

HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

December 2024

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM



At Holyhead School we endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We believe that all children should feel safe and be able to approach someone if they have a concern. The safety and wellbeing of our students is the most important aspect of our work as a school. If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing or safety, or want to report a concern about another child, please ask to speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

In this month's issue we look at:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Chatting online
- What to do if you are concerned about your child
- Check age ratings
- Increasing the security on your child's Iphone and Ipad
- NCA issues urgent warning about sextortion
- Parenting online safety tips

As we approach the end of term, a lot of children will take advantage of the cold dark evenings and may begin spending more time online. This month's focus is on informing parents about how to support your child in staying safe online.

Check age ratings!

There is so much that we can do online nowadays including playing games, chatting with others, watching TV or sharing our videos/photographs. Being online can be great but it is important that we set boundaries for our children to keep them safe while they explore being online, develop their digital resilience and understanding of what to do if anything negative happens when online.

So how can we help keep our children safe? We can start by checking age restrictions/ratings. It is important that we follow these to ensure that what our children are doing or seeing online is appropriate for their age.



Where can I find age ratings?

- Films: The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rate films. This page includes a link to a 'Parents' Guide to Age Ratings': <https://www.cbbfc.co.uk/resources/viewing-films-safely-online>.
- Video games: PEGI provides age classifications for video games. PEGI considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and chat facilities within games.
- Apps: Check the individual age ratings within the relevant app store. We also recommend that you download any apps and play them yourself to check their suitability.
- Social Media: All social media networks have a minimum age rating; they are all at least 13+.

What else can I do?

- Explain the importance of age ratings to your child.
- Go online together to see what your child is accessing.
- Set up parental controls on your broadband devices and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing or viewing anything unsuitable.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and as always, remind your child that if anything is worrying them then they should talk to you or another trusted adult.

Further information You can find out more here:

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit/take-control/understanding-age-ratings>

Chatting online



Following a recent report by the BBC detailing how a child was asked for inappropriate images when chatting online, we thought we would discuss the dangers your child might face when communicating with strangers online.

In addition to social media apps that include a chat facility, most online games also allow communication, for example EA FC and Fortnite. Depending on the game, this may be via the in-game text chat, direct messages or talking through headphones. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off or restrict bad language so make sure settings appropriate to your child are set up for each of the games they play. You need to be aware that there are people who may use these games to start chatting to your child and then encourage them to chat on alternative apps (which are more private, encrypted or have fewer safety options). Talk to your child about the dangers of doing this.

What risks are there with chatting online?

- Bullying
- Inappropriate chat – children may encounter explicit or inappropriate content.
- Contact from strangers – talk to your child about who is contacting them online.
- Sharing personal information – talk to your child about what information they share with others including images.
- Sextortion - this is a form of blackmail where somebody threatens to share a nude/sexual image of you

How can I mitigate the risks?

- Ensure your child is accessing age-appropriate apps/games and that appropriate parental controls are set up.
- Chat to your child about the risks above so they are aware of what can happen online.
- Depending on the age of your child, it may be more appropriate for devices to be used in family rooms so you can monitor what they are doing and if they are chatting to others.

Reporting other users

It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report others who make them feel uncomfortable and that they know to talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns.

NCA issues urgent warning about sextortion

Globally there has been an increase in reports of children and young people being victims of financially motivated sexual extortion, often referred to in the media as 'sextortion'. The National Crime Agency's CEOP Education have issued an alert in education settings across the UK in response to this threat. The alert will help professionals/carers to:



- Recognise and understand financially motivated sexual extortion
- Raise awareness and help seeking behaviours amongst children and young people
- Give suitable messaging and support to parents and carers
- Support victims of financially motivated sexual extortion

Financially motivated sexual extortion involves children and young people being forced into paying money or meeting another financial demand (such as purchasing a pre-paid gift card) after an offender has threatened to release nudes or semi-nudes of them. It is a type of online blackmail and also a form of child sexual abuse. Financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by organised crime groups based overseas who are typically motivated by money. These groups target all ages and genders however, a large proportion of cases have involved male victims aged 14-18.

Please click the links for an essential guide of advice and sextortion explained more in depth, together with tips on having difficult conversations and how to report incidents.

https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/globalassets/professional/guidance/nca_financially_motivated_sexual_extortion_alert_education_eng.pdf

https://ineqe.com/2024/04/30/financially-motivated-extortion/?utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz-97EUAjSSAMU6wPIHmLcqJwZtgBLmt_jqGeuauaQ9MSIFvYJIsysTFXHm60G-OJPbpG2biAYPW6_IBKVNew0b2YkrX-6JrPT5YxzMqPWxtte-iTEao&hsmi=305010616&utm_content=305010616&utm_source=hs_email

Increasing the security on your child's Iphone and Ipad

This is a message from West Midlands Police for parents, carers, and older brothers or sisters.

Police and schools across the West Midlands are committed to working together to protect our young people from becoming victims of robbery and violent crime, but to do this we need your help.

We have seen an increase in criminals targeting young people who carry iPhones or iPads. Thieves are forcing young people to log out of their iCloud to prevent the phone being tracked after it's stolen. By enabling two-factor authentication on



iCloud or your child's phone, they can make thieves lose interest in taking their phone.

Increasing the security on your child's iPhone and iPad:

1. Firstly, talk to your child about enabling two-factor authentication on their devices to help keep them, and their phones, safe from theft and exploitation.
2. Reassure them that turning on location and enabling better privacy settings allows them to communicate with their friends and family safely and securely.
3. Turn on two-factor authentication for your child's Apple Account: On your iPhone or iPad: Go to Settings > [your name] > Sign-In & Security. Tap Turn On Two-Factor Authentication. Then tap Continue and follow the onscreen instructions.
4. Discuss with your child who they would like to add to their 'trusted contact list' and encourage them to save these numbers in their emergency contacts list in case they get into trouble.
5. Add your child's devices to your 'Family' by heading to your Apple ID settings and adding the devices.
6. Make sure all the latest software is updated across the devices you're adding
7. From the 'Family' group you can enable content and privacy restrictions and two-factor authentication, as well as location sharing. For further information about parental controls and privacy guidance please visit: [Use parental controls on your child's iPhone and iPad - Apple Support](#)

Please note, if your child has an Android phone there are additional security settings you can put in place to make sure the location of their phone and data is secure. Visit your phone provider website for further crime prevention advice.

Parenting online safety tips

With the technological advances that had to be made during the lockdown periods, learning from home was forced to be increased. This meant that young people were spending a lot more time online doing their schoolwork, gaming, and socialising. However, it's important we all consider how we can help keep young people safer online. Here's some information about what your child may enjoy online and what you can do to help keep them safer!

Online gaming

Online games are social activities, and most have features that allow young people to chat with others whilst they play.

Sharing images and videos

Young people often share images or 'selfies' and there is potential for some of those to be nude or nearly nude images. Young people share 'nudes' for a number of different reasons, and some situations are riskier than others.

More information?

Thinkuknow is the education programme from the National Crime Agency's Child Protection Command CEOP (NCA-CEOP). Their aim is to protect children and young people from sexual abuse online.

Steps you can take to help keep your child safer online

Have an ongoing conversation: Continue to talk about the apps, games, and sites they like to use, and what they like and don't like and any concerns about being online. Discuss with them when to unfollow, block or report.

Make sure they know where to go for support: Remind your child they can always speak to you or an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. Remind them that they won't be in trouble and that you are there to help

Make sure they know about NCA CEOP: Young people can report a concern about grooming or sexual abuse to NCA CEOP at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> and get support from a specialist Child Protection Advisor.

What to do if you are concerned about your child or a young person you know

Talk to them in a safe and quiet location that feels comfortable for both of you.

You may wish to contact a member of the DSL team at school if you feel your child isn't listening or is at risk. Mrs Denny ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk or Mr Beale dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk alternatively your child can complete a Holyhead Helpline request form which will be picked up by a DSL and your child's head of year

You can reach out to your school's link Police officers to seek advice. They can talk through your concerns and plan a way forward together. PC Mason steve.mason@westmidlands.police.uk and PC Williams katy.williams@westmidlands.police.uk

If you or your child has been a victim of crime or their life is in danger, call **999** immediately. Alternatively, you can call **101** if the crime has happened and you want to report this to the police.

You can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111** or via www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Thank you, West Midlands Police.