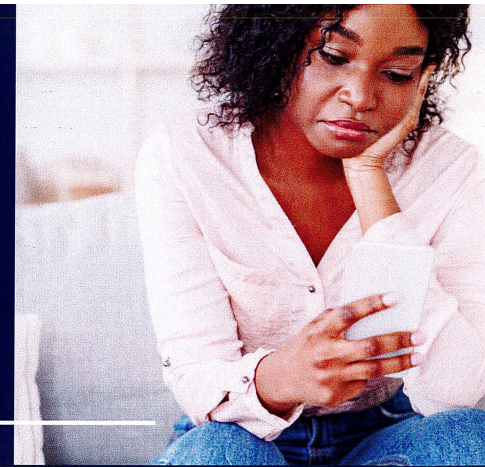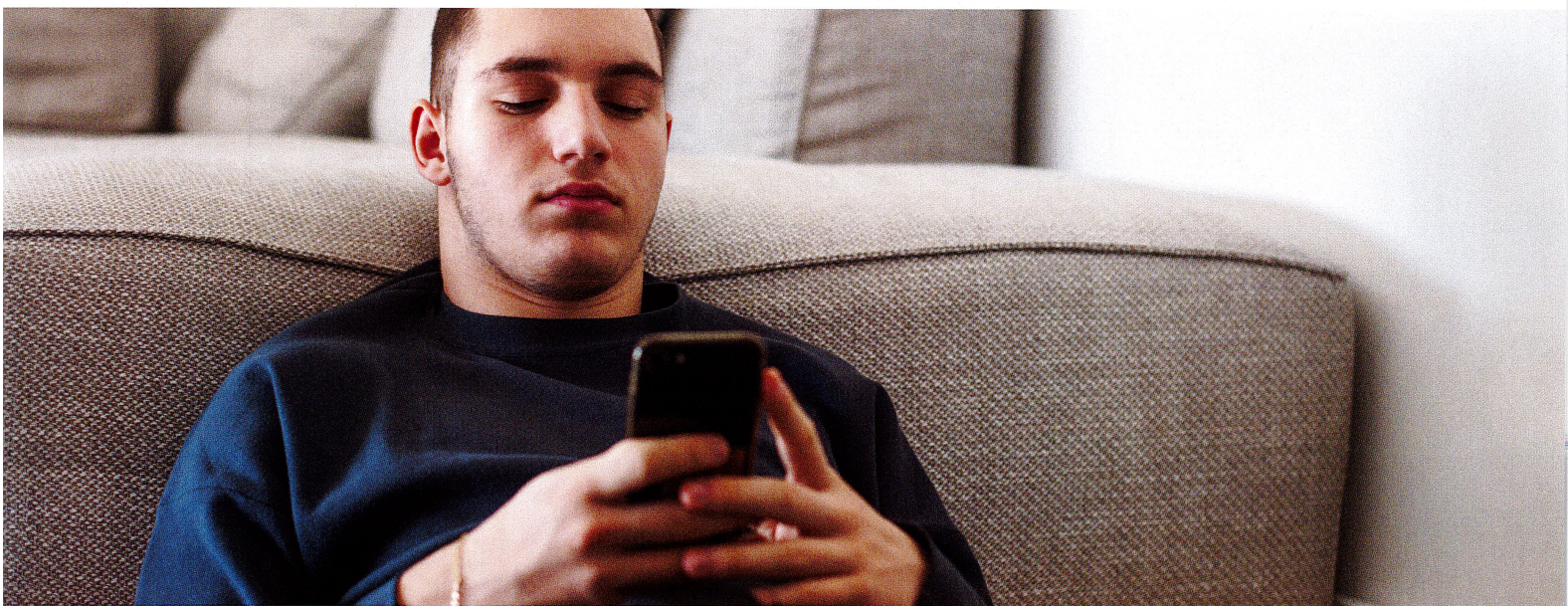# OTHER FORMS OF ONLINE ABUSE

Being abused online can manifest itself in many forms. Some of the symptoms are described here:
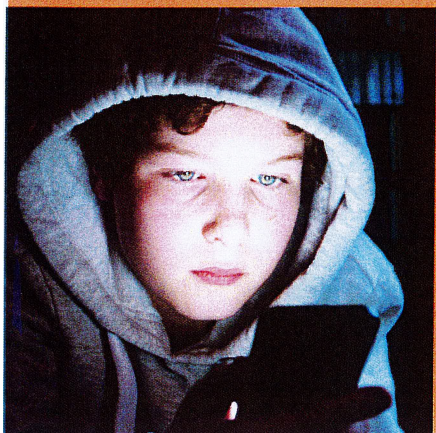
- **Harassment:** repeatedly sending offensive, rude and insulting messages
- **Denigration:** posting derogatory information about someone, and/or digitally altered photographs
- **Flaming:** fighting online, often using vulgar language
- **Impersonation:** hacking another's email or social media account to post embarrassing material
- **Outing and trickery:** sharing another's secrets or tricking someone into revealing embarrassing information
- **Cyber-stalking:** repeated threats or online activity that makes a person afraid for their safety
- **Trolling:** the starting of arguments in online communities with online insults, provocations and threats

Note: the pace of the development of technology means that constant updating is needed to understand the potential ways children, young people and adults can be abused using social media. Useful websites for keeping up-to-date are:

- www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- www.iwf.org.uk/
- www.familylives.org.uk/advice/bullying/cyberbullying
- www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/
- www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/
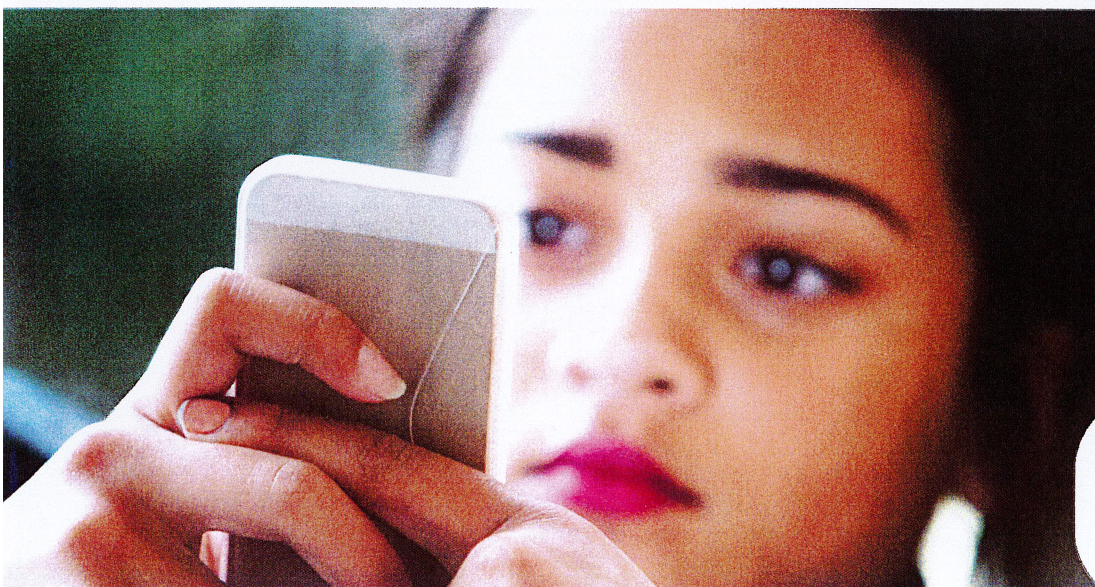
Other things to be aware of:

- **Addiction** is the excessive use of the computer that interferes with daily life to the extent that children and young people spend numerous hours playing computer games, chatting, or surfing the net while forgetting their responsibilities or even to eat.

- **Inappropriate content** is a generic label for any sort of Internet content, whether verbal, visual or audio which may be illicit, dangerous, or age-inappropriate and yet publicly available.

- **Offences relating to indecent images:** taking, making, showing, distributing, possessing with intent to show or distribute; advertising for showing or distributing.

Possible indicators of online abuse:

Without having access to their mobile, tablet or computer, it can be difficult to know if someone is experiencing cyber abuse. Some indicators of this form of abuse may include a child or an adult:

- spending much more or much less time online, texting, gaming or using social media withdrawing from the family, spending a lot of time alone
- being quiet, upset or outraged after using the Internet or texting
- being secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- being reluctant to let parents/carers or family members anywhere near their mobile, tablet, laptop, etc
- having lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet

Your Parish Safeguarding Officer is: