

4th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Year 10 Malicious Communications – Instagram**

We have been informed by a number of Year 10 students that an individual, as yet unknown, has been sending what we term 'malicious communications' from an Instagram account. We believe this individual is sending these messages to at least forty of our students. We do not know if this individual is a student in our school, or indeed is even of school age. The messages contain a combination of racist, homophobic and sexually abusive language. The messages appear to have originated during last week and we have called some of you directly to alert you to this. However, with potentially high numbers of students being targeted we wanted to make all parents/carers aware. We do not have the technology or powers to trace this individual and therefore require your support in the following way:

- Check your son/daughter's phone or ask them if they have received any Instagram messages from **knownascraig1**.
- If received, and the messages contain any language that is discriminatory or abusive in nature, please call 101 in order to record the crime reference as malicious communications.
- Ensure your son/daughter blocks the account and regularly updates their privacy settings.
- Remind them, they should not follow or allow others to follow them when they are unsure as to their true identity.
- Please urge them not to respond or react to the messages. They will be equally at fault should they send abusive or discriminatory messages. Often, such communications are designed to invoke a response. We ask them to have the self-control to refrain from retaliating with messages they would later regret.

We are committed to preventing and dealing effectively with all forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, which may take the form of cyber-bullying as it has in this instance. As part of our responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 we strive to prevent all forms of prejudice-based bullying. This may include bullying targeted at protected and vulnerable groups including disabled children, children with special educational needs, race or religion targeted bullying, sexist and sexual bullying, and bullying of those who are, or are perceived to be, LGBT. We therefore wish to thank those that came forward to alert us to these messages so we can support our school community in tackling this form of bullying.

We have included an online safety guide to Instagram for Parents to support your understanding so you can continue to protect your son/daughter from all forms of on-line abuse. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Miss M Green  
Head of Academy