

To: Parents/Carers of Highland Pupils

Please ask for: Louise Jones
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Dear Parent / Carer

Mobile Phone Safety Advice

In Highland, we have a partnership approach to promoting e-safety by encouraging children and young people to use new technologies safely and responsibly. Whilst we acknowledge the positive opportunities for learning afforded by mobile technology, and seek to realise these, we are conscious of the need to promote e-safety. We ensure that e-safety education programmes continue to be delivered in all our schools.

As part of our approach we would like to offer you advice on the use of mobile technology, as you will be aware that modern mobiles or 'smart phones' are in essence small personal computers. The latest phones provide great opportunities for being more connected in the digital world but can also therefore pose a risk for users to be identified or located, and send or receive images they may feel uncomfortable with.

We wish therefore to raise awareness and specifically highlight the dangers of young people finding themselves in uncomfortable or compromising situations. Research recently conducted by the NSPCC has reported that in most cases where young people have been in situations of risk from being involved in transmission of inappropriate images, this has been through interaction with their peers rather than strangers.

It is vital that modern technology is used with responsibility and regard for the personal safety and privacy of both the user and others both now and for the future. There are also implications for young people who may not know that they could be breaking the law by receiving or sending such images or footage. They also may be unaware that images may be circulated far and wide or uploaded without their permission or knowledge.

We hope that this letter provides you with a starting point for increasing your own awareness of these issues and may help you in your ongoing discussions in keeping your family safe.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Alexander
Director of Care and Learning
The Highland Council

Maggie Miller,
Detective Inspector,
Public Protection Policy & Support Unit,
Police Scotland

NSPCC Research - http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/resourcesforprofessionals/sexualabuse/sexting-research_wda89260.html