



Bredon Hill Academy

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Newsletter



Safeguarding Our Children Together

Autumn
Term 2023

Welcome to the first Bredon Hill Academy Safeguarding and Wellbeing Newsletter of the academic year. The aim of this newsletter is to share with you any recent news items that might be relevant to keeping your child safe, share information to keep you informed and to highlight concerns that have been raised.

Online Safety and SRE Evening for Parents/Carers

On Tuesday 16th January we are holding an information evening for parents and carers focussing on Online Safety and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE). The evening will begin at 6pm and will be held in the main hall. We aim to share useful information regarding keeping your children safe online and discuss how we implement our SRE curriculum. If you would like to come along and haven't already notified us, please email office@bredon.worcs.sch.uk.

The Big Blue Box



Two years ago, we introduced 'The Big Blue Box' to pupils at Bredon Hill Academy.

The Big Blue Box is located in the main corridor on the ground floor, and is for pupils who wish to reach out for some support or for someone to talk to.

The box is checked daily and anyone who places a note inside the box will be contacted by a member of our pastoral team.

If pupils wish to talk to someone, all they need to do is place a card in the box with their name and form on, and we will meet up with them as soon as we can.

Support Near You

If you are looking for mental health support for either yourself or a family member then the Hub of Hope is a really useful search tool for local support agencies or groups. Google 'Hub of Hope' or click on this link:

<https://hubofhope.co.uk/>



Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs K Dunkley

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Miss D West, Mr M Horton and Ms S Vaughan

Deets and Squares

Parents and carers are being warned about a scam called 'Deets and Squares'. In the scam, fraudsters encourage young people to accept money into their bank account. That money is then transferred into another person's account, or withdrawn and handed over in cash, in exchange for a cut of the money.

For many young people the opportunity of getting cash by allowing someone to use their bank account for a bank transfer is tempting. However, knowingly becoming involved in such activity runs a risk of a prison sentence and a ruined credit history which can incur financial problems into later life. It can also lead on to much bigger and wider involvement with criminal gangs and organised crime groups.

Please be extra vigilant when monitoring your child's bank account.

Local Policing Team Visits

On November 7th all pupils in our BHA community attended an assembly presented by PCSO Sweatman on behalf of West Mercia Police.

The assembly focused on the power our actions and word choices can have on others, and the importance of being sensitive, mindful and respectful of others' backgrounds, heritage and identities.



Further information is available at the True Vision website - <https://www.report-it.org.uk/> or <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/hco/hate-crime/>



On Thursday 16th November Year 7 and 8 had an assembly delivered by PC Alex Prentice and PC Justine Lane on behalf of West Mercia Police. The assembly focused on Operation Sceptre, a nationwide police campaign, that highlights the issue of knife crime. During the assembly, pupils watched a short video which also highlighted the risks of county lines and organised criminal gangs.

If you would like to watch the video [click here](#).

Throughout the assembly, pupils were reminded that we live in a very safe area where knife crime incidents are rare.

Our thanks go out to West Mercia Police for their support.

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Water Bottles and Coats

May we remind you that your child(ren) should come to school EVERY DAY with a coat and a water bottle.



During the wet and wintery months, we aim to get outside as much as possible so coats are a necessity.

We are also trying to reduce our impact on the environment by using less plastic. As a result, we no longer selling single use bottles of water.

Please ensure both these items are named!



Operation Encompass



Our Education setting is part of Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience domestic violence and abuse, and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our setting about **all** police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the day, or as soon as the information becomes available.

As a school, we pledge to treat each Operation Encompass notification with respect and will only share information we feel is relevant in supporting the child and their needs. Mrs Dunkley (our DSL) is always available to chat if you have been, or are a victim of domestic abuse and require further help and support for you and your family.



For the latest information regarding online safety please visit: <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>
Sign up for their #wakeupwednesday updates!



Following a number of concerns regarding issues on Whats App, please see guidance below.

A reminder that Whats App is for 16+

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+

In UK and Europe;
rest of the world 13+

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original... and might not be entirely factual, either.

ONLINE

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval: you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



...HEY OSCAR...



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://blog.whatsapp.com/an-open-letter> | <https://faq.whatsapp.com/10770/8839582332> | https://faq.whatsapp.com/361005996189245/shelpref-hc_mv
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