

Safeguarding Newsletter



Spring 2024 – Issue 3

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

If you are worried about a child please do not hesitate to contact a Designated Safeguarding Lead straight away.

Below are the names of staff who are part of the safeguarding team at Long Meadow School.

Mr Gray



Miss Kidd



Mrs Evans



Mr Chris Bond (Chair of Governors)

They can be contacted via the school office by email

office@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk

or by telephone on 01908 508678

For more information you can also find our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy by clicking [here](#)



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the third safeguarding newsletter of the year.

This newsletter focuses on County Lines, FGM, car seat awareness and information about apps, Netflix and You Tube.

Please remember that if you ever have a safeguarding concern regarding your child, or indeed another child, you can always speak to any member of staff or a member of our school's safeguarding team, details of which are on the left hand side of this page.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

What is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Long Meadow School?

The Designated Safeguarding Leads have a crucial role in taking lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. DSLs must be senior members of the school's leadership team and at LMS we have 3 DSLs forming a team (see column on the left hand side). A DSL is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. DSLs are trained to take on this role and that training is updated every two years, with additional training and conferences in between.

Key aspects of the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' role include:

- ⇒ Ensuring that **all** staff are aware of the processes for raising safeguarding concerns
- ⇒ Ensuring all staff understand the signs of child abuse and neglect
- ⇒ Referring any concerns to Social Care
- ⇒ Monitoring children who are the subject of Child Protection and CiN (Child in Need) Plans
- ⇒ Maintaining accurate and secure child protection records
- ⇒ Raising awareness of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and ensuring these are implemented and reviewed regularly

Safeguarding Governor Role

The school governors are responsible for working with the school to ensure that it delivers a good quality education. Together with the headteacher, who is responsible for day-to-day management, they help to set the school's aims and policies.

The Safeguarding Governor's responsibilities include:

- ⇒ Ensuring the school is following safer recruitment procedures when recruiting any new staff members
- ⇒ Reviewing all activity and policy relating to the physical and emotional wellbeing of all children
- ⇒ Seeking improvement to ensure the school follows best practice in creating a productive and safe environment for all

Report any concerns if you suspect a child is being abused or is in danger of being abused to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. You can also contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01908 253169 or email: children@milton-keynes.gov.uk

If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police immediately on 999

County Lines - What is it?

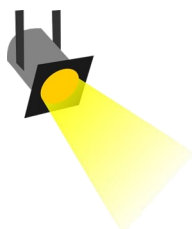
It is likely you will have heard the term 'County Lines' in the news. This is a real and growing form of criminal activity that exists nationally. To explain, it is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in transporting illegal drugs from urban areas into rural areas. The leaders of these gangs are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults, often without them realising it, to move (and store) drugs and money. They use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. There may be signs of a change in a young person's behaviour such as:



- ◆ Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- ◆ Being found in areas away from home
- ◆ Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- ◆ Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- ◆ Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- ◆ Unexplained money, phones, clothes or jewellery
- ◆ Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- ◆ Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- ◆ Coming home with injuries or looking particularly dishevelled
- ◆ Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places

Schools and local police are working together to spot signs of exploitation and ensure young people are safe. If you know a child that may be at risk as described they will need support and police should be advised on 101 if you have any concerns.

Spotlight on FGM



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM has been categorised into four types, ranging from a symbolic prick to the clitoris, to the fairly extensive removal and narrowing of the vaginal opening. All these forms of FGM have been found in the UK. FGM is sometimes known as "female genital cutting" or female circumcision. It's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades.

Children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained. It's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

The World Health Organisation estimates that three million girls undergo some form of the procedure every year in Africa alone. It is practised in 28 countries in Africa and some in the Middle East and Asia. **FGM is considered to be child abuse in the UK and is a violation of the child's right to life, their bodily integrity as well as of their right to health.**

FGM is illegal in the UK. It is also an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out FGM abroad or to assist the carrying out of FGM abroad.

If you are concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM you can call the NSPCC FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 for more information or email them at fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, if you are experiencing pressure regarding FGM, please contact a member of our Safeguarding Team on office@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk.

See the next page for traditional and local terms for FGM.

Traditional and local terms for FGM

Country	Term used for FGM	Language	Meaning
EGYPT	Thara	Arabic	Deriving from the Arabic word 'tahaar' meaning to clean/purify
	Khitan	Arabic	Circumcision - used for both FGM and male circumcision
	Khifad	Arabic	Deriving from the Arabic word 'khafad' meaning to lower (rarely used in everyday language)
ETHIOPIA	Megrez	Amharic	Circumcision/cutting
	Absum	Harrari	Name giving ritual
ERITREA	Mekhnishab	Tigreigna	Circumcision/cutting
KENYA	Kutairi	Swahili	Circumcision - used for both FGM and male circumcision
	Kutairi was ichana	Swahili	Circumcision of girls
NIGERIA	Ibi/Ugwu	Igbo	The act of cutting - used for both FGM and male circumcision
	Sunna	Mandingo	Religious tradition/obligation - for Muslims
SIERRA LEONE	Sunna	Soussou	Religious tradition/obligation - for Muslims
	Bondo	Temenee/Mandingo/Limba	Integral part of an initiation rite into adulthood - for non-Muslims
	Bondo/Sonde	Mendee	Integral part of an initiation rite into adulthood - for non-Muslims
SOMALIA	Gudiniin	Somali	Circumcision used for both FGM and male circumcision
	Halalays	Somali	Deriving from the Arabic word 'halal' i.e. 'sanctioned' -implies purity. Used by Northern & Arabic speaking Somalis
	Qodiin	Somali	Stitching/tightening/sewing refers to infibulation
SUDAN	Khifad	Arabic	Deriving from the Arabic word 'khafad' meaning to lower (rarely used in everyday language)
	Tahoor	Arabic	Deriving from the Arabic word 'tahaar' meaning to purify
CHAD - the Ngama	Bagne		Used by the Sara Madjingaye
Sara subgroup	Gadja		Adapted from 'ganza' used in the Central African Republic
GUINEA-BISSAU	Fanadu di Mindjer	Kriolu	'Circumcision of girls'
GAMBIA	Niaka	Mandinka	Literally to 'cut/weed clean'
	Kuyango	Mandinka	Meaning 'the affair' but also the name for the shed built for initiates
	Musolula Karoola	Mandinka	Meaning 'the women's side/that which concerns women'

To download the health FGM passport, or FGM statement, please see [FGM Passport](#). You can take this abroad with you and show your family.

For more information visit the NHS website [NHS](#)

Car Seat Awareness



We have been made aware that there are some children arriving at school in cars without any safety restraint.



With this in mind, we thought this month's newsletter would be a good opportunity to highlight the UK law on use of car seats and child safety in cars as a reminder.

Did you know?

“Seat belts did not become a legal requirement for real passengers until 1987? Even more remarkably the use of children's car seats wasn't made a legal requirement until 2006!

*Since then, all infants from birth until a certain age or height **must** be in a specially designed car seat. This is a legal requirement and failure to do so will likely result in you receiving a £500 fine but, of course, the threat of a cash fine pales into insignificance when compared to the realities and outcomes of an accident.”*

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

Main points of the law:

1. Height based seats are required to be used REAR FACING for a minimum of 15 months.
2. A suitable* child car seat **must be used** until the child reaches a height of 135cms or 12 years old, whichever is reached first.

*suitable = a seat that is intended for the child's height, weight and the vehicle it is to be used in.

The purpose of the regulations and the law is to improve levels of safety for children in vehicles. It is our responsibility to ensure our children are protected to the best of our ability.

What are the legal requirements for rear-facing car seats?

New laws dictate that children must travel in rear-facing car seats until they are 15 months old. **Furthermore, you must never fit a rear-facing car seat in the front of your car where there is an active passenger airbag.**

What are the legal requirements for forward-facing car seats?

From 15 months old onwards, it is believed that your child's neck will be strong enough to more reasonably handle the impact of an accident and, therefore, forward-facing car seats may be used. **However, it is recommended that rear-facing seats are used for as long as possible.**

What car seat is legally required for my child?

There are two categories of seats: those that are manufactured to the latest **EU standard ECE R129**, known as i-Size and are based on a child's height; and those manufactured under the **EU standard ECE R44** which are weight based.



Here is a simple guide to seat categories

Categories	Height based	Weight based	Approximate Age
Infant Carriers	Birth to 75 or 87cm	Birth to 13kg	Birth - 15 months
Toddler Seats	76 to 105cm	9kg to 18kg	15 months - 3 1/2 years
Combination Seats (infant and toddler combined)	Birth to 105cm	Birth to 18kg	Birth - 3 1/2 years
Child Seats	100 to 150cm	15kg to 36kg	3 1/2 - 12 years
Combination Seats (Toddler and child combined)	n/a	9kg to 36kg	3 1/2 - 12 years

When can a child legally travel without a car seat?









In the UK, children **must** be restrained in a car seat until they are 12 years old or at least 135cm. From that point onwards, they must use a seat belt like all adults.

There are a few exceptions to this:

- * A child can travel in a taxi or min-cab without a car seat if the driver doesn't provide one however, they **must** wear a seat belt.
- * The same rule applies for coaches and minibuses - children **must** travel in rear seats and use seat belts.
- * If you have to make a short, unexpected journey as an emergency, it is legally acceptable to restrain your child with just a seatbelt instead of a car seat providing your child is 3 years or older.
- * Children with special or additional needs or medical conditions will have bespoke requirements outside of normal laws. Usually, they are required to be restrained by means designed for the needs.

While these exceptions exist, it is advisable not to take any unnecessary risks. Accidents happen in buses and taxis too.

Good to know - reminders of the minimum age for popular apps

	Facebook (minimum age 13) - lets users create their own profiles, share status updates, pictures, videos and chat with other users and also has a messenger app.
	Instagram (minimum age 13) - allows users to alter photos, upload them and share to other social networking sites. Photos and videos can be sent directly to specific users.
	Snapchat (minimum age 13) - a photo sharing app where users can send photos or videos to friends. These will display on screen for up to ten seconds before deleted, although it is possible to take screenshots of messages and download other apps designed to capture and save Snapchat content.
	TikTok (minimum age 13) - TikTok users can make their own short videos on the mobile app and often like to have music accompany these. The users have creative control over the videos. Other TikTok users can 'react' to videos they see by filming their responses alongside the original video, or 'duet' by making a video alongside another video.
	Twitter (minimum age 13) - a social network that lets users send and read 'Tweets': messages limited to 280 characters.
	Tumblr (minimum age 16) - a social networking site where users can post blogs and follow other people's blogs. Some of the content on this site includes sexual and/or pornographic images.
	WhatsApp (minimum age 16) - a free-of-charge, real time messaging service. Users can share images and videos, take part in 'group chats' and share locations. As it's based on knowing the user's phone number, you can only message users if you already have this information.
	YouTube (minimum age 16) - allows users to watch, create and comment on videos. The dislike button can create insecurities with content posted even if comments are turned off for the video.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video-sharing social media platform that allows billions of people around the world to watch, share and upload their own videos with a vast range of content – including sport, entertainment, education and lots more. It's a superb space for people to consume content that they're interested in. As a result, this astronomically popular platform has had a huge social impact: influencing online culture on a global scale and creating new celebrities.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate material. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as messaging other users directly. Connecting with strangers online, of course, can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, to cyberbullying and even to encountering online predators.

SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but can also lead to binge-watching and the risk of screen addiction, especially if 'auto-play' is activated. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

HIGH VISIBILITY

Content creators can also be put at risk – especially young ones who try to make their online presence as visible as possible. Creating and uploading content exposes children to potential harassment and toxicity from the comments section, along with the possibility of direct messaging from strangers. Videos posted publicly can be watched by anyone in the world.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends, challenges and memes that are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may harm children through either watching or copying. The painful 'salt and ice challenge', which can cause injuries very quickly, is just one of many such examples.

SNEAKY SCAMMERS

Popular YouTube channels regularly have scammers posing as a well-known influencer in the comments section, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and sometimes offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users are not who they claim to be.

Advice for Parents & Carers

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate content (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence and sexual situations) to underage viewers. To prevent your child from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that your child uses to access YouTube.

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CENSORED

TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows you to monitor what your child is watching, uploading and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives you an oversight of how your child is using sites like YouTube and helps you ensure they are only accessing appropriate content.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that your child is subscribed to can be hidden. If your child is only uploading videos that are protected as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

CHECK OTHER PLATFORMS

Influential content creators usually have other social media accounts which they encourage their fans to follow. Having an open discussion about this with your child makes it easier to find out how else they might be following a particular creator online. It also opens up avenues for you to check out that creator's other channels to see what type of content your child is being exposed to.

MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them children. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course, and react to content differently. You may want to keep an eye on how your child interacts with content on YouTube – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand the types of videos they are interested in.

LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases: users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch, for example. If you're not comfortable with your child purchasing content online, limit their access to your bank cards and online payment methods. Many parents have discovered to their cost that a child happily devouring a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

NETFLIX

Netflix is a subscription-based streaming service that allows users to watch TV shows and movies on any internet-enabled device that supports the software, such as smart TVs, phones and tablets. The pandemic saw a surge in children consuming on-demand content as many families relaxed their screen-time rules. Netflix's diverse range of programming caters for all age groups – so it's important for parents to recognise the potential risks of children using the service and the measures to help their child enjoy a safe streaming experience.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Netflix produces and curates an extensive catalogue of content that can provide hours of entertainment. If they share the same user account as an adult, this can potentially lead to children accidentally viewing all manner of inappropriate content, including nudity, profanity and extreme violence. This can happen easily on shared accounts, as Netflix cannot establish who's watching.

BINGE-WATCHING

Netflix allows users to view shows and movies quickly and easily without adverts or interruptions, making excessive screen time a concern. Binge-watching has become more common during the pandemic, due to Netflix's regularly updated content and algorithms which recommend content very similar to what's previously been enjoyed. Marathon viewing sessions can lead to children staying up too late, affecting their mood and concentration the next day.

SCREEN ADDICTION

From TVs and phones to consoles and tablets, Netflix is available on almost any device with an internet connection – making it extremely difficult to manage children's screen time. The service is now adding games to its mobile app, tempting users to spend even more time on the platform. Screen addiction can distract children from important activities like schoolwork and socialising, and can impact their health by reducing their exercise and sleep.

HACKING ATTEMPTS

With millions of users worldwide, Netflix is often targeted by hackers who try to steal usernames and passwords to gain access to people's accounts. If successful, they can then steal payment details or try to sell stolen personal data on the dark web, providing other criminals with a profitable opportunity. Netflix also doesn't provide two-factor authentication, making the hackers' task that little bit easier.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

Netflix's Teleparty feature became popular during lockdown periods as it allows users from different households (friends and relatives, for example) to synchronise when they watch content. It requires an access link to be sent to the people you wish to invite; the link, however, can also be distributed to people you don't know. A text chat feature enables interaction with the other users in real-time; this represents a risk to children if a stranger gains access to the Teleparty.



Advice for Parents & Carers

KEEP ACCOUNTS SECURE

Netflix doesn't use two-factor authentication, so a strong password is vital. Your child's Netflix password should be unique (not one they've used elsewhere) and a minimum of eight characters with a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Emphasise not to share their login details with anyone and remind them to always log out after using the app – so their account remains inaccessible, even if their device is lost or stolen.

SET UP PROFILE PINS

Netflix account holders can lock profiles using a four-digit PIN. Doing this can prevent your child from accessing the wrong account and viewing content that isn't appropriate for their age. Try setting a PIN for each account on your Netflix app – ideally avoiding numbers that would be easily guessed, such as dates of birth. Remember not to share these PINs with anyone, including family.

CHECK MATURITY RATING

Netflix warns about content that includes violence, sex, profanity and nudity. These warnings form part of the show or movie's 'maturity rating'. Users can restrict age ratings to avoid children viewing age-inappropriate content. On their profile, open the Profile and Parental Control settings and choose the maturity level for the shows and movies you want to allow.



SWITCH OFF AUTO-PLAY

When a show or movie concludes, Netflix's algorithms select content with similar themes that it thinks your child will enjoy next. This new content starts automatically after a 10-second countdown. Disabling this auto-play feature reduces the possibility of your child being shown something inappropriate and provides a natural break to help prevent them becoming too immersed in Netflix.

CREATE A KIDS' PROFILE

Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile means your child can only access content which is suitable for children aged up to 12 years. All other content is automatically blocked. This rating can be further restricted via the child's profile settings. Setting up a Netflix Kids experience profile will help to prevent your child from viewing age-inappropriate content.



CHECK VIEWING HABITS

Netflix has tools which enable parents and carers to monitor what their child has been watching. Selecting 'Viewing Activity' in each profile's account settings displays a list of what content has been viewed (and when). This can reassure parents that their child is watching age-appropriate content and can open avenues for discussing your child's favourite shows and movies, and why they like them.



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.



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Sources: www.netflix.com, www.aboutnetflix.com, www.afcom.gov.au



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