

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. As you are no doubt aware there has been a recent national focus on the issue of sexual harassment of young people, in particular young women, as a result of the murder of Sarah Everard and the extremely upsetting testimonies that have been shared on the 'Everyone's Invited' website. Safeguarding is the 'golden thread' at Sydenham School and we take the contextual safeguarding of our students extremely seriously.

The Department for Education has commissioned the NSPCC to set up a helpline for children, families and professionals to seek expert, sensitive advice and to safely report abuse. The NSPCC helpline 'Report Abuse in Education' can be accessed on: 0800 136 663 from 8am-10pm Monday-Friday and 8am-6pm at weekends, or via email on help@nspcc.org.uk. More details of the helpline can be found [here](#). We of course encourage all our students and families to contact the school to discuss any safeguarding issues, and as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Sydenham School, I can be contacted directly via the contact details below. I also want to signpost families to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which can be found on the website [here](#).

In addition, I wanted to outline to you how we will support students with this issue, as well as support our students to be leaders of change. We have previously participated in a contextual safeguarding project with Lewisham borough called 'Immersive Safety' which included safety mapping of the local area with both staff and student groups. We are planning to revisit the mapping with students, led by our Student Leadership Team, and use these findings to campaign to improve the safety of our local context. We are also continuing to work in active partnership with the Mayor to improve lighting on the bridge over the railway line by Dacres Road.

I have met with the organisation BelEve which runs a campaign called 'It is that deep' which aims to contribute to systematic change to end sexual harassment through empowering young women to speak out. More details of the organisation and the campaign can be found [here](#) if you would like further information. We are planning to include this into our PSHE programme for this year and have also been approached by a parent who has suggested a podcast competition for students on this topic. The planning for this is taking place at the moment and we will share all of our work on this area in forthcoming Syd newsletters.

Additionally, we have been liaising with Forest Hill Boys and are planning to collaborate with them to address this issue. We feel this joint working will enable students to learn from one another and encourage our young people to be leaders of change. We are committed to tackling the behaviours that foster sexual harassment and rape culture. We cannot allow the current culture to continue unchallenged and we have a zero-tolerance approach to these matters.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. If you have any questions regarding any element of safeguarding at Sydenham School, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Ms E Quartey

Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

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