



July 2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am writing to update you on the approach to safeguarding that we have undertaken this academic year, and to keep you up to date with topics that have been discussed with students. I have also included some helpful links to the topics outlined that you will hopefully find useful.

Safeguarding topics are delivered through a mixture of assemblies, wider curriculum lessons, pastoral sessions and individual tutorials.

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
- Miss Jessica Harle - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead
- Mrs Joanne Cervantes - Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead

In addition, all other members of senior staff, heads of house and the director of sixth form are also trained in this area, and can be contacted with regard to safeguarding issues.

- **eSafety**

As a society, social media and mobile phones are pervasive. Whilst these bring many benefits, there are also intrinsic risks associated with these platforms. 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/>



- More information on the age restrictions of social media platforms and how to stay safe can be found on the safer internet website

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

- **E-cigarettes [vapes]**

Over this year, there have been a number of news articles about the rise in using e-cigarettes by children. As a school community we do know that some young people are attracted to this and often are encouraged to use vapes via social media sites such as Tik Tok. Understanding more about the dangers and how to quit is important, and some of our students have had the opportunity to look at this topic in detail.

ASH [Action on Smoking and Health] have produced an article that explores the use of e-cigarettes.

<https://ash.org.uk/media-centre/news/press-releases/fears-of-growth-in-children-vaping-disposables-backed-up-by-new-national-survey>

Northumbria Police have also produced information for parents around the legality of vapes

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16Sszh9L2-oPLrIZbJQwRW1RWvoa6lXPJ/view?usp=sharing>

- **Mental health - self harm**

Mental health is a significant issue for a number of young people in our community, and as a result some feel the need to self harm. This is a complex and difficult to understand topic, and such instances are always dealt with in a supportive and caring manner.

Young minds have an A-Z guide of mental health, and includes an informative section on self harm.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/self-harm/>

- **Prevent**

Prevent is a part of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy that aims to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. Prevent works with people who are at risk of becoming involved with terrorism or supporting terrorism. Whilst this is not a major issue for our school, Newcastle has been designated a priority funded area. Given the close geography, being aware of what to look for in terms of radicalisation is important. Find out more about Newcastle's strategy on the link below

<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/communities-and-neighbourhoods/prevent-newcastle>



- **Knife Crime**

Sadly, knife crime continues to occur in our region. In response students have had sessions focussing on the dangers of carrying knives. The message of how to stay safe is one we continually repeat in school to drive forward its importance.

The Ben Kinsella Trust is one of the leading anti-knife crime charities in the UK. You can find lots of useful information on their website.

<https://benkinsella.org.uk/>

- **Bullying**

The school's "One Community" campaign 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>

At school we have our own #NEVEROK campaign to support pupils with instances of bullying and discrimination. This is promoted widely around school. 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](mailto:neverok@stthomasmore.org.uk)

- **Stay safe around water**

As we approach the summer break, students have been given information about how to stay safe around water. Further information about staying safe in water is available from the Royal Life Saving Society

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/summer-water-safety>

- **E-scooters**

These have risen in popularity over recent years, but often pose a risk to young people. Northumbria Police have produced information for parents around the legality of scooters and other types of bikes.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16bUnJJeFKb6NhSzAHBB4uW1VmBUafnpV/view?usp=sharing>



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.

I hope you and your family have a safe summer break. If you have any concerns, please contact the school via the email addresses below.

Your sincerely

Mr D Shield  
 Deputy Headteacher

St Bernadette House	St John Fisher House	St Catherine Laboure House	St Theresa House	Sixth Form
<a href="mailto:s_stbqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk">s_stbqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:s_stjfqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk">s_stjfqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:s_stclqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk">s_stclqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:s_sttqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk">s_sttqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:s_6frmqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk">s_6frmqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk</a>

