



# ORMISTON SIX VILLAGES ACADEMY



26<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Please find this week's notices below.

### Year 9 Parents' Consultation – 1<sup>st</sup> February in the Gate theatre

A huge thank you to the 84% of parents and carers who have already booked their appointments for this very important parents' consultation which will give you an opportunity to discuss your child's progress.

If you have not made your appointment, please do so over the weekend as the booking system closes on Monday at 12 noon.

### Year 9 Options Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> February – Save the date.

We look forward to launching the Year 9 options process on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, in an online meeting at 6pm. On this day, the options hub will go live giving access to the subject videos which will support you and your child in choosing their options. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of joining this meeting.

### Year 7 and Year 8 Valentine Disco

The Year 11 Prom team and Miss White are delighted to invite Year 7 and 8 students to a Valentine's disco on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February**, 6pm to 8pm in the Gate Theatre. Payment of £3.50 per child is to be made via Parent Pay by 6<sup>th</sup> February. There will be a sweet treat stand (cash only) and there will be prizes for the best dressed (red for love).

### Tutee of the Week

7O	Tilly P	8O	Darsh P	9O	Rihanna B	10O	Gracie B	11O	Alex H
7R	Darcy B	8R	Henry S	9R	Alice D	10R	William T	11R	Keeley B
7M	Reuben W	8M	Imogen C	9M	Louie W	10S	Mya P	11M	Maherub H
7S	Oscar B	8S	Lilly HS	9S	Yasmin Denly	10T	Alexis F	11S	Amberley P
7T	Darcie-Sienna S	8T	Ellie C	9T	Farah B			11T	Ceitidh M

### Sparx Superstars

Congratulations to this week's superstars for going above and beyond to make progress.

Morgan J	Millie C	Will A	Amelia P	Leon B
Jack S	Sophia H	Lily H	Kyle B	Matthew T

### Spring Term Fixtures

Week commencing	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
29 <sup>th</sup> January		U16s – Boys Basketball Return to school – <b>5:45pm</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 9 – Girl's Football. Return to school - <b>6pm</b>	U16s – Boys Basketball Return to school – <b>5:45pm</b>

### **What children and young people need to know about MyLOL**

Teenagers' blossoming interest in romantic relationships and their devotion to online networking is a potent combination – and, regrettably, not always a safe one. It raises all kind of worries about the possibility of sharing intimate images or deeply personal information; and that's simply with contacts their own age – to say nothing of the chance of connecting with an older stranger.

MyLOL – a site which specifically facilitates interaction between 13 to 19-year-olds – has amassed around a million users worldwide, but sadly its safeguarding protocols can't match that level of success. The ease with which an adult could pose as a teen under a bogus birthdate makes grooming a realistic threat – and that's far from the platform's only risk, as the guide at the end of this letter explains.

### **Key dates 2024**

1 <sup>st</sup> February	Year 9 Parents' Consultation, 3.15pm-6.15pm
7 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 8 Immunisations
12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> February	Half term
22 <sup>nd</sup> February	Year 9 online Options Evening, 6pm
26 <sup>th</sup> February-1 <sup>st</sup> March	Year 11 mock week
7 <sup>th</sup> March	Futures Fair (careers)
28 <sup>th</sup> March	Last day of spring term

Yours sincerely



Paul Slaughter  
**Principal**



## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# MYLOL

AGE RESTRICTION  
13-19

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

MyLOL is a free social networking and dating site aimed at teens. Profiles can publicly display users' images and information, including sexual orientation and personal interests. The service bills itself as "the number one teen dating website in the world", claiming to have more than a million users globally. Despite its popularity, the MyLOL app is no longer available from Google Play or the App Store, although the site is still active. In some countries, police forces and schools have previously warned parents about "sinister predators" and "inappropriate activities" on the site.

### FLimsy AGE GATES

Although MyLOL states it is exclusively aimed at users aged between 13 and 19, there is no credible age verification system to prevent a younger child – or an older adult – from signing up to the platform. Coupled with the fact that it's impossible to establish a user's true identity on MyLOL, this raises a serious concern that the site could be used for grooming.

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

MyLOL maintains that it monitors all uploaded images for nudity or sexual content. It also claims to be able to detect suspicious keywords. However, there have been numerous reports of explicit content being found on the platform, with users often posting provocative, semi-nude pictures of themselves and engaging in flirty or sexually explicit conversation.

### POTENTIAL CYBER-BULLYING

MyLOL lets users 'vote' on other people based solely on their appearance, much in the same vein as the now-defunct site Hot or Not. This feature could easily lead to distress and bullying, especially if a young person's profile pics receive an unfavourable response. Various reviews of MyLOL have noted that bullying frequently becomes an issue in the platform's chat groups and private messages.

### IN-APP SPENDING

MyLOL is free to join and use, but it also offers paid-for memberships. Users who have paid money get their profile promoted at the top of the site and in search results. They can also earn additional credits for increased engagement with the platform – such as sharing, replying to messages and voting. At the time of writing, the monthly membership fee was \$9.95 (just under £8).

### DATA COLLECTION

According to its privacy policy, MyLOL collects user data including email addresses, contact details and interests. While the company says it is committed to protecting users' privacy, the small print states that information may be shared externally. MyLOL claims to follow procedures to keep data secure, but does not specify what these procedures are, or whether such information is encrypted.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

MyLOL makes it easy to connect with strangers. In fact, the site's rewards feature encourages users to send private messages to people they don't know. There have been several media stories of adults posing as teens on MyLOL to connect with minors, which could lead to extremely dangerous situations, such as a young person meeting up with someone who has been posing under a false identity.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### DISCUSS ONLINE DATING

It's vital to talk to your child about the possible dangers of platforms like MyLOL – particularly the threat of online predators. Remind them of the risks of sharing intimate images and information with strangers and emphasise that most people don't realise they're being 'catfished' until it's too late – it really isn't wise for a young person to meet up with someone they've only spoken to online.

### RESTRICT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child has access to a bank card or other payment method, they may be enticed into signing up for MyLOL's premium features. Having their profile boosted and receiving more attention could be especially tempting if their friends also use the site. You could consider altering their device's settings to disable internet purchases, or at the very least keeping an eye on their online spending.

### EXPLAIN PRIVACY RISKS

Before your child begins using a service such as MyLOL, it's important that they understand the potential pitfalls of giving out their personal data on this type of platform. Explain to them, for example, that they shouldn't divulge any personally identifying information to people who they don't know, as scammers can be quite convincing when attempting to steal someone's identity.

### SET UP LOCATION ALERTS

If you're worried that your child may be planning to meet up with someone they've met on MyLOL, you could consider utilising GPS or WiFi location tracking technology to follow their whereabouts in real time. You can even set up a virtual boundary or 'fence' and opt to receive an alert to your phone if your child enters or exits a specified area.

### Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a large network of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech website The Insider, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, writer and columnist.



The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday



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