

RIVERMEAD INCLUSIVE TRUST

PARENTS AND CARERS SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2021



inspiring the journey for
independence together

Welcome from the Team

Welcome to the second edition of our Safeguarding Newsletter.



The Department for Education (DFE) document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE)' provides the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The main purpose of our newsletter is to promote the importance of proactive safeguarding by keeping you informed about current and emerging safeguarding issues, so we can all continue working together to help protect and keep our young people safe.

SAFEGUARDING IN THE NEWS

Media attention continues to highlight the sensitive subject of Sexual Harassment/Abuse within the school community.

PEER ON PEER ABUSE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The subject of Sexual Harassment/Abuse in schools and colleges is more prevalent than ever currently. Since the assault and murder of Sarah Everard, there has been a wave of disclosures and testimonies on the anonymous website 'Everyone's Invited'. In light of the recent media coverage and disclosures of Sexual Harassment/Abuse, it is clear that now more than ever, we ALL need to be more aware of the language used. We need to be making sure students have a thorough understanding of what consent is and also having conversations with our young people about what is acceptable and what is NOT OK to say or do! We need to be promoting Respect - both for ourselves and for others.

All Trust schools have reviewed their policies and these can be found on each school website along with a Learner friendly version.

Parents and carers have a hugely important role to play in reducing levels of sexual harassment/abuse. With our whole school approach, we hope that you will be fully engaged and feel supported to be able to address the subject with your children.

Parents Protect

Together we can prevent
child sexual abuse

PARENTS PROTECT

Parents Protect is a child sexual abuse and prevention website created by the sexual abuse and prevention campaign Stop It Now! UK and Ireland and The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The Stop It Now! Campaign aims to prevent child sexual abuse by raising awareness and encouraging early recognition of warning signs of abuse. It also sets out identifying and responses to the problem by abusers themselves and those close to them.

Click [PARENTS PROTECT](#) - Learn to educate yourself on all aspects of safeguarding. The website has many resources for parents and carers to access. Click [Parents protect -resources](#) to see the full range of information leaflets, safety plans, posters and books to share with children.

Sexual Abuse Learning Programme (Parents Protect)

Parents Protect has developed this online child sexual abuse and exploitation awareness learning programme for parents/carers and professionals to help:

Understand potential risks

Recognise the signs of possible abuse in children

Be aware of inappropriate behaviour in adults

Know where to go for help if you have concerns and would like to talk about them



[STOP IT NOW](#) believes that sexual abuse and exploitation is preventable and gives adults the information they need to protect children effectively whilst urging abusers and potential abusers to seek help. Stop It Now! encourages adults to create a society that no longer tolerates the sexual abuse of children. There is a confidential and anonymous helpline and email service.



Call **0808 1000 900** or live chat if you are not ready to speak to someone on the phone. Click the following link: [Live chat - Stop It Now](#)

ON LINE GROOMING – NEW CAMPAIGN (IWF)



Are you unknowingly letting child sexual abusers into your home?

On-line child sexual abuse is not a new problem, but it is a rapidly growing one. The methods abusers use is constantly shifting and changing, they are always looking for ways to avoid detection. Since the start of the pandemic, the amount of ‘self-generated’ child abuse imagery has increased dramatically. In 2020, the IWF confirmed 68,000 cases of such imagery, a rise of 77% on the year before. It accounts for nearly half the imagery that action was taken on last year. In 80% of these cases, the victims were 11-13-year-old girls! Young people are being contacted in their own homes on online platforms and apps and asked for sexual pictures and videos, while their parents and carers believe they are safe. More and more sexual abuse material is created by offenders who coerce and groom children into sexual activities, often in children’s own bedrooms and bathrooms. They then record this via webcams or livestreaming services. It’s known as ‘self-generated’ child sexual abuse imagery. This is happening now and it can happen to anyone. But you can do something about it’; you can help prevent it happening to your child.



A new IWF safety campaign aims to help parents have conversations with their children about keeping their ‘door’ closed to child sexual abusers. The campaign includes a booklet for parents, explaining the risks, explaining why children are vulnerable, and suggests practical steps that parents can take.

The mnemonic used in the campaign is TALK:

TALK to your child about online sexual abuse. Start the conversation - and listen to their concerns.
AGREE ground rules about the way you use technology as a family.
LEARN about the platforms and apps your child loves.
KNOW how to use tools, apps and settings that can help to keep your child safe online.

For further details go to: <https://talk.iwf.org.uk/>

Barnardo's DICE Programme

DICE is a program for parents and carers; It aims to provide support and raise awareness of child exploitation and grooming. The four-week programme offers an understanding of the risks young people face in modern society. The sessions cover:

Thinking of life as a teenager, the exploitation of young people, digital dangers and parenting top tips. For more information go to : https://barnardos-parenting.org.uk/dice_programme/

Grooming is when someone befriends and builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. They can do this both online and offline, with technology and the internet being commonly used to initiate and facilitate contact with a child. Grooming often begins in a way that is engaging to the child, such as offering help or support, or using tactics such as engaging in social talk or exchanging personal information with the child about hobbies and relationships, using flattery and gifts to build a rapport or even making threats and intimidation to gain control. This can take place over varying periods of time - from a few days to several years.

What parents need to know about
ONLINE GROOMING

NUMBERS OF GROOMING OFFENCES ARE SOARING
In April 2017, a new government law came into force in England and Wales to allow police to charge adults who send sexual messages to children through mobile phones and social media. In the first year since the law change, there were 3,900 police-recorded offences of sexual communication with a child - a figure 50 per cent higher than experts expected in the first year.

ALL CHILDREN ARE AT RISK
According to a 2018 NSPCC report, a quarter of young people have experienced an adult who they don't know in real life trying to contact them online. One in four said they had been sent messages, images, videos or other content that made them feel sad, worried or uncomfortable. One in 10 girls and one in 20 boys under the age of 13 said they had received unwanted sexual messages.

CHILDREN ARE VULNERABLE TARGETS
Groomers use psychological tricks and methods to try and isolate children from their families and friends and will often choose to target more vulnerable children who may be easier to manipulate. In order to seek potential victims, predators are likely to use apps and websites that are popular with children and young people. Groomers can use a 'scattergun' approach to find victims, contacting hundreds online to increase their chance of success.

LIVE STREAMING CONCERNS
Predators may use live video to target children in real time using tricks, dances or built-in gifts to manipulate them. Grooming often takes the form of a game where children receive 'likes' or even money for performing sexual acts. Social media channels, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, all have live streaming capabilities, but there are many apps which children can use to live stream, including Omegle, Livecam, SCOT Live, Livebox and many more.

GROOMING CAN HAPPEN RAPIDLY
Grooming is generally a slow, methodical and intentional process of manipulating a person to a point where they can be victimised. However, according to researchers at the University of Swansea, online grooming can also be very rapid, with analysis of chat logs revealing that it can take just 18 minutes for some predators to arrange to meet their victim. The fastest groomers used sophisticated, persuasive, language-based strategies to rapidly build trust, including the use of small talk and praise which quickly escalated into requests for sexual messages.

ANYONE CAN GROOM YOUR CHILD
Many people expect groomers to be adults posing as children, but this is not always the case. Data from University of Swansea reveals that groomers' use of identity deception (around age, location and appearance) is fairly low. This can be because they approach many children, limiting their ability to lie. The worry is that honesty can be more damaging to the victim since they are more likely to feel as if they are in a real relationship.

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Top Tips for Parents

IT'S GOOD TO TALK
It's unlikely that you can stop your child using the internet, nor can you constantly monitor their online activities. But you can talk to your child on a regular basis about what they do online. By talking openly with them about online relationships, they can quickly ascertain the kind of behaviour which is appropriate or inappropriate. Ask them whether they have any online friends or if they play online games with people they haven't met. This could then open up conversations about the subject of grooming.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS
In order to give your child a safer online gaming experience, it is important to check privacy settings or parental controls on the networks, devices, apps, and websites they may use. If you use location-sharing apps to check where your child is, remember that these could always be used by strangers to follow your child without their knowledge. Ensure that you check options so that location information is never shared with anyone except those they have permission to share with.

DISCUSS SAFE ONLINE BEHAVIOUR
Make it clear to your child that they should not accept friend requests from people they don't know and to verify friend requests with people who they do know. They should never agree to chat privately with a stranger or someone they don't really know. Remind them that they should never divulge personal information, such as mobile phone numbers, addresses, passwords or name of their school.

DISCUSS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS
Talk to your child about what a healthy relationship looks like and how to detect someone who might not be who they claim to be. Explain that groomers will pay your child compliments and engage in conversations about personal information, such as hobbies and relationships. They may advise how well they play an online game or how they look in a photo. Groomers will also try and isolate a child from people close to them, such as parents and friends, in order to make their relationship feel special and unique.

BE SUPPORTIVE
Show your child that you will support them and make sure they understand they can come to you with any concerns they may have. They need to know they can talk to you if someone does something they are uncomfortable with, whether that is inappropriate comments, images, requests or sexual comments.

LOOK OUT FOR WARNING SIGNS
Child safety experts have identified key grooming patterns and advise parents to look out for:
- Secretive behaviour about what they are doing online.
- Hearing phone usage late at night.
- Going to unusual places to meet up with friends you have not heard of.
- They are clingy, have problems dropping and have not heard of.
- They seem withdrawn, anxious, depressed or aggressive.
- Meeting older boyfriends or girlfriends.

HOW TO REPORT
If you're worried that your child is being groomed online or sexually exploited, you can report your concerns to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Safety Centre, which is part of the National Crime Agency at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre. Reports are read by a Child Protection Advisor who will make contact by phone or email to work with you to make a plan to keep your child safe. If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999 or NSPCC on 0800 800 3000.

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PREVENT IN SCHOOLS

The Prevent strategy aims to stop people becoming involved in extremism or supporting terrorism

During terms 5 and 6, all schools across the Trust have been lucky enough to invite Sally Green, the local Prevent Education Officer, in to work with pupils and educate them about online dangers.

Educate against hate is a Government website with advice and trusted resources for schools and parents to safeguarding students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and promote shared values. <https://educateagainsthate.com/parents/>

NATIONAL ONLINE SAFETY UPDATES

NoS have released some useful guides on how to set up parental controls for privacy.

How to Set up PARENTAL CONTROLS for PRIVACY iPhone

The privacy settings on your child's Apple device give you control over the information stored on it. This allows you to select which apps can access features and information on your child's device; for example, you might wish to block a social networking app from connecting to the camera roll, or specify which apps can use the device's location data.

How to make changes to privacy settings

You can block certain apps from obtaining information from your child's device. You can also prevent your child (or anyone other than you) from altering these settings.

- 1 Open 'Settings'
- 2 Tap 'Screen Time'
- 3 Tap 'Content & Privacy Restrictions'
- 4 Scroll to 'Privacy'
- 5 Choose the settings you wish to restrict
- 6 After you've made any changes, select 'Use Screen Time Passcode' to lock your changes with a PIN

How to prevent changes to other settings/features

You can also stop changes being made to the iPhone's other settings or features by anyone but you. For example, you can prevent your child from altering their passcode, accounts or mobile data settings.

- 1 Open 'Settings'
- 2 Tap 'Screen Time'
- 3 Tap 'Content & Privacy Restrictions'
- 4 Scroll to 'Allow Changes'
- 5 Select 'Allow' or 'Don't Allow' on the settings for which you wish to enable or disable changes

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How to Set up PARENTAL CONTROLS for PRIVACY Android Phone

The settings on an Android device allow you to set certain rules to help safeguard your child's privacy when they are using it. For example, you can turn off location services to keep their whereabouts private; prevent third-party apps and sites from viewing their information; and stop apps from accessing other functions of the phone (like the camera or microphone, for example). We've produced step-by-step guides on how to tighten up an Android phone's privacy settings.

How to manage location services

- 1 Open the Google Family Link app
- 2 Select your child's account
- 3 On the 'Settings' card, tap 'Manage'
- 4 Tap 'Location'
- 5 On the card with the correct device's name, tap 'Settings'
- 6 Tap 'Location Settings'
- 7 Turn 'Device location' to off
- 8 To reactivate location services in future, repeat these steps and turn 'Device location' back on

How to control access for third-party apps and sites

- 1 Sign in to your Google Families account
- 2 Under 'Members', select your child's name
- 3 Select 'Account info' and then 'More'
- 4 Select 'Third-party apps with account access'
- 5 Turn 'Allow third-party apps to access XX account' to off by toggling the switch

How to manage app permissions

- 1 Open the Google Family Link app
- 2 Select your child's account
- 3 On the 'Device' card, tap 'Settings'
- 4 Tap 'App permissions' then choose a permission
- 5 Below your child's device, switch the permission off

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COUNTY LINES

A recent Panorama documentary aired on BBC One has exposed the problems surrounding County Lines drug dealing in Kent. Panorama followed Kent Police for a year as they tackled County Lines between London and north Kent. Operations in Medway, Rochester, Dartford and Maidstone were all covered on the programme which was shown on May 11.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phones lines or 'deal lines'. County Lines can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs.

Further info can be found at [Protecting children from county lines | NSPCC Learning](#)

This leaflet explains all that parents need to know [County Lines for Parents](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

If our pupils are to succeed then we must seek to promote their resilience and mental health. At Rivermead Inclusive Trust we strive to raise awareness surrounding mental health and wellbeing. We endeavour to work with families, outside agencies and most importantly the young people as we recognise positive mental health and wellbeing are a key part in keeping our pupils safe.



Raising awareness and signposting support

While raising awareness through preventative work we must also teach young people the knowledge and self-care skills to look after themselves. This is done through our PSHE and Relationship Curriculums. In addition, you can find mental health resource links on our school websites.

Useful support for your child:

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

<https://www.kooth.com/>



Both offer free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support.

If you are concerned about mental health issues please contact the Mental Health lead at your school for support.

Medway Young Persons Wellbeing Service (NELFT)

This for people aged 0-18 years or up to 25 with SEN needs. The service offers advice and support for stress, low mood, and depression, anxiety, self-harm, difficult to manage behaviours as well as support for neurodevelopmental difficulties such as ADHD or ASD. You might benefit from some of the self-help resources accessible at or you can self-refer on 0300 300 1981.

[Kent and Medway | NELFT NHS Foundation Trust](#)

SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

General Support

MEDWAY FIS 01634 332195 One stop information service



Medway Small Steps: A new service providing support and advice for families whose children are either pre or post diagnosis of Autism or ADHD.

Contact: <https://www.family-action.org.uk//medway-small-steps-service/>

Support with Food

Medway Foodbank - For families who are struggling to afford food, proof of financial difficulties will need to be provided, the following are charities which may be able to support. Foodbank times, day and locations are available from <https://medway.foodbank.org.uk/>

Gillingham Street Angels - Supply food parcels, including fresh food, between 9 am until 1 pm Monday to Friday & 9am until 12 midday Saturday. They also supply clothes, bedding, and general household items. They are part of the Medway emergency food project run by the Medway Council, this was set up during the first pandemic and Medway Food Partnership, to help people of Medway, including children at half term, which is ongoing. The shop is located at shop at 43 Skinner Street, Gillingham
<https://www.thestreet-angels.org/>



2nd Chance Support Charity - Food aid project where food is available at a lower price. <http://www.mrs.plus> This is located in Chatham. Telephone number 01634 408840 / 01634 403340

Financial Support

Family Fund - <http://www.familyfund.org.uk> Family Fund is the UK's largest charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people.

Disability Grants - Grants for Children and Young People <https://www.disability-grants.org/>
A list of available grant opportunities, eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Citizens Advice Bureau - Tel: 01634 383760 - Citizens Advice Medway is a registered charity that offers free, independent and impartial advice <https://www.medwayadvice.org.uk/>

Step change - Tel: 0800 1381111 - <http://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/coronavirus-affecting-finances.aspx>

WORRIED ABOUT A YOUNG PERSON?



Information, help, support and advice if you are worried about a child in Medway.

If you have concerns that a child or young person living in Medway is suffering from harm please phone 01634 334 466 or the 24-hour emergency number 03000 419 191

Medway Children's Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.medwayscp.org.uk/mscb/>

If you have concerns about a child you can also phone:

NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

Child Line on 0800 1111

Medway Police on 0162 2690 690



Please contact your school Safeguarding Team if you have concerns or need further advice/support.