

Blacklow Brow Primary School

Safeguarding Newsletter

Spring Term 2024



Report any concerns

If you are worried about a child's safety, please do not hesitate to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr Kenny, or Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Gibson Burkert. They can be contacted via the school office.



If you suspect a child is being abused or is in danger of being abused, please contact a Designated Safeguarding Lead or contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on: 443 2600. **If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police immediately on 999.**

We are an Operation Encompass School



Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome to our second safeguarding newsletter of this academic year. Spring term was very busy with Child Mental Health Week, Time to Talk Day and Safer Internet Day all being highlighted to the children. On top of that, we have had police assemblies around Stranger Danger and gangs as well as the road safety team in for year 1 + 2. Year 5 and 6 took part in County line workshops over 2 days. We have also held Attendance Panel meetings and school nurse drop-ins for parent/carers over the Spring term.

I would like to remind all of you that at Blacklow Brow, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and our top priority. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families in our community has a role to play.

- TIP #1: Normalising it can be REALLY hard to listen!** Before we get stuck into the helpful tips, let's normalise that listening can be tricky for all of us, children and grown-ups. Life is incredibly busy and listening takes time. Try not to be too hard on yourself! Choose 1 strategy and begin with implementing that to make it manageable and not too overwhelming.
- SERVICES WE RECOMMEND: YOUNGMINDS** fighting for young people's mental health. You can call their Parent Helpline for free on 0800 800 5554, Monday to Friday, from 9.30am to 4pm.
- NSPCC** Search NSPCC Support for Parents
- Exciting Teacher** offers Mental Health and Wellbeing resources for children aged 4-11. Over 500+ used globally by Parents, Carers, Teachers and Professionals.
- SUPPORT YOUR CHILD TO FEEL HEARD** 5 Top Tips for Parents & Carers to Encourage a Child's Voice!
 - TIP #2: Validate Feelings: "I can see that you are feeling... 'How do you feel?' how can I help?"
 - TIP #3: Ways to use my body to show I am listening: nodding, eye contact, facing my body towards them, signal & encourage praise.
 - TIP #4: Things I can do to show I am listening: repeat, clarify, open-ended questions, summarise.
 - TIP #5: Things I can say to show I am listening: "That makes me wonder about...", "I agree/disagree with you because...", "I understand that...", "That sounds like you're really trying!", "What do you mean by...?", "I understand it must be really tricky..."

Knowsley Council Early Help Hub

We know that some families may be finding it stressful and harder to cope during these difficult times. We don't want people to struggle and we have a team of staff who can talk you through any issues and offer you some advice and guidance.

Contact the Freephone helpline on 0800 073 0043

and ask for your information to be passed on to the Early Help Hub and one of our staff will call you back.

Or you could complete the online form by clicking the ask for help and support on the Knowsley News link.

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





Are your contact details up to date?

It is vitally important that if you change your home phone/mobile number/email/address/names of contacts, that you immediately let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details.

Thank you!



For more information contact:

Knowsley Mental Health Support Team
Beckett Unit,
Hollins Park Hospital
Wirrwick
Warrington
WA2 8WA

Tel: 01925 664 120
Web: www.merseycare.nhs.uk/mhst-knowsley
Email: mcn-tr.mhst-knowsley@nhs.net

NHS
Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust
Community and Mental Health Services

Knowsley Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

Information for parents and carers



@DT_Parkview

What is the PREVENT Strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorist or extremist causes.

The [Prevent Strategy](#) covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme far-right wing and extreme Islamist groups.

How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools and parents?

From July 2015 all schools have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism. This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremism and violent views the same way we protect them from drugs or gang violence.

The **Prevent strategy** is not just about discussing extremism itself, which may not be appropriate for younger children. It is also about teaching children the British Values: the *Rule of Law, Democracy, Individual Liberty, Tolerance and Mutual respect.*



Devices before bedtime affecting your child's sleep quality?

Given the important of sleep for a child's mental and physical health, ensuring that children are consistently getting enough sleep at night is critical. Experiments confirm that the blue light emitted by electronic screens can reprogram the brain to delay the onset of sleep. If you are concerned about the impact of your child using a device before bedtime and the effect it may be having on your child's sleep, there are a number of steps you and your child can take. Start by trying the following interventions:

- 1) Set a technology curfew. Establish a nightly routine that involves ceasing the use of technology at least one hour before bedtime. Plan in other calming activities like reading or colouring.
- 2) Create technology-free zones. Store phones and other devices outside of the bedroom. It reduces the temptation to use devices before going to sleep and eliminates the possibility of being woken up by texts, calls and other alerts.
- 3) Alter settings. Many electronic devices include options for 'night mode' or 'dark mode' that change the screen background to black, reducing blue light exposure.

NHS recommended sleep durations are:

3 - 5 year olds 10 - 13 hours; 6 - 12 year olds 9 - 12 hours

Don't forget to also download the free **National Online Safety App** which can help you keep up-to-date with new developments in keeping your child/ren safe.



School Nurse Drop in sessions for summer term please check with school office dates and times of when the school nurse is available.

Believe Achieve Succeed

Online Safety

App focus...

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+



Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe – with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends – but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautifully' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely – but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.



DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.



CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.



KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.



BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger *does* connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/en-gb/articles/226788388922-what-is-my-ai-for-snapchat-and-how-to-use-it> | <https://viduus.snap.com/en-GB/news/early-access-to-the-new-snapchat-safety-enhancements> | <https://bbc.com/news/2023/03/19/snapchat-live-location-sharing-chatgpt/> | <https://help.snapchat.com/en-gb/articles/202304369644>