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November 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November – Chelsea’s choice**

Throughout the autumn term, West Sussex County Council has commissioned applied theatre specialists AlterEgo Creative Solutions to tour schools and other suitable venues in our area with their highly innovative production ‘Chelsea’s Choice’.

The play - which has now been seen by over 200,000 young people around the UK - tells the story of a group of three students who discover the diary of a girl called Chelsea. Chelsea was a young girl who, having fallen out with her friends and family, was approached by a man called Gary. Gary was older, owned a car, had a flat and treated her like an adult. Unfortunately Gary was not what he seemed to be! Chelsea’s story is played out and examined by the three students along with their teacher in an attempt to understand what happened to Chelsea and how it could have been prevented.

The 40 minute production and post-show Q&A have proven highly effective in raising awareness of:-

- healthy relationships
- safe internet use
- risky behaviour
- the grooming process
- child sexual exploitation
- where young people can go for help and advice

Child sexual exploitation is a highly sensitive subject and every care has been taken to ensure that the production is hard-hitting and relevant without being graphic or offensive. The issues are raised and discussed in a manner entirely relevant and suitable for the target age group.

**“The Government believes that local initiatives like ‘Chelsea’s Choice’ have a key role to play in preventing grooming and exploitation and in helping keep children safe from this heinous crime.” - Rohini Krishnamurthy, Child Safeguarding Division, Department for Education.**

With high profile cases around the country currently making the news on a regular basis, it is all of our duties to raise awareness of this subject. Councils, charities, support agencies, schools, parents and carers all need to engage with and acknowledge this issue in order to give young people the tools and knowledge that they need to keep themselves and their friends safe.

The production will have the full support of Sussex Police and Barnardos during the tour who will make sure that the appropriate care is in place should any of the young people wish to discuss the issues in the play afterwards.



I do realise that due to the nature of this highly sensitive subject that this opportunity may not be appropriate for every student. Should you wish to discuss your child attending this opportunity then please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Millican  
**Head of Year 9**