



## **Safeguarding Newsletter**

(Spring Edition: March 2024)

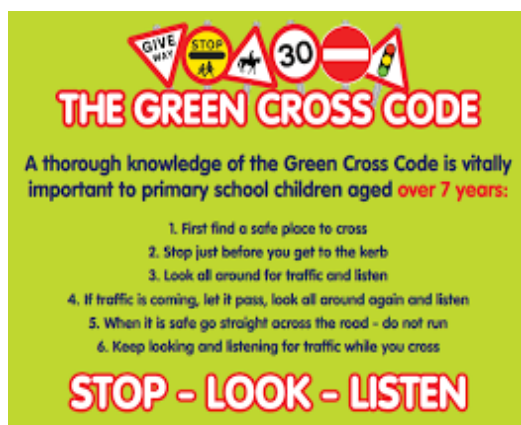
Welcome to the second edition of our parent safeguarding newsletter. This newsletter is designed to support parents and carers in their understanding of topical safeguarding issues that may affect their child, themselves or members of the local community. At St. Robert Southwell we promote a culture of vigilance, we do this by teaching and reminding our children how to keep themselves safe. We teach them to speak out and tell them what to do if they come across a situation that makes them feel unsafe. Safeguarding children is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.** Every single person who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

### **Travelling to and from school unaccompanied & mobile phones**

We have safeguarding procedures in place for Year 5 & 6, whereby a form **MUST** be completed if you want your child to travel **TO** and **FROM** school alone or leave the premises unaccompanied at 3.15pm dismissal. A member of our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will have a conversation with your child about their journey prior to these arrangements commencing. We prioritise calls to the primary parent/carer of children who travel to school unaccompanied if they are absent and we have not received communication about their absence.

As a primary school we do not encourage mobile phones/devices to be brought onto the premises. However, we do appreciate that some parents wish their child to have a phone/device if they are travelling to/from school on their own. We have reviewed our procedures and now have secure storage lockers for mobile phones and smart devices. All children who bring a phone or smart device to school must have a locker as there will be no provision for storing phones/devices any other way. Please note that children are not to keep mobile phones or smart devices on their person or in their belongings. If found, the phone/device will be confiscated and the parent/carer called to collect.

Please email [cmcevoy@robsouth.org](mailto:cmcevoy@robsouth.org) for further information and to request the appropriate forms.



School children need to be aware of the danger of crossing roads while using mobile phones. Although, many people are distracted by mobile phones, children are the most affected. Different studies over a number of years have shown phones are a growing cause of distraction for pedestrians, affecting if they cross a road safely. Those distracted by phones are known as SMOMBIES (from smartphones plus zombies). Pedestrians aged 10 and 11 are most at risk as this is the age when most children begin to travel on their own to and from school for the first time and have their own phone to stay in touch with family.



## NSPCC confirms crimes involving child abuse imagery (CAI) have increased

According to figures collected by the NSPCC, crimes involving child abuse imagery (CAI) have risen by a quarter in the past year. Nearly half of those incidents where the platform was recorded occurred on Snapchat, while Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp covered another 26 percent. Please see information below regarding WhatsApp and Snapchat – please note their age restrictions.

***Following Jesus' footsteps and inspired by St. Robert Southwell we work hard, aim high and treat everyone with honesty and gentleness.***





At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP

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

**AGE RESTRICTION**  
**16+**  
In UK and Europe, rest of the world 13+

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### EVOLVING SCAMS

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

#### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

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

#### FAKE NEWS

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

#### VIEW ONCE CONTENT

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

#### CHAT LOCK

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

#### VISIBLE LOCATION

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

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

#### EMPHASISE CAUTION

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

#### THINKING BEFORE SHARING

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

#### ADJUST THE SETTINGS

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

#### CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

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

### Meet Our Expert

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

**...HEY OSCAR...**

**NOS** National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

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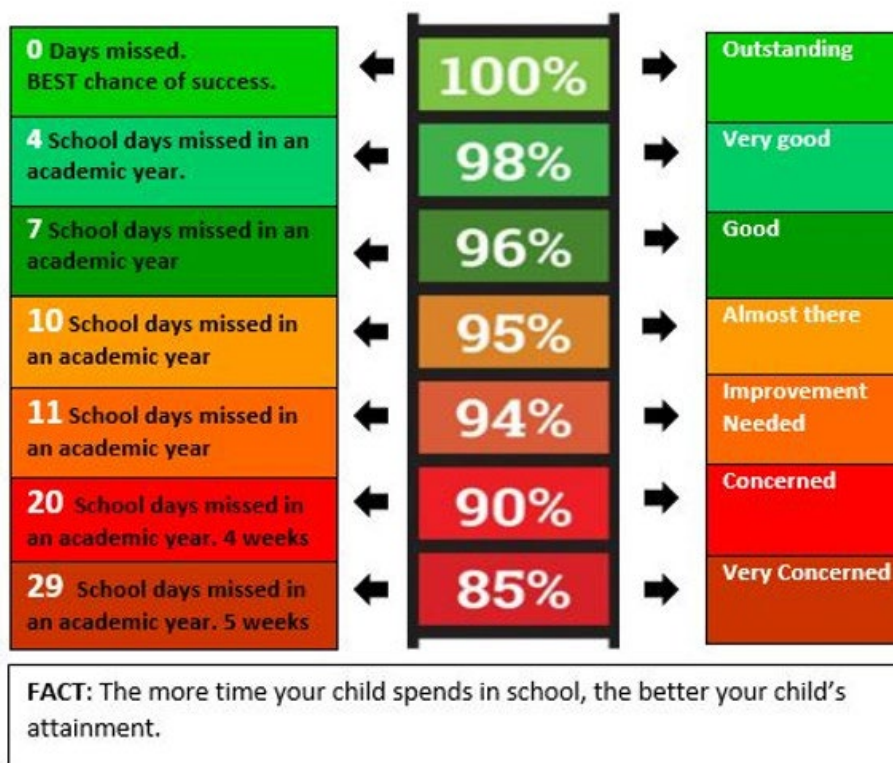




## St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School

*Aiming for Excellence - Being the Best We Can Be*

### Attendance



We are sure that like us, you as parents and carers realise the importance of attendance and punctuality. At SRS, we continue to work hard to try to raise attendance levels and to reduce instances of lateness. There is much evidence to show that good attendance plays a vital role in helping your child to achieve their potential. We also know that poor attendance can lead to other problems for children. How can you help your child attend school regularly?

- Talk to your child about school. Take a positive interest in your child's work, including homework;
- Make sure your child understands why school is important;
- Get everything ready for school the night before;
- Arrange appointments before or after school or during the school holidays;
- Take holidays during school holidays and not during term time;
- Set your alarm and your child's alarm clock- see who can beat the clock!
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness (you will know!)
- If your child is slightly under the weather (without a temperature), still send them into school - children often start feeling better as the day goes on and they get busy, and if the school is concerned, we will call you.
- Children can attend school if they are taking prescribed medicines – email [cmcevoy@robsouth.org](mailto:cmcevoy@robsouth.org) or complete the consent to administer occasional prescribed medication. We can give children certain medications with your permission.

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### Useful websites for parents:

#### Place2Be

Place2Be have a fantastic resources on their website with a variety of different videos and resources to practically support parents with a wide range of issues their children may face.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>



#### CEOP - Child Exploitation & Online Protection

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

**NSPCC** – 0808 8005000

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/report/>

**Brent Family Front Door** – 0208 937 4300 or online reporting form

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/keeping-childrensafe#Reportchildabuse>

If you feel that you or a child is in immediate danger, please call 999 immediately.

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# Safeguarding Newsletter



**If you have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or a family, please contact us:**

**THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD WITH OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY - MISS BECK, HEADTEACHER**

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) - MISS JOSEPH, DEPUTY HEADTEACHER**

**DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (Deputy DSL)**  
**MRS EGAN, ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER & INCLUSION MANAGER**

**SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GOVERNOR - MRS MICHELLE RATTIGAN**

**FGM HELPLINE 0800 028 355**

**PREVENT HELPLINE 020 7340 7264**

**Brent Local Safeguarding Children Board 020 8937 4300**



## Miss Beck

## Miss Joseph

**Mrs Egan**

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