



24th October 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to update you on our approach to safeguarding, and to keep you up to date with topics that have been discussed with students this half term.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

The following staff lead the safeguarding in school and are a point of contact for staff, students and parents / carers who wish to raise concerns.

- Mr David Shield - Designated Safeguarding lead
- Mr Richard Lennox - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead
- Mrs Catherine Lennox - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead
- Mr Anthony Olsen - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead

Knife Crime

You will recall, a few weeks back, there was a very sad and shocking incident of knife crime that resulted in the death of a teenage boy in Gateshead. In response to that issue, we immediately changed the focus of our wider curriculum lesson to focus on the dangers of carrying knives, and invited representatives from Northumbria Police to talk to our older students. The message of how to stay safe is one we continually repeat in school to drive forward its importance.

The Ben Kinsella Trust are one of the leading anti-knife crime charities in the UK. You can find lots of useful information on their website. [The Ben Kinsella Trust](http://benkinsella.org.uk) (benkinsella.org.uk)

eSafety

As a school, we regularly have to deal with issues around social media and misuse of communications. The recent case of Molly Russell, where the inquest found that social media content contributed to her death, highlights the seriousness of this topic. We teach students the importance of using these systems sensibly and cautiously. Virgin media have produced a useful website that gives information on how to support your child to stay safe online.

[Children's Online Safety Test | Virgin Media O2](#)

#NEVEROK

At school we have our own #NEVEROK campaign to support pupils with instances of bullying and discrimination. You can find more information on our school website.

<https://www.stthomasmore.org.uk/students/key-information/neverok/>



SEMH

Social Emotional Mental Health issues continue to be an area of concern for some of the young people we have in our community. We encourage students to talk to staff, and as such have a number of Mental Health First aiders.

- Mr Lennox
- Mr Olsen
- Miss McNeill
- Mrs Cervantes
- Mrs Ashdown
- Mr Young
- Mr Davis
- Miss Peel
- Mrs Burns
- Miss Eden
- Mr Jackson
- Mrs Olsen

The importance of talking about issues has been highlighted in a recent campaign of adverts, one of which you can see here: [ITV: Britain Get Talking](#)

Safeguarding and child protection remain central to our daily practices, and we value the support you provide as parents / carers and working with us to keep children safe.

If you have any queries, concerns, or want to chat to us, please get in touch via your child's Head of House using the house email addresses below.

Your sincerely

Mr D Shield
Deputy Headteacher

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese	Sixth Form
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