

## OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM



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.

*In this month's issue we look at:*

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Understanding Child-on-Child abuse
- Child Criminal Exploitation CCE: An Understanding
- Parent survival guide to your child starting secondary school
- Talking to Your Child about Knife Crime
- Online Safety: Group Chat Apps

This month we are looking at the importance of talking to your child about knife crime and how to stay safe in online group chats. This comes from a BBC survey which found that nearly half (46%) of 2,000 young people aged 13 to 18 are worried about knife crime in their local area, with 31%

worried about it in their school. The poll also found that 37% of the teens surveyed were messaging people online that they don't know, up 6% from last year's figures.

## *Parent Survival Guide to Your Child Starting Secondary School*

### *Survival guide*

How to help with those first few weeks at Holyhead school.

- Show your confidence in your child so that they believe in their own confidence. Avoid taking over tasks that they can do themselves – it can sometimes be hard to hold back on trying to help.
- Be ready to listen, but don't expect your, "how has your day been?" end-of-day question to be answered. Just be there when your child wants to talk, so that if they have a tough day or a worry, they know you are available.
- If your child feels they are being bullied or tells you of a circumstance that you consider to be bullying, **contact our safeguarding team on 0121 523 1960** for a confidential conversation to deal with this.
- Subtly increase your child's independence with practical experiences such as popping out to the shops or getting them to take more responsibilities like getting their own school uniform ready

### *Cheat sheet*

The easy-wins and simple changes to make the transition to secondary school run smoothly.

- Make sure you are signed up to the school Arbor portal which has all the information you need – how your child has been behaving, what homework they have and what exams they have coming up.
- Practise the journey to school, particularly if it involves public transport or a new route to walk.
- Go through that school checklist together so that they have everything they need. Go stationery shopping together if necessary.
- Name everything! Lost property is more likely to get back to your child if it is clearly named.
- Photocopy or take a photo of their timetable in case it gets lost. They could also take a photo on their phone and save it as their background - that way they'll never be without it!
- Make sure they get to bed in good time without any electronic devices, and they have a water bottle and a healthy snack for topping up during their school day too – the first week will be very tiring.



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## Understanding Child-on-Child abuse

**5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD STAY SAFE FROM ABUSE**

**HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT STAYING SAFE IN VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTS**  
Children who are aware of risks and safety measures are better equipped to recognise potential abuse situations.

**HAVE ACCESS TO THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS AND USE PARENTAL CONTROLS ON THEIR DEVICES**  
Monitor children's online activities to protect them from inappropriate behaviour such as grooming. Utilise safety features on devices and apps.

**BE AWARE OF YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND WHO THEY ARE SPENDING TIME WITH**  
Educate your child on the importance of choosing positive environments and companions. Show genuine interest in their activities and relationships.

**TEACH THEM ABOUT BODY SAFETY**  
Support your child in understanding boundaries regarding their body. It is crucial for them to understand the concept of consent.

**PROTECTION FROM ONLINE HARM**  
Teach children how to stay safe in the digital world, including social media apps, group chats, and streaming sites.

The Enlightened Parent

### Understanding Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse refers to any inappropriate behaviour between children that is abusive in nature. This type of abuse is so named because it typically involves individuals who are similar in age or developmental stages.

Child-on-child abuse can occur either in-person or online, and it can happen anywhere – at school, in the park, or even within the confines of a child's own home via internet-connected devices. This type of abuse encompasses physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, harassment, exploitation, bullying, coercive control, and initiation rituals.

Spotting the signs that your child may be experiencing abuse:

- noticeable change in behaviour
- not wanting to go to school or spend social time with specific friends
- withdrawn or mood changes
- changes in the times spent online
- asking for money or giving belongings away/losing belongings



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## Talking to your Child about Knife Crime

### Create an open space for conversation

- Avoid a 'big talk'. Instead, have regular conversations whilst doing other activities such as washing up, travelling in the car or doing the shopping.
- Use a stimulus as a starting point. A good conversation starter might be 'Did you hear about that incident in...'
- Give opportunities for your child to talk freely about what they know or have experienced. Listen to them and don't make assumptions.

### Open up about your fears

- Knives don't give protection. If you carry a knife, you are more likely to be injured or killed with a knife.
- Walking away is not cowardly. This may temporarily draw attention from others but this will soon go away.
- There are consequences for using a knife, this can range from; injuring or being injured, getting caught by the Police or at worst, killing someone or being killed.

## TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT... KNIFE CRIME



The\_Enlightened\_Parent

### Give them the tools to make good choices

- Discuss how they might know if one of their friends is getting involved with knife crime.
- Explore what they might say if someone tries to give them a weapon to hold for them. For example, 'My parents/carers go through all of my belongings'.
- Let them know that they can report their concerns anonymously to Fearless (part of Crimestoppers). Reporting it could save someone's life.

### Stick to the facts

- The law: it is illegal to carry a knife in a public area without a valid reason.
- You can be searched by the Police if they have reasonable suspicion that you are carrying a prohibited item, including a knife.
- If you are found to be carrying a knife, you will be arrested and prosecuted, even if you haven't used it. The maximum sentence for carrying without good reason is four years.
- Joint enterprise: you were part of a situation that could have encouraged an incident.

### Knife Crime: Discussing the Topic With Your Child

In the current news climate, we often hear about knife and weapon-related incidents, but it may feel distant. As parents/carers, it's crucial to actively educate our children about these risks. Early intervention is key, and here are some strategies to consider:

- reassure your child that they can always talk to you if something feels wrong
- establish sensible socialising boundaries together
- keep track of their whereabouts and company, incorporating this into the agreed boundaries
- maintain open communication with your child's friends' parents/carers



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## Child Criminal Exploitation: An Understanding

### Child Criminal Exploitation: What is it?

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a form of child abuse. Children are coerced and forced into committing crimes.

Examples of the crimes might be:

- working in cannabis factories
- moving drugs (county lines)
- moving or holding money (sometimes through their bank account)
- moving or holding weapons
- carrying out acts of violence

See the graphic on the right for signs that a young person may be involved in CCE.

### Any child could be exploited by criminals

#### Signs to be aware of...



#### BEHAVIOUR?

Disrespectful, secretive, change in attitude.



#### LOTS OF MONEY?

Unexplained money, different phone, expensive clothes.



#### POPULAR?

Frequent texts and calls at all hours. New friends, might be older.



#### DISTANT?

Signs of harm or depression. Missing school.



#### UNUSUAL ITEMS?

Balaclava, debit cards, drugs, knives.



#### JOURNEYS?

Frequent and repeat trips. Leaving without explanation.

### How do children become involved in CCE?

Organised crime gangs groom children as they are less suspicious than adults.

Gang members may:

- Hang around places young people are attracted to such as fast food establishments, especially if they are near a school
- Make friends with those who are lonely and may offer protection against bullies
- Offer small jobs to those who are interested in making some money
- Offer a young person a sense of belonging

If you suspect your child is involved in CCE let them know that you are worried about them and that you are there to listen to them.

Speak to a member of the pastoral team at your child's school- they are there to help and support. The Police will also support you and will never blame you or your child.



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## Online Safety: Group Chat Apps

### Online safety: What are group chat apps?

Group chat apps are social media apps which allow users to create large groups to exchange messages.

Some well-known apps are WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and SnapChat.

These apps allow users to send photos, text, videos and links to others in the group. Used responsibly they can be a great way to stay connected.



### Online etiquette

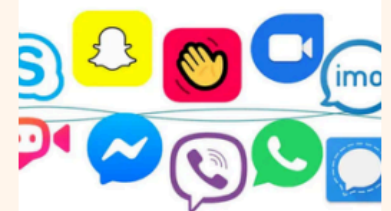
- 1) Only invite people into the group if current users agree to it
- 2) Do not kick people out of the group. If you do not want to have contact with another user, leave the group
- 3) If you are unhappy with something taking place in the group, speak to a trusted adult. You may want to consider leaving the group
- 4) Never post your own or anyone else's personal information, even if you think you know everyone in the group
- 5) A good rule to stick to- only post or say things in a group chat that you would be happy for your parents to see

### The dangers of group chat apps for young people

- Some apps allow users to message people they don't know. This allows strangers to connect and can make young people vulnerable to online grooming
- Group chats are not regulated or monitored in any way. This means users can share upsetting or inappropriate material which can be viewed by children
- Apps which have a disappearing message function can give young people the opportunity to share more risky/inappropriate content. This content is difficult to report if it has been deleted or has disappeared

### Advice for parents:

- Research any apps you or your child download to make sure you know how to use the safety and privacy functions
- Make it normal for your child to show you the groups they are in so you can identify the other users and make sure there aren't any strangers in the group
- Show your child how to block and report people they don't know and talk through situations where they might need to use these functions
- Teach your child digital etiquette so they know how to behave in the online world (see above)



Group Video Chat App



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