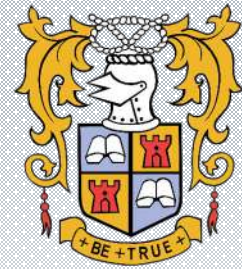


# The Wilnecote School Safeguarding Newsletter

Welcome to the first safeguarding newsletter of the 2024-2025 academic year. This newsletter will focus on some key aspects of online safety, how the school participated in World Mental Health Day and provides some advice regarding Halloween.

This newsletter also provides further information about Safety Online, Mental Health support and guidance on Horror Films & Age ratings.



## Online Safety

During the first half of the Autumn Term we cover Online Safety with all students. KS3 students cover numerous topics during their Computer Studies lessons and KS4 recap during their timetabled PSHE lessons and Tutor Time.

The following information provides guidance to parents/carers and how to support children at home.

## Are you CONFIDENT to TALK TO YOUR CHILD? Is your child confident to TALK TO YOU?

You don't need to be a tech expert to help your child stay safe online. One of the most effective ways to protect them is by having regular conversations about their technology use, just like you would with any other aspect of their life.

Recent studies show that four out of five parents (81%) chose to discuss the situation with their child. Just over half recommended that their child block certain content or individuals (54%) or advised them to stop using specific apps or sites (53%). However, only one-third of parents in these cases (32%) suggested reporting the content to the platform where it appeared.

It's important to maintain open and honest communication. If you react without involving them or discussing things, it might push their behavior underground, meaning it continues, but you're less likely to know about it, which can increase potential risks.

## YOU don't need to be an EXPERT... be a PARENT

You don't need to be a technology expert to help your child stay safe online. The key is open communication and being proactive.

- **It's your decision**—don't let others decide when it's the right time to use technology.
- **Stay engaged**—make time to communicate and discuss what they are doing. What do they enjoy? What makes them laugh?
- **Don't quiz them**—have ongoing conversations. What's their favorite app? What's the best site for learning something new?
- **Get involved**—watch them play a game and participate. Who are they playing with? Do they know the other players?
- **"Show me how..."**—ask for their advice on privacy settings, who to add as friends, and whether there are any risks.
- **Be a role model**—children learn as much by watching as by being told, so demonstrate good behavior.
- **Reassure them**—let them know they won't get in trouble and that you're always there to help.



## PSHE Update:

The following topics have been covered this half-term during tutor time and KS4 PSHE lessons:

Year 7: Transition and safety

Year 8: Drugs and alcohol

Year 9: Peer influence, substance abuse and gangs

Year 10: Mental Health

Year 11: Building for the future

## Safeguarding Weekly Updates:

Remember to check the safeguarding posters that get sent weekly. These now cover online safety, wellbeing & mental health.

This half-term we have covered:

- Going Back to School
- QR Codes
- Respect Online
- Instagram
- In-game Chat
- Fire Safety
- Emotional Resilience

School Safeguarding Team: Mr Simpson, Mr Foskett, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Ager, Mr Herbert, Miss Julius & Mr Croydon

Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service— 0800 111 8007

You can call Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service as parent/carer or as a member of the public. If you have any concerns about a child you can call this number for support if you feel a child is at serious risk or harm.

## What RULES do YOU SET about being online?

What are you children doing online? Have you set any boundaries?

Who are they interacting with? What types of websites and apps are they using? Are they spending money online? What information are they sharing? Where and when do they use their devices and what video content are they watching?

While parental concerns in some areas have increased considerably, their enforcement of rules appears to be diminishing, partly because of resignation about their ability to intervene in their children's online lives.

### Why not have a family agreement to:

- Clarify what is allowed... or not
- Establish ground rules like no phones at the table or in the bedroom at night-time
- Agree shared expectations to reduce arguments and keep everyone safe & healthy



### Digital Family Agreement LGfL DigiSafe®

I will:	Why?
Check with mum before getting a new app or game or buying an add-on so she can check it's safe	
Set up privacy and safety settings on any apps and sites I use and show them to dad, so he doesn't worry	
Check with mum or dad before going live and explain what I can do to avoid any risks	
Not post or share any personal information, e.g. mobile, address, to stay private and safe	
Put my phone down when we're eating together or mum or dad want to talk, as it's respectful	
Turn off notifications when I'm doing homework and at bed time, to help concentrate and sleep	
Come off my devices an hour before bedtime to unwind and sleep well	

Parent/carer will:	Why?
Put our devices down when you want to talk to me/us so we can model good behaviour	
Keep our mobiles away for important family time, e.g. breakfast and dinner so we can have quality time and talk	
Trust you to manage your screen time sensibly as we agreed, and only say something if I/we are worried, to help you stay safe and healthy	
Ask permission before sharing any photos of you, to respect your privacy	

**If there are any issues:**  
We will talk about it calmly and respectfully. I may have to show you more about what I am doing on devices, or other consequences.

**If I'm worried by anything:**  
I can tell mum or dad and they won't judge me.  
I can talk to Ms Patel at school.  
I can contact Childline or The Mix.

Signed: *Sophie Mum Dad*

Today's date: *24th March*      Date we will review this: *24th May*

Download me again and find more support for parents at [parentsafe.lgfl.net/](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/)

#### Further Reading

Talking to children about life online:  
<https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/#h.ldnnd1hbl56b>

Keeping your child safe online: <https://tinyurl.com/54eefmy6>

Online Safety Guide: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-safety-guide/>



Click here to download

## Have you set up parental CONTROLS/PRIVACY SETTINGS for ALL DEVICES and NETWORKS?

Controls have to be set up on both the broadband connection AND each individual device, these do not come as standard so it's worth checking.

They are important because they allow you to:

- Block and filter upsetting or inappropriate content or sites
- Plan what time and how long your child can go online for



**School Safeguarding Team:** Mr Simpson, Mr Foskett, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Ager, Mr Herbert, Miss Julius & Mr Croydon

**Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service— 0800 111 8007**

You can call Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service as parent/carer or as a member of the public. If you have any concerns about a child you can call this number for support if you feel a child is at serious risk or harm.

## World Mental Health Day - Thursday 10th October 2024

Students participated in a special initiative to raise awareness of mental health and well-being. The school encouraged students and staff to wear yellow ribbons as a symbol of their support for positive mental health.

A variety of activities were organised to promote mindfulness and relaxation, including mindful colouring and jigsaw puzzles. Students were also invited to write on yellow pennants things that made them happy.

Representatives from the Schools Educational Mental Health team, Chloe and Polly, were on hand to speak with students about mental health and offer support. The school's assemblies also focused on mental health. Students learned about the importance of mental health and who to talk to if they have concerns.

The yellow ribbons served as a visible reminder of the significance of mental health and encouraged students to think about strategies for supporting their own and others' well-being. The school aims to use this campaign as a starting point to develop further support for mental health and enhance students' understanding of the topic.



## Have a great half-term!

We hope you have a great half-term, we shared the following information with students this week regarding Halloween. Thank you for your support, take care!

### Halloween Do's and Don't

**Do:**  
Look out for Halloween posters - these will let you know whether 'trick or treaters' are welcome at a house or not.  
Take extra care crossing roads - more accidents happen to children in the dark.  
Get a responsible adult to go with your group to help keep you safe.  
Dress to be seen - wear light, reflective clothes or carry a lamp or torch so that drivers and your responsible adult can see you.  
Respect people's rights - be polite, don't go out too late, knock only once, and be prepared to take 'no' for an answer.

**Don't go alone** - 'trick or treating' is more fun and safer if you go in a small group with friends and family.  
**Don't go into houses** - stay on the doorstep where the responsible adult can see you.  
**Don't play pranks** that may damage property - this could result in arrest and a criminal record.  
**Don't demand money** or intimidate people - Halloween can be a night that some residents dread, so be respectful and polite.  
**Don't throw any objects** at people or their property - it's classed as a criminal offence, and you will be arrested.

Have lots of fun but **STAY SAFE!**

School Safeguarding Team: Mr Simpson, Mr Foskett, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Ager, Mr Herbert, Miss Julius & Mr Croydon

Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service— 0800 111 8007

You can call Staffordshire Children Advice Support Service as parent/carer or as a member of the public. If you have any concerns about a child you can call this number for support if you feel a child is at serious risk or harm.

# SIX TOP TIPS

For Parents To Keep Your Children Safe Online

## SafeguardED

Most parents & carers think their children and young people spend too much time on devices. **DON'T FEEL BAD!** Lots of it is perfectly healthy anyway. Instead, follow these tips to keep them safe, happy and healthy.

### Don't worry about screen time; aim for screen quality

Scrolling through social media isn't the same as making a film or story, or video calling Grandma. Use the Children's Commissioner's 'Digital Five A Day' to plan or review each day together.



### Check the safety settings are turned on

Whether it's your home internet, mobile devices, consoles, apps or games, there are lots of settings to make them safer. The key ones are - can they chat to strangers, can they video chat or 'go live', are their posts public? What about safe search and Youtube? See [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net) for more.



### Get your children to show you their apps and games

You don't need to know all about the latest app or game, but if your child shows you what they are doing and with whom, you'll probably see if it's appropriate or not. Remember 18 games are not more advanced - they are harmful to children! For parent guides to apps, including recommendations for kidsafe apps and video platforms, search for **Common Sense Media** reviews.



### Don't try to hide news about scary things in the news

If you don't talk about it, your children might read inappropriate pages, believe scare stories or simply catastrophise in their heads. Why not watch **Newsround** together and talk about how they feel - there is guidance from **Childline** to help you.



### Remind them of key online safety principles

There are too many to list, but remember human behaviour is the same online and offline. Remind your children to be a good friend, to ask for help if they are worried or if someone is mean, not to get undressed on camera and most important of all... if somebody tells them not to tell or ask for help because it's too late or they will get in trouble, **THAT'S A LIE!**

### If you aren't sure, ASK!

Your school may be able to give you advice, but there are plenty of other places to ask for help as a parent or a child, whether it is advice or help to fix something. Lots of sites are listed at [reporting.lgfl.net](https://reporting.lgfl.net), including ones to tell your kids about (they might not want to talk to you in the first instance).



## What other support is out there?

<https://camhs.mpft.nhs.uk/south-staffordshire>

<https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind>

<https://sandbox.mindler.co.uk>



## Top tips for looking after your well-being:



Take time to do things you enjoy doing.



Eat a balanced diet.



Talk to someone you trust if things get tough.



Get plenty of sleep.



Spend time in your happy place so you can relax and recharge.



Be compassionate to others but aim to love yourself too.

# Mental Health Support Team

Information for children and young people

Risk Management Services

Youth Wellbeing Directory



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

- Open the Camera app on your mobile phone.
- Select the rear-facing camera. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app. Your device will recognise the QR code and display a notification.
- Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code.

[@SOUTHSTAFFSMHST](https://www.instagram.com/southstaffsmhst)  
Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.



## Who are MHST?

We are a Mental Health Support Team that work in schools, aiming to educate young people about mental health and wellbeing, as well as help young people with difficulties they may face and how these may affect mental health.

## How can MHST help me?

- Working with you 1-1 for 6-8 sessions
- Running drop-in sessions
- Hosting groups and workshops
- Education around mental health and wellbeing.
- Supporting staff at school to further help you
- Working together with your parents and carers

## What can MHST help me with?

- Low mood
- Anxiety
- Worry
- Panic



• Exam stress

• Sleep difficulties

• Exploring problem solving



• Developing coping strategies

## How can I access support from MHST?

Please speak to a teacher or the Senior Mental Health Lead in your school if you feel that you would benefit from some support from the Mental Health Support Team. They can discuss this with us and refer you into our service or work with us to guide you to the most appropriate type of support.

Alternatively, look out for information about drop in sessions in school which are led by our service.



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HORROR FILMS & AGE RATINGS

The 'on-demand' availability of streaming platforms in many homes creates extra possibilities for young viewers to be exposed to age-inappropriate content. Material which features horror or violence can cause anxiety and nightmares for children, especially since it can be hard for young ones to grasp that what they're watching isn't real.

## CLASSIFICATION BREAKDOWN

The British Board of Film Classification has the following age ratings:

- U: Suitable for all ages
- PG: For children aged 8 and above; this content shouldn't unsettle them
- 12A: Children under the age of 12 should not watch without an adult; this content potentially features bad language, nudity or sexual references
- 15: Suitable only for 15-year-olds and above
- 18: Exclusively for an adult audience, with potentially explicit themes of violence, nudity or sex

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### STREAMING IS EVERYWHERE

Modern mobile devices make it very easy for children to watch streamed films without the need for a TV. The availability of inappropriate content has risen significantly on streaming platforms, almost all of which host 18-rated content. If not restricted by parental controls, this could be viewed by children who aren't quite ready for such adult themes, concepts and imagery.

### FACT VS. FICTION

Many children have no trouble separating fact from fiction, however, with modern day technology making profane violence and horror look ever more realistic, it's becoming easier for youngsters to tell the difference. For instance, consider remakes of older films, where stated special effects (making it easy to discern that something wasn't real) have been replaced by far more convincing monsters and gore.

### PEER PRESSURE

Friends encouraging each other to watch the latest film featuring violence or horror can lead to children consuming content that they're not ready for. As 18+ content is available on many streaming platforms, youngsters can watch these together – potentially without their parents' or carers' knowledge.

### CHILDREN SCARE DIFFERENTLY

It can be difficult to decide what content is appropriate for children. What's fine for one child could be extremely frightening for another. As many children admit to not sharing or discussing the content they watch with their parents, encouraging an open dialogue around the kind of media that young people consume can help avoid exposing them to any inappropriate content.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS

Horror relies first on its ability to startle or induce genuine fear in the viewer – so it's no surprise that this genre isn't usually intended for children. A natural side-effect of this is that 'jump scares' or a creepy, suspenseful atmosphere can have lasting effects on younger minds. The resulting anxiety can impact a child's sleeping patterns or eating habits.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### WATCH THE FILM FIRST

If you're concerned that a film might be unsuitable for children (whether it's their first dive into the horror genre or a step up in age classification), then take a look yourself. There's no better way to judge whether this content is something you deem appropriate for a child – and if a parent, for example, has actually seen the film (or at least a portion of it), they can construct a far more credible case if they decide it's inappropriate.

### REMEMBER - IT'S NOT REAL

Emphasise to children that the content they're viewing is entirely fictional and has no chance of affecting them in real life. If a child is upset after watching a film, try to understand what exactly has unsettled them; this can help you approach the topic in a healthy and informative manner, to dispel any fears or anxieties they may have.

### DISCUSS THE CONTENT OF FILMS

If a child has seen a film that you think may have exposed them to potentially uncomfortable themes and ideas, don't shy away from talking about it, and answer any questions they may have. This is especially important if they watched the film without an adult present. Ask them to summarise the story for you, as this will give you an understanding of what they've learned from watching it.

### USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Most streaming platforms have the option to put age ranges on children's accounts. This means that films not shown that are inappropriate for children won't be advertised while they're browsing and won't even appear if a child specifically searches for them. This can be changed any time at parents' discretion, but it's wise to protect these settings with a password, so a child can't alter anything on their own.

### Meet Our Expert

John Inley is an assistant principal at a secondary school. He has been involved with e-safety in schools for over 15 years, writing policies and supporting various schools in developing their e-safety provision. John has introduced a range of strategies at multiple schools aimed at helping parents to better support their child in the ever-changing digital world.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/horror-films-and-age-ratings>