



## **Safeguarding and Protecting Children Thomas More Catholic School**

THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
Russell Hill Road, Purley, Surrey, CR8 2XP

### **Mission Statement**

**To Care** for, respect and value all people and or environment.

**To Learn** that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.  
To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to  
academic excellence and personal integrity.

**To Achieve** beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities,  
which take us all confidently into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

#### **Links:**

**Child Protection Policy**  
**Internet acceptable Use Policy**  
**Anti-Bullying**

### **What are the e-safety issues?**

Although the use of ICT and the internet provide ever increasing opportunities for children to expand their knowledge and skills, it is also the case that the use of such technology may sometimes expose children to the risk of harm.

Apart from the risk of children accessing internet sites which contain unsuitable material, risks to the well being of children may also exist in a variety of other ways.

It is known that adults who wish to abuse may pose as children to engage and then meet up with the children or young people they have been in communication with.

This process is known as 'Grooming' whereby an adult prepares a child or young person to be abused. The process may take place over a period of months using chat rooms, social networking sites and mobile phones.

An adult may pretend to be a peer and gradually convince the child or young person that they are their boyfriend or girlfriend, establishing a relationship of apparent trust with the intended victim and making it difficult for the child to then speak out.

Increasingly bullying is conducted on the internet (cyber-bullying) or by the use of text messages and is therefore harder for schools to notice and deal with.

Section 175 of the 2002 Education Act and Section 11 of the 2004 Children Act places upon all those who work with children a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare by creating a safe learning environment and where there are child welfare concerns, taking swift action to address them. It is vital that schools are aware of the signs which might indicate that a child is being groomed, bullied or being subjected to inappropriate material and know how to take steps to begin to address this and safeguard and support the child.

**Thomas More Catholic School has a policy about the use of ICT and the internet which links into our Child Protection and Anti-bullying Policies; please ensure this is read and signed by your child**

TMCS ensures that all staff know who to go to if they have a concern that a child or young person might be at risk or suffering harm as a result of the use of these technologies (CP Policy, Acceptable Internet Use Policy)

**TMCS child-protection policy includes the following guidance:**

*“As with all forms of harm or abuse, there is no exhaustive list of signs or indicators to watch out for. But these can include: changes in children’s behaviour, demeanour, physical appearance and presentation, language or progress.*

***If anyone is concerned that a child’s safety is at risk because there is a suspicion that someone is using communication technologies (such as social networking sites) to make inappropriate contact with the child***

- 1. Report , and discuss with, the Child Protection Officer at TMCS and contact parents*
- 2. Advise the child on how to terminate the communication and save all evidence*
- 3. Contact CEOP <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>*
- 4. Consider the involvement police and social services*
- 5. Inform LA e-safety officer*

*TMCS will also consider delivering a parent workshop for the school community.*

***Children should be confident in a no-blame culture when it comes to reporting inappropriate incidents involving the internet or mobile technology: they must be able to do this without fear.***

***TMCS does not allow access to Facebook or other social networking sites from any computer at school; these sites are all barred to children and young people while on our premises***

### **Parental responsibility**

An effective arrangement that parents can make to ensure the safety of their children is to monitor their child / ren's use of the Internet / mobile phones at home:

- ensure that filters are in place to bar inappropriate sites, check this regularly as these sites can often be accessed via other means
- make sure the computer is in use in a communal area, like the living room; children are less likely to use inappropriate sites if they know they are being monitored; adults are also more likely to spot an inappropriate site
- parents need to monitor their child's use of Facebook / mobile phones
  - TMCS will **not** accept responsibility for comments posted on Facebook made on **home** computers
  - If incidents occur **at school**, then normal consequences as detailed in our 'Behaviour for Learning Policy', will result
  - Our task at TMCS is to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning; time spent investigating 'Facebook' comments takes us away from our core task
  - If you feel your child is the subject of inappropriate comments and feel he / she is being bullied, contact 'Facebook' with details of the sender, keep any evidence, and 'Facebook' will remove that user from their site

### **Report any incidents to *Contact CEOP* <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>**

- Consider contacting the police to report misuse of the site
- Please ensure that your child has his / her mobile phone and is not in unlawful possession of another student's
- Please monitor your child's use of the mobile phone and take necessary action if you feel your child is misusing it
- If your child is the subject of inappropriate calls / nuisance/ threatening / please consider reporting the matter to the police

### **Young people's responsibility**

- children need to take responsibility for the remarks they place on Facebook or other social network sites – cyber-bullying is still bullying and is no less harmful to others than face to face bullying; in fact, cyber-bullying is probably more harmful to other children as the sender is often anonymous and this can be more threatening to the receiver

- children need to report anything on the Internet which is inappropriate such as a suspicion that a user is not declaring his / her true identity
- photographs should never be taken in a classroom using a mobile phone
- photographs should never be taken of any child which would be likely to humiliate or cause offence i.e. a child in distress, involved in an altercation etc – this also applies to photographing adults

**TMCS reserves the right to bar any student from using the internet at school if it is thought to be used inappropriately**