

Department of Education

Director: John Wilson BSc (Hons)
Council Offices, 211 Main Street, Barrhead, East Renfrewshire G78 1SY

Mearns Castle High School

Head Teacher: Dean T Smith MA
Waterfoot Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 5GU
Phone: 0141 577 2300 Fax: 0141 577 2314
e-mail: schoolmail@mearnscastle.e-renfrew.sch.uk

Our Ref: DS/CW

Your Ref:

Date: 16 November 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

UNSOLICITED TECH SUPPORT FROM MICROSOFT/WINDOWS

After investigating a few issues raised by parents regarding a 'VIRUS FOUND' message which appeared when some of our young people were completing homework tasks online on Glow, I write with regard to an alarming message which has been brought to our attention via the parent body regarding a scam which appears to be following a virus alert while using the internet at home.

Both of these issues are unrelated, and we have assurances from the GLOW team that the GLOW site is virus free and that Microsoft will not contact pupils or parents via GLOW. The 'VIRUS FOUND' message in Glow appeared if there is any material which is deemed inappropriate, which is obviously not a virus. GLOW has now made the necessary changes and this message should no longer appear.

The information that has been passed to us regarding the scam, is that some parents have received phone calls from "Microsoft Tech Support" to offer to fix viruses or issues on your computer, which includes the caller asking to enter codes into online software allowing the caller to gain remote access to your computer and requesting payment for this service.

Microsoft provides more in-depth advice on dealing with this scam. Below is an extract from the link to give some advice on how to deal with any similar calls:

Microsoft does not make unsolicited phone calls to help you fix your computer

In this scam cybercriminals call you and claim to be from Microsoft Tech Support. They offer to help solve your computer problems. Once the crooks have gained your trust, they attempt to steal from you and damage your computer with malicious software including viruses and spyware. Although law enforcement can trace phone numbers, perpetrators often use pay phones, disposable cellular phones, or stolen cellular phone numbers. It's better to avoid being conned rather than try to repair the damage afterwards.

Treat all unsolicited phone calls with skepticism. Do not provide any personal information

If you receive an unsolicited call from someone claiming to be from Microsoft Tech Support, hang up. We do not make these kinds of calls.

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/security/online-privacy/msname.aspx>

I hope that you have not had the misfortune to experience either of the above situations and I trust that you will find the information helpful.

Yours faithfully

Dean Smith
Head Teacher