

Stoke Park Primary School—Safeguarding Newsletter

No.5

Dear Parents/Carers,

This week, the school had their annual safeguarding review with the Cathedral Schools Trust. The review found that there is a strong safeguarding culture at the school. The children they spoke to were very confident talking about how they can keep themselves and others safe. The review also highlighted that our overall attendance is lower than it should be. Of course COVID has played its part in this, but now that restrictions have eased it is essential that children are attending school regularly. Poor attendance can have a negative impact on how pupils build relationships with others, their academic success and their wellbeing. If you require support with improving your child's attendance, please speak to a member of SLT.

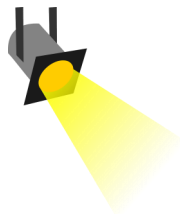
Amy Higgitt

Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Spotlight on: Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.



Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet.

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse or are concerned about someone who may be, you can contact the following for advice and support:

[National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247](https://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org/) A 24 hour free helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

[Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327](https://www.menstheory.org.uk/) Advice and support for men experiencing domestic abuse



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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 Higgitt—Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL)



Mrs Lambert—Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Or contact **First Response** on: 01179036444



National Online Safety Hub

The school now subscribes to The National Online Safety Hub. The hub contains a wealth of useful information to support schools and parents in keeping children safe online. As members of the hub, our parent community can access all the resources too. These include: Parent guides (like the one attached), explainer videos and training on how to keep your children safe online.

To access the hub and all its resources, parents simply need to follow the link below and self enrol:

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/stoke-park-schools>

If you have any problems with accessing the hub, please speak to Mrs Higgitt.

Safeguarding Parent Survey

We would love to hear your views about safeguarding at the school. Please complete this short survey to help us understand how we can better improve our safeguarding practice.

<https://forms.gle/DVUhJUtrBib9enZq9>

Useful contacts:

First Response: To report any safeguarding concerns. This can be done anonymously. 01179036444

North Bristol Foodbanks (0117 9791399) For areas covered see here: <https://northbristol.foodbank.org.uk/locations/>

Young Minds: supporting children and young people's mental health

Mind: adult mental health support and information

Refuge: domestic abuse support

Saneline: Emotional Support: 07984 967 708 (leave name and number and someone will call you back)

Bristol Mindline: 0300 123 3393 (in the day); 0800 808 0330 (after 7pm)



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers



CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.



EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.



REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.



LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.



THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.



DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone.' However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.



CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.



Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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