Safeguarding and Child Protection Edition

Welcome to our second Safeguarding Newsletter, where we hope to share key information and advice with parents and carers, so that we can all work together with the same aim of keeping children safe in school, at home and in the wider community. Safeguarding relates to many areas of life at Etching Hill including children's physical health and safety, mental health issues, attendance, managing medical conditions, internet safety, bullying, the dangers of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, gang culture, FGM, neglect, domestic abuse, sex and relationships education, British Values and road safety among other issues.

We hope that you find this useful and welcome any comments or ideas that you have in regard to this important aspect of life and regarding the contents of future editions.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants: ELSA

More than 20 years of evidence-based ELSA research shows that children, educational communities, and families have consistently benefitted from the support provided by ELSAs

At Etching Hill, the well-being of our pupils and families is incredibly important for us. We are acutely aware of some of the difficulties and adversities that children and young people face and continue to face. Gaining and maintaining a sense of wellbeing and experiencing positive mental health is what all of our children and young people deserve. Therefore, we have two fully trained, registered ELSAs- Mrs Pope and Miss Bridges- which means that we can therapeutically support and meet the emotional, social, and wellbeing needs of our children.

The skills that ELSAs bring are to individually support children through bespoke intervention to enable overcoming life's challenges, to support their wellbeing, to provide relational care, build resilience, and to help children develop the skills they need that promote emotional, social, and psychological growth and resilience. Because our children already know the ELSAs in school, it is easier for them to establish trust, connection, and for us to attune to and respond to their needs.

Family Liaison Officer: FLO Support

In addition to our ELSA support, we also have a Family Support Officer (FLO) Miss Smith, who is highly skilled in working with families experiencing difficulties with regards to areas such as: behaviour in the home, financial difficulties, routines etc. This is an Early Help support offered by the school, where Miss Smith will work with parents to discuss relevant needs and identify pathways of ongoing support.

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

If you have any concerns about a child's welfare or safety, please speak to a member of the schools safeguarding team.

Mrs Marie Smith—Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Alison Morganti

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Zoe Hasketh-Boston

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Mrs Joanne Hill

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (EYFS)

Mrs Cheryl Pope

ELSA & Mental Health Lead

Miss Beverley Smith

Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

What is the role of the DSLs at Etching Hill:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a crucial role in taking lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. DSLs must be senior members of the school's leadership team, and at Etching Hill we have 4 DSLs forming a team with Mrs Smith and Mrs Morganti in the senior roles.

A DSL is always available during school hours for staff and parents to discuss any safeguarding concerns. On most days there is a DSL in school from 8.00am to 6pm and DSLs are always contactable by phone if not in school during these hours or email outside these hours.

DSLs are trained to take on this role and that training is updated every two years with regular additional training and conferences in between. The DSL has many responsibilities including working with staff and agencies involved in safeguarding children, working with parents and families, giving advice to staff, training staff, managing referrals from staff and investigating concerns, including passing them onto the correct body as necessary, managing the records of safeguarding and Child Protection concerns, keeping own knowledge up to date etc.
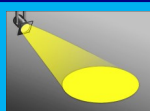
Spotlight on: Homophobic Language

Homophobic language means terms of abuse that are often used towards LGBT+ or those thought to be LGBTQ+. A Stonewall survey across many schools found the most common form of homo-phobic language heard in schools is 'that's so gay' and 'you're so gay'. 99% of gay young people report hearing the casual use of these phrases in school. These comments are sometimes directed towards people who are actually, or perceived to be, gay. However, they are most often used to mean that some-thing is bad, weak or rubbish, with no conscious link to sexual orientation at all. Whilst often dismissed as banter, the unchallenged use of 'gay' to mean bad or rubbish has a profoundly negative effect on gay young people's self-esteem. It also affects pupils who have gay friends, family or loved ones.

The Stonewall survey also found that nearly half of LGBT pupils including 64 per cent of trans pupils – are bullied for being LGBTQ+ in Britain's schools.

As a school we are committed to ensuring that we celebrate diversity and promote acceptance and will always challenge any homophobic views. All staff at Etching Hill have had training about how to challenge the use of homophobic language and the children know that homophobic language will not be tolerated. Parents will always be informed if their child uses such language.

We also tackle these views through our PSHE curriculum and assemblies.

Useful Acronyms & Vocabulary about Safeguarding

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

KCSIE: Keeping Children Safe In Education (key document for all schools to follow)

PREVENT: Part of the Governments Counter Terrorism Strategy to stop people being drawn into extremism

SPOC: Single Point of Contact (PREVENT) - responsible for preventing children being impacted by extremism

LADO: Local Authority Designated Officer who deals with position of trust safeguarding issues

DBS: Disclosure & Barring Service used to make safe recruitment decisions

CP: Child Protection

CEOP: - Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre (tackling child sex abuse and providing advice)

Early Help: "providing Early Help support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years".

NSPCC: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

SSCB: Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP?

A good night's sleep is essential to feeling good, being able to learn and staying healthy. A lack of sleep can make you feel poorly, unable to learn and not want to go out with your friends and family. If you, or your child, is struggling to get a good night's sleep, follow these top tips:

1. Think about your bedtime routine - What time do you go to bed? If you are going to bed too late, you will not get enough sleep. Try bringing your bedtime forward by 20 to 30 minutes at a time.

2. Make sure you are tired before going to bed - the less time you have to spend awake in bed, the better.

3. Have at least 15 minutes of quiet time before going to sleep so that your body and brain can relax and prepare for sleep.

4. Don't use your phone or computer before bed - this can stimulate your brain and make it more awake.

5. Try having a lukewarm bath as this can help your body to relax.

6. Try to go to bed at the same time every day once you have a settled routine.

7. Choose a relaxing activity before bed, such as reading or listening to calm music.

8. Create a cosy environment. Is the room dark enough? Is the room at the correct temperature... not too hot and not too cold?

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH SLEEP YOUR CHILD NEEDS?

The amount of sleep that your child is recommended to have is based upon their age. The NHS recommends the following:

Age	Amount of sleep
5 years old	11 hours
6 years old	10 hours 45 minutes
7 years old	10 hours 30 minutes
8 years old	10 hours 15 minutes
9 years old	10 hours
10 years old	9 hours 45 minutes
11 years old	9 hours 30 minutes

Who should you contact if you are concerned about a child?

Parents should not email school to report concerns in case the email is not picked up. You can, however discuss concerns in person with any members of the Safeguarding Team.

Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS)   0300 111 8007

8.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

8.30am- 4.30pm Friday

Or   EDS (out of hours) Tel No. 0345 604 2886

Or email: eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk

Non-emergency – call Staffordshire Police on 101

Helping children and young people with
MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10–15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it *can* make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem: it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it *does* also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

Advice for Parents & Carers

LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with *every* online change or *every* new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same: you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.

National Online Safety®
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

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Please find below some useful websites, worth taking a moment to look at:-

https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides—provides a wealth of support and advice for parents from roblox to dealing with grief.

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/talking-about-difficult-topics/

https://www.womensaid.org.uk/

https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

https://www.mankind.org.uk/

https://napac.org.uk/

https://galop.org.uk/

https://www.internetmatters.org/

https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/keeping-young-children-safe-online/