



St. Julie's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mr. T. Alderman

"Serve the good God well with much liberty of spirit"

11 November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to advise you that a number of anonymous accounts on the social media app 'TikTok' were set up over the last few days using secretly filmed videos and images of school staff and images of staff taken from the school website.

In some instances the accounts have taken profile pictures from staff's private social media accounts so that not only school staff but their partners and infant children appear in the videos that have been uploaded. The majority of the videos were accompanied by offensive and derogatory comments. This type of social media activity is unacceptable.

On the advice of staff professional associations, we have now sought to remove all images of staff from our school website. Regrettably, this includes the image of our recently deceased friend and colleague Miss Duffy, whose image appeared in the online book of remembrance on our website. This is a direct consequence of the misuse of staff images by others.

The setting up of such accounts appears to have been a national issue that has affected a large number of schools and the professional associations are raising this matter with TikTok and also with the government.

School staff have reported all of the accounts that relate to St Julie's and we have passed all information relating to these accounts, including details of other accounts that have 'liked' or 'followed' them, to Merseyside Police for them to investigate further as we have been advised that some of the content may constitute actionable offences.

We are advising all parents and carers to implement appropriate measures to screen your daughter's online activity, since bill payers can be held liable for the content on their daughter's phones should criminal or civil action be taken. Pupils who did not set up but still follow social media accounts such as these may still have committed an offence under our behaviour and online safety policies and so our instruction to them would be to unfollow the accounts immediately and to encourage others to do the same. The only reason that such harmful and malicious content is able to spread is by people 'liking' or 'following' it.

Whilst we accept that it is only a very small number of students who have engaged in this behaviour, it is important nonetheless to alert all parents and carers to this issue so that we can work together to ensure social media activity is a force for good, not a weapon of hate.



You may remember that I wrote to you at the start of the school year to ask for help in addressing issues relating to violence against women and girls, particularly by challenging unacceptable behaviours that may have previously been dismissed as 'banter'. We are asking for your help again in discussing with your daughter why the behaviours outlined above can also not be dismissed as 'banter' or 'fun'. Not condemning such behaviours is in itself an act of support; 'liking' and 'following' them is active support for this unacceptable behaviour.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'T Alderman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr T Alderman
Headteacher