



Safeguarding Newsletter

Autumn 1

This newsletter is designed to support parents in deepening their understanding of topical safeguarding issues that may affect their child, themselves or members of their local community. 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. You will see below information about who to speak to if you have concerns about a child's safety or welfare, however all our staff are trained in safeguarding if you want to discuss any concerns with them. Please read the information in this edition and speak to a member of staff if you have any concerns. Many thanks for reading.

Meet the safeguarding team

As designated safeguarding leads, we are appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. To find out more, please visit the [safeguarding](#) section of our school website. All of the children have been informed already who the safeguarding team are and shown this poster which is displayed around the school as a reminder. We have a really large safeguarding team at Loughton School so that there is always someone available to support your child both in school and out of school at school fixtures and festivals or on trips and residential.





Back to school reminders about safety

At the beginning of the autumn term, the children at Loughton School are reminded about a number of ways that the adults keep them safe during all aspects of the school day. This could be from the meet and greet at the gates and classroom doors in the mornings to the importance of informing a member of staff if they cannot attend an after-school club they have signed up for. You will already have seen a communication from Mrs Green sharing that we have had assemblies reminding children about our evacuation, invacuation and lockdown drills.



Spotlight on: 'Online safety'

Children will take the time in their PSHE lessons to learn about how to keep themselves safe. This half term, they will focus specifically on keeping themselves safe online. This unit of work is delivered at the beginning of every school year so that our children are equipped with the skills and knowledge to manage their risks online in an age appropriate way, but to also know what to do if they ever feel unsafe online.

Most of the popular social media services (such as WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Kik, YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook) require users to be **at least 13 years of age** before they can register and use the site although we know that many of our children are accessing these apps. Following the age restrictions sets a good example for your child. Although the age requirement doesn't always mean the site is inappropriate for children to use, it's a good indication, especially for younger children.

If you are allowing your child to access social media services online, we advise that do the following:

- Continue to talk about the apps, games and sites they like to use, and what they like and don't like and any concerns about being online. Discuss with them when to unfollow, block or report.
- Make sure they know where to go for support. Remind your child they can always speak to you or an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. Remind them that they won't be in trouble at that you are there to help. For a breakdown of report services, visit: <https://www.internetmatters.org/report-issue/>

WhatsApp

The age limit to use WhatsApp changed in April 2024 from 16 to 13 years of age. We understand that a number of families use WhatsApp as a way of communicating quickly and we are aware that there are children who also have it on their phones for socialising. If you allow your child to use WhatsApp, please do monitor this. Teachers always welcome being informed about any issues on WhatsApp which they may need to be aware of but may not be in a position to support you should the platform be used to send unkind messages to each other outside of school hours. However, where social media is used for bullying and harassment and begins to feed into school life, we at Loughton School have a zero tolerance towards this bullying. Should this type of behaviour be brought to light, serious conversations will be held with the child and their parents informed.

Further guidance on WhatsApp and how to keep your children safe can be found here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>