



## SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

### E-Safety or Online Safety – How to keep your children safe online

E-safety is a term which refers not only to the internet but other ways in which young people communicate using electronic media, e.g. mobile phones. E-safety/ Online Safety means ensuring that children and young people are protected from harm and supported to achieve the maximum benefit from new and developing technologies without risk to themselves or others.

The aim of promoting e-safety is to protect young people from the adverse consequences of access or use of electronic media, including from bullying, inappropriate sexualised behaviour or exploitation.

Teenagers spend a considerable amount of time on social media each day. It is important that we know how to protect our children when they use any online platform.

### Parental controls are an important way to keep your child safe online.

Parental controls can be used to block upsetting or harmful content, control in-app purchases or manage how long your child spends online.

***And the good news is parental controls are really easy to set up.***

Innocent searches sometimes reveal not so innocent results. So if you're worried about what your child is searching for online, who they're talking to or what they're seeing, there are some simple rules you can take.

It's simple to get started. And, along with talking to your child regularly, using parental controls is one of the best ways to help keep children safe online.



## Child on Child Abuse

This is high on the school's Safeguarding agenda as we would never want any student to feel that they have been abused by another student and not have the confidence to come forward. One aspect of child-on-child abuse we deal with is overly sexualised language and homophobic slurs. We have completed training with staff to explain the unacceptable language that a minority of students use and not to tolerate it when they hear it.

If any parents/carers feel there is an issue that has not been addressed, please contact [office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk).

### Snapchat

**Snapchat** is a popular messaging app that lets users exchange pictures and videos (called "snaps"). The unique part of Snapchat is the "snaps" are only available for viewing for a set period of time.



### The Evils of Snapchat!!

Once a recipient looks at the "snap" it disappears from the device and the servers after an allotted amount of time. Once the snap has been opened and viewed it simply ceases to exist. This makes it nearly impossible for parents to see what their child is doing within the application.

Because "snaps" are gone as soon as they are opened, parents complain they cannot keep an active tab on their child's use of the application. For the same reason, some teens feel that any "snap" is fair game and safe because it quickly disappears. Because there is no log of their correspondence some teens may feel the app is completely "safe" and they can send pictures and messages that they would not otherwise send if the image could be captured, or their activity can be tracked. However, while the photos message disappears after a few seconds, it doesn't prevent the receiver from snapping a screenshot of the photo while it's live! In addition, if a receiver knows that a message is coming, they could take a photo of the screen with another phone or digital camera and the sender would never know that their supposedly evaporating photo would be alive and well on someone else's device. Finally, because of the lower risks of having a photo eventually making the rounds of the Internet, it's also tempting for teens to use Snapchat for "[sexting](#)." (See page 4) Snapchat itself admits that up to 25% of users may send sensitive content on a regular basis "experimentally."

The 'Snap Map' allows users to share their location with anyone on their Snapchat friends list. Users are able to see the exact location of their friends, even down to the street name, and what they happen to be doing at the time, such as listening to music, driving in a car etc and also view local snapchat stories in the area.

A 'Snapstreak' occurs when two users have snapped back and forth within a 24-hour period for three days in a row. Once this occurs, a flame emoji and a number will appear next to the streakers' names to show how long the streak has been maintained. Maintaining streaks is very important to teens because streaks allow kids to interact socially and feel part of something many of their peers are doing. For many children, they're a measure of their friendships. It's a worry, though, that the pressure of keeping a streak going - teens are often maintaining many streaks at the same time and this may take a toll on children.

## Health and Well-being

### Vaping

Prior to the summer we provided information to parents about the potential issues connected to vaping, i.e. popcorn lung, the fact that the long-term effects of vaping is unknown etc. We have been made aware that there are retailers in the town who are selling Vapes to children – we have made Trading Standards and the police aware. Vapes will be confiscated if they are found and will only be returned to parents. If students are found to be vaping on school premises, they will receive a serious sanction.



## Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Lessons

To help with conversations between yourselves and your children about the potential difficulties that teenagers may face, now and in the future, we will include topics and a short explanation of RSE lessons in the Safeguarding Newsletter. During lessons we always refer to how it feels to be in a positive relationship, be it friends or otherwise, and that if all relationships they have are like this a lot of the issues they may face (hopefully) should never be a thing.

### Autumn Term

**Year 7** - To be able to describe the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty, and learn how to manage them.

The main aim of these sessions is for students to understand that emotionally puberty can be a tough time but also it is a time which all youngsters experience. We explain how they may experience strong emotions but this is normal and not to 'over worry' if they feel sad/happy/angry for no reason.

**Year 8** - To understand that individuals can be attracted to others of the opposite, same, both/ neither and that no assumptions should be made about someone's sexual orientation.

The main aim of these sessions is for students to understand the message of tolerance.

**Year 9** - To understand the meaning of consent and the consequences of when someone does not receive it

The aim of this session is to teach the students the subtleties surrounding consent. We use the 'Respect Nobody' resources which explains this difficult topic in an age-appropriate manner.

**Year 10** - To learn what are healthy/unhealthy behaviours in a relationship and how to break-up well.

The aim of this is to teach students in an age-appropriate way about relationship behaviours. The lessons use case studies and students discuss, guided by the teacher, what they think and how different people have different values. We use resources developed by the Alice Higgins trust.

**Year 11** - To develop confidence in reporting abuse and seeking support from trusted adults.

This builds on the topics that the students covered in year 10, again using age-appropriate case studies to help the students process the information.

# Sexting - What parents need to know....

## What is 'Sexting'?

'Sexting' is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video on their mobile phone, computer or tablet. It can include sexual chat or requests for pictures / images of a sexual nature.



## Is it illegal?

This depends on what the image is or what the chat involved and who it is sent between. However, it is a crime to possess, take, make, distribute or show anyone an indecent or abuse image of a child or young person under 18 years of age.

**Always remember that, while the age of consent is 16, the relevant age in relation to indecent images is 18.**

## What if a child (under 18 years of age) takes a sexually explicit image of themselves?

That child has committed an offence by making and possessing that image. If that child then sends the image to another person then the child has committed a further offence of distributing the image and the person who receives the image will also be liable for an offence of possessing the image. **In these cases you should contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance.**



Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances.

## If it's sexually explicit text/chat between children:

This may still be a possible offence but in these cases the detail of the text/chat should be considered. General sexual references would not necessarily constitute an offence but text/chat that incites a child to engage in sexual activity or to make or distribute sexual images of themselves or another child should be reported to local police for further guidance. Do not delete or alter any material.

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances. In particular any age difference between the children should be considered.

## **If you need any further information or guidance:**

Anyone looking for advice about sexting or keeping children safe online, or concerned about the safety and welfare of a child, please contact.....

