whilst I recognise the benefits of such sites for adults, when used appropriately, I hope you will understand and support my concerns for our students.

When used inappropriately social network sites cause great harm. In their extreme form, contact with strangers can be made and this poses inevitable dangers. In their less extreme form, but none-the-less highly damaging, arguments / disagreements started in, or out of, school can be carried on in the evenings amongst a wider social group (and often across schools). Such arguments / disagreements are often part of the normal growing up process. However, without adult guidance (from schools, parents etc) these arguments / disagreements, when carried out on social network sites, become exacerbated. Students may often lack the maturity, and / or skills, to avoid saying something which they will regret or is inappropriate and hurtful to others. We need your support to stop your daughter using these sites until such times as she is old enough to use them sensibly. Over use of these sites can also interfere with focused and thorough school work.

Additionally it has come to my attention that many of the younger members of our school community have created Facebook accounts. Facebook requires its users to be **at least 13 years** old before they can create an account. To do so, an individual is required to provide her name, email and date of birth. It therefore follows that those under 13 years have knowingly provided incorrect information and information that leaves her vulnerable. We would strongly advise that accounts belonging to under 13 year olds are removed.

If you wish to check if your child has created an account without your knowledge, please complete the form at [http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show\\_form=coppa](http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=coppa)

If you wish to remove an account belonging to your child, complete the form at: [http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show\\_form=underage](http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=underage)

As these sites cannot be used / accessed at school it is most appropriate that these forms are submitted by the parents or guardians of the child. Whilst as a school, we can and do, highlight the inappropriate use of such site, this is first and foremost a parental responsibility.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Please note, if it is brought to our attention that your daughter has been involved in using a social network site in an inappropriate way that impacts our school community we will send a letter home to enable you to have an appropriate conversation with your daughter and if necessary remove the site. Additionally we will inform your daughter's form tutor to ensure that the message from school is heard; no student should use a social network site until she is old enough to use them appropriately.

Students are often taught, at Wycombe High School, the importance of keeping data safe and how to behave on the internet. We have also held an awareness evening for parents.

We very much hope that you will continue to work with us to ensure that your daughter's use of the internet is appropriate and sensible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Cromie', written in a cursive style.

Mrs Sharon Cromie  
Headteacher