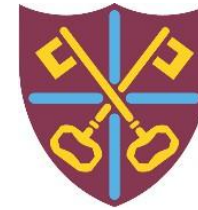


St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Safeguarding & Child Protection Newsletter



Issue 10: July 2025

At St. Peter's

At St. Peter's, we believe that every child matters and everything we do has each and every child at heart. Your child's wellbeing, safety, achievement and their happiness underpins every decision that we make and determines how we work. Often when safeguarding is talked about the assumption is that it is just child protection - when a child is suffering harm, or is in danger from suffering harm.

However, safeguarding is much broader than this and takes into account a very wide range of areas.

St. Peter's Safeguarding Team will publish a regular newsletter that will give you current advice and information about issues that will hopefully keep all of our children safe in school and at home.

Who is responsible for Safeguarding?

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. We are dedicated to working with the wider community, including the parish community and our families to tackle any safeguarding concerns and keep all children safe.

Who is St. Peter's Safeguarding Team?

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Hall (Deputy Head teacher)
- Deputy designated Safeguarding Lead -Mrs Kelly (Headteacher)
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Tucker (SENCO)
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs McWilliams (KS2 Phase Lead)
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead– Mrs Walsh (Family Support Worker)
- Designated Safeguarding Governor– Mrs Lafferty

Posters displaying this information are placed around school as a reminder for adults and children of who to go to if there are any concerns.

What is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)?

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguard Leads have a crucial role in taking responsibility for child protection issues in school. The DSL must be a senior member of the school's leadership team. DSL's and DDSL's are trained to take on this role and that training is updated every two years with additional training and conferences in between. The DSL and DDSL have many responsibilities including working with staff and agencies involved in safeguarding children, working with parents and families, giving advice to staff, training staff, managing referrals from staff and investigating concerns passing them onto the correct body as necessary, and managing the records of safeguarding and Child Protection concern.

In this issue: 1.Sleepover advice, 2. Device boundaries, 3. Helping Children understand loss, 4. Using Whatsapp safely

Spotlight on:

1. Sleepover safeguarding considerations

As your child grows, sleepovers often become a part of their social life. They're a great way for children to build friendships, practice independence and have fun in a new environment. However, while sleepovers are usually positive experiences, it's important to be mindful of the safeguarding considerations involved.

Before agreeing to a sleepover: What to consider

1. Know the family well

- How well do you know the child's parents or caregivers?
- Are you comfortable with their values and parenting style?

2. Supervision and household dynamics

- Will an adult be present all evening, overnight and in the morning?
- Who else will be in the home? Are there older children or teenagers and how will they be supervised? Will there be any visiting adults?

3. Sleeping arrangements

- Where will the children sleep? In a shared room, separate rooms or communal space like a living room?
- Are the sleeping arrangements appropriate for your child's age and comfort level?

4. Behaviour expectations and house rules

- What are the rules around bedtime, snacks, screen time and general behaviour?

Technology and internet safety

1. Access to devices

- Will children have access to phones, tablets or gaming consoles?
- Are parental controls in place?

2. Content monitoring

- Are there clear limits on what children can watch or play?
- Will they be allowed to use social media, video apps (e.g., TikTok or YouTube) or messaging platforms?

3. Digital boundaries

- Remind your child never to take or share pictures of themselves or others in private settings.

Talking to your child before a sleepover



Empower with knowledge

- Teach your child that they have the right to say "no" to anything that makes them uncomfortable.
- Use age-appropriate language to talk about private body parts and safe touch.

Discuss 'tricky' Situations

- What should they do if they feel uncomfortable?
- What if another child suggests something unsafe (e.g., sneaking out, prank calling, inappropriate games)?
- Who should they talk to?



Safe secrets vs unsafe secrets

- A surprise party is okay to keep quiet about—but any secret that makes them feel sad, scared or confused should always be shared with a trusted adult.



Communication plan

- Agree on how and when they can contact you.
- Reassure them that they can always call you—even if it's late or they're worried about upsetting someone.



2. Device boundaries

In today's digital world, devices like tablets, smartphones, and laptops are part of everyday life— even for young children. Used well, they can offer learning opportunities, creativity and connection. But without clear boundaries, children can be exposed to online risks, screen time struggles and content that isn't age-appropriate.

Why boundaries matter

Even at a young age, children are:

Curious and impressionable, often unable to assess what's appropriate.

At risk of viewing **violent, sexual or disturbing content** accidentally or through peers.

Vulnerable to **online contact from strangers** Prone to **sleep disruption, anxiety and mood swings** from too much screen time.

That's why clear and consistent boundaries are essential for both safety and healthy development.

Tips for conversations at home: Building trust and understanding

Open, ongoing conversations are one of the **most powerful safeguarding tools** you have as a parent. When children feel safe talking to you about what they see and experience online, they are far less likely to be harmed by it—and much more likely to come to you for help when something goes wrong.

Explain to your child:

That online spaces, like games and videos, aren't always made for children—even when they seem fun.

That some people online pretend to be someone they're not and may try to trick or manipulate. That not all content is safe or real—boundaries help protect their brain, body, and feelings.

Try these conversation starters regularly:

“What are you playing/watching right now? Show me how it works?”

This encourages sharing and lets you check the content and chat features together.

“Has anything ever popped up that made you feel weird or unsure?”

Helps children recognise red flags and opens the door for them to share worries without shame.

“What do you do if someone you don't know sends you a message or wants to play?”

Reinforces that they should never respond to strangers online.

“Why do you think we set limits on screen time and certain apps?”

Encourage reflection and understanding that boundaries are there to protect their mental health, sleep, and safety.

“If a friend showed you something upsetting or made you feel uncomfortable online, what would you do?”

Teach them it's okay to say 'no', walk away, and always tell an adult—even if someone says, 'Don't tell.'

4 KEY DEVICE BOUNDARIES

Parental access

- Passwords are shared
- Regularly checked
- Apps and games are monitored and approved
- Filters and privacy settings are installed

Screen-free time

- Limits on daily use
- Screen-free activities
- Consistent, screen-free bedtime

01

04

Tech-free zones

- Devices out of bedrooms and bathrooms
- Screen-free meal times

02

03

Honesty

- Complete honesty about how the device is used
- Talk openly about online activity

3.

Helping children understand loss

At some point in life, most children experience the death of someone they know—whether it’s a grandparent, a family friend, a beloved pet or another important figure in their life.

Bereavement can be confusing, sad and sometimes frightening for children, especially if they don’t fully understand what’s happening. As parents and carers, your support can make all the difference in helping your child feel safe, heard and comforted during this difficult time.

Understanding how children grieve

Grief in children can look very different from grief in adults. Young children may move in and out of sadness quickly- one minute playing happily, the next asking a difficult question about death.

Here are some common ways children might react:

- asking the same questions repeatedly
- showing changes in behaviour (clinginess, anger, quietness)
- worrying about others dying too
- having trouble sleeping or concentrating
- acting out emotions through play.

TALKING ABOUT DEATH HONESTLY AND GENTLY

It’s natural to want to protect children from pain - but being open and honest is actually one of the kindest things we can do.

Use simple, clear language

Avoid confusing phrases like ‘gone to sleep’ or ‘passed away’. Try gentle but clear words such as:

“When someone dies, it means their body has stopped working. They don’t feel pain anymore.”



Answer questions honestly

It’s okay to say ‘I don’t know’ or ‘That’s a really good question’ if you’re unsure. Children often ask the same questions repeatedly - this helps them make sense of the loss.



Talk about feelings

Talk about feelings. Let your child know it’s okay to feel sad, angry, confused, or even nothing at all. You might say: “Everyone feels different when someone dies. However you feel is okay.”



Model healthy grief

It’s okay to let your child see you cry. This shows them that sadness is natural and it’s safe to express emotion.



Practical ways to support your child

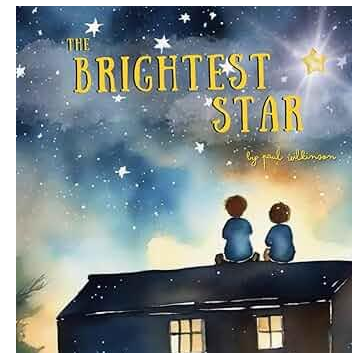
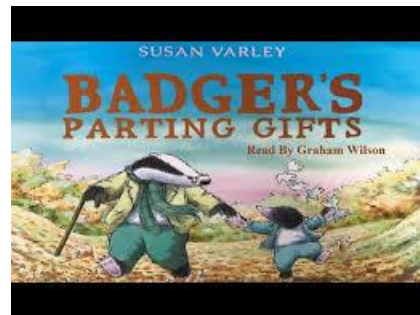
- **Keep routines going** – children feel safer with predictable routines such as school, mealtimes and bedtime.
- **Create space to remember** – light a candle, draw pictures, make a memory box or photo album together.
- **Give choices**– if there’s a funeral or memorial, ask your child if they’d like to attend or do something else to say goodbye.
- **Use stories**– reading books about loss can help children talk about their own feelings.

Recommended Books:

-Badger's Parting Gifts

-The Invisible String

-The Brightest Star



4.

Using WhatsApp safely

As children begin exploring ways to connect with friends online, many are using apps such as WhatsApp to message and share with others. While these platforms can offer positive social interaction, they also come with risks that children may not yet fully understand.

WhatsApp's age rating is 13+, so if your primary-aged child is using it, they'll need close parental support and clear guidance. It is important to note that age 13 does not reflect the content children may be able to view on WhatsApp; it does not have moderators previewing what users send to each other and therefore, the content may not be appropriate for a child.

Keeping your child safe on WhatsApp

Here are some key steps you can take to help your child use WhatsApp responsibly and safely:

1. Set strong privacy settings

- **Last seen, Profile photo, About Info:** set these to 'My Contacts' or 'Nobody' to prevent strangers from seeing their information.
- **Status updates:** limit who can see their status to trusted contacts.
- **Blocked contacts:** encourage your child to block anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable or is unkind.
- **Read receipts:** you can turn off read receipts (blue ticks) to help reduce pressure to respond immediately.

2. Turn off disappearing messages

WhatsApp allows users to send messages that vanish after a set time, which can hide evidence of bullying or inappropriate content.

- **To check this setting:** Open a chat → Tap the person or group's name → Tap 'Disappearing Messages' → Set to 'Off'.
- **Talk to your child** about why it's important to keep a record of conversations and why messages shouldn't 'disappear'.

3. Encourage kind and respectful messaging

Digital communication can sometimes feel less personal, which makes it easier to say things we wouldn't say face to face. Help your child develop empathy and kindness in their messages:

- **Think before you send:** encourage your child to pause and ask, "Would I say this in person?"
- **Use kind words:** compliments, encouragement, and friendly emojis can make a big difference.
- **Avoid teasing or excluding:** group chats can become a place where some children feel left out—talk about how to make everyone feel included.
- **Don't forward hurtful messages or images:** even sharing something as a 'joke' can really upset someone else.

4. Know how to report and block

- Show your child how to **block contacts**, **report** harmful messages, and **leave group chats** if they feel uncomfortable.

5 STEPS TO

Setting healthy boundaries

Children need guidance to build healthy habits with technology. Here are some suggestions:

05

Screen-free times: set limits like no phones after 7 PM or during family meals.

04

Check-ins: regularly check their chats together and discuss anything confusing.

03

No phones in bedrooms: this helps avoid late-night chatting and protects sleep.

02

Real-life friend rule: agree that they only chat with people they know in person.

01

Keep the conversation open: remind your child that you're their safe person.