



20<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Internet safety and the use of Social Media**

As we head in to the summer children will spend more time socialising online with friends and we would like to ensure children are as safe as possible over the summer holidays.

In recent weeks we have had a number of issues concerning social media. There has been a number of incidents of online bullying and targeting of certain children. This has resulted in some children becoming upset and distressed. Online bullying has a significant negative effect on the children's relationships and can greatly impact on the learning environment and ultimately, the children's happiness and feeling safe in school. I would appreciate if you could discuss the seriousness of this matter with your child.

St Thomas CE Academy is committed to promoting the safe and responsible use of the internet and as such it is our responsibility to raise this particular issue as a growing concern, due to the increase in inappropriate and underage social media apps and sites such as OoVoo, Skype, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, Youtube, Google+ and TikTok.

**No primary school child should have their own social media account until they are 13 years old. As a school, we strongly advise that your child does not have their own social media account and that it should be removed where possible due to them being under aged.**

We understand that it is increasingly difficult to keep up with the ways that our children are using new and ever changing technologies, however it is incredibly important to monitor and supervise your child's internet usage. It is very important to talk with your child about what they use the internet for and how they use it; making you aware of any possible dangers there may be.

Such dangers may include:

- Exposure to inappropriate language, games, picture and video content.
- Exposure to online predators leading to possible child protection and cyberbullying issues.
- Legal implications of children posting content of a sexual or abusive nature.

We cannot govern matters occurring out of school hours, but we will take action if a problem comes to our attention that involves the safety of our pupils, including reporting the use of inappropriate images of young people and inappropriate messaging to the police, as this is a legal matter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr Lassetter', written over a faint circular watermark.

Mr Lassetter  
Executive Headteacher

**St Thomas CE Academy**

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