Control and Censorship of social media:

Hi, I am Ella McIntosh, and alongside Amy Struthers i will be chairing the Media committee at the North Berwick High School Model United Nations Conference 2018. We are looking forward to welcoming delegates from all different schools to debate current and problematic issues facing the world in media today. We are excited to see each committee’s proposition on the topics we have chosen to debate. We ask that each committee prepares a position paper on your countries views on the issues that will be debated (this should be between 50-75 words). Please email your position paper to either nb13mcine@edubuzz.org or nb13strua@edubuzz.org. We also advise that your committee make resolutions on the actions your country would want the UN to take on the topic as this would allow you to participate in the debate fully. Good luck and we look forward to seeing everyone’s contributions.

Introduction to debate:

Control and censorship of social media refers to how the government and authorities control what is said or published in social Medias such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and many other platforms. Most Western countries have little to no censorship on social media such as the UK or the USA as we live in a democratic society that puts emphasis on our freedom of speech/press and expression; there is also little control on our social media platforms. This has its benefits of giving people the freedom of speech and allowing them to communicate, criticise their government and be exposed to other opinions and ideas, but it also has the negatives of making it a lot easier for radicalisation and bullying to take place online.

However, some countries do have strict controls on what people can say, post or do on social media. For example China, a communist, one party state have banned western social media sites and have created their own. This allows the government to monitor and stop individuals from sharing ‘inappropriate’ content or opinions with each other and to the wider public. This inappropriate content is often criticisms of their government. This censorship isn’t just in social media but also in press and daily life. The control the Chinese government have over their citizens freedom of speech has been criticised by many countries and leaders as it does not allow people of China to their freedom of opinion and expression which is a human right in itself.

It has been argued that control of social media is needed, especially in the case of cyber bullying as a study taken in 2017 found that 37% of today’s youth have experienced cyber bullying, 30% of these young people have had suicidal thoughts and 7% of these victims have taken their own lives due to the cyber bullying they faced. Which supports the idea of tightening control and censorship of what people say on social media’s as it can affect people’s mental health negatively.

North Berwick High School MUN 2018
Points to consider:

● Your countries stance on social media
● How censored the internet is in your country
● Possible methods of censorship and control
● To what extent social media should be controlled

Useful links:

https://www.edubuzz.org/modelunitednationsnbhs/2016/03/21/hello-world

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/ether/rise-social-media-censorship

https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/www.marketplace.org/amp/2016/05/27/world/social-media-censorship-around-world

https://www.debate.org/opinions/is-there-a-need-to-censor-social-media-in-our-society