



# St Robert of Newminster Catholic School and Sixth Form College



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Head Teacher: Mr. D. Juric  
Chair of Governors: Mr. G. Moorhouse

25<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

## Social Media & Keeping your Child Safe Online

St Robert of Newminster School is committed to keeping our children safe and to promoting the safe, responsible use of the Internet. As such, we feel it is our responsibility to raise a particular issue with you. It has come to our attention that recently, some of our Year 7 students have encountered concerning behaviours with the use of Instagram. This letter is to draw your attention to some useful advice and guidance. The advice provided here is in light of recent concerns, and is not an exhaustive guide to keeping your child safe online. Our school website contains guides for parents/carers and we encourage you to look at this, in addition to the content of this letter.

### Instagram 'Live Streaming'

This has become a more recently popular way for young people to communicate online. Whilst this may be able to be managed safely, and have benefits such as young people feeling less socially isolated, there are many risks involved.

Two risks we wish to highlight involve both content and contacts:

- **Firstly, if a young person is watching other people's live streams, then they could be exposed to age inappropriate content, including sexual or violent content;**
- **Secondly, when a young person 'goes live' there can be hundreds, potentially thousands, of people watching a live stream, including people who might be looking to hurt or exploit children and young people.**

### Talk to your child often

- We encourage you to talk to your child about their use of social media, the number of 'followers' that they have on their accounts, and specifically, the concerns raised about Instagram 'Live'.
- Have a conversation with your child. You could ask your child if they think there are any differences between a photo being shared online and a live stream.
- Reinforce the message that although live streaming seems fun, anyone watching could be recording and saving it, just like with a photo.
- Avoid having one 'big' conversation with your child, keep the conversation about social media use open and often. Given the current circumstances it is understandable that young people are spending more time online. This should then increase how often we have these conversations.

In school, we will be continuing to promote online safety through information sessions, the first of which will take place within school time on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March, as well as PSHE lessons and key messages from tutors and Pastoral staff throughout the course of this academic year.



## **Find out more**

A useful website for you to find out more about Instagram and the specific 'Live' function is **thinkyouknow.co.uk** where you can also find a short video, which is linked [here](#). You can also find further advice and guidance on our school website also linked here: [Safeguarding and E-Safety - St Robert of Newminster](#).

If you have any concerns regarding your child's use of social media and feel they have in anyway been at risk in any way then we advise you to take the following steps:

- **Report this to CEOP <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre>**
- **Contact the school and ask to speak to a member of the safeguarding Team (listed below) who will also support you and your your child with this**

The school safeguarding team is as follows:

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mrs J Bowen and Mr A McHale

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mr D Bayne, Mrs K Gittins, Mrs R Hurst and Mrs K McHale

We will continue you to keep you updated and we are here to support you and your child should you ever need our advice and support.

Yours faithfully

**The School Safeguarding Team**