

Dear Parent

Many of you will have heard about the disturbing allegations of serious sexual misconduct which have been posted to the *Everyone's Invited* website. Those of you with children at secondary schools will undoubtedly be concerned about the apparent culture in some educational establishments which has led to these very troubling incidents. We want to share with you our thoughts, and to describe how Ickleford Primary School is responding.

First, it is important to acknowledge that some of you – particularly those with children at the lower end of the school – might be surprised that primary schools are even considering this matter. It is incredible to think that any of the *Everyone's Invited* testimonials are even remotely relevant to us. While we are not experts in this subject, it seems likely that the extreme cases which have been reported lie at the end of a spectrum of behaviours that start with low-level actions; if the latter are left unchallenged, they may progress to more serious matters. Additionally, our safeguarding 'bible' – the Department for Education's policy *Keeping Children Safe in Education* – mandates all schools to adopt an 'it could happen here' approach to avoid complacency.

We want to assure you that our current Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum, which is tailored to make it age appropriate, provides a very good basis for ensuring your children are well-equipped to develop good, healthy relationships now and in the future:

- **Respect** – this is a core value of the school, and central to our positive behaviour policy. We have a zero-tolerance approach to disrespectful attitudes, words and actions along with a commitment to address any examples where these might arise.
- **Consent** – our PSHE objectives include knowing personal boundaries, responding respectfully to others, managing pressure and the impact of hurtful behaviour.
- **Equality and inclusion** – everyone is treated equally and with dignity, and any comments which could be considered prejudiced against individuals of, for example, a different sex are challenged. This is also at the heart of our positive behaviour policy and consistent with the Equalities Act.
- **'Trusted adults'** – this concept is threaded through pupils' time at Ickleford Primary School. Regular classroom discussions are held, and children know that if anything troubles them, they have a range of people – at home, at school and elsewhere – to whom they can safely disclose the issue.
- **Appropriate action will be taken** – if a child tells something to a member of staff, that child knows that they will be heard, their concerns taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken.
- **School processes and culture** – underpinning all of these are very robust policies, processes and procedures which ensure pupil safety and wellbeing, along with a culture of care for which the school is recognised.

There is one potential weak point in this approach: if your child reveals information to you as their 'trusted adult' about an incident that you feel might impact their health, wellbeing or learning, please make sure you bring it to the school's attention. We acknowledge that this could be a difficult conversation to have depending on the sensitivity of the subject, but it is important that we know about issues so that we can address them appropriately.

We believe our framework is the right one, that teachers handle these matters with sensitivity, and that the PSHE syllabus allows our pupils to grow into confident, self-assured and respectful young adults.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Miles Maxwell  
Chair of Governors

Mrs Sue Dury  
Headteacher