



9th April 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

SENSITIVE INFORMATION

You may have seen the recent Netflix documentary, "Adolescence" that has created some serious questions and made educational headlines over the last few weeks since its release. As a result of this, we have put together some initial information to enlighten you about the world of incel and hidden meanings of emojis.

What does the term incel mean?

'a member of an online community of young men who consider themselves unable to attract women sexually, typically associated with views that are hostile towards women and men who are sexually active.'

Online, young people are communicating in ways that most adults completely miss and what looks innocent could have a much deeper meaning.

Here are some details of the different meaning to the emojis that are used by some young people (current as of April 2025).

● Red Pill – "I see the truth." Used in toxic male spaces to mean waking-up to supposed hidden 'truths' about women and society, often linked to misogynistic ideologies.

● Blue Pill – Represents those who are "blind to the truth" or still believe in mainstream views about relationships and gender dynamics.

💣 Dynamite Emoji – An "exploding red pill," meaning someone is a radicalised Incel.

🫘 Kidney Bean – A symbol linked to Incel culture, sometimes mocking women.

💯 100 Emoji – Tied to the "80/20 rule," the belief that 80% of women are only attracted to 20% of men.

🕳 Black Hole – Used to express depression, hopelessness, or being sucked into negative online spaces.

🌀 Tornado – Represents chaos or feeling overwhelmed, sometimes used to indicate mental distress.

🐸 Frog Emoji – Associated with alt-right and extremist meme culture, often linked to Pepe the Frog, which has been co-opted by some toxic online groups.



🦅 Eagle – A symbol of extreme nationalism, sometimes used in far-right online spaces.

💀 Skull – While often just slang for “That’s funny” or “I’m dead (from laughing)”. In certain groups, it can signal darker themes like nihilism or self-harm.

❤️ 💜 🟡 🩷 🧡 Heart Colours – Not just about love!

❤️ = Love

💜 = Lust

🟡 = “Are you interested?”

🩷 = Interested but not in sex

🧡 = “You’ll be okay”

The digital world is evolving faster than most adults can keep up, but we don’t have to be in the dark.

So how can you support your child?

- **Get Curious, not Combative** – Ask open-ended questions: “I saw something about emojis meaning different things. Have you heard of this?” Keep the conversation light.
- **Create a Judgment-Free Zone** – If your child feels like they’ll be punished for opening up, they won’t. Make it clear you’re there to listen, not just lecture.
- **Decode Together** – Ask them to explain their digital world. What do different symbols mean? Who are the influencers they follow? Don’t assume. Ask.
- **Teach Critical Thinking** – Help them question online content. “Why do you think some groups push this idea? Who benefits?” Arm them with questions, not just rules.
- **Monitor Without Spying** – Open conversations work better than secret surveillance. Make checking in on their online spaces a normal part of parenting, not a crisis move.
- **Be Real About Manipulation** – Explain how toxic online groups groom young people by making them feel special, included, or like they have ‘insider knowledge.’
- **Build Their Offline Confidence** – The more they feel valued and confident in the real world, the less they’ll seek validation in dangerous online spaces.

Some further references:

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership have created this useful guide for parents with more emoji references for you also [DEX004a_Emoji-Dictionary-A5-Leaflet_V2_DIGITAL.pdf](#)

[Slang-Dictionary-A5-Booklet.pdf](#) (Published by The Children’s Society)

[50 text acronyms & slang terms that every parent should know - Asda Mobile](#)

[Incels: Inside a dark world of online hate - BBC News](#)

[Adolescence: Netflix series writer Jack Thorne wants 'radical action not role models' - BBC News](#)

[How Netflix’s Adolescence Exposes the Rise of Incel Ideology - Safeline](#)

At Alcester Academy, we continue to try to educate students on staying safe through their phones and the online world through assemblies, tutors time, super learning days and through our Personal Development programme (PD).

On Wednesday 7th May, we are hosting a parent forum at school led by the Smartphone Free Childhood organisation. Spaces can be booked for this after Easter. The speakers will outline some of the most recent concerns regarding what children can access on smart phones.

Please do not think that this one stand-alone letter is intended to address the huge concerns currently about the inappropriate use of smart phones. Only in communication and sharing information, however, will we all begin to understand this more effectively, in order to help our children to make positive choices and keep them as safe as possible.

At the request of the Chair of Governors, Mrs Mellors spoke to some students about the content of this letter before I sent it to you. It was refreshing to know that the Year 11s spoken to were unaware themselves of many of the hidden meanings of these emojis. This provided some reassurance for us all that these hidden messages might not be as common as society thinks presently. In our opinion, as educators and parents however, it our responsibility to stay as up to date with these trends as we can possibly be.

If you have any concerns about your child or need further support, please do not hesitate to contact me further.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K-Buckthorp', written in a cursive style.

Karen Buckthorp
Assistant Headteacher &
Designated Safeguarding Lead