

Headteacher: Dr. J Bartlett – NPQH, PGCE, D.Phil, M.Chem **Specialisms:** Mathematics

Safeguarding Newsletter – Summer term 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

Overall, we wish you a happy, fun and healthy Summer break together, but we do want to make sure you have a safe break as well.

Previously, we have sent out information about Online Safety and Domestic Abuse – these newsletters can be found at any time on our website and provide a range of information, advice and support for both adults and students alike. An area which we would like to raise awareness on for our parents and students is Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.

We hope you will never have to be worried about any of these concerns, but equally, the only way to combat concerns is to have the knowledge as well.

Child Exploitation

Within Birmingham, a large concern across the city is Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, so we felt we wanted to help equip you with the knowledge to spot the signs that your child could have been approached or become involved in exploitation. 90% of English police forces have seen county lines activity in their area and the violence is getting worse, whilst 46,000 children in England are thought to be involved in gangs. There is likely many more.

It is very easy for us to feel that because we have brought up our children well and they know the signs of exploitation, that they won't be impacted by it, but unfortunately this just isn't the case. Those who wish to exploit children are calculated and experienced people who know how to befriend and then use young people.

Especially over the Summer Holidays, whilst children are out with friends, they could come into contact with or be tempted to speak with people they wouldn't normally, and unfortunately, as school aren't there to monitor and you cannot be by their side all the time, they are exposed to these dangers.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is where children are used for sexual purposes, and can be given presents, status and an extra sense of belonging or fitting in, in return. Children often feel they're in control of these situations, and that it's normal, or part of growing up, and don't realise the dangers until it is too late. Sexual Exploitation isn't just physical sexual activities, but can include photos or conversations as well.

The NSPCC provides the below as signs of CSE which may be seen in young people:

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Being frightened of some people, places or situations
- Bring secretive
- Sharp changes in mood or character

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- Having money or things they can't or won't explain
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their private areas
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy.

If you're ever worried about CSE, especially over the summer holidays whilst we're closed, parents can directly contact PACE who work with parents and carers of children who are, or at risk of, being sexually exploited. You can call them for confidential help and advice on 0113 240 5226 or fill in their online form at <https://paceuk.info/contact-us/> Barnardos are also a good source of support, found at <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/protecting-children/cse>

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation is where children are used for criminal purposes such as moving drugs and weapons across the country (known as County Lines) or within the local area. They can be introduced to gangs and forced to commit crime, including assaults, robberies or handling stolen goods.

The Children's Society provides the below signs of CCE which may be seen in young people:

- Travelling alone, particularly in school hours, late at night or frequently
- Looking lost or in unfamiliar surroundings
- Anxious, frightened, angry or displaying other behaviours that make you worried about them
- In possession of more than one phone
- Carrying lots of cash
- Potentially under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Being instructed or controlled by another individual
- Accompanied by individuals who are older than them
- Seen begging in a public space.

For support and advice about CCE, especially if you're worried about a child, the Children's Society provides a lot of support and information at <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines> or the NSPCC.

Mr. Jennings, Mrs. Benham and Mrs. Kent
Your Shenley Safeguarding Team