RSA ACADEMY ARROW VALE
Ian Mellor, Principal (BSc. FRSA)
Green Sward Lane
Matchborough West
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 0EN

23rd June 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

I write to inform you about an update to Snapchat, which in our opinion could pose a significant risk to its users. Snapchat have unveiled a new feature that allows users to share their location with 'friends' in real time. It is our understanding that the update automatically has location sharing switched on unless users switch to 'ghost mode'. The new update allows users to see the exact location of their online 'friends'. It can give you the area, town and street if you zoom in enough, displaying the house on the street layout. It can also tell users if you are in the car or listening to music. This would mean that 'friends' could see where you live or if they wanted to find you, where you are.

This highlights once again the importance of our young people only accepting 'friends' that they know and can trust and the need to regularly review their privacy settings on all forms of social media. Please could I ask that you use this opportunity to check the settings on any form of social media that your son/daughter may use to ensure their safety and well-being.

Whilst writing to you about this issue, it is opportune to share with you a list of links for Newsletters and Websites to help parents/carers and young people on a range of safeguarding issues.

- Parents Protect – a website to help parents protect their children against sexual abuse.
- Spot the Signs – Advice for parents, professionals and young people on the signs of sexual exploitation and how to keep safe.
- PACE – a free online course for parents to equip them with the knowledge to protect their children against sexual exploitation.
- Teenage Relationship Abuse – a parents' and carers' guide to violence and abuse in teenage relationships.
- Sexting – how to talk to children about the risks of sexting, and what you can do to protect them (NSPCC).
- Get Advice – CEOP advice on talking to children about sex, relationships and their lives online.
- Chat Danger – Advice for parents and carers on keeping their child safe online, including parental controls.
- Self-Harm in Young People – Information for parents and carers and anyone who works with young people.
- Know the Signs – Information on suicide and self-harm for parents (Samaritans).

An electronic version of this letter is available on the school website, which will enable you to access the links above.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Crane
Vice Principal