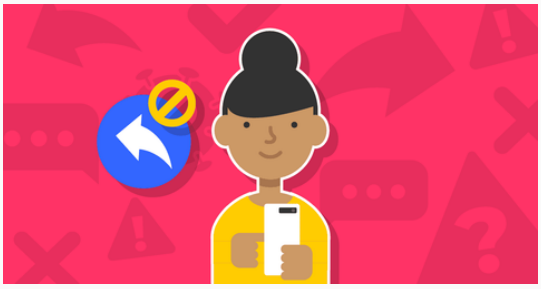
ISSUE 4 • APRIL 2023

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

WHAT IS `FAKE NEWS?`

With so many sources of information online, it has become difficult to make sense of what content is based on fact, half-truths or lies.

The use of digital platforms to share things we believe to be true when they may not be can have a powerful ripple effect, influencing others to see them as facts. This can be especially dangerous for young people, who can be persuaded to take on distorted views of the world that could cause them or others harm in the real world.



CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO ACCESS THE FULL ARTICLE AND VIDEO, OR SCAN THE QR CODE ON THE RIGHT IF READING A PRINT VERSION

The internet and social media have changed the way we learn about the world around us. With so many sources of information, it can be hard to keep up with what is real and what is fake online. Increasingly, those creating ‘fake news’ (disinformation and misinformation) are making it more difficult to spot. At times even well-established news organisations find themselves reporting on stories based on false information gathered through social networks which originate from a fake post (an example of this is the Blue Whale challenge).

While having access to information is vital, the increase of fake news online, particularly around the COVID-19 pandemic, has made it more urgent to help children and young people develop their critical thinking to spot the difference between fact and fiction online. From research, it is thought that only 2% of children and young people in the UK have the critical literacy skills they need to tell whether a news story is real or fake.

If you feel that an individual has been negatively influenced by a 'fake news' story or is involved with the distribution of misinformation within the College, please inform the Safeguarding Team. Internet Matters has created articles looking into examples of misinformation and how to challenge and support young people, which can be found here, or via the QR code on the right.

THE INFLUENCE OF ANDREW TATE

WHO IS ANDREW TATE?

Andrew Tate is an American-British professional kickboxer turned internet personality. He is a self-described 'success coach' and has a subscription-based online marketing programme called 'Hustler's University' or 'The Real World' with over 100,000 subscribers.

WHY IS HE SO CONTROVERSIAL?

Tate has become infamous due to a string of controversial comments and behaviours, such as promoting gendered violence and misogyny, claiming mental illness makes people '***weak***' and depression '***isn't real***', and stating that rape victims must "***bear some responsibility***" for their attacks.

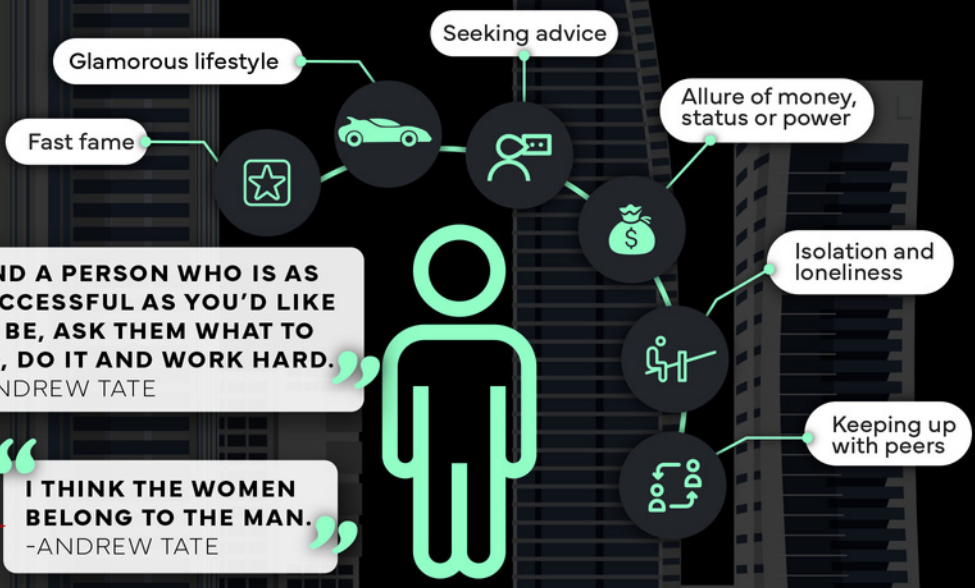
Tate has made many controversial statements that have caught the public's attention, including "***Men can cheat but women can't. It's not sexist – it's reality.***"

Tate regularly references the ***'Matrix'***, his theory being that society is controlled by the rich elite. Politicians, media and education providers would all come under this umbrella too.

He has been banned from social media platforms and was arrested in Romania in December 2022 on suspicion of human trafficking, rape, and forming an organised crime group to exploit women.

WHY ARE YOUNG PEOPLE DRAWN TO THIS BEHAVIOUR?

As much as Tate is known for his controversial comments, he also likes to be motivational, encouraging his followers to work hard and go after their dreams, to work out and be disciplined. He has spoken of the difficult childhood he endured and how he is "self-made". He speaks of his experiences in a way that a lot of young people can relate to and in turn, they aspire to be like him.



> **FIND A PERSON WHO IS AS SUCCESSFUL AS YOU'D LIKE TO BE, ASK THEM WHAT TO DO, DO IT AND WORK HARD.**
> -ANDREW TATE

> **I THINK THE WOMEN BELONG TO THE MAN.**
> -ANDREW TATE

RED FLAGS TO WATCH OUT FOR:

- Referring to the 'Matrix'
- Attempting to justify harmful behaviours
- Notable and negative change in behaviour
- Using harmful or derogatory phrases in conversation
- Being physically violent towards females
- Disrespecting female authority figures or classmates

Schools across the UK are encountering increasing numbers of pupils who admire Tate and attempt to mirror his ideology. They believe his views have been misunderstood and taken out of context. However, incidents in schools show how his views have been interpreted by vulnerable young men.

TOP TIPS

Remind them they don't need to follow the crowd

Explain the importance of making their own mind up on issues by discussing their core values and what's important to them. It may be worth reminding them that not everything they see online is correct or helpful and that they have the freedom to make a different choice.

Talk to senior staff

They may be able to offer insight into patterns in online behaviours and should be notified if an incident occurs.

Allow room for classroom discussion

Try not to shut down pupil conversations or ban certain topics. Where appropriate, ask them to think about how they would feel if someone they love was treated this way. Without being reactive or emotional, emphasise the damage that this behaviour causes and talk about healthy ways to express themselves to others.

Discuss positive role models

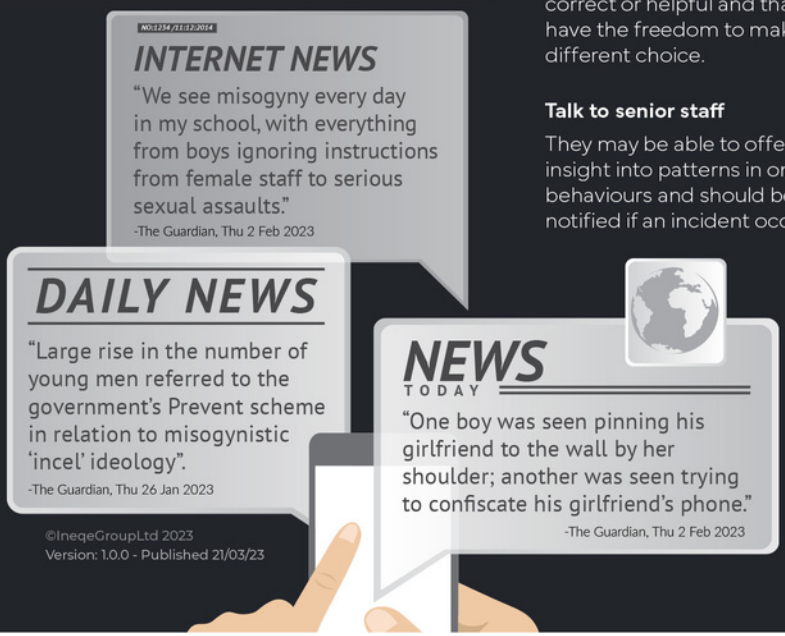
Listen to pupils' suggestions for positive role models who they look up to in their lives and their reasons why. Use the opportunity to end the discussion positively by affirming and reinforcing good choices.

Offer solutions

It is helpful to discuss examples of respectful language versus harmful language or 'friendship behaviour' versus harmful behaviour. You could even use examples from popular television shows or films to help them understand!

Keep the focus on the behaviour, not the person

Andrew Tate represents wider issues around consent, gender roles, violence and toxic masculinity. By focusing on these behaviours rather than Tate himself, you may encounter less defensiveness and more understanding.



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RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A STUDENT

Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)
Donna Trusler

Link Governor
Sofie Khachik

Alert DSL or Deputy of concern by either:

Calling the freephone:
0800 061 4222

Email:
safeguarding@wqe.ac.uk

If you are concerned about a member of staff, you must tell Paul Wilson (Principal)

If you are concerned about the Principal, you must tell Phillip Parkinson Chair of Governors

Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy speaks to the student & reviews concern and decides next steps

Decision made to monitor the concern.

Decision made to discuss the concern informally with the parents/carers

Decision made to refer the concern to external agency e.g. police, social care

Monitor

Discuss

Refer

Relevant staff monitor student and feedback to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy within an agreed timescale.

Monitor

Once discussed with parents Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy may decides to discuss further with parents, monitor or refer to social care.

Refer

Designated Safeguarding Lead may review decision with Deputy and agree to refer to external agency.

Prevent/Channel Referrals:

All need to go through Donna Trusler as the single point of contact

Record

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputies keep

concerns se cure & confidential on CPOMS

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0800 028 0285

Education Support Helpline 08000 562 561

A GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA - INSTAGRAM SPECIAL

Instagram is a photo and video social networking service that allows users to create profiles, upload photos, create 'stories' and apply filters, tags and hashtags for others to browse and follow.

However, Instagram may also put users at heightened risk of various threats commonly associated with social media. Below is a more detailed report into the possible risks of using Instagram.

Predators

The internet is an ideal forum for predators to find victims because they can disguise their identities and talk to children privately. As it's so popular with minors, Instagram is the site most used by child predators. They may send or request inappropriate messages or pictures, and use said pictures as blackmail. They can even subscribe your child's account to other unwanted accounts without their knowledge or consent.

Mature Content

If your child only follows real-life friends and doesn't search for anything, they'll hopefully only see clean content. However, it's likely that they'll follow strangers, potentially exposing themselves to sexual content, harsh language, drugs, and dark subjects, like suicide. They may also be manipulated by marketing. Also, despite Instagram's policy against nudity, pornographic content can be found on the site.

Cyberbullying

The internet makes it easy to bully people anonymously, sometimes in virtual mobs. Some cyberbullies create new Instagram accounts to publicly abuse their victims. In addition to this, there's an especially damaging method of harassment called doxing, in which the abuser finds and publicly publishes someone's personal information often encouraging mobs of strangers to harass the victim or call their employer.

Impact Upon Mental Health

A study conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health found that out of YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, Instagram is the worst for one's mental health. This could be linked to the jealousy, frustration and disappointment that develops when viewing others' seemingly perfect lives. Even many adults believe that the lives of others are as glamorous as they look online. Though correlation isn't causation, several studies have found that teens who spend the most time on social media are the most likely to be depressed.

Potentially Dangerous Challenges

The internet promotes many silly fads, such as planking and the ice bucket challenge. Some are more dangerous than they appear. For example, the cinnamon challenge requires someone to swallow a spoonful of cinnamon without water in one minute. Doctors warn that this can cause choking and even respiratory failure.

Private Messaging

Instagram's private messaging may lead users to take risks under the false impression of security. One risk they might take is sexting, which may lead to blackmail, public humiliation, and legal repercussions. They may also talk to bad influences such as predators, drug dealers, or badly-behaved peers. The illusion of privacy and misplaced trust may lead users to share private information such as their address, and they may also opt to meet up with strangers, not fully understanding that their online personas may be fake.

Information taken from an article found on 'TechUntold' website, written in December 2022