Personal Development: A Guide for Parents/Carers

Year 8: Autumn Term 2

In the news: how do I speak to my child about war?

War is an incredibly difficult topic of conversation for children and adults alike. There is an unrelenting amount of information available to young people via. Social media can often be graphic and distressing

Content they see online can also be polarising – dividing groups of people into either 'good' or 'bad', often using offensive or discriminatory language.

If your child has a phone and access to social media, please do speak to them about anything they may have seen online.

Unicef has a helpful guide for parents and carers about how to approach the topic with your child which you can view by clicking here.

Attached to this email is a guide from National Online Safety about how to support your child if they have seen distressing content online.

If you or your family are affected by current conflicts, please inform your child's tutor so they are able to further support your child in school.

Click on the links below to access further support:
NSPCC: How to talk to your child about online safety
Keeping your child safe online
A full list of guides for parents about online platforms is available here
Child Exploitation and Online Protection: a place to report online sexual abuse or sexually inappropriate communications towards children.

Unit 2: Digital Literacy

Students begin by considering online safety before moving onto online gaming and some of the risks they may encounter with this. Teenagers often encounter conflict in their friendships online; however, we do see that teenagers will say things online that they would never say in person! We encourage students to consider their own behaviour on social media as well as give strategies to manage this conflict.

As part of this unit, we also look at 'Abigail's Story', a dramatised and age-appropriate story of a teenage girl who has been groomed online. We speak to students about the dangers of befriending online friends and hope to equip them with strategies to keep themselves safe.

Finally, we encourage students to begin thinking about financial security online as students often buy either physical items or credits for games which are often monetised.

Discussion points/questions for home:
- What access does your child currently have to social media or online gaming?
- Has your child ever seen anything online that has made them uncomfortable?
- If your child has access to social media or messaging such as WhatsApp, have they seen unkind behaviour or bullying? If so, what did they do when they came across this?
- If your child uses a computer at home, is this in a communal area where you are able to monitor their use of the internet? If not, do you have a way to check that they are being safe online?
- Are you aware of the privacy controls of the apps your child is using? For example, is their profile public or private?

If your child shares with you that they have been affected by any of the issues covered, we are here to support you. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school so we can provide further support.