



Oxenhope C of E Primary

Safeguarding Newsletter – 26.1.24

Message from Mrs Jones – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Hello all, we are working hard to develop our safeguarding curriculum and year 2 class enjoyed a visit from a paramedic this week who talked to them about keeping safe and medicine safety.

Next week we will be having our Trust Safeguarding Lead, James Clark, visiting. He will be completing a safeguarding audit of our school which is inline with OFSTED practise, we will let you know how it goes.

Key Staff

Mrs Jones –Head, safeguarding lead, Relationships Education Lead and Personal, Social and Health Education Lead	
Mrs Woodhead – Diversity and inclusion officer	
Mrs Jones– Online Safety Lead	
Mrs Durrant – Special Educational Needs Coordinator and inclusion lead Mrs Dyson SENCO support	
Mrs Brown – Assistant Head and Deputy DSL	
Mrs Laura Lucas – safeguarding Governor	
Mrs Hartley, Mrs Woodhead and Mrs Costello – Attendance Leads	
Mrs Hopkinson – Before and After School Club – Deputy DSL	

If you are concerned about the safety of a child, act!

Our Named Persons for Child Protection are Alice Jones, Gillian Dyson, Caroline Auty, Joanne Brown, Laura Woodhead, Oliver Thurlby and Janet Hopkinson

Useful phone numbers:

School – 01535 642271

Social Services Initial Contact Point 01274 437500

NSPCC – 0800 800 5000

West Yorkshire Police – 101 or 999

Attendance

Our attendance is improving across school with some children making real progress. Our attendance leads meet regularly to discuss children whose attendance is 91% or below. They may contact you to discuss how we can help.

We have noticed a number of children who are leaving early at the end of the day. If this happens regularly it has an much impact as if they are late. Please only do this when there is no other option.

Holidays – can we just let you know that children WILL tell us if you have been on holiday and not ill and we can usually tell! We can fine retrospectively. Honesty is the best policy, if you are going on holiday, please obtain a form from the office. It may be approved with extenuating circumstances. We can start our child missing in education procedures which involve home visits and in some cases police action if we cannot locate your child. Therefore, please just be honest and tell us you are on holiday – Thank you



A confidential support line for children and young people who live in Bradford, Leeds, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield.

If a child or young person you care for is in a crisis and you are concerned about their emotional wellbeing contact Night OWLS.



SCAN ME

For more information scan the QR Code to watch our video

Call free on: 0800 148 8244 or text us: 07984 392700



Online Grooming is when someone befriends and builds an emotional relationship with a child and communicates with them through the Internet with the intent to commit a sexual offence. This type of victimisation can take place across any platform; from social media and messaging apps to online gaming and live streaming. Often it involves young people being tricked, forced or pressured into doing something they wouldn't normally do (coerced) and often the groomer's goal is to meet the victim in a controlled setting to sexually or physically abuse them. In some cases children may be abducted or have long-lasting psychological damage.



What parents need to know about

ONLINE GROOMING



CHILDREN ARE MOST VULNERABLE

Unsurprisingly children are often most at risk as they are easy to target and unlikely to question the person who is engaging in conversation with them. Groomers will use psychological tricks and methods to try and isolate them from their families and friends and will often choose to target more vulnerable children who may be easier to manipulate. Predators will stalk apps and websites that are popular with young people and will use a 'scattergun' approach to find victims, contacting hundreds online to increase their chances of success.



LIVE STREAMING CONCERNS

Predators may use live video to target children in real-time using tricks, dares or built-in gifts to manipulate them. Grooming often takes the form of a game where children receive 'likes' or even money for performing sexual acts. Social media channels, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, all have live streaming capabilities, but there are many apps which children can use to live stream, including Omegle, Live.me, BIGO Live, YouNow and many more.



ANYONE CAN BE A PREDATOR

The Internet has made the ability to interact with strangers online easy. Many sites and apps are reliant on individual users entering their own information when signing up. However individuals can remain anonymous if they choose to enter inaccurate information and many online predator cases are due to groomers using impersonation techniques. However, often the greater threat comes from adults who 'hide in plain sight', choosing to befriend young children without hiding their real identity.



CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DETECT

Unfortunately, most children find the 'grooming' process (before any meeting) an enjoyable one as the predator will compliment, encourage, and flatter them to gain their trust, friendship and curiosity - 'a wolf in sheep's clothing' scenario. This often means children fail to disclose or report what is happening. If the groomer is also previously known to the child, their family and their friends, then this can make detection even harder.



FROM OPEN TO CLOSED MESSAGING

Online predators may contact their victims using any number of ways including social media, forums, chat rooms, gaming communities or live streaming apps. Sometimes there is little need to develop a 'friendship / rapport stage', as the victim has already shared personal information online and is communicating openly with others. Children may also be prepared to add other online users they don't know so well to gain 'online credibility' through increasing their friends list. Predators will often seize this opportunity to slowly build a relationship and then move their conversation with the child to a more secure and private area, such as through direct messaging.

EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Online predators will use emotive language and aim to form close, trusted bonds with their victims through showering them with compliments and making them feel good about themselves. Often victims will refer to them as their 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends' and it can be difficult to convince some young people that they have been groomed, often leading to lasting psychological effects.



Safety Tips for Parents & Carers



IT'S GOOD TO TALK

It's unlikely that you can stop your child using the internet, nor can you constantly monitor their online activities, but you can talk to your child on a regular basis about what they do online. By talking openly with them about online relationships, they can quickly ascertain the kind of behaviour which is appropriate or inappropriate. Ask them whether they have any online friends or if they play online games with people they haven't met. This could then open up conversations about the subject of grooming.



CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

In order to give your child a safer online experience, it is important to check privacy settings or parental controls on the networks, devices, apps, and websites they use. Disable location sharing if you can. If you use location-sharing apps to check where your child is, remember that these could always be used by strangers to follow your child without their knowledge. Ensure that you check options so that location information is never shared with anyone except those they have permission to share with.



MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA & LIVE-STREAMING USE

It's important to be aware of what your child is sharing on social media and with whom. Create your own profile and become 'friends' with them or follow them so that you can monitor their activity. Similarly, always check on them if they are live streaming and implement privacy controls. Choose a generic screen name and profile picture that hides their identity. You may also feel more comfortable being present each time they live stream.



STICK TO 'TRUE FRIENDS'

Make it clear to your child that they should not accept friend requests from people they don't know and to verify friend requests with people who they do know. Encourage them to only interact and engage with 'true friends' i.e. those friends who don't ask personal questions such as close family and friends. Remind them to never agree to chat privately with a stranger or someone they don't really know and to never divulge personal information, such as mobile phone numbers, addresses, passwords or the name of their school.



DISCUSS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Talk to your child about what a healthy relationship looks like and how to detect someone who might not be who they claim to be. Explain that groomers will pay your child compliments and engage in conversations about personal information, such as hobbies and relationships. They may admire how well they play an online game or how they look in a photo. Groomers will also try and isolate a child from people close to them, such as parents and friends, in order to make their relationship feel special and unique.

BE SUPPORTIVE

Show your child that you will support them and make sure they understand they can come to you with any concerns they may have. They need to know they can talk to you if someone does something they are uncomfortable with, whether that is inappropriate comments, images, requests or sexual comments.



Meet our expert

Jonathan Taylor is an online safety expert and former Covert Internet Investigator for the Metropolitan Police. He is a specialist in online grooming and exploitation and has worked extensively with both UK and international schools in delivering training and guidance around the latest online dangers, social media apps and platforms.



LOOK OUT FOR WARNING SIGNS

Child safety experts have identified key grooming patterns and advise parents to look out for:

- Secretive online behaviour.
- Late night internet or smartphone usage.
- Meeting new friends in unusual places.
- Becoming clingy, develop sleeping or eating problems or even bedwetting.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities.
- Having new items, such as clothes or phones, unexplainably.
- Seem withdrawn, anxious, depressed or aggressive.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.

