



St Cuthbert Mayne School

Joint Catholic and Church of England 11-18 Comprehensive School Dioceses of Plymouth and Exeter

Headteacher
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JD/JW

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Dear Parent/Carer

We understand that social media has a widespread impact on the way in which we communicate and express our thoughts and opinions. There are clearly many benefits for us, both as individuals and also as communities in using the power of social media to engage family, friends and the wider world.

We live in a society where we are rightly proud of our freedom of speech and would not wish to suggest this should be curtailed in any way. There are occasions however where things said in the virtual world are at best unhelpful, and at worst may compromise the safety of our students or constitute harassment, bullying or intimidation, which could ultimately lead to Police involvement. **As a school we will always challenge such comments and contact the parents involved along with any other necessary authorities or legal agencies.**

All of the staff at St Cuthbert Mayne School work tirelessly to provide the very best education for the young people they serve and always want to work in partnership with parents and the wider community. However, we recognise that there will be occasions where, for whatever reason, parents may not agree with a particular course of action or will have specific concerns.

It is entirely normal to discuss school life and express our thoughts and opinions face to face or on the phone. Unfortunately, some of these conversations are now being aired on social media and the person posting has very little control over who might ultimately see it even when these comments are shared as part of a private group. Some parents are under the illusion that these comments will not be seen by the school, but that is not the case because when you post anything on social media it is in the public domain. Sadly, some of these comments and observations are causing offense and are distressing to members of staff or students who these comments are aimed at, either directly or indirectly. In some cases these comments could be considered intimidating or slanderous. We will always discourage the posting of negative statements about named individuals or institutions. Care should also be taken when linking to sites or sharing content that contains defamatory statements. This is because you may be liable in the law of libel for repeating defamatory statements even in they have been previously published elsewhere.

This is not to suggest that schools are not above criticism, or do not welcome feedback. However, it is always best when this is constructive and reasonable and is focused on finding an acceptable solution. When difficult things need to be said it is usually better face to face or at least in some form of private form of communication such as an email or letter. The school wants to remind parents that



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the school has an open door policy. The school welcomes honest dialogue with all parents. As many of you know the school will endeavour to make, and indeed has made improvements as a result of feedback from parents and students.

In general it is good advice to think twice before posting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Down', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr J. Down
Headteacher