

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.
   <a href="https://www.virginmedia.com/blog/online-safety/childrens-internet-safety-test/">https://www.virginmedia.com/blog/online-safety/childrens-internet-safety-test/</a>
- Premier Education has a useful Parent's Guide to Mobile Phone Health & Safety for Kids
   <a href="https://www.premier-education.com/news/the-parents-guide-to-mobile-phone-health-safety-for-kids">https://www.premier-education.com/news/the-parents-guide-to-mobile-phone-health-safety-for-kids</a>
- Internet Matters has clear guides linked to the age of children https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/

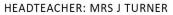
ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, CROFTDALE ROAD, BLAYDON, TYNE & WEAR, NE21 4BQ













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

#### Alcohol

Many of our older students may well be attending parties over the Christmas period. Understanding how to enjoy oneself safety 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: <a href="https://youtu.be/9cXDvqEsf9k">https://youtu.be/9cXDvqEsf9k</a>

### 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: <a href="https://youtu.be/VXLtKlmtrvM">https://youtu.be/VXLtKlmtrvM</a>

# #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. <a href="https://www.stthomasmore.org.uk/students/key-information/neverok/">https://www.stthomasmore.org.uk/students/key-information/neverok/</a>
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: <a href="mailto:neverok@stthomasmore.org.uk">neverok@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>

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

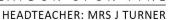
ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, CROFTDALE ROAD, BLAYDON, TYNE & WEAR, NE21 4BQ













Your sincerely

Mr D Shield Deputy Headteacher

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese
s_stbqueries@sttho	s_stclqueries@stthom	s_stjfqueries@stthom	s_squeries@stthoma
masmore.org.uk	asmore.org.uk	asmore.org.uk	smore.org.uk





