St Antony's
Roman Catholic School

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Date: 30.06.2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping our students safe, we would like to make you aware of a recent increase in reports of online sextortion scams targeting young people.

These incidents often begin when an individual, pretending to be another young person, starts a conversation through social media, messaging apps or online gaming platforms. They may encourage a child to share an inappropriate image or video. Once an image has been shared, the offender demands money (commonly around £100) and threatens to send the image to family, friends or post it online if payment is not made.

We are also aware of a growing trend involving artificial intelligence (AI). In some cases, offenders are using AI tools to create fake explicit images that appear to show a young person, even when no real image has ever been sent. They may then use these AI-generated images to blackmail or intimidate victims into sending money or genuine images. This can be extremely distressing, and it is important for young people to know that they should seek help immediately if this happens.

We would like to reassure parents that this type of exploitation can happen to any young person and that those targeted are victims of a crime. Offenders are highly skilled at manipulating and pressuring children into making quick decisions.

We encourage you to speak with your child about staying safe online and remind them to:

- Never share personal or intimate images with anyone online, even if they think they know or trust the person.
- Be cautious when communicating with people they have only met online, as profiles and identities can easily be faked.
- Remember that images and videos can now be manipulated or created using AI, so they should think carefully about what they share online and with whom.
- If someone asks for an inappropriate image, stop communicating with that person, block them and tell a trusted adult immediately.
- If someone threatens or blackmails them, whether using a real image or an AI-generated image, they should **not pay any money** or continue engaging with the offender. Instead, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible so they can be supported.

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If your child ever finds themselves in this situation, it is important that they know they will not be in trouble for asking for help. Prompt support can help prevent further harm, enable images to be reported and removed where possible, and allow the appropriate authorities to investigate.

Please continue to encourage open conversations at home about online safety. Knowing that they can come to a trusted adult without fear of judgement is one of the most effective ways to protect young people from online exploitation.

If you have any concerns about your child's online safety or would like further advice, please do not hesitate to contact the school's Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@st-antonys.com

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our young people safe.

Kind regards,

Safeguarding Team

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