

25 March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Re: Responsible Use of Social Media**

As we approach the Easter break, I would like to address a growing concern regarding the increased antisocial and inappropriate use of social media among some of our students. While social media can be a positive tool for communication and creativity, it also presents risks when used without appropriate boundaries, supervision, and guidance.

Recently, we have seen instances where online behaviour has had a negative impact on students' wellbeing, relationships, and learning. These behaviours include unkind comments, exclusionary group chats, the sharing of inappropriate content, and the misuse of messaging platforms to cause distress to others. Although much of this activity occurs outside school hours, its effects often carry over into the school environment.

To support your child's safety and wellbeing, we kindly ask all parents and carers to take an active role in monitoring and guiding their child's social media use outside of school hours.

### **Guidance for Monitoring Your Child's Social Media Use**

- **Know which platforms they use** and ensure their accounts are set to private.
- **Check age restrictions** as many platforms require users to be 13 or older.
- **Review their friend lists** and discuss the importance of only connecting with people **they know and trust**.
- **Encourage open conversations** about what they see and share online and reassure them that they can speak to you or a trusted adult if something makes them uncomfortable.
- **Set clear expectations** around screen time, appropriate behaviour, and consequences for misuse.
- **Regularly review device settings**, including parental controls, privacy settings, and content filters.
- **Model positive digital behaviour** by demonstrating respectful and responsible online communication.

### **Possible Consequences of Misuse**

It is important for students to understand that their online actions have real-world consequences. Depending on the nature and severity of the behaviour, misuse of social media may result in:

- **School-based sanctions**, such as loss of privileges e.g. trips and clubs, detentions, Internal and external suspensions
- **Confiscation of the phone** – whether until the end of the day or for a more prolonged period.
- **Meetings with parents or carers** to discuss concerns and agree on next steps.
- **Referral to external agencies**, where behaviour constitutes harassment, bullying, or safeguarding concerns.
- **Legal implications**, as certain online behaviours such as sharing explicit images, threats, or hate speech may be considered criminal offences.

Our aim is not to restrict students unnecessarily, but to ensure they develop healthy, respectful, and safe online habits. To do this, we ask for your support.

If you have any concerns about your child's online activity or would like further guidance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Together, we can help our young people use social media in a positive and responsible way in line with school and home values.

Year 7 Contact: [CGrinnam@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:CGrinnam@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Year 8 Contact: [MTechieMensah@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:MTechieMensah@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Year 9 Contact: [LAmaira@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:LAmaira@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Year 10 Contact: [RBurton@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:RBurton@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Year 11 Contact: [Talabi@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:Talabi@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Sixth Form Contact: [LLangford@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:LLangford@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

[LHopwood@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:LHopwood@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

SLT Contact: [EBowen@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:EBowen@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

Thank you for your continued support.

Miss Bowen

**Assistant Principal: Pastoral and Careers**