

# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

## Autumn Half-Term One 2024/25

Welcome to the first safeguarding newsletter of this academic year. It has been wonderful to welcome the children back to school after the summer – especially the new year 7s who have settled in so well.

This half-term, the children will have assemblies on important topics such as extremism & radicalisation, mental health, and ADHD awareness.

This newsletter contains information about some Early Help drop-in sessions for parents/carers which we hope will be of use.

As always, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require additional support.

Kind regards,  
Ms Jones and the Keep Kids Safe team.

## KEY NUMBERS

Anyone can contact the services below directly, regardless of whether you are a child, parent, carer or a member of staff. If you have a safeguarding concern, please ensure you pass it on: safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

<b>01925 443322</b> (Option one, followed by option one) <b>Warrington Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</b>  For urgent safeguarding concerns about a child	<b>01925 443322</b> (Option two) <b>Out of Office Emergency Duty Team</b>  For urgent safeguarding concerns about a child outside of office hours	<b>0808 800 5000</b>  <b>NSPCC</b>  For adults who are worried about a child
<b>0800 1111</b>  <b>Childline</b>  For children who are worried about their own safety or need some advice	<b>101</b>  <b>Police Non-Emergency</b>  For reporting any crimes or concerns	<b>999</b>  <b>Emergency Services</b>  For anyone in immediate danger (including if you are worried about the immediate risk to a child)

## Early Help Advice Sessions

We are pleased to announce that a representative from Early Help will be based in school on a regular basis to offer appointments for parents/carers who need advice regarding the support available for their child, without requiring a formal Team Around the Family meeting.

Early Help provides a range of support and signposting to families regarding variety of different situations. We are often asked what Early Help actually is, and it is often confused with social care.

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person and their family early on when a situation emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth through to adulthood and applies to any situation or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on its own. Early Help is a strength-based approach enabling families to develop the skills to prevent issues from getting worse by offering the right support at the right time.

If you would like to book an appointment with our Early Help representative, please contact Ms Jones on [kjones@padgateacademy.co.uk](mailto:kjones@padgateacademy.co.uk). These advice sessions will be available during the following dates/times:

**Wednesday 9th October 10am – 11.30am**

**Monday 4th November 3pm – 4pm**

## World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day is held on 10<sup>th</sup> October and we will be marking the occasion with assemblies for every year group. The assemblies have been created, and will be delivered by our student mental health ambassadors who are really keen to support their peers if they are struggling. This year's theme which has been set by the World Federation of Mental Health, is workplace mental health. To make this relevant for our children, we will be changing this to school mental health and talking about what pressure young people feel today, as well as what support is available to them.



## Kooth Competition

In conjunction with World Mental Health Day, Kooth are launching a competition to find members for their first-ever youth-powered content team.

Winners will learn and collaborate with top social media creative talent, supported by Ravensbourne University. They will participate in a series of masterclasses where they will be empowered to create content that opens up conversations around mental wellbeing, helping young people across the UK. Kooth Future Council members will also gain new skills including video editing, social content creation, teamwork, leadership and creative problem solving which will boost their future college, UCAS or job

applications.

To enter, they are asking any 15 - 18-year-old students to create an original piece of artwork, illustration, photography, video or creative writing that answers the question: **How do you overcome negative emotions?** For more information, see [here](#).





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

## 1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

## 2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

## 3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss what they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

## 4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

## 5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

## 6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

## 7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

## 8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

## 9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

## 10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

## Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-55204835>  
<https://ipr-social.com/insights/social-media-against-rhms/>

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# Finding support for your mental health



Mersey Care  
NHS Foundation Trust



Bespoke support for LGBT+ young people and their adults  
[theproudtrust.org](http://theproudtrust.org)



Online mental wellbeing community for free, safe, anonymous support  
[kooth.com](http://kooth.com)



here for you 24/7  
[giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)



Whatever you're going through 24 hours a day, 365 days a year  
[samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org) | 116 123



Online, on the phone, anytime  
[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk) | 0800 1111



Essential support for under 25s  
Free information and support for under 25s in the UK  
[themix.org.uk](http://themix.org.uk)



Giving hope to grieving children  
Helping young people navigate grief  
[winstonswish.org](http://winstonswish.org)



Helping you focus on staying safe from suicide  
[papyrus-uk.org/](http://papyrus-uk.org/)  
[papyrus-hopeline247](http://papyrus-hopeline247)



Discrete emotional wellbeing drop-in service for young people aged 7-19 (25 if additional needs)  
[warringtonyouthzone.org/youth-in-mind](http://warringtonyouthzone.org/youth-in-mind)



Teenager and Gender Sexuality Youth Support group  
[warrington.gov.uk/youth-service](http://warrington.gov.uk/youth-service)



Youth group for young people aged 13-18 who self-identify as Black, Asian or other ethnic minority  
[warrington.gov.uk/youth-service](http://warrington.gov.uk/youth-service)



A referral can be made to Warrington CYPMHS or schools can have a consultation with the Mental Health Support Team



Do you need urgent help with your mental health?  
Call our 24/7 mental health crisis line FREE

0800 051 3253 if you live in Wigan  
0800 051 1508 if you live in Halton, Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington