



Sherburn High School

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The STAR
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Dear Parents/Carers and students

Important Safeguarding Updates:

I am sorry to start this half term by bringing to your attention two worrying trends that place our students' safety in jeopardy.

The first is a site called “Wizz” – Its logo looks like this or this in the App store:



Wizz markets itself as an app which allows teenagers to “make new friends” but it places young people in danger because:

- Adults can make a profile, pretending they are teenagers
- It links with Snap Chat, making someone's location (unless this function is turned off) easy to find

Catfishing: We also wanted to alert all parents/carers of reports of young people in our area being targeted by individuals who are catfishing teenagers into sharing nude images of themselves and then blackmailing their victims into sending money to accounts to ensure these images are not shared widely online.

With this in mind we wanted parents/carers and our young people to have an increased awareness of catfishing and what to do if you think you or your child may have been scammed in this way.

What is catfishing?

Catfishing is when someone uses social media to create a false identity, usually to defraud or scam someone else. Often people who catfish make up fake backgrounds, jobs or friends, so that they appear as someone else. Using this fake identity, they may even trick a person into believing they are in an online romance, before using this to ask for money, gifts or nudes.

What does catfishing look like?

- Being encouraged to share more than you usually would.
- People who catfish may encourage you to tell them your secrets, so they can embarrass you by sharing them with others.
- Being encouraged to share your personal details.
- People who catfish may want your details so they can scam you, or steal your identity.
- Someone who only wants you to send pictures of yourself, especially nude ones.

What are the signs?

- They don't seem to use their social media accounts much and may not have many followers
- The way they chat or act does not seem to match their profile.
- They seem to know a lot about you and are interested in all the same things as you.

- They want you to send photos or live videos of yourself, but always have excuses about why they can't send you any images of them - like saying that their webcam is not working - so you can't check what they really look like.

How to respond?

- Report and block - make sure that you are aware of how to report and block accounts on all platforms that are used. You can report fake accounts and block users to prevent them from viewing a child's profile.
- Check with Google If you are concerned that someone is using a child or young person's photographs for their own benefit, use a Google image search to check. After uploading a photograph, use related images to see if anyone else is using photos that the child has previously shared online. If this is the case, report the user directly to the platform.
- Report to authorities If you suspect that a child or young person has been the victim of any fraudulent, illegal or inappropriate activity, then you should immediately report it to the local police or [Action Fraud](#).

We hope this information update is helpful and if we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year or our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Marsh. Alternatively, you can contact us using the Tell Us feature on our website.

Yours sincerely

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