

March 2011

Dear Parents

As you know safeguarding your children, and the school community as a whole, is of paramount importance and school policy clearly states the position and responsibilities of each and every member of the school community in ensuring that we fulfil our obligations. Advances in modern technology present ever-increasing challenges with regard to the facilities for the taking of photographs, videos and audio recordings and the dissemination of such material on the internet, and the school constantly reviews its approach to the monitoring and policing of such material and the children's ability to contribute to it.

In this regard, we have ensured that all wifi connection within the school is password secure so that ill-advised access to the internet via computers, laptops and certain other gaming devices is restricted. Unfortunately, most mobile telephones and some music devices can now access the internet via a telephone provider, which it is impossible for the school to regulate. In response to these more sophisticated devices, the school has reviewed its Mobile Phone Policy to ensure that it meets with the school's needs and I have great pleasure in enclosing a copy of the policy for your information.

Obviously, we do not wish to preserve your children in a 'bubble' and our approach is designed to educate them in the correct and safe use of the internet and the pitfalls associated therewith. For example, a photograph taken at school in all innocence and placed on the internet can have serious and far-reaching consequences such as exposing individuals' personal data without permission, contravening legal restrictions which may be in place (eg court orders) and/or attracting unwelcome attention from outsiders.

St Richard's is proud of its reputation for providing a safe and secure environment where children can develop at their own pace and embrace the modern world, including the various forms of communication and networking, whilst fully aware of the dangers this may involve. We aim to instil self-esteem, confidence and judgement when assessing the issues and situations they will face in the wider world and an understanding of the right and wrong approach to dealing with them. The school has a clear policy on Cyberbullying which is available on the school website.

I trust that you will support us on this important issue. It goes without saying that my door is always open should you have any concerns or questions about this.

Yours sincerely

Nathan S Cheesman
encs: Mobile Phone Policy