HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN
April 2024

- **Our Designated Safeguarding Leads**

- **How can we challenge victim blaming and sexual harassment in our school**

- **Understanding pupils mental health and wellbeing**
- **Keeping your child safe playing Fortnite**

- **Various links to help for support for Teens**

- **How to support children who may have experienced trauma**
- **International Bystander Day**

- **Fake news and disinformation online**

- **Keeping your child safe on Snapchat**

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM

As always, the safety and wellbeing of our students is the most important aspect of our work as a school. This month's bulletin focuses on Mental Health, Childhood trauma and victim blaming as well as including some tips for keeping your child safe on social media and online gaming platforms. If you have any urgent safeguarding issues or concerns about any child at our school, please contact the school on 0121 523 1960 or via email and ask to speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

How to support children who may have experienced trauma

Behaviours that might indicate a child may of experienced trauma:

- Hypervigilance: a pupil might seem 'on edge', distracted or jumpy. They might have disproportionate reactions to events, or show repetitive behaviour and fidgeting
- 'Fight, flight or freeze' responses: a pupil might argue, be aggressive, run away, hide, be unable to do a task, or not speak or make eye contact
- Poor self-regulation: they may have emotional outbursts, appear to overreact to things, be confrontational, or not be able to control impulses
- Avoidance: they may try to avoid things that remind them of past experiences
- Apparent daydreaming
- Difficulty trusting others: they may seem wary and suspicious
- Social isolation and difficulty managing social interactions
- Less interest in daily activities or hobbies: they may seem to enjoy things less than others
- Signs of depression: they seem persistently sad or angry, irritable, lose interest in things they used to enjoy, and be tired or not have any energy
- Signs of anxiety: they lack confidence, seem unable to deal with simple, everyday challenges, or find it hard to concentrate. They may be tired, and have angry outbursts and negative thoughts, and start to avoid everyday activities
- Focusing on negative memories or thoughts
- Difficulty recalling details of memories: they may also struggle with planning, making decisions and social problem solving
- Tiredness

What to do 'in the moment'

- **Pause and reflect**: ask yourself what the pupil's behaviour could be communicating
- **Keep calm**: even if you don't feel calm, act like you are. Try to stop, look down at your shoes, take a deep breath, think about the pupil's strengths, and then look up and smile
- **Keep your voice low and slow**: 'low' means both low pitched and low volume
- **Use simple, consistent language**: repeat phrases rather than trying to say the same thing in different ways. A pupil is more likely to take it in this way
- **Try to offer choices**: even if it's just something like "sit here or sit there", it will help the pupil feel more in control of the situation
- **Give positive reinforcement and space**: remind the pupil that they're safe, that you're here to support them, and that the problem can be managed. Praise the child for making the right choices. Try to avoid standing too near them
- **Use distractions**: offer the child an opportunity to do something else, like reading a book, looking out the window, or an activity that helps calm them. A change in adult can also provide a distraction

6 things you can do every day

- **Create consistency**: always act the same way towards pupils, and set consistent boundaries for what's acceptable behaviour
- **Have a clear routine**: and give warnings about changes to the routine and give a visual reminder of the routine to pupils
- **Make pupils feel valued**: show an interest in them, including their strengths and motivators. Smile and welcome them. Think about how you phrase things – for example, if a child shouts in class, say "thank you for sharing, but next time please put your hand up first" rather than "don't shout"
- **Think about what might have happened before you see them**: this helps you anticipate how they might be feeling and what you might need to do to help them be ready to learn or settle
- **Start every day with a clean slate**: welcome pupils back each day with a smile and a positive greeting, and try to avoid punishments that last more than one day
- **Never judge**: be aware of your body language and tone of voice, and show the pupil you're listening

How we can challenge victim blaming and sexual harassment in our school?

Sexual harassment means unwanted sexual conduct. It can happen online and offline. It can include: Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexualised name-calling or sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, Sexual 'jokes' or taunting, Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with their clothes (note: this can sometimes cross a line into sexual violence), or displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature. Online sexual harassment, such as non-consensual image sharing, unwanted sexual comments and messages, sexualised online bullying, sexual exploitation, coercion, threats, or upskirting.

6 tips to help you challenge it in the moment

- **Challenge it there and then.** It's important to do this to send a clear message that the comment or behaviour isn't acceptable. Don't dismiss or downplay an incident
- **Challenge the behaviour, not the person.** This depersonalised the challenge. For example, "That is sexist language" is a more helpful comment than "You're sexist"
- **Explain what the problem is.** This gives a reason for your challenge and helps pupils see why their comment or behaviour was problematic
- **Support the victim and show empathy.** Let them know it's not their fault. Consider the incident from their perspective and encourage others to do the same
- **Challenge gender bias and stereotypes.** And be aware of your own biases too. Don't stereotype or make assumptions based on your perceptions of the pupils involved
- **Focus on the perpetrator's behaviour rather than the victim's.** This moves us away from seeing sexual harassment and violence as 'inevitable' and something girls should adapt their behaviour to avoid

Conversation starters

- "That behaviour is entirely inappropriate. It may constitute sexual harassment / assault"
- "You may not have meant to cause harm, but … "
- "What do you think that word means?"
- "What do you mean by that?"
- "You may not find that behaviour / language offensive, but many others would"
- "In our school we … "
- "I'm really uncomfortable with you saying things like that / behaving that way. It makes me feel … "

International Bystander Day

About International Bystander Awareness Day

On March 13th 1964, Kitty Genovese, a 28 year-old bar manager was stabbed, raped and killed on her way back from work in the early hours of the morning in Queens, New York just yards away from her apartment. Newspaper reports later suggested that up to 38 people saw or heard the incident, which took place over half an hour and failed to call the police for help. One man, viewing the murder from his third-floor apartment window, stated later that he rushed to turn up his radio so he wouldn't hear the woman's screams. Others thought it was a lovers' quarrel, were afraid or too tired.

A documentary (The Witness available on Amazon Prime) made by her brother Bill identified some contradictions in the original accounts, some of which were politically motivated. US Researchers John M. Darley and Bibb Latané became interested and conducted the research that led to the terms 'bystander' and 'bystander effect'.

This national day gave us an opportunity to:

- Raise awareness of the positive role that bystanders can play
- Share the different ways that people can help others
- Promote the benefits and importance of supporting others

Awareness of the day increased over the years and in 2021 we had an international input from our good friend Patrice O'Neal, founding member of the Not In Our Town Movement (add link to their website and to the NBAD you tube event) and Executive Producer at PBS America.

In January 2023, our Creative Director was attending the in-person International Visitors Leadership Program, A Global Moment in Time: Peace and Justice, in three US cities, she had an opportunity to reach a global audience and was supported by the US Department of State and their program partners to launch International Bystander Awareness Day in Florida.

Understanding pupil mental health and wellbeing

What causes mental ill health? Mental health concerns or difficulties can stem from a range of factors, including psychological, biological, social and life events.

- For example, difficult life events or adverse childhood experience (such as physical or sexual abuse) can be triggers. Other examples of these factors include having a family history of mental health problems (biological) and the home environment (social).

However, everyone responds differently to these factors, so we can't perfectly predict mental health concerns. Anyone can have mental ill health.

Can we prevent mental ill health? No. It's not possible to prevent difficulties, and we can all suffer from poor mental health. But, developing wellbeing, resilience, effective coping strategies and knowing where to get help can prevent difficulties from becoming more serious.

How are schools in a position to support pupils with their mental health and wellbeing? In a survey by Anna Freud, more than 3,000 young people said they wanted mental health to be brought into the classroom and for conversations about it to be normalised. Although some children said they wouldn't speak to anyone while they're struggling, many will turn to their friends at school. 52% of young people said they would talk to a member of staff about their concerns, and more are likely to turn to a trusted adult at school.

How can I show empathy when talking to pupils?

- Acknowledge how they're feeling and try to see things from their point of view, without any judgement
- Make sure you listen to what they're saying
- Avoid minimising their feelings or suggesting that you're there to fix the problem

What can our school do to promote positive wellbeing? Adopt a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. This involves every part of the school working together as a single unit to co-ordinate action between the curriculum, teaching and learning, the school's ethos, vision and values, and all stakeholders

How do we at Holyhead promote positive mental wellbeing in the classroom? One way we do this is by modelling good habits. Children naturally copy what's around them. By sharing ways you look after yourself, such as getting exercise, creating a routine, doing things that make you happier when you feel anxious or sad, or talking to someone about your worries, you can help to normalise the idea that everyone has 'mental health'. There are many other ways to do this too, as part of a whole-school approach – as you'll discuss towards the end of this training session.

For some practical strategies, take a look at Anna Freud's classroom wellbeing toolkit. https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/classroom-wellbeing-toolkit/

What are the current issues affecting children and young people? In 2023, the Good Childhood Report asked children and young people aged 10 to 17, questions about their wellbeing and happiness:

- When asked about issues in society, the top 2 issues that children were worried about were **rising prices** and the **environment**
- When asked about their future, the things children were most worried about were **having enough money**, **finding a job** and **getting good grades at school**.

A rise in mental health concerns in young people also means that services are stretched and there is often insufficient support for these issues. Issues around online safety also affect children, with cases concerned with online exploitation and victimisation having risen since the pandemic.

Is there a link between social media and poor mental wellbeing? Research has found a link between social media use and poor mental wellbeing, but it's not yet clear whether social media use is a cause. There is growing research to suggest it may contribute to an increased risk of depression and anxiety symptoms. There can be negative effects of using social media, like comparing yourself to others, and using screens before bed affecting sleep quality. But there can also be positives, such as learning about others' health experiences and accessing support online.

Fake news and disinformation online

What's the problem?

Fake news is false or misleading information presented as genuine news.

Your child might have seen fake news online about the Russian invasion of Ukraine. There have been examples of old footage being shared as if it's new, or images being manipulated to present a misleading picture about what's happening. There's been lots of misinformation on TikTok in particular.

Fake news and disinformation have also been linked to radicalisation by extremists and attempts to skew people's world views. For example, extremist narratives relating to coronavirus include:

- Antisemitic conspiracy theories blaming Jewish people for the spread of the virus or suggesting it's a 'Jewish plot'
- Claims that British Muslims have flouted social distancing rules
- Anti-Chinese hatred
- Isis-inspired narratives about how coronavirus is a divine punishment for the 'sinful behaviours' of the west
- Extreme right-wing conspiracies that society is collapsing and far-right groups can accelerate its end

Reading information like this can upset or worry your child unnecessarily. Fake news also helps create a culture of fear and uncertainty, with children trusting reputable news outlets less as a result of fake news.

How can I help my child spot fake news online?

Tell them to ask themselves:

- **What's the source?** Is it a reputable news source, and are mainstream news outlets reporting it too?
- **When was it published?** Check the date an article was published, as sometimes old stories are shared on social media. This could be an accident, or it might be to make it look like something happened recently
- **Have you seen anything similar elsewhere?** What happens if you search for it on Google or check it using a fact-checking website like Full Fact?
- **Do the pictures look real?** Images might have been edited. They might also be unrelated images that have been used with the story
- **Why might this have been created?** Could someone be trying to provoke a specific reaction, change your beliefs, or get you to click a link?

Encourage them to **read beyond the headline** too. Many people share stories having just read the headline, then discover the actual story is quite different.

What signs of radicalisation should I be alert to?

It's worth knowing what signs to be alert to, just in case. If you do see these signs, it doesn't necessarily mean your child is being radicalised – it could be nothing at all, or it could be a sign that something else is wrong.

- Becoming more isolated from friends and family
- Not being willing or able to talk about their views
- Becoming more angry
- Talking as if from a script
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Being more secretive, especially about their internet use

Keep your child safe playing Fortnite

- Fortnite is an online video game where players compete to be the last person standing in a post-apocalyptic world. The most popular version is **Fortnite: Battle Royale**, which sees up to 100 players pitted against each other to stay alive on an island. Players can build and demolish structures, and collect weapons, supplies and armour to help them along the way
- Players shoot each other using a range of lethal weapons, but the brightly-coloured, cartoon-style graphics and lack of bloodshed mean it doesn't feel too gory or graphic
- The age recommendation to play is **12 and above** – but you don't have to provide your age when creating an account, so younger children can still use it easily
- Fortnite: Battle Royale **is free to download** on PC/Mac, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch, Android and iOS devices (Apple phones and tablets)

What are the concerns?

You may have seen news reports or heard concerns raised about:

- **Communication between players:** they can talk to each other via messaging or a headset and microphone. Children could speak to strangers or be at risk of cyber-bullying
- **In-app purchases:** children can build up large bills on their parents' accounts by buying cosmetic items, like outfits for their character, and better-looking weapons ('skins')
- **The game's addictive nature:** there have been stories of children staying up all night to play, and falling asleep in lessons. Some people say this is down to the communal feel of the game – you can play with your friends – and because it's different every time you play

3 steps to take to keep your child safe

1. Use the parental controls on your gaming device

- Most devices allow you to **set time limits** on game play, **set age limits** for content, and **restrict in-app purchases.** Go to the website below for links to detailed instructions on your child's device – it covers PlayStation, Xbox, Apple and Android phones, and Nintendo Switch:
- [Ask About Games](#) - *www.askaboutgames.com/advice/parental-controls*
- Battles in Fortnite last around 20 minutes, so make use of this natural stopping point when limiting your child's screen time. Set a limit in terms of matches rather than hours and minutes, or set time limits in 20-minute increments

2. Turn off the voice chat feature

- Speak to your child to make sure they understand how to use this feature safely. Encourage them to follow the steps below if they meet someone who is offensive or inappropriate in the game.
- To **disable the in-game voice chat function**:
- Select the menu icon, then 'Settings'
- Select the 'audio' tab (it's represented by a speaker icon)
- Tap the arrows next to 'voice chat'
- To **'mute' individual players**:
- Pause the game
- Hover over the player you wish to mute and select the mute button (a loudspeaker icon)

3. Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour

- To **report** players who make your child feel uncomfortable:
- Select the menu icon, then 'Reporting/feedback'
- On the 'Feedback type' tab, select 'Report player'
- Select the reason you want to report the player
- On the 'Select player' tab, select the name of the player you want to report
- On the 'Submit' tab, select 'Accept' to send the report
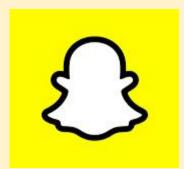- Select 'Send report'

What else can I do?

- Download and play the game to help you understand it
- Take a look at the other parental controls explained on the Epic Games website: https://bit.ly/2o3YnaC
- Talk to your child about what they're doing online, and make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that has upset them. See more guidance from the NSPCC on how to do this here: https://bit.ly/1HpjYgO
- Check your bank statements and gaming system account balance regularly for in-app purchases you're not happy with, and to make sure your child isn't getting around any passwords you've set up

Keep your child safe on Snapchat

Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as 'Snaps'), and text messages. The 'Stories' feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once.

Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds. Stories disappear after 24 hours. Images and messages aren't automatically saved on phones.

The **minimum age** to use Snapchat is **13**, but it's easy to sign up if you're younger.

What's the problem?

- There's a risk of seeing sexual content, and of bullying
- Your child's location could be shared automatically with their contacts, which could put them in danger if they have strangers as 'friends' on the app. A new 'Meetup' feature allows people to get directions to another user's location, if they're sharing their location
- There's a risk of children being 'groomed' by strangers into sharing pictures and information about themselves. Gangs also use apps to groom and recruit children

4 steps to help your child use Snapchat safely

1. Tell your child to only use it with real friends

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk to people they don't know in real life. Encourage them not to share information such as what school they go to or where they live with people they don't know offline.

2. Use privacy settings

By default, only 'friends' your child has added on Snapchat can contact them directly and see their story or location, so encourage your child to keep those default settings.

- To check and change the settings:
- Tap the person icon in the top-left of Snapchat, then the cog in the top-right
- Scroll down to the 'Privacy Control' section and tap the relevant options (e.g. 'Contact Me' and 'View My Story')
- Under 'See My Location', enable 'Ghost Map' to turn location sharing off
- Under 'See Me In Quick Add' you can stop your child's profile from being suggested to strangers as a potential 'friend'

3. Talk to your child about image sharing and being careful about what they share

- Even though images disappear in Snapchat, they can be screenshotted and then shared – outside of the original sender's control.
- So, remind your child to think carefully about the images they share, and with whom. Before they share anything, tell them to ask: "Would I be happy for other people to see this?"
- In particular, make sure your child knows the risks of **taking, sharing or viewing naked or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child, either voluntarily or if asked to by someone else**.
- This is known as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' or 'sexting' and is illegal, even when the person doing it is a child. It can also be distressing for a child to have their image shared more widely, or to see an inappropriate image that someone else has shared.

4. Make sure your child knows how to use reporting and blocking functions

- To **report** a Snap or Story, press and hold on it, tap 'Report Snap', then explain the problem
- To **remove** or **block** a friend, swipe to the right to go to the 'Chat' screen, then tap and hold on the person's name. Tap 'Manage Friendship', then choose 'Remove Friend' or 'Block'
- What can I do about online bullying?
- Encourage your child to talk to you if someone says something upsetting or hurtful to them
- Look for signs they may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go to school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep
- Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences

There are also a few ways you can save images and messages as evidence:

- Use another device to, quickly, take a photo of the image or message (this is the only way you can save the image without other people knowing)
- Tap on the message, quickly, to save it (other people will know, from the grey background)
- Take a screenshot, quickly (the person who shared it will get a notification)
- Change your 'delete' settings to save messages for 24 hours – swipe to the right to go to the 'Chats' screen, tap and hold a friend's name, then 'Chat Settings' > 'Delete Chats…' > '24 Hours after Viewing'

What can I do if I think my child is being targeted by a gang?

Share your concerns with our school immediately. You can also contact the NSPCC for advice – call 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Be alert to changes in your child – such as having new unexplained possessions, changing friendship groups, behaviour and mood changes, or unexplained injuries.

Various help & support for Teens including links

Action For Children https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/

Action for Children supports vulnerable children, young people and their families during difficult times, such as parental separation.

Brook on Consent https://www.brook.org.uk/your-life/sex-and-consent/

Includes information on the age of consent, your rights and sexual harassment.

Catch 22 https://www.catch-22.org.uk/what-we-do/

Catch 22 work in towns and cities across England and Wales to support young people, including offender rehabilitation.

ChildLine

Childline provide support and counselling for anyone up to the age of 18. Childline can discuss anything of concern.
Helpline: 0800 11 11 (lines open 24 hours a day)
1-2-1 Chat online (lines open 24 hours a day)

Childline - Domestic Violence https://www.childline.org.uk/

Information and support from Childline for children affected by violence in the family.

Childline – Gangs https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/crime-law/gangs/

Information on gangs and support for those being pressured to join one.

Coram Children's Legal Centre https://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/

Providing information and representation to children, young people, their families and carers.

ERIC https://eric.org.uk/

Information and support on bowel and bladder conditions in children and teenagers. Including support for giggle incontinence.

Exam Stress – The Calm Zone https://www.thecalmzone.net/guides/exam-stress

Information on dealing with exam stress.

Hope Support Services https://hopesupport.org.uk/

Support for young people aged 5 -25 who have a family member diagnosed with a life-threatening illness.

Missing People - Runaways https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/

Missing People offer support advice to anyone who is missing or has run away, and the families of those missing.
Helpline: 116 000 (lines open every day 9am – 11pm)
Text: 116 000
Email: 116000@missingpeople.org.uk
Chat online: for those away from home or thinking of leaving (talk confidentially 1-2-1 everyday 2.30pm -9.30pm)

National Youth Advocacy Service - NYAS https://www.nyas.net/

NYAS provide advice and legal representation to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Advisors are available to discuss various concerns including parental divorce.
Helpline: 0808 808 1001 (lines open Monday – Friday 9am – 8pm)
Email: help@nyas.net
Text: for 24/7 support, text NYAS to 85258

Respect Yourself https://respectyourself.org.uk/category/messages/sexual-health-and-safety/

Advice for sex education and relationships, with a downloadable app for smartphones.

Spurgeons https://spurgeons.org/

In partnership with local authorities, Spurgeons support vulnerable children and their families to find solutions to challenges faced.
Email: info@spurgeons.org

The Children's Society
https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines

Information on work to help children and young people who are at risk of, or victims of child criminal exploitation or county lines drug trafficking.

Young Minds https://www.youngminds.org.uk/

Young Minds support young people on a range of mental health concerns.