Holmer C. E. Academy—Safeguarding Newsletter

Issue 4 - December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to this month's edition of our parent safeguarding newsletter.

With the shorter days, dark evenings and sometimes mornings, I am sure everyone is looking forward to Christmas and the events that come with it. Whilst Christmas can be an exciting time, we know that for some it can also be difficult for many reasons, especially given the current economic situation. We are here to support any families who may find this time of year particularly difficult, so please do get in touch if you are worried. We can signpost to local services who may be able to help.

In the following pages you can find information about the pastoral support we can provide in school as well as the regular online safety section, tips for helping children stay safe while out and about in the dark and the Operation Encompass strategy that we are proud to be part of.

Any questions, please do ask.

Jayne Maund

Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Spotlight on: Pastoral Support

Staff are all here to support the children in school and you as families. If there are any issues or concerns that cannot be solved by the class teacher, who should always be the first port of call, Mrs Anderson is our Pastoral Support and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: she works across the school supporting children and families and helping to reinforce and extend

the links between home and school. Mrs Anderson's work ranges from working with individual children, supporting the running of social and nurture groups, to supporting parents with court cases and other legalities, to making referrals to school nursing or other support agencies and, perhaps most importantly, she makes a

We recognise that everyone needs help at some points and by sharing any worries or concerns and asking for help and support, together we can work together to make things better.

Please look on the well being and pastoral support pages of the school website to see ways in which Designated Safeguarding Lead we can offer support.

Well-Being and Pastoral Support | Holmer CofE Academy (holmerceacademy.co.uk)

great cup of tea if you just need to talk to someone!

Photos/videos of these

Whilst we are more than happy for you to take photos and videos of your child's performance we ask that these photos and videos are NOT posted online. Not all parent's and carers consent to their child's image being shared. You could be inadvertently be placing other children at risk by sharing their image online.



The Safeguarding team. If you have any concerns about a child's welfare or safety, please speak to a member of the schools safe- guarding team



Jayne Maund Designated Safeguard Lead





Rachel Anderson **Deputy Designated** Safeguarding Lead



Our school participates in a national scheme called 'Operation Encompass', which is a joint partnership between Police and schools. One of the principles of Operation Encompass is that all incidents of domestic abuse are shared with schools, not just those where an offence can be identified.

This system has been established to help schools provide in-house support to children who have been present at, exposed to or involved in any domestic abuse incident. We know that children can be significantly harmed physically and/or emotionally during these situations and that it negatively affects their learning and behaviour. Therefore, as part of the Operation Encompass procedure, and to help mitigate the resulting negative impact, the school receives a report the morning after a child has been witness to or involved in any reported domestic abuse incident.

We are then able to use this information to provide the right support to any child and their family as and when it is needed.



Online Safety

Pegi age-rating reminders:
Grand Theft Auto – 18 Call of Duty – 16 Fortnite – 12

We are aware of a number of children in school who are playing these games which are rated above the age range of primary education. Please be mindful of what children are exposed to on these platforms.

Useful online safety websites for parents:

National Online Safety – safety guides on ALL aspects of internet use https://nationalonlinesafety.com/

Internet Matters – wide range of online safety advice for parents to keep their children safe on -line. https://www.internetmatters.org/

<u>Useful contacts:</u>

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 bac



Zoe Jackson
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Katie Thomas
Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

To speak to the team - <u>(01432)</u> <u>260800</u>

To email the team
- cypd@herefordshire.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team

(01905) 768020

(out of hours number for when MASH are unavailable)

Useful Safeguarding Acronyms and Vocabulary

DSL: Designated Safeguarding

Lead

MASH: Multi-Agency Safeguarding

Hub

CP: Child Protection
CiN: Child in Need

CEOP: Child Exploitation and On-

Line Protection Centre

KCSIE: Keeping Children Safe in

Education

PREVENT: Part of the

Government's Counter-Terrorism

Strategy to stop people being drawn in to extremism

CAMHs: Child and Adolescent

Mental Health Services

SEND: Special Educational Needs

& Disabilities

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to military conflicts around the globe, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS (1)

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.

RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relexed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.

KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.

EMPHASISE HOPE

Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.

MONITOR REACTIONS

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.

CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process; adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the autside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.

Meet Our Expert

Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to light bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a vaice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.

SET LIMITS

Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example), it's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.

TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once: instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.

ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.

10

FIND A BALANCE

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.

BUILD RESILIENCE

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.

IDENTIFY HELP

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It is essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.

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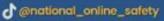
#WakeUpWednesday



f /NationalOnlineSafety

4





Be Bright, Be Seen!

We are always mindful for the safety of our children near roads and conscious of how vulnerable they can be.

At this time of year, with reduced visibility for drivers your child is even more vulnerable near roads. With new bikes and scooters arriving at Christmas for some, the temptation to go out in the evening will be even stronger so I have included some safety tips below so that you can discuss with your child/ren how important it is to be visible when near roads.

These tips emphasize how wearing brightly coloured clothing shows up well in daylight but, as it gets dark, reflective clothing and accessories are far more effective in signaling pedestrians or cyclists to drivers.

For more information and activities to do with your child(ren) please visit: https://www.think.gov.uk/resource/be-bright-be-seen-game/



