



Safeguarding Newsletter

Issue 13 - 7.2.25

Nothing is more important to us than the safety and welfare of our pupils.

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people within our school. We work closely with families and a range of professional external agencies to secure this and follow Dudley

Safeguarding policies and procedures within our school.

We hope you find this Safeguarding Newsletter useful and aim to send at least one each half term.

NSPCC

NSPCC Podcast: Mental Health First Aid Kits

Mental health is as important to a child's safety as their physical health; mental health issues can sometimes lead to safeguarding and child protection issues. By recognising when a child is struggling with their mental health, and intervening to provide appropriate support, parents and professionals working with children can help prevent mental health problems from escalating into crisis. A mental health first aid kit is one tool that can be used to help. The kit contains a selection of resources to help young people manage their mental health if they're struggling, such as ways to distract oneself, relax or calm down, and pointers to further support.

Listen to this podcast episode to learn more about the mental health first aid kit and how you can use it with the young people. We'll cover:

- what a mental health first aid kit is and what it is useful for
- how to recognise when a young person would benefit from using a mental health first aid kit
- how to support a young person with the creation of their kit
- what sorts of resources young people can include in their kit
- what else you can do to help young people if they're waiting for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or other mental health support.

Listen to the podcast here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUyEIZj8cmw>

Online Safety

The Guardian has published guidance on talking to children and young people about violent material online. The guidance looks at how parents can address the risks by being proactive; establishing ground rules around online safety; and finding out more about the online communities their children are engaged with.

Read the article here: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jan/24/talking-about-extreme-online-violence-with-young-people-advice-for-parents>

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Support with Children's clothing

If, as the season changes, you need some support with new clothes for your child, we can refer you to Kids Clothes Project who support with new clothing ages 2- 12 years. All requests are dealt with sensitively and without judgement. Also, we have lots of pre-loved uniform if you need support with school uniform. Please ask for Mrs Bridgwater who will be able to help.

Social Media – Age Guidance

Is your child ready?

The age of your child as well as their developmental stage and maturity can affect their ability to have a safe and positive experience of social media.

Minimum age requirements

Most of the popular social media services require users to be at least 13 years of age before they can register, although some sites are created especially for children under 13 (see Internet Matters' [Social networks made for children](#)).

The age requirements are there because of data protection laws. Online services are not allowed to collect or store children's personal information if they are under the age of 13. Data protection laws also say that only children aged 13 and over can sign up to online services without parental permission.

Following the age restrictions sets a good example for your child. Although the age requirement doesn't always mean the site is inappropriate for children to use, it's a good indication, especially for younger children.

Development and maturity

It's important to think about your child's current social and emotional skills and their maturity. This will help you to decide if they can deal with the pressures, risks, emotions and unpredictable nature of using social media and use it responsibly.

Here are some things to think about, with your child, when making the decision.

What are their social skills like?

Social media is a great way to stay in touch with friends, but children who struggle with social interaction offline, may find online friendships difficult. There are fewer visual cues online, so it can be difficult to tell if something is inappropriate. Added to this, the boundaries of what is acceptable behaviour might be very different online to offline. Children who struggle with self-regulation or peer pressure, may not be ready yet.

How do they deal with negative experiences?

As outlined in the risks above, children may see or experience things they don't want to on social media, including embarrassing pictures, mean comments, and inappropriate content and people. If your child gets very upset or anxious because of a negative experience, they may not be ready yet.

Will they come to you if they need help?

When they set up their social media account, you will probably want to come to an agreement about how they use it and supervise their online activity. But you also want them to feel they can come to you, if they are ever worried about something



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they have experienced on social media. If you are worried that your child won't come to you, if they need help, they may not be ready yet.

Are you ready?

- **Check out the social media site or app.** Before you or your child sign up to a social media account, make sure you check it out, including the age requirements, and are aware of any potential risks.
- **Take time to be proactive.** Be prepared to spend time with your child online and support them as they take their first steps. The safest way to introduce them to social media, is to find a site or app you can use together. This way you can be online with them, as they learn, which builds trust and means you share the experience with them. It's a good idea to get to know your child's friends, both on and offline. Be available to answer questions or address any concerns they may have. Also be ready to reinforce any rules or boundaries when needed.
- **Be a great role model.** Children learn from those around them, so what you do on social media will influence their online behaviour. Make sure your social media accounts are a good example to your child, by taking some time to check your friendships, privacy settings and the things you have posted. For example, you could ask your child's permission to post pictures of them on your account, to encourage them to do the same with others.

If you don't have a social media account, involve other family members or friends, so your child has someone else they can be guided by.

Home or out alone guide

This guide from the NSPCC provides practical tips and advice to help parents and carers decide what is best for their child when it comes to staying home alone or going out alone. It covers some of the risks parents should consider before making a decision, such as how their child feels about the idea and who they should contact in an emergency.

There is also a checklist for parents and children to work through together to help them prepare for different types of scenarios. This includes questions about what to do if there is an accident at home or they are approached by a stranger outside.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/leaflets/home-or-out-alone-guide>

Meet our Safeguarding Team

Tracy Curnin	Simon Duncan	Hayley Owen	Ellen Foxall	Karen Bridgwater
				
DSL	Deputy DSL	Deputy DSL	Deputy DSL	Safeguarding Officer

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Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

Buy Milk

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do: the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screens.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the Internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Meds AtRisk design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday