



SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025- Issue 2

Latest advice for parents and carers

Welcome to our Safeguarding Newsletter. Our aim is to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues that we feel will be of importance to you. This issue contains information and support on where to get support, Online Safety, Christmas support, mental health and wellbeing links, training opportunities and local support groups and workshops

Safeguarding at Christmas

Christmas is often seen as the most magical, family-orientated time of the year. But with this focus on family comes pressure – so much so that that same magic can be lost under the expectation of what Christmas SHOULD be.

Whether it's the anxiety that comes with spending extended time around family members or not having a family to spend Christmas with.

This edition of our Safeguarding Newsletter will look at the many things to consider to ensure that both your child and adult safeguarding responsibilities aren't lost in the craziness of Christmas.

Pressures and Expectations

Christmas time comes with a lot of ideals that many households try to reach. This can bring families and groups closer together – but it can also cause tension. Whether it's the abundance of alcohol or being cooped up for longer periods than usual, conflict can ensue and it can require safeguarding practices to be used.

On top of this, children in particular can have a very specific and idealised version of Christmas in their heads that may not come true in their household. Managing the expectations of those within your circle at Christmas is complicated, but the most important thing to remember is to prioritise the people first.

Pressure creates environments that can facilitate abusive behaviour. So, the key is to create a Christmas atmosphere not based on vanity (presents, lights, and whether you can cook the best dinner), but on welcoming values that make all members feel accepted.



Lifelines and Support Networks

The NSPCC are here to help 24/7 and children can call their [Childline](#) number on 0800 1111

[ThinkUKnow](#) – links to various sites

[Safer Internet Centre](#)

[Shout](#) is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text 85258

Anna Freud Crisis Messenger – If you need support, you can text **AFC** to **85258**. A free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is feeling overwhelmed or is struggling to cope.

[Educateagainsthate](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

[Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world.

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment.

Find a food bank <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>



Mental Wellbeing

A consideration for both children and adults is their mental health over Christmas. Those who are or have been a part of households with child protection issues, domestic violence and mental health difficulties can carry those issues into other environments – sometimes unknowingly.



It's been shown that people with mental health problems struggle with self-harm and suicidal feelings due to the pressure of Christmas. Not only can this create hostile environments for adults but the effects can ripple out onto children and young people, putting them in extremely vulnerable situations.

It's important to know how to best [support those with mental health issues](#) at a time where it can seem like they are discarded.

Protect your phone number with trueCall38

Do you get frustrated when you complete a form, and you are asked to enter your telephone number, even when you know that the company doesn't really need it?

What are they going to do with it? Who will they give it to? Your privacy is valuable – **protect your phone number with trueCall38!**

The solution: enter the phone number 0333 88 88 88 88 (that's three threes, eight eights) as your phone number, and if, or rather when, they call, those cold call culprits will hear the short but sweet recorded message: *'trueCall38 is handling my calls. I prefer not to be contacted by phone, so please contact me via my email address. Goodbye!'* Genius! For further information visit - [trueCall38](#)

trueCall38

0333 88 88 88 88



Bierton CE Combined School

Aim High, Achieve Success, Find Your Sparkle and Shine



Mental Health
Support Team
Buckinghamshire



FOR PARENTS
AND CARERS

FREE

LIVE WEBINARS

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



DATES:
JAN - APRIL
2026



TIME:
6PM - 7.30PM






To register, scan the QR codes on the next page!

01865 901566

bucksmhst@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

*PLEASE NOTE: YOUR CHILD MUST ATTEND AN MHST SCHOOL FOR ACCESS TO THE WEBINARS. IF YOU ARE UNSURE, PLEASE CONTACT US.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SECURE YOUR PLACE:

Topic	Date	Link	QR code
Exam Stress	Monday 12 th of January 2026	Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams	
Awareness and understanding of eating disorders	Monday the 26 th of January 2026	Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams	
Understanding childhood development and behaviour	Tuesday the 10 th of February 2026	Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams	
Understanding low mood	Monday the 9 th of March 2026	Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams	
Understanding adolescent development and behaviour	Monday the 20 th of April 2026	Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams	



#TALKSUICIDE

The #TalkSuicide campaign has been created by the Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership to reduce the stigma around talking about suicide by raising awareness of free suicide prevention training available from the Zero Suicide Alliance.

**TALKING ABOUT
SUICIDE DOESN'T
CAUSE PEOPLE TO
KILL THEMSELVES.
NOT TALKING ABOUT
IT MIGHT.**



GET HELP NOW.

#TalkSuicide is a suicide prevention campaign. If you're feeling suicidal and need urgent help, or if you're worried about someone you know, help is available from the services below:

Samaritans Call 116 123
C.A.L.M (for men, 5pm-12am) Call 0800 585 858
Papyrus Call 0800 068 4242

IN 20 MINUTES LEARN HOW TO:



SEE.

Identify the signs of when someone might be suffering from suicidal thoughts and behaviour.



SAY.

Feel comfortable speaking out about suicide in a supportive manner.



SIGNPOST.

Signpost anyone suffering to the correct services and support e.g Samaritans call 116 123.

Take the Training: https://zsa.frank-cdn.uk/scorm/full-training-v2/story.html?utm_source=Relias&utm_campaign=Training-Landing-Page



Stay Safe This Elf-mas

1. **Light up your exterior** - Fairy lights don't just need to be for decoration; any form of outdoor lighting can help protect your home - lighting up darkness that thieves love.
2. **Ensure you only put rubbish out just before bin collections**, folding boxes inside out and breaking down all packaging into your bins so that you are not advertising any new contents in your home to thieves. If possible, remove labels with your name/address.
3. Before spending online, ensure you **'take five'**. Check the sender of any email/text links to ensure they are legitimate.
4. **Don't advertise your plans** - including sharing holiday posts on social media - you could be giving a potential burglar knowledge of when your house is going to be empty.
5. **Consider using a timer light switch** - when you are due to be out during darker hours – deterring thieves from committing a crime as they will think someone is home.
6. **Keep your valuables and Christmas presents away from plain sight**- this includes storing house and car keys away from the front door. Keyless car keys can be stored in a faraday pouch for added protection.
7. **Be aware of your surroundings when out and about**- ensure your bag is closed - be wary of distractions that may be used to pick-pocket valuable items.
8. **Use a personal safety app** such as [Hollie Guard](#) or [Get Your Coat](#) to help you get home safe.
9. **Display a 'no cold caller' sticker**
10. **Remove any valuable items from your vehicle** - Keep your car and valuables safe by always adopting a 'clear car' policy.



12 tips for

HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY



1

Water fresh trees daily



2

Check all lights before decorating

3

Make sure smoke alarms work, replace if 10+ years old

4

Install a carbon monoxide detector- it's now the law

5

Develop and practice a fire escape plan



6

Use extension cords safely



7

Give space heaters at least one metre of space

8

Avoid using real candles- go flameless instead



9

Keep matches and lighters out of kids' reach



10

Watch what you heat- pay attention to your cooking



11

Encourage smokers to smoke outside



12

If under the influence of alcohol, avoid cooking or smoking





What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ALLERGIES & ANAPHYLAXIS

An allergy is an overreaction of the immune system to a food or substance that's usually harmless. Symptoms can be mild, but for some people they can be very serious. This is known as anaphylaxis.



HOW TO SAY ANAPHYLAXIS: ANA-FIL-AX-IS



ALLERGIES AND ANAPHYLAXIS

- Mild allergy symptoms are treated with antihistamines.
- Anaphylaxis is treated with adrenaline, which is administered via an auto-injector into the outer upper thigh.
- Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency and a threat to life.



WHAT ADRENALINE DOES

Adrenaline reduces swelling, opens the patient's airways and raises their blood pressure. Patients must go to hospital for monitoring, as the reaction could return.



ANAPHYLAXIS SYMPTOMS

AIRWAY

Symptoms include swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways; tightening of the throat; a hoarse voice; and difficulty swallowing.



BREATHING

Symptoms include persistent cough; sudden onset of wheezing; breathing difficulty; and noisy breathing.



CIRCULATION

Symptoms include pale and clammy skin; dizziness; feeling faint; sudden sleepiness; tiredness; confusion; and loss of consciousness.



In extreme cases of anaphylaxis, there could be a dramatic fall in the patient's blood pressure. The patient may become weak and floppy, and have a sense of something terrible happening. Any of the ABC symptoms listed above may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, be fatal.

TOP 14 FOOD ALLERGENS:

(However, be aware people can be allergic to anything.)



CELERY



FISH



CRUSTACEANS



EGGS



MILK



SOYA



LUPIN



CEREALS



TREE NUTS



SESAME



MUSTARD



MOLLUSCS



PEANUTS



SULPHITES

NON-FOOD ALLERGENS:



POLLEN



PET HAIR/DANDER



INSECT VENOM



MEDICATION/DRUGS

LINKS TO FURTHER RESOURCES - Scan the QR codes to find out more



AllergyWise®



EpiPen



Jext



ADRENALINE
AND A&Is

Meet Our Expert

Anaphylaxis UK is the only UK-wide charity operating solely for the growing numbers of people at risk of serious allergic reactions and anaphylaxis. While there's no treatment or cure for anaphylaxis, we believe that by providing information, training and support, there's a brighter future for people living with serious allergies.



The
National
College®



Online Safety Act

What is the Online Safety Act?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is a set of laws introduced to protect children and adults online. Ofcom is the regulator for online safety in the UK, responsible for ensuring companies follow the new rules. As part of this role, Ofcom have designed the Children Codes of practice, which came into force in July 2025. The codes outline what all online services likely to be accessed by children must do to protect children online, for example:

- Enforce age limits.
- Protect children from accessing harmful or age-inappropriate content. This includes content relating to self-harm and eating disorders.
- Ensure users can easily report harmful content.

Ofcom has the power to enforce the rules as well as issue fines if companies fail to comply. You can find out more here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/new-rules-for-a-safer-generation-of-children-online>

How will it help to protect my child?

One of the main purposes of the Act is to protect children online. Ofcom has published information on how they are helping children to be safer online. The first link is a guide for parents, which also includes a section on what you can do as a parent. You can access this information here:

- <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/how-ofcom-is-helping-children-to-be-safer-online-a-guide-for-parents>
- <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/how-the-online-safety-act-will-help-to-protect-children>



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

What is AI?

AI is when a computer/machine can learn and perform tasks like a human. Its popularity continues to grow, and examples include:

- Search engines such as Google now include an AI generated overview as part of their results.
- Virtual assistants like Alexa, Meta AI and Siri.
- Chatbots such as ChatGPT and My AI from Snapchat.

Opportunities

AI can be an effective tool when used correctly, for instance:

- Homework – children can use AI to support and assist their learning.
- Advice – AI can be used to provide information and suggestions on a variety of topics.

Risks and concerns

- Misinformation – ensure your child understands that AI can sometimes provide incorrect or misleading information.
- Privacy issues – read any privacy policies before using.
- Chat apps - a simple search of “AI Chat” within the App store highlights the number of apps already available that are not suitable for children as many are rated as 17+.
- Image manipulation – there are AI tools that can be used to digitally remove clothes from photos, which clearly raises serious safeguarding and privacy concerns.
- Deepfakes – there are also AI tools that create realistic, fake videos that can be used to spread misinformation or cause harm.



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

How can I protect my child?

To help keep your child safe online, it is important to:

- Check age ratings of any apps or websites that your child accesses.
- Develop your child's digital literacy by highlighting the risks of AI and showing them how important it is to verify what they see online.
- Set up appropriate parental controls on their devices/ broadband.
- Chat to your child regularly and ensure your child knows that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if anything concerns them.

Further information

- Overview: <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/byactivity/using-artificial-intelligence/what-is-ai-artificial-intelligence/>
- Should you worry if your child has an AI friend? <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/should-you-worry-if-your-childhas-ai-friend>

Test your knowledge: Online Scams

Childnet have created a quiz for 9- 13 year-olds that includes a range of potential online scams, as well as tips to help your child protect themselves online. Find out more here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/test-your-knowledge-about-online-scams-with-our-quiz-for-9-13-year-olds/>



Drink Awareness Training

DRINK DRUG HUB.

Every time we get a drink there's one thing we don't get – drink. Whether it's telling our children to avoid drugs but then giving them alcohol, or buying booze as part of our weekly shop, it's clear we have a strange relationship with alcohol. How did one of the UK's most harmful drugs become so widely accepted? And what does this mean for people who drink?

Find out the facts with this free 1-hour course for people who drink, their friends and family, and professionals.

<https://drinkdrughub.co.uk/training/getting-drink-drink-module-1/>

EAL Resources for Online Safety

Please see below for useful websites to support your children, together with a link for leaflets in other languages that will assist you in keeping your children safe on-line.

Parents: Supporting Young People Online (Childnet)

<https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/SupportingYoung-People-Online.pdf>

Leaflets available in other languages here <https://www.childnet.com/resources/supportingyoung-people-online>

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| • Arabic | • Punjabi |
| • Bengali | • Somali |
| • English | • Spanish |
| • Farsi | • Turkish |
| • French | • Urdu |
| • Hindi | • Vietnamese |

ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS UP TO DATE?

It is vitally important that if you change your home phone / email / mobile number, that you immediately let the school know, so that we have the most up to date contact details.

Thank you.

USEFUL ONLINE SAFETY WEBSITE

Internet Matters – Contains a wide range of online safety advice for parents to keep their children safe on-line.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>



We know that for lots of families your circumstances may have changed recently, so if you feel your child may now be eligible for Pupil Premium, please complete the form and return it to the school office. If you are not sure, complete it anyway and we can run it through the Bucks System.



Free School Meals & Pupil Premium

Research shows that better food in schools is improving what children eat during the school day, and there's evidence of a clear link between what children eat at lunchtime in school, where they eat it and how they focus with their teachers in the afternoon.

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools in England are eligible for Universal Infant Free School Meals. This includes infant pupils in maintained infant and primary schools, free schools, academies, special schools and pupil referral units.

Free School Meals are also available to pupils in years 3 and above whose parents receive certain benefits and register using this application form. Please return this form to your child's school if you think you qualify for Free School Meals.



Pupil Premium - completing this form could also raise money for your child's school...



The Pupil Premium is a Government scheme that provides funding to schools of £985 - £1,385 per pupil whose parents receive one of the qualifying benefits listed on this application form.

The school can use this money to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers

Q. How can I apply?

A. Simply complete this application form and return it to your child's school

Q. Why should I apply?

A. You and your school could benefit from Pupil Premium funding worth £985 - £1385 per pupil. As well as this, if your child is in year 3 or above this form is also used to apply for Free School Meals and could save you hundreds of pounds a year.

Q. My child is in Reception, year 1 or year 2 and automatically receives Universal Infant Free School Meals, do I still need to complete this form?

A. Yes! Pupil Premium is only paid to a school if the parent registers using this form and is receiving one of the qualifying benefits listed. Even though your child automatically receives free meals at school completing this application form may entitle your school to Pupil Premium funding.

To register for free school meals, including Pupil Premium, please complete this application form and return it to your child's school as soon as possible to avoid delay.



Buckinghamshire Council

2022/23

FREE SCHOOL MEAL & PUPIL PREMIUM APPLICATION FORM

CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS/CARERS RECEIVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS ARE ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND WILL GENERATE PUPIL PREMIUM FOR THEIR SCHOOL:

- ✓ **Income Support (IS)**
- ✓ **Income-based (not contribution-based) Job Seeker's Allowance (IBJSA)**
- ✓ The guaranteed element of the **State Pension Credit**.
- ✓ **Income-related employment and support allowance**
- ✓ **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- ✓ **Universal Credit** with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400
- ✓ **Child Tax Credit** (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190
- ✓ Where they are entitled to Child Tax Credit and also Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week, their children are entitled to free school meals.

Children who receive IS or IBJSA in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.

Administration for the provision of free school meals is undertaken by Buckinghamshire Council for those pupils attending an education establishment within Buckinghamshire. This form should be completed and returned to your child's school.

1. DETAILS OF PARENT/CARER WITH QUALIFYING BENEFIT – COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS

SURNAME/FAMILY NAME as it appears on your benefit letter:

FORENAME: **TITLE:** **DATE OF BIRTH:** dd/mm/yyyy

NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER

OR

NATIONAL ASYLUM SEEKER NUMBER

ADDRESS

POST CODE

DAYTIME TEL. NO(s)

2. DETAILS OF THE CHILD/CHILDREN

Surname/Family Name Forename Date of Birth Name of School

3. DECLARATION

I declare that the information given on this form is true and complete and I undertake to inform the school if my entitlement to one of the qualifying benefits is terminated. I understand that the results of any free school meal eligibility check may also be used to assess my entitlement to other support/benefits, including free travel to school. *The remainder of this declaration does not apply to pupils in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 - I agree that you will use the information I have provided to process my claim for free school meals and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial, and ongoing, entitlement to free school meals.* I understand that I may be liable for any costs incurred in providing free school meals for my child(ren), should I fail to inform the school of the termination of my benefit.

I have read and I understand the above declaration.

SIGNATURE _____ (Parent/Guardian) **DATE** _____