



December 2023

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, as well as other information linked to the safety and wellbeing of our students.

- **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
- Ms Jessica Harle - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead
- Mrs Joanne Cervantes - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead

In addition, Heads of House and the Director of Sixth Form are also trained in this area, and can be contacted via the email links at the bottom of this letter.

- **eSafety**

As a school, we regularly have to deal with issues around social media, and misuse of communications, especially mobile phones. 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.
<https://www.virginmedia.com/blog/online-safety/childrens-internet-safety-test/>
- Premier Education has a useful Parent's Guide to Mobile Phone Health & Safety for Kids
<https://www.premier-education.com/news/the-parents-guide-to-mobile-phone-health-safety-for-kids>
- Internet Matters has clear guides linked to the age of children
<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/>



Social media is an area that can cause issues when misused. The age limit for these sites are usually 13, although we see lots of younger children accessing them. More information on the age restrictions and how to stay safe can be found on the safer internet website.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/age-restrictions-on-social-media-services>

- **Alcohol**

Many of our older students may well be attending parties over the Christmas period. Understanding how to enjoy oneself safely is essential, and the risks associated with alcohol and “spiking” need to be clearly understood. Drink Aware has clear information on these and other topics that are very useful.

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/advice/staying-safe-while-drinking>

- **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.

The importance of talking about issues has been highlighted in a recent campaign of adverts, one of which you can see here: <https://youtu.be/9cXDvqEsf9k>

- **Protected Characteristics**

Students have been introduced to our “One Community” campaign which highlights that despite each of us being different, we all belong. This includes information on protected characteristics, details of which are on the video linked below:

<https://youtu.be/VXLtKImtrvM>

- **#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/>

Anyone student who feels they are being victimised in line with the characteristics should report it to their tutor or head of house or via email: neverok@stthomasmore.org.uk

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 concerns, please contact the school through via email address below

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL,
CROFTDALE ROAD,
BLAYDON,
TYNE & WEAR,
NE21 4BQ

0191 499 0111
info@stthomasmore.org.uk
www.stthomasmore.org.uk



Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust is an exempt charity. It is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under company registration number 07890590. The registered office address is Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education HQ, Barmston Court, Turbine Business Park, Nissan Way, Washington, SR5 3NY.



Your sincerely

Mr D Shield
Deputy Headteacher

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese
s_stbqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_stclqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_stjfqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_squeries@stthomasmore.org.uk

