



In addition to the useful resources we have shared with you across the year, on a variety of matters concerning your child's well-being, this newsletter focuses on summer safety and provides resources you may find helpful to support you and your child.

During the summer holidays Parents/Carers can access support via the Family Support Worker Helpline on 01926 412412 or the Family Information Service on 01926 742274

On Behalf of the safeguarding team at Bilton School we wish you a happy summer and look forward to seeing you all in September

Have Fun and Stay Safe!
Best Wishes
Miss Chambers – Lead DSL





COLD WATER SHOCK
WATER SAFETY
DO NOT TAKE THE RISK

We are aware as the weather is getting warmer that young people are wanting to cool off or go swimming.

We would like to remind people of the extreme dangers of swimming in open water quarries, canals, lakes and rivers.

What are the dangers?

- Not knowing the depth of the water
- If there are objects in the water you can't see e.g sharp objects or rocks you can't see
- Plants that could obstruct you from moving freely in the water or prevent you from getting out of the water
- The potential you could drown

How else can you stay cool?

- Treat yourself to an ice cream or ice lolly.
- Get a paddling pool for the garden or alternatively have a cold shower to cool off.
- When at home wear loose and light clothing.
- Sit in the shade or find a cooler area to relax in.

QUARRY WATER IS STONE COLD AND CAN KILL

STAY SAFE STAY OUT

Why teenagers are most at risk
 More likely to swim in open water with friends
 More likely to underestimate risks
 Increased risk during hot weather and holidays
 Peer pressure or dares

Staying safe around water – Message for families

As the weather gets warmer, more people head to rivers, lakes, and the coast to cool off. While this can be fun, it also comes with real dangers—especially for teenagers. Recent UK data shows that young people are one of the highest-risk groups for drowning and water-related incidents, making it important to understand the risks and how to stay safe.

- Around **15–20 teenagers (aged 13–17) die each year in the UK** in drowning or water-related incidents (based on recent official data trends).
 - In England alone, there were **31 child drowning deaths in the year to March 2025**, with teenagers making up a **large proportion (around 41%)**
 - Teenagers and young people are among the **most at-risk age groups**, with males particularly affected
 - During a **May 2026 heatwave**, there were **around 10–15 water-related deaths in just a few days**, many involving young people
- 👉 Experts say that **cold water shock is a leading cause behind many of these deaths**, even on warm days.

Why is it so dangerous?

Even if you're a strong swimmer, open water is very different from a swimming pool.

Cold Water Shock

- UK rivers, lakes, and seas are often below 15°C, even in summer
- Jumping in suddenly can cause:
- gasping for air
- panic
- loss of swimming ability
- This can lead to drowning in seconds

Hidden Hazards

- Strong currents (especially in rivers and the sea)
- Deep water or sudden drops
- Objects under the surface
- Poor visibility

Unexpected Falls

- Many victims didn't plan to enter the water—they slipped or fell in

How to stay safe

Here are simple but life-saving rules to follow:

1. Think Before You Jump

- Never jump straight into open water
- Enter slowly to let your body adjust

2. Stay with Friends

- Never swim alone
- Look out for each other

3. Choose Safer Locations

- Go to places with **lifeguards**, like supervised beaches or lidos

4. Avoid Alcohol

- It seriously increases the risk of drowning

5. Know What to Do If You Fall In

Follow the **“Float to Live”** advice:

- Tilt your head back
- Keep ears underwater
- Relax and control your breathing
- Stay calm until you can call for help or swim to safety

🚨 If Someone Is in Trouble

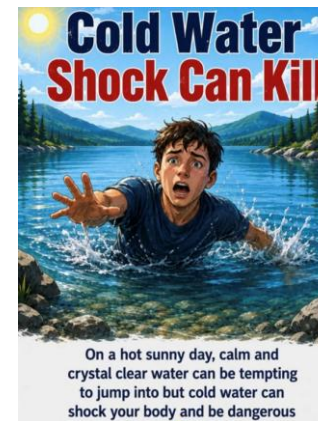
Call 999 or 112 immediately

Ask for the **Coastguard** (for sea incidents) or emergency services

Do NOT jump in—throw something that floats instead

Drownings don't just happen to weak swimmers—they often involve **fit, confident teenagers** who don't expect the danger. The number of deaths each year is relatively small, but everyone is preventable.

Enjoy the water — but respect it.
 Making a few safer choices could
 save your life or a friend's life





Discover our FREE rail safety
videos and keep your children
safe by visiting
railsafefriendly.com

THE RAIL SAFE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

The Rail Safe Friendly programme has
educated over **3 million young people**
on the dangers of the railways.



SCAN ME

**DON'T LET YOUR
CHILDREN BECOME
THE NEXT
STATISTIC**



**"I implore you to listen to
Harrison's story"**

Simon Frazer, Principal,
Guilsborough Academy

According to the **ORR Report**, April 23 - March 24 on UK railways:

12

people died in accidents
while trespassing

58%

were struck by a train
or tram

42%

were electrocuted

According to **Rail Safe Friendly**, July 25:

120+

companies support the
programme

11,000+

schools in the UK have
engaged

20,000+

UK schools still need to
be reached



Dear Parent or Guardian

Trespassing on the railway network is extremely dangerous and endangers not only the lives of those on the track, but also passengers, railway staff and the general public.

Many people - especially young people - fail to understand the danger they put themselves and others in, when they make the choice to stray onto the rail network. As we step into Spring and also as Summertime approaches, we see an increase in the number of incidents being reported in the local area of Rugby with incidents we're seeing involve children and young people:

- Walking along the railway lines
- Throwing stones at trains
- Placing objects on the railway lines
- Using the railway as a playground

I am sure you agree that all of the above activities are extremely dangerous.

Key Messages

Trains are **ALWAYS** running on the railway and can differ in times meaning that you can never predict when a train will pass

The Electricity is **ALWAYS** switched on around the railway

Always **Stop, Look and Listen** before using a Level Crossing

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?

The British Transport Police (BTP) and Network Rail are seeking the support of parents, guardians and the local community to highlight the danger and implications of these activities to help us reduce the number of young people putting themselves and others at significant risk.

To assist with the conversation there are a number of online videos available and range depending on the age group of your child:

www.switchedonrailsafety.co.uk

www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/safety-education/

www.youvsstrain.co.uk

Trespassing on any part of the railway is also a **criminal offence** which can involve your child obtaining a criminal record and a fine of £1000

If you wish to report any information to BTP, please call us on Freephone 0800 40 50 40 or text the information to 61016.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

June 2026 | Secondary | What parents need to know about: Looksmaxxing | Attendance

Understanding 'Looksmaxxing'

Many parents and carers know that young people feel pressure about appearance, especially due to social media. The online trend of 'looksmaxxing' is gaining popularity among teenagers.

What is looksmaxxing?

'Looksmaxxing' is a term used to describe attempts to improve physical appearance in order to become more attractive, gain social status or increase popularity online. While some content focuses on relatively harmless habits such as skincare, exercise, sleep or fashion, other areas of the trend can become far more extreme and unhealthy.

Young people may encounter advice encouraging:

- obsessive dieting or exercise
- rigid appearance 'ratings'
- dangerous supplements
- dangerous 'do it yourself' tricks to change facial appearance
- cosmetic surgery
- unhealthy comparisons with others
- beliefs that appearance determines personal value or success.

Some online communities linked to looksmaxxing also promote negative attitudes about self-worth, masculinity, relationships and social status.

Where did it come from?

The term originated in online forums and social media spaces focused on self-improvement and appearance. Over time, it spread widely through platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Discord, where short-form videos and algorithms can quickly expose young people to increasingly extreme content. Many influencers present looksmaxxing as a route to confidence, popularity or success. However, the advice shared is often unregulated, unrealistic, dangerous and designed to generate engagement rather than support wellbeing. One of the most recent trends encourages boys to use a hammer to break their cheek bones in order to shape their face in a particular way.

If parents or carers are concerned about a child's wellbeing, changes in eating habits, excessive focus on appearance or anxiety linked to social media, support from school staff, a GP or mental health services may be helpful.

You may notice new language or phrases such as:

- **Mogging** - looking significantly more attractive, stylish or physically dominant than others in a group, essentially 'outshining' them.
- **Glow-up** - dramatic transformation in a person's physical appearance.
- **Hunter eyes** - a distinctive eye shape characterised by the deep-set position.
- **Measuring facial harmony** - assessing the proportions and space between facial features.
- **Looks rating** - providing feedback on symmetry and style of facial features.

Talking to your child about looksmaxxing

Open, calm conversations are often more effective than criticism or alarm. Young people are more likely to engage positively when they feel listened to rather than judged.

Some helpful approaches include:



Asking open questions such as:

"What kinds of things are people talking about online at the moment?"



Showing curiosity rather than shock

Staying calm helps children feel safe enough to talk honestly about what they are seeing online.



Discussing how social media algorithms work

They might not realise that apps often show similar content based on their interactions.



Encouraging critical thinking about influencers

Remind children that many online content is edited or created for marketing purposes.



Reinforcing that self-worth is not based on appearance

Reminders that qualities like kindness, effort, humour and resilience matter far more.



Promoting balanced habits for health and wellbeing

Promoting sleep, exercise and hobbies builds confidence more effectively than unrealistic online standards.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

Why school attendance matters

We understand that getting children into school is not always easy. For some young people, worries about friendships, mental health, anxiety, sleep, learning or confidence can make attending school feel difficult. As a school, we want parents and carers to know that we are here to support you.

Why attendance is important

Being in school regularly helps children to:

- keep up with learning
- build confidence
- develop friendships
- feel part of the school community
- prepare for exams and future opportunities.

Missing school can quickly make children feel more worried or overwhelmed. Even a day missed here and there can make it harder to catch up with lessons and friendships. Good attendance is not about being 'perfect'. It is about helping young people stay connected to learning and support.

When attendance becomes difficult

There are many reasons why a child may struggle to attend school, including:

- anxiety or low mood
- friendship issues
- difficulties with learning
- bullying worries
- poor sleep routines
- family pressures or changes
- feeling overwhelmed.

Sometimes children may not clearly explain why they are finding school difficult. You may notice changes such as:

- refusing to get ready
- headaches or stomach aches before school
- changes in mood
- trouble sleeping
- becoming withdrawn or upset.

These behaviours are often signs that a child needs support.

Children do best when school and home work together.

Our aim is always to help young people feel safe, supported and successful in school.

If you are worried about your child's attendance, please reach out - you are not alone, and support is available.



HOW PARENTS/CARERS CAN HELP

SMALL STEPS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE. HELPFUL STRATEGIES MAY INCLUDE:



KEEPING MORNING AND BEDTIME ROUTINES CONSISTENT

Predictable routines can help children feel calmer and more prepared for the school day.



ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO ATTEND EVEN IF THEY FEEL WORRIED

Missing school can sometimes increase anxiety, while attending can help children rebuild confidence over time.



FOCUSING ON ONE DAY AT A TIME

Breaking things down into smaller steps can make school feel less overwhelming for young people.



PRaising EFFORT AND SMALL SUCCESSES

Recognising small achievements, such as getting out of bed or attending one lesson, can help build confidence and motivation.



AVOIDING LONG PERIODS OFF UNLESS YOUR CHILD IS GENUINELY UNWELL

Long absences can sometimes make returning to school feel harder and more stressful for children.



STAYING CALM AND SUPPORTIVE DURING DIFFICULT MORNINGS

Children often pick up on adult emotions, so a calm approach can help reduce tension and anxiety.

It can also help to keep communication open by asking:

- "What feels hardest about school at the moment?"

This gives children the chance to explain their worries in their own words.

- "What would help make tomorrow easier?"

Small changes or support strategies can sometimes make a big difference.

- "Who in school helps you feel safe and supported?"

Identifying trusted adults can help children feel more connected and supported in school.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

July 2026 | Secondary | What parents and carers need to know about: Water safety | 'Ship' accounts

Water Safety: Conversations that could save a life

As the weather gets warmer, many young people are drawn to rivers, lakes, reservoirs, canals and other outdoor swimming spots. Following several serious incidents involving young people entering cold water during last month's heatwave, it is important for parents and carers to understand the risks and have conversations with their children before the warm weather returns.

Why can open water be dangerous?

On a hot day, jumping into water can seem like a quick way to cool down. However, open water is very different from a swimming pool. Rivers, lakes, reservoirs and canals can remain surprisingly cold, even during periods of warm weather. Entering cold water suddenly can trigger 'cold water shock', causing an involuntary gasp, rapid breathing and panic. This can affect anyone, regardless of age or swimming ability. Even strong swimmers can quickly find themselves in difficulty.

Open water also contains risks that cannot always be seen from the surface. Hidden objects, sudden drops in depth, strong currents, slippery banks, weeds and poor visibility can all create dangerous situations. Water conditions can change quickly and what appears safe may not be safe at all.

Why are teenagers particularly at risk?

Many water-related incidents involving teenagers happen when young people are with friends rather than with parents or carers. Decisions are often made in the moment, influenced by peer pressure, a desire to cool down, boredom, dares, social media content or a belief that 'it will be fine'.

Research and water safety organisations have repeatedly highlighted that young people can underestimate the risks of open water and overestimate their swimming ability. Confidence in a swimming pool does not necessarily prepare someone for the challenges of cold, open water. For this reason, water safety is not simply about supervising children. It is about helping teenagers understand the risks and make safer decisions when adults are not there.

Conversations to have with your teenager

Rather than simply telling your child not to enter open water, try discussing situations they may realistically encounter.

You might ask:

- If your friends decided to jump into a lake or river on a hot day, what would you do?
- Do you know what cold water shock is?
- Would you feel confident saying "no" if everyone else wanted to get in?
- What would you do if one of your friends got into difficulty in the water?
- Do you know how to call for help in an emergency?

KEY SAFETY MESSAGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY

NEVER ENTER WATER ALONE

and never jump or dive into open water of an unknown depth.



Avoid swimming in rivers, reservoirs, quarries, canals or lakes that are not designated swimming areas



BE CAUTIOUS OF PEER PRESSURE AND DARES

If you unexpectedly enter cold water, try not to panic and focus on controlling your breathing.

CALL FOR HELP

IF YOU GET INTO DIFFICULTY, FLOAT ON YOUR BACK, KEEP YOUR AIRWAY CLEAR AND CALL FOR HELP.

Get more water safety tips at: <https://www.rlss.org.uk>

How parents and carers can help

While we cannot be with our teenagers all the time, we can equip them with knowledge and confidence to make safer choices.

Helpful steps include:

- talking regularly about water safety before periods of warm weather
- encouraging your child to swim only in supervised locations where lifeguards are present
- challenging the belief that being a strong swimmer removes risk
- discussing how peer pressure can influence decision-making
- helping your child think through what they would do if friends made unsafe choices around water.

If someone else is in trouble

Many tragedies occur when friends attempt to rescue one another.

Teach your child that if somebody is in difficulty in the water they should:

- call 999 immediately
- encourage the person to float on their back
- throw something that floats if available
- never enter the water themselves to attempt a rescue.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

'Ship' accounts: When online fun stops being fun

Many parents are familiar with social media trends, group chats and online challenges, but a growing number of schools are also reporting concerns about so-called 'ship' accounts.

The term 'ship' comes from the word relationship. These social media accounts, often created by students, invite others to suggest or vote on which students should be paired together romantically. Some accounts also encourage comments about friendships, appearance, popularity or who someone should date.

While many young people see these accounts as harmless fun, they can quickly become upsetting for those involved and create real-world problems within friendship groups and school communities.

What are 'ship' accounts?

'Ship' accounts are typically found on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat. They are often anonymous or run by students, and may:

- pair students together romantically
- invite followers to suggest couples
- ask students to vote on who should date each other
- encourage comments about appearance or popularity
- post rumours about friendships or relationships
- share screenshots, photographs or personal information.

Some accounts may start as a joke between friends but can quickly attract large numbers of followers and comments.

Why can they be harmful?

Although some young people enjoy the attention or find the content amusing, 'ship' accounts often create situations where people lose control over how they are being discussed online.

Being publicly linked to someone can be embarrassing, particularly if the feelings are not mutual, if one or both young people are already in relationships or if they simply do not want their personal lives discussed publicly.

Students may feel pressured to respond to comments, explain friendships or defend themselves against rumours. What starts as a joke can quickly become a source of stress, anxiety or conflict.

'Ship' accounts can contribute to friendship breakdowns, arguments between peer groups, rumours and gossip, cyberbullying and online harassment

5 ways you can support your child to use social media in a positive way

Talk about people, not just platforms

Emphasise treating people kindly online instead of just focusing on apps and settings. Discuss the importance of empathy, privacy, and respect. Teaching children the impact of their words and actions is often more effective than merely outlining rules.

Encourage them to think before they engage

Encourage your child to pause before liking, sharing, commenting or posting online. Prompt them to consider, 'Would I be happy if this were about me?' This brief reflection can help them avoid engaging with potentially hurtful or embarrassing content.

Promote positive digital communities

Engage with the accounts, creators, and communities your child follows. Encourage them to explore online spaces that inspire, inform, or connect, rather than those that focus on gossip or negativity.

Help them understand consent and boundaries

Young people frequently share information online. It's important to remind your child that friendships, relationships, photos and personal details belong to the individuals involved. Just because something can be shared doesn't mean it should be.

Keep conversations regular and judgement-free

Children are more likely to share their online experiences when they feel heard rather than criticised. Regular discussions about social media enable parents to stay informed and address issues before they escalate.

Teenagers are still learning about boundaries, consent and respectful relationships. Being able to discuss someone else's personal life online without their permission can blur those boundaries and make unkind behaviour feel acceptable.



Supporting the wellbeing of young people in the UK is more important than ever. With Rising Academic pressures, social media influence, and the lingering effects of the covid-19 pandemic, many children and adolescents face challenges that can impact their mental and emotional health. Promoting wellbeing is not just about addressing problems – it is about creating environments where young people can thrive.

A key element of wellbeing is mental health awareness. Schools and communities across the UK are increasingly recognise the importance of early intervention. Programmes that teach emotional literacy, resilience, and coping strategies can help young people understand and manage their feelings. Initiatives such as Mental Health Support Teams in schools aim to provide accessible care and reduce stigma, encouraging students to seek help with they need it.

Physical health also plays a vital role in overall wellbeing. Encouraging regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and sufficient sleep can significantly improve mood and concentration. Schools can contribute by offering a variety of sports and promoting active lifestyles, while families can re-enforce healthy habits at home.

Another important factor is social connection. Strong relationships with peers, family members and trusted adults can provide emotional support and a sense of belonging. Youth clubs, extracurricular activities, and safe community space allow young people to build friendships and develop social skills. Tackling loneliness – especially in a digital age is essential for maintaining positive wellbeing.

Digital wellbeing is an emerging focus area. While technology offers opportunities for learning and connection, excessive screen time and exposure to negative content can affect self esteem and mental health. Educating young people about healthy online habits and encouraging balance between digital and offline activities is crucial.

Finally, creating a supportive environment is the responsibility of society as a whole. School, parents, healthcare providers and policy makers must work together to ensure that young people have access to the resources they need. This includes investing in mental health services, reducing inequalities, and listening to young people's voices when shaping policies that affect them.

In conclusion, promoting wellbeing among young people in the UK requires a holistic approach that addresses mental, physical, and social needs. By fostering supportive environments and equipping young people with the right tools, we can help build resilience, confidence, and a strong foundation for the future.



PROMOTING

Wellbeing for young people

Helplines and Online Information/Support



INSIGHT TIMER

Has an insanely huge library of content: nearly 13,000 guided meditations from over 2,600 teachers on topics like stress, relationships, creativity and more.



STRESS LESS

Sleep soundly. Get happy. Learn the life-changing skills of meditation and mindfulness in a few minutes a day with Headspace.



CHARLIE WALLER

Supports and educates young people to look after their mental health and wellbeing.



CLEAR FEAR

Provides you with a range of ways to manage anxiety



MIND SHIFT

is a free app designed to help teens and young adults cope with anxiety.



CALM HARM

Is an app designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm.



SMILING MIND

Is a non-for-profit web and app-based meditation program developed by psychologists and educators to help bring mindfulness into your life.



COUCH TO 5K

It's an easy-to-follow programme known the world over, and perfect for those new to running and need some extra support and motivation along the way.



KOOTH

Is a wellbeing online space for young people with a range of resources including a wellbeing magazine, messaging functions and discussion boards.



WORRY TREE NOW KNOWN AS LUMA

The WorryTree app aims to help you take control of worry wherever you are.



Any immediate concerns or worries about your child's mental health please contact the CRISIS TEAM on 111 Option 2

Your Child's risk of being injured on foot or on a bicycle increases as they gain independence. Far more teens are knocked down and hurt than younger children. Peer pressure can also cause young people to behave in unsafe ways near the road.

This group are at further risk due to longer journeys to and from school with friends or on their own. Ensure that they understand the importance of walking directly to their destination, without any stops or diversions.

Even as your child approaches adolescence, you should keep talking about road safety with them and ensure that they know the importance of continuing to take great care when crossing the road, including putting away their phone and taking out any earphones when crossing the road. Remind them that they will be unable to hear traffic if they are listening to music through their earphones or see it properly if they are wearing a hood.



Why Students shouldn't spend the whole Summer Online

For many students across the UK, the long summer break is something to look forward to all year. It's a time to relax, unwind and take a well-earned break from school pressures. However, with the rise of social media, online gaming and streaming platforms, there is a growing temptation to spend most – or even all – of that time online. While digital spaces can be entertaining and even educational, relying on them too heavily during the summer can have a negative effect on students' wellbeing and development.

It's important to recognise that being online isn't inherently bad. The internet can be a valuable tool for learning, entertainment and staying connected. However, the key is balance.

UK students don't need to completely avoid screens during the summer, but they should aim to combine online activities with offline ones. Setting limited on screen time, planning outdoor activities and making time for hobbies can help create a more filling and healthy summer break.



Summer holidays are also a great time to build stronger connections with friends and family. Meeting people face-to-face, sharing experiences, and making memories are important for social development.

Although online communication can help people stay in touch, it shouldn't replace real-life interaction entirely. Spending quality time together without screens helps build deeper, more meaningful relationships.

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The summer holidays are a valuable period for growth, relaxation and exploration. Spending the entire break online can mean missing out on important opportunities for personal development, physical health and meaningful experiences. By stepping away from screens and embracing the wider world, UK students can make the most of their summer – and return to school feeling refreshed, confident and ready to learn.

At The National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formally delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalonlinesafety.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. With end-to-end encryption, only the sender and receiver can view messages. This may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GROUP CHAT PRESSURES

Group chats enable multiple users to message in the same space and this can cause pressure for young people to feel excluded or ostracised. Young people may feel pressure to respond, and young people may feel pressure to reply or stay engaged even when the conversation is uncomfortable or upsetting.

SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS

Scammers are increasingly using WhatsApp to trick users into sharing personal information. One common scam is the 'friendship scam' where a scammer pretends to be a friend of a friend and offers a reward for help. These can lead to identity theft or access to private conversations.

DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES

WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages and 'Close Friends' lists. While these can be useful for privacy, they can also be used to hide inappropriate content, making it harder for adults to spot potential risks.

EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS

'Channels' are an optional feature that allows users to follow public content from individuals, organisations, or even entire communities. While this can be useful for staying up-to-date, it also means that users can be exposed to unwanted content, including misinformation and harmful messages.

UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp users can share their live location, and this can be shared with others. This can be useful for staying safe, but it can also be used to track someone's location without their consent. Also, without the right privacy settings, young users may be contacted by strangers.

COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT

WhatsApp now includes ads in the 'Suggested' feed and has introduced an AI assistant - 'Meta AI' - across the app, which cannot be removed. These additions raise concerns about targeting, privacy, AI use, and the type of content children and young people might encounter with.

Advice for Parents & Educators

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Help young users check who can see their profile photo, status, and location. Adjust the 'Privacy' settings and set group chat permissions to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...' for added security.

TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS

Encourage caution around unusual and unsolicited messages, especially if they involve money or codes. Help young users understand the signs of scams and what to do if they receive a suspicious message. Enable two-step verification to add an extra layer of protection.

BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS

Discuss why children and young people might use features like disappearing messages or 'Close Friends'. Encourage them to share if they receive suspicious or age-inappropriate messages. Remind them that users can't see who has viewed their profile or if they have blocked someone.

TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI

Explain that WhatsApp now includes ads and AI tools. Discuss the difference between genuine and sponsored content, and the potential for AI to be used for inappropriate purposes. Encourage users to think critically before interacting with these features.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Buchanan 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 regarding internet use and online behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

#WakeUpWednesday **The National College**

See full references list on our website

[X @wake_up_weds](https://www.wake_up_weds.com) [f /www.thenationalcollege.com](https://www.thenationalcollege.com) [@wakeupwednesday](https://www.wakeupwednesday.com) [@wakeupweds](https://www.wakeupweds.com)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 18.05.2023

Parents should be aware that while chat apps can help students stay connected, they also carry risks. Children may be exposed to inappropriate content, cyber bullying or unwanted contact from strangers. There is also the danger of students sharing personal information, images or their location without understanding the consequences. Additional, excessive rise of chat apps can impact sleep, concentration, and overall wellbeing. It is important to talk openly with children about safe online behaviour, set clear boundaries, and regularly monitor their digital activity to help keep them safe.

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about DISCORD

AGE RATING 13+

Discord is a free app which allows users to communicate in real time via text, video or voice chat. Available on desktop and mobile devices, it was originally designed to help gamers cooperate - but has evolved into a more general networking platform for a range of online communities, discussing topics like TV series, music, Web3 and more. Discord is organised around closed groups, referred to as 'servers'. To join a server, users must be invited or provided with a unique link. It's a space for users to interact with friends, meet others with shared interests and collaborate privately online - but it's also a place where young people can be exposed to risks if the right precautions aren't taken.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CYBERBULLYING

Discord's easy accessibility and connectivity, unfortunately, makes it an ideal place for cyberbullying to occur - especially as audio and video streams disappear once they've ended, meaning that bullying could take place without leaving any evidence. Closed groups can also be created, giving young people the opportunity to exclude their peers or send cruel messages without adult oversight.

DIFFICULT TO MODERATE

Like many private communication apps, Discord's real-time messaging can be difficult to control. The system enables content moderation through each individual server - so different groups can set their own rules for what's acceptable, and some groups may not monitor for unsuitable content. Anything that happens in an audio or video stream is also virtually untraceable once the stream has concluded.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Discord mainly hosts private groups, making it easier for unsuitable or explicit content to be shared on channels. Pornography, racism and inappropriate language can be found in some groups. Server owners are required to add an age-restriction gate to channels where 18+ content is being shared - but this solution isn't foolproof, as the platform doesn't always verify users' ages when they sign up.

ACCESSIBLE TO PREDATORS

On many chat platforms, users can lie about their age or true identity - and Discord is no exception. Predators have attempted to abuse the platform by using it to contact and communicate with underage users - by initially chatting with a child on an age-appropriate channel, for example. While Discord has improved its safety settings, some users will still try to bypass them for malicious reasons.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Discord does have strict Terms of Service and Community Guidelines to protect its users - but, sadly, not everyone adheres to them. Criminal activity including grooming, hate speech, harassment, exploitative content, doxing and extremist or violent material have all been found on Discord servers over the last two years. In 2020, Discord received almost 27,000 reports of illegal activity on the platform.

Advice for Parents & Carers

REVIEW SAFETY SETTINGS

Discord has a series of safety settings, including users to check who can see their profile photo, status, and location. Adjust the 'Privacy' settings and set group chat permissions to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...' for added security.

EXPLAIN AGE FILTERING

While Discord requires users to be at least 13 to sign up, many servers are not towards older users are flagged as NSFW (not safe for work), which indicates they probably contain mature or inappropriate content. It can be easy to click through settings without properly reviewing them, so ensure your child understands why age filtering is important and that it's there to protect them.

SCREEN OUT EXPLICIT CONTENT

In the privacy and safety settings, Discord users are offered the ability to filter direct messages for inappropriate content: a setting that should be enabled if your child uses the platform. Discord automatically tries to flag images that are explicit, but the setting must be manually enabled for text. If a young user is sent explicit content in a direct message, Discord will scan and (if necessary) delete it.

MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's wise to regularly review your child's activity on Discord. This can include checking their safety settings to ensure they're correctly enabled, talking about which servers they've joined and reviewing some of their friends and direct messages. Ask if anything has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Things can change quickly online, so plan routine check-ins and follow up frequently.

DISCUSS GOOD ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

The anonymity offered by the internet often leads people to communicate more openly online and behave differently than they would at school or home. It's crucial to bear in mind, though, that every internet user is still a real person. Talk to your child about the severe and lasting consequences that cyberbullying or exchanging inappropriate material online can have in the real world.

HAVE CANDID CONVERSATIONS

It can sometimes be awkward to discuss topics like grooming, pornography, racism or explicit content with your child - but it's important to ensure they're aware of the harms these things can pose. Talking openly about these subjects is a great way to help your child feel more comfortable about coming to you if they experience an unwanted encounter on Discord (or anywhere else online).

Meet Our Expert

Coral Gripps is a Canadian-born, London-based tech journalist at www.coralgripps.com, a website specialising in all things Web3, gaming and XR (extended reality). With a focus on brands and culture, she researches and writes about the ways that our current innovations - including the metaverse and Web3 - are impacting people, places and things.

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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 18.05.2022



Recent incidents at UK holidays parks have highlighted the continuing danger posed by Carbon Monoxide (CO) – A colourless gas often called the “Silent Killer”. Families staying in caravans, lodges and cabins can be particularly because of confined spaces and fuel-burning appliance.

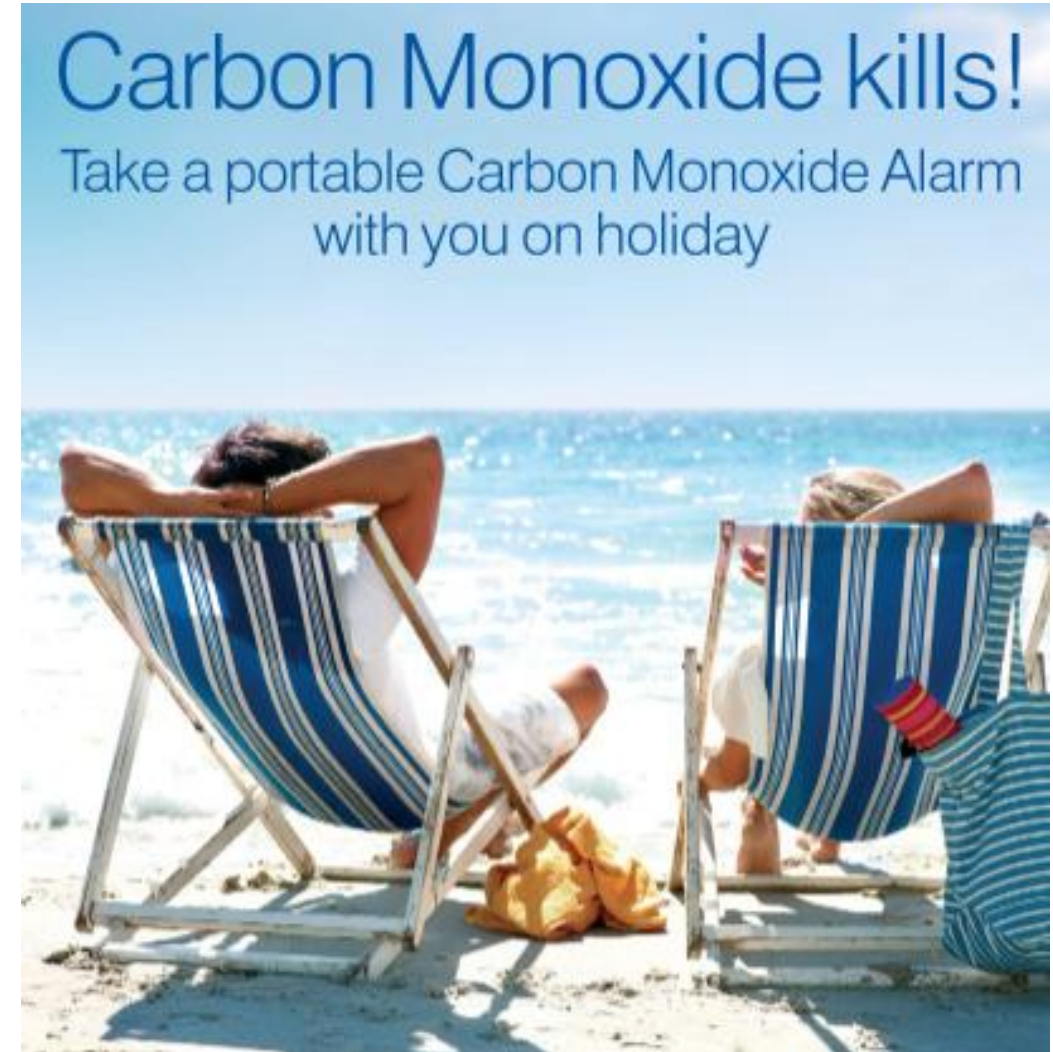
Holiday accommodation such as caravans and lodges can increase exposure risk for several reasons:

- Confined spaces allow gas to build up more quickly
- Use of gas boilers, heaters and cooking appliances
- Possible poor maintenance or ventilation issues
- Holiday makers may be unfamiliar with property systems

Because CO cannot be seen, smelt or tasted, occupants often rely solely on alarms to detect danger.

Precautions Holiday makers can take:

- Check fir a working CO Alarm – considering bringing a portable alarm (Costs around £20)
- Know the symptoms, Headache, Dizziness or nausea, tiredness or confusion, chest pain or shortness of breath. If the symptoms improve when outside, this may indicate CO exposure.
- Ensure ventilation, never block vents, keep flues and ventilation areas clear
- Use appliances safely, no not barbecues, gas heaters or stoves inside caravans or awnings, only use heating equipment as intended
- Check maintenance and safety standards, look for evidence appliances have been services by qualified engineers, report any smell of fumes or faulty equipment immediately
- Act quickly if an alarm sounds, evacuate immediately, get fresh air, seek medical help if anyone feels unwell.



Recent tragedies at UK holiday parks show that carbon monoxide poisoning remains a serious but preventable risk. While fatalities are rare, the consequences can be devastating – especially for families expecting a safe holiday.

With proper awareness, functioning alarms, and basic safety checks, parents can take practical steps to protect their children and ensure a safer break.

STAY SAFE THIS SUMMER

Festival Safety Guide for Young People & Parents

PLAN AHEAD

- Agree meeting points and back-up plans if separated.
- Share travel details and expected return times.
- Ensure phones are charged and contacts saved.

STICK TOGETHER

- Stay with trusted friends and look out for each other.
- Never leave anyone behind.
- Use a buddy system at all times.

KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

- Locate first aid, welfare tents, security and exits.
- Speak to staff immediately if something feels wrong.

STAY AWARE

- Trust your instincts — if something feels off, act.
- Be mindful of crowds, exits and surroundings.

DRINK & SUBSTANCE SAFETY

- Never accept drinks from strangers.
- Keep your drink with you at all times.
- Seek help immediately if you feel unwell.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

- Stay hydrated and take breaks.
- Wear sunscreen and appropriate clothing.
- Keep valuables secure.

FOR PARENTS

- Know who your child is with and how they are travelling.
- Agree check-in times and communication expectations.
- Encourage open, non-judgemental conversations.

EMERGENCY

- Call 999 if someone is in danger.
- Seek festival staff or security for immediate support.



Look after yourself and each other
Have fun safely



WATER AND SUN SAFETY

With the summer holiday approaching and the summer weather coming the **Safeguarding team** want to raise awareness around water and sun safety

Dangers of jumping into shallow water

Jumping into shallow water is nearly the same as jumping into no water. You soon hit what is under the water. Your body has less of an idea when its going to hit something solid, so you cannot prepare for the impact which could lead to serious injuries.



Dangers of swimming in open Quarry water

Quarry water is much colder than rivers, lakes, and the sea. A sudden plunge into cold water could cause your body to go into shock.



Stay safe in the sun

Wear protective clothing like sun hats and sunglasses
Limit your time in the sun, use shaded areas
Use sunscreen that has a sun protection factor of at least 30 to protect your skin
Drink lots of water to stay hydrated





MHST Support young people who are experiencing low mood and a range of anxiety difficulties. They are currently based in schools in South Warwickshire, Coventry, Rugby and North Warwickshire. The team consists of qualified and trainee Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs), Senior Educational Mental Health Practitioners Specialist Mental Health Practitioners, Team Leaders, A Service Manager and Clinical lead.

Between them they have a wealth of experience supporting children and young people with their mental health.



Dimensions tool



Free online personalised self-care information & support for adults and children in Coventry & Warwickshire

Transition

Transitioning into a new class or school can feel exciting and scary at the same time. It is important to remember, you are not alone in this situation or alone with experiencing these feelings. If you are worried, it can be helpful to talk about how you are feeling about the transition with others as they may help you get prepared or give you a different perspective to consider, which can help you to feel better about it. Below are some tips to help you manage your transition into a new class or school.

Our tips for coping with transitions:

1 – What will be the same?

When moving to a new class or school, it can feel overwhelming because we feel that everything will change but there may be some similarities. For example, you may still have some people you know in your new class and you may still be learning subjects that you love.

2 – Think about what you can control

You may be worrying about the things that will be different in your new class. Think about the things you have control over and can think of practical solutions for. For example, can you visit your new classroom or complete your new journey to school, ahead of the first day? Can you ask a sibling or a friend to walk into class with you? You can ask for ideas from friends and family members too!



Scan this QR code to see how these children solved some of their worries!

In Coventry and Warwickshire, for any urgent mental health concerns, contact the RISE Crisis Helpline available 24/7, by calling NHS 111. Alternatively, call 999 or visit A&E in an emergency, for example if medical attention is required.

MHST are available to support you and your school throughout the school year including term time and school holidays.

Please contact your school's Mental Health Lead for information and advice.



Top Tips for Results Day



Talk to people around you

Try not to bottle your emotions up. If you are feeling upset or worried about your results, seek out a trusted person that you can speak to about how you are feeling, or contact one of the services overleaf for support.

Celebrate your success and the success of those around you

Try not to compare yourself to those around you, and do not feel pressure to share your results, but be proud of what you have achieved and celebrate the hard work and effort you and your peers have put into the exams.



Find out your options

If you do not have the results you were hoping for, this is not the end of the road and it might even be the start of a new, exciting journey. Speak to members of staff to find out about the options that are open to you with the results you do have.



Be kind to yourself

Take a deep breath and remember that exam results are not the only measure of success and do not define you. Take your time to work out your next step. Education is important, but not at the cost of your mental health.



A journey with **RISE**
is as unique as the person seeking support