

Safeguarding Newsletter

What is Safeguarding?

The education sector has a duty of care for children, young people or vulnerable adults to ensure that those under their care are protected from harm inside and outside of their institutions. Safeguarding is the term used to describe the measures put in place to ensure the protection of health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals under their care.

What we do in school?

Safeguarding the health and well-being of the children is our number one priority

- A whole school ethos of safeguarding including strong leadership. We have created a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Policies and procedures including but not limited to:
 - Safeguarding / Child Protection policy.
 - Behaviour policy.
 - Staff Behaviour policy / code of conduct.
 - Health and Safety policy.
 - Safer Recruitment policy.
- All staff have a DBS certificate
- High-quality training that ensures all school staff know what to do including first-aid.
- Implementing the policies, procedures and training consistently across the school.
- Working in partnership with children, their families and carers and outside agencies.
- Yearly checks on all resources by outside agencies
- Regular Health and Safety reviews

The Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team is:

Daniel Webster - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ryan Walker - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Kay Cook - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Safeguarding Topics

Each term the newsletter will give you information about safeguarding topics that could affect you child.

The topic covered in the this terms newsletter are:

- Gangs and County Lines
- Mobile Phones
- Chat Apps

Gang and County Lines

We associate gangs with big cities like Bristol, Liverpool and London but local Police have informed us that gangs are becoming and increasing issue locally. While these gangs may be made up mainly of children in secondary school it is not uncommon to primary school children to be involved.

What is a gang?

The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.¹

Peer group

A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.

Street gang

"Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."

Organised criminal gangs

"A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.'"

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gang' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

What is County Lines?

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using

dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Children as young as 10 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs.

What to do if you're worried

Speak to someone about your concerns

If a child or young person is being groomed to join a gang, there are many factors to consider to protect them and keep them safe. However, it's crucial that they feel they're able to talk to you, or to another trusted adult outside of the gang.

Speak to them honestly about the consequences of violent or illegal behaviour – they might not realise how they could be liable or could have been lied to. However, make sure that they still feel comfortable talking to you about what is worrying them.

[Protecting children from county lines | NSPCC Learning](#)

[safeguarding-children-at-risk-from-criminal-exploitation-caspar-briefing.pdf \(nspcc.org.uk\)](#)

[Advice to parents and carers on gangs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Mobiles Phones and internet connected devices

Many families have internet connected devices for their child or home. Internet connected devices are devices or toys that are connected to the internet via WiFi, Bluetooth or a physical connection like a USB cable. They can also be connected to each other.

Internet connected devices can send and receive data, respond to voice commands and be controlled remotely using a smartphone app. They can also be called ‘the internet of things’ and include mobile phones.

What are the risks of internet connected devices?

Internet connected devices can have similar risks to devices like smartphones and tablets. These can be more likely to happen if the devices aren't set up properly. Some of the risks of using internet connected devices are:

- other people might be able to access the device and content without you knowing such as a child's GPS activity tracker
- you may not be able to see that someone's connected to your device, but sometimes developers or hackers can see your content
- internet connected devices can collect personal data, including audio and visual data.
- When not set up with parental controls children can access unfiltered images which are unsuitable for their age.
- If a device has a camera, pictures including inappropriate can be sent and received.

Tips for keeping your family safe

Online safety: top tips

Going online is a huge part of most young people's lives so it's important to talk to them about online safety. Here's our tips to get you started.



Chat to them about what they like to do online

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to talk to them and have regular conversations so that online safety is part of everyday discussion. Ask them open-ended questions like 'What's your favourite game or app to play on?'.

- Listen to what they have to say and show an interest. They could give you a demo of their favourite app or show you their favourite YouTube or TikTok account.
- They will probably be able to teach you things you don't know! This will also give you an opportunity to chat about any safety settings they might already have in place.
- Regular conversations with your child will encourage them to come to you if they ever need support or advice.

Talk about who they are in contact with online

There are lots of different ways that children can talk to people online – messaging apps, on social media, and less obvious ways such as chat on online games. Talk to your child about who they are talking to and what they are sharing with them.

- Use settings to help limit who can contact your child.
- Remind your child that they shouldn't share personal information with people they don't know online.
- Let your child know they can come to you or another trusted adult if any conversation makes them feel uncomfortable.

Help manage what they see and do online

Parental controls and privacy settings can help you manage how your child spends time online and help to keep them safe.

- Device settings – manage things like location sharing, screen time and in-app purchases. Most tech and gaming companies have dedicated pages to support with setting these up.
- App or game settings – in-app tools that can help to keep your child's account private and manage who they're talking to. You can normally find information on these in account settings or directly on the platforms website.
- Mobile or network provider settings – help to manage browsing access and stop your child from visiting inappropriate sites or downloading apps that aren't suitable. Contact your mobile or broadband provider for more information about setting this up.

Make sure to talk to your child first before implementing any new settings and explain to them how they help to keep them safe.

Remember it's ok to ask for help!

Remember you don't have to be an online safety expert – that's our job! We're here to help, with resources and advice to help support you and your child.

If your child asks you a question you don't know the answer to, or speaks to you about a negative experience they had online, here are some of things you could do:

- Visit the NSPCC online safety hub: nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
- Call the NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5000** to speak to an advisor
- Ask another parent
- Speak to your child's teacher
- If your child needs more support, they can contact Childline: childline.org.uk



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EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

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Chat Apps (WhatsApp)

WhatsApp had become a go to APP for sending messages but for children it can be very difficult to manage and has an age rating of 16+. If your child is using WhatsApp or other chat apps, please take time to read the advice on the links below.

[Is WhatsApp safe for my child? | NSPCC](#)

[Inappropriate or explicit content | NSPCC](#)

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility