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Head teacher: Ms Jo Phillips

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have had a good start to the half term. I realise that it is unusual for schools to contact parents during the half term break, but I felt that it was necessary to share concerns arising particularly in the last two days of school around the access some of our pupils may be having to inappropriate gaming and online video content so that our parents and carers can be extra vigilant this holiday.

It is clear from some of the language our pupils are using towards each other in school that some have been exposed to (GTA) Grand Theft Auto and C.O.D. (Call of Duty), both of which have '18+' age ratings due to their violent and graphic nature.

Whilst we are confident that none of our parents would knowingly subject our pupils to inappropriate content, it is worth bearing in mind that young people can sometimes 'stumble across' such content by walking into the room while older relatives or friends are playing the games or by playing with older siblings or friends who are talking about scenes or features from the games. Pupils who have been exposed to the crude, callous language and concepts of these games then begin to incorporate them into their own play and interactions with each other, often without fully understanding that what they are re-enacting can cause great distress in the real world.

In a similar vein, we are aware that some of our pupils have been exposed to an inappropriate 'game' which appears on 'YouTube', known as 'Charlie, Charlie', which appears to be a modern version of the old-fashioned 'Ouija Board'.

In all cases, where pupils demonstrate that they have been exposed to such content (either directly, or indirectly by word-of-mouth), it is the school's policy to make clear to them that they should not be accessing such content and that we will be informing individual parents of our concerns.

We know that parents and carers will share our concerns and hope that you will be able to support us in safeguarding our pupils in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Phillips (Head teacher)