

Digital Safety Culture at St Thomas More Catholic Primary

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we understand that having a good digital safety culture across the whole school community is vital. By implementing a good digital safety culture with the added benefit of staff, parent/carers and governors having free access to our National Online Safety (National College) platform, we can help families stay protected and up to date with how the online world develops and changes.

“The online world develops and changes at great speed. New opportunities, challenges and risks are appearing all the time. This can make it difficult for schools to stay up to date with the latest devices, platforms, apps, trends and related threats.” DfE Guidance.

Digital technology is constantly developing and changing at speed. At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School we provide:

- **Education:** Staff and governor training annually, ‘Safetynet’ meetings with the safeguarding team, regular updates to parents either via email, Class Dojo or our safeguarding section on our weekly newsletter, monthly safeguarding bulletins for staff and governors, access to the National College platform (previously National Online Safety platform) for staff, parents/carers, governors, a curriculum for children through our PSHE, RHE and Computing, our school ethos and mission statement, workshops led by mental health specialists, police visits, safety in action lessons to support transition to secondary school, therapists, child focus groups, Digital Leaders to promote the curriculum, staff, pupil and parent voice and therapy specialists.
- **Classroom Management:** Pupil engagement, adaptive teaching and support for vulnerable pupils, highly effective classroom management to ensure children remain on task to learn.
- **Firewall:** A firewall is used so that if anyone accesses the school network, it will be protected from cyber-attacks that could jeopardise school data.
- **Safeguarding Records:** Safeguarding team have access to a secure data base to record, store, monitor and act upon information which may put a child at risk of harm or if a child is at risk of harm.
 - **Filtering & Monitoring:** Medway Grid for Learning provides our Broadband and filtering and monitoring in conjunction with an application that can monitor and print screen activities by staff and children that may be of a concern. All devices will go through the filtering and monitoring system. KS2 children will have their own login to alert safeguarding leads to individual’s behaviour and KS1 will continue to identify usage through recording allocation of devices.

Whole School Community

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School regularly encourages all parents/carers to sign up to our free National College (previously National Online Safety) platform advertised on our weekly newsletter. Parents/Carers can access all policies via the school website and the curriculum including the Personal, Social and Health, Relationship and Health and Computing curriculum.

Children at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School need to stay safe and will engage in all lessons, workshops and assemblies including online safety. Having a strong digital environment and access to modern resources will allow children to grow in resilience in the online environment and understand

how their digital actions may have consequences. Children have access to their own Acceptable Use Policy in class and this is tailored to meet the needs of children with additional needs. Children are also taught to understand the importance of having a trusted adult they could speak to, have a dedicated safeguarding display board in the hall, posters to support their understanding of how to stay safe online, Digital Leaders to promote and support others and child voice activities such as surveys and child focus groups.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will ensure that their digital safety education allows children to comprehensively explore the types of risks they might be exposed to online. They should understand what dangerous communication can look like and learn to reflect before posting or sharing anything in the digital environment that may lead to harm for either themselves or others.

Children will benefit from an internet that is not locked down so that they can build resilience in a safe environment. By being able to explore age-appropriate exciting resources that meet real world requirements, they will become more understanding of the online space. Knowledge is power, and lack of understanding creates vulnerability. The IT department will manage the school safety systems in liaison with senior leaders.

Staff will follow reporting arrangements for safeguarding concerns and ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is delivered. Having a strong digital safety culture in school will enable teachers to identify problems and also support teachers in delivering high quality lessons with good access to resources and technology which will also support assessment for learning.

Governors will ensure that the school's digital safety culture is effective and that staff are trained in online safety and that children are protected from harm but also know what they need to do to stay safe.

Today, the online world has a greater presence in the day-to-day life of children and therefore children and young people are more exposed to online risks. There has been an alarming rise in self-harm, bullying taking place online that can be difficult to escape, reports of children affected by county lines, online grooming, gang violence, anxiety and depression. Therefore, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will ensure that a strong digital safety culture is in place so that safeguarding of children will be effective and digital resilience will increase through the building of online skills. By involving all stakeholders in creating a digital safety culture, not only will the school community be better protected, but pupils will gain better outcomes.

Further information can be found via our National College platform and:

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/parents-and-carers>

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/online-safety-parents-questions>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>