



21 January 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

ONLINE SAFETY

The safety and welfare of our young people is of paramount importance to us all as teachers or as parents/guardians. It is important that we regularly remind our young people of the risks associated with the use of the internet and social media, including cyberbullying, sexting, exploitation, online reputation, inappropriate contact with adults and the misuse of personal information such as photographs and videos. Young people should be encouraged to use the internet and social media in a safe and responsible way.

There is no shortage of websites with information for young people and parents about internet safety, including:

- www.connectsafely.org which contains a very useful 'Parents' Guide to Facebook' and provides advice and guidance on controlling who can see the information posted on the social networking site;
- www.thinkyouknow.co.uk which provides advice from the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) Centre;
- www.kidsmart.org.uk which contains a very useful 'Young People and Social Networking Sites' leaflet;
- www.childnet.com which provides a breadth of information on keeping your child safe online;
- <http://parentinfo.org/articles/all> which provides an excellent and up-to-date reference point for the main e-safety issues affecting young people; and
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/> which provides advice to parents/guardians about how to talk to their child about sexting and what they can do to protect them.

I would ask that you discuss these matters with your son/daughter and highlight the importance of responsible internet use. I would also ask that you reinforce that pupils should not use social media or other forms of online communication to:

- compromise the rights and dignity of others, including fellow pupils or staff; or
- bring the name of the school, its pupils or staff into disrepute.

Please find attached a leaflet entitled 'Sexting and the Law'. I recommend that you take some time to read the information contained in this guide carefully and ensure that both you and your son/daughter are fully aware of the definition of 'sexting' and the possible consequences of such activity.

Further information on e-Safety is also available in the Parents' Section of the St. Mary's website.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely

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