



# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026- 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 attendance, child exploitation and some parenting tips.

### Attendance

We want all our pupils at Bierton CE Combined School to enjoy coming to school. Good Attendance is absolutely vital in enabling children to achieve academically and to develop a love of learning. Regular attendance equips children with an essential toolkit of key social and emotional skills, which will give our pupils the best possible start in life and future success. Research has proven that there is a high correlation between school attendance and academic performance and success and persistent absence from school is often the greatest single cause of poor performance and achievement.

As a school, we have a responsibility to ensure that all children have high levels of attendance. We have high expectations for the attendance of every child. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school because as well as it being a legal requirement it is also each child's right to access their education on a regular basis.

Evidence shows that there is often a clear link between poor attendance and safeguarding concerns. Therefore, **if a child's attendance is irregular it does raise safeguarding alarm bells** for all our staff and it will therefore be looked in to in more detail.

#### Why is it so important to attend every day?

Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous day(s).

Many classes use discussions, demonstrations, experiments and participation as part of the daily learning activities, and these cannot be made up by those who are absent.

#### Are there other benefits to my child?

Pupils with good attendance records generally achieve higher grades and enjoy school more.

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life.

Regular school attendance patterns encourage the development of other responsible patterns of behaviour.

#### What can parents do to help? .

Model the value of education, including the importance of regular attendance.

Make sure that your child goes to school regularly and arrives on time- you will establish a good habit that your child will carry through life.

If your child starts missing school, work with the school to put things right.

If your child is ill or must miss school for some other reason, contact school immediately.

Take an interest in your child's school work and be involved in the school as much as possible-your child will value school more if you do.



## Child Exploitation

# #LookCloser

Across the country, young people are being manipulated, sexually abused, forced to launder money and deal drugs. Exploitation isn't obvious. But it happens everywhere. And you can stop it. Get to know the signs of child exploitation and how to report it through our award-winning #LookCloser campaign with the British Transport Police and National County Lines Coordination Centre. Together we can protect children from this abuse.

The Children's Society have put together clear information about the signs of child exploitation and also linked it to what you might spot in different industries.

[https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/lookcloser?dm\\_i=5438,1DURP,5U02C4,5OR8B,1,0,0,0](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/lookcloser?dm_i=5438,1DURP,5U02C4,5OR8B,1,0,0,0)

## Domestic Abuse



Disagreements in relationships are normal but when they become frequent and begin to form a pattern, it might be a sign that something is wrong, and possibly abusive – a word that is hard for many people to think about or even say out loud.

### If you need to talk to someone...

If you want to access support over the phone, you can call:

National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247 – [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/) (run by Refuge)

The Men's Advice Line, for male domestic abuse survivors – 0808 801 0327 (run by Respect)

The Mix, free information and support for under 25s in the UK – 0808 808 4994

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 999 5428 (run by Galop)

Samaritans (24/7 service) – 116 123

Rights of Women advice lines, there are a range of services [available](#)



# Safe around roads

“ *One act of bad driving robbed the world of a beautiful, intelligent and caring young person. Our lives have been turned upside down by our daughter’s death.* ”

Bereaved Dad whose daughter was killed in a car accident

**It can be hard knowing how best to teach your child to stay safe. Here we help you to break it down and keep it simple.**

## Pedestrians – younger children

- Get young children into the habit of holding your hand or use walking reins
- Ask questions while you’re out to help them understand simple ideas like ‘fast’ and ‘slow’
- You can start teaching the Green Cross Code from age five, encouraging children to stop, look, listen and think
- But they won’t always remember safety rules, especially if they’re excited or spot a friend across the road
- Children will copy what you do, so try to avoid stepping into the road without checking for traffic first. If you can do the right thing, it will help them get into good habits.

## Pedestrians – older children

- Children find it difficult judging the speed and distance of traffic until they’re at least eight. Accidents peak around 12, as children start making independent journeys
- Children learn by doing and practising. If they’re moving to a new school, help them practise the route over the holidays. Where are the safe places to cross? What should they do if they see their bus and they’re on the other side of the road?
- They can be mesmerised by their mobiles, so remind them not to talk or text on their phones or listen to music while crossing the road.




## In the car

- Make sure your car seat is the right one for your child’s height and weight and for your car - not all seats fit all cars

## Cycling

- Get your child into the habit of wearing their helmet. If you cycle as a family, remember to wear yours too
- Look out for cycle training. Many schools offer courses to help children gain practical skills.

 **Driving** – speed is everything when it comes to a child’s chances of survival. They’re 3.5 times more likely to die if hit by a car doing between 30-40 mph.

- Keep an eye on your speed
- Keep your phone in the glove compartment so it can’t distract you.



# Fire safe families

*“ He ran upstairs and into a wall of black smoke and could feel intense heat coming through the walls.”*

Coroner's report, death of 5-year old who played with a lighter

**Your family are eight times more likely to die in a fire if you don't have a working smoke alarm. If a fire breaks out at night, you won't smell the smoke and wake up. The poisonous fumes will send you deeper into sleep.**

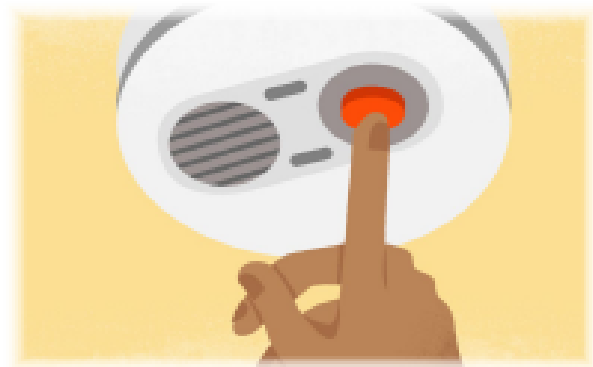
**It makes sense to have a smoke alarm upstairs and downstairs, to save you from smoke that can kill in minutes.**

## Prevent fires

- Cooking is the main cause of fires in the home – stay in the kitchen if children are cooking
- Keep matches, lighters and lit candles or tea-lights well out of reach of young children and teach children not to play with them
- Take care not to plug lots of chargers and equipment into an extension lead from one electrical socket - the socket will be dangerously overloaded
- Stay close by when you have fat heating and never pour water onto hot fat
- Store things like hair straighteners safely – avoid leaving them switched on or where a child might be able to switch them on
- Avoid charging e-bike or e-scooter batteries when you're out or overnight. Follow the instructions and don't over charge
- Double check your cigarette is out and be careful smoking if you're really tired (or in bed) in case you fall asleep with it in your hand.

## Check your smoke alarms

- You need a working smoke alarm upstairs and downstairs
- Test your alarms every month
- If you live in rented housing your landlord is responsible for providing alarms.



## Plan your escape

- Work out your escape route in case of a fire and practice it with your family
- Keep the stairs and escape route clear of clutter at night
- Keep keys to any doors on your escape route in one place so you know where they are in an emergency.

## Teach children what to do if they see a fire

- Tell someone straight away – a grown-up if possible
- Don't try to put the fire out yourself
- Get outside as quickly as possible. Don't try to hide from the fire
- Never go back inside for anything.

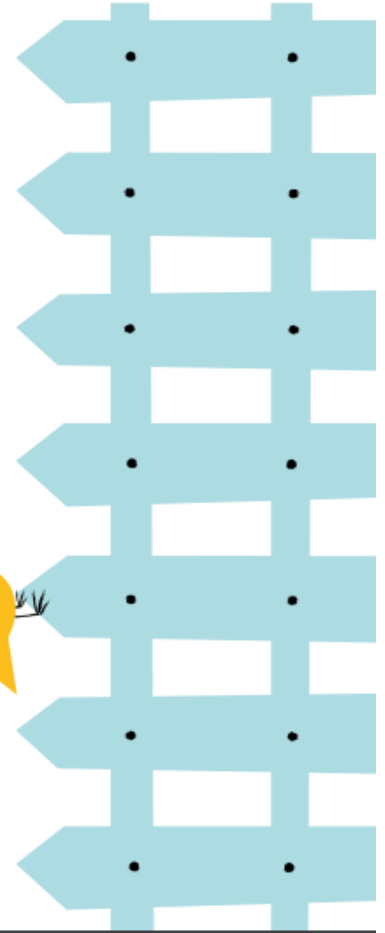


## How can I set boundaries?

All children need love, guidance and to have rules and boundaries. Rules and boundaries help families to understand how to behave towards each other, and what's OK and not OK. But the best way to go about this will vary based on your child's age and stage of development. All children are different and develop and reach milestones at different rates.

You can find more UK-wide information at

**[nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development)**



## NSPCC—Positive Parenting Advice

### Top tips...

#### for all ages

- Keep guidance simple and consistent.
- If your child is behaving in a way you don't want them to, clearly explain what you want them to do instead.
- Be available and make time for your child, so they will come to you when they feel something is wrong or they are upset.
- Keep talking and listening to your child even if at times it feels like a challenge. Start listening from a very early age and set a pattern for life.
- Review family rules as your child gets older and recognise the different needs of children living at home. For example, you shouldn't expect the same from your 12-year-old as you would from your four-year-old.
- Get support from friends and try any good ideas they have found helpful.
- If you are struggling and feel things are getting out of hand, get advice from your GP, a health visitor, or your child's teacher.

#### for babies – toddlers

- Introduce boundaries from an early age.
- Reflect to your child that you know how they may be feeling – for example, saying "I know you're frustrated," if your child is struggling to do something.
- Share your own feelings if you find it helps to relieve your stress – for example, "I know you're tired but I'm tired too."
- Try to avoid using orders and ultimatums.

#### for school age – teenagers

- Be willing and give your child opportunities to show they can be trusted.
- Avoid criticism wherever possible. If your child has done something wrong, explain that it is the action and not them that you're unhappy with.
- Try to avoid getting trapped in petty arguments. There are rarely any winners!
- Consider ways to negotiate or offer choices as your child gets older.



## NSPCC—Positive Parenting Advice

**Only you will know what works for your child but here are some helpful points to think about.**

- Praise children whenever possible for all they do.
- Reward positive behaviour and consider asking what would be a good reward.
- Avoid making rash decisions when you're angry.
- Talk to your child about the rewards and consequences of their behaviour, and do it before rather than after.
- Take time to really listen to what your children are saying and explain to them what you are feeling.
- Be a role model and don't do things that you wouldn't want your children to do.

**Smacking is never a good idea**

Ideas on bringing up children have changed, and we now know a lot more about the effects of smacking. Smacking can hurt children's feelings – making them resentful and angry, and damaging the relationship between parent and child. This makes parenting and discipline harder in the long run, not easier. Smacking can get out of control.

This also comes back to being a role model. If you smack your child, they may think this is acceptable behaviour and treat other people in the same way.

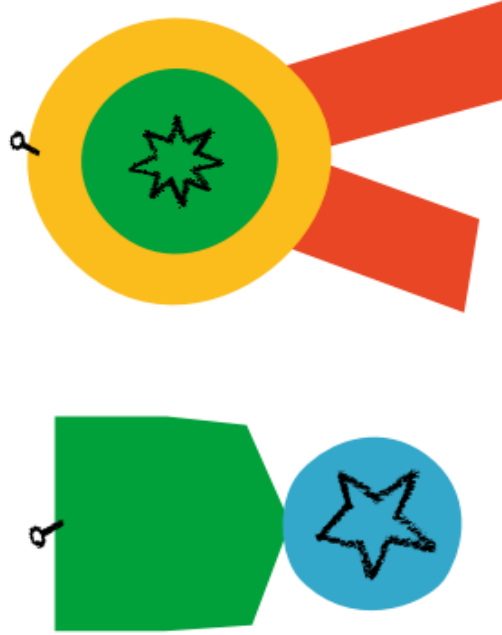
Children may avoid being smacked by lying or hiding how they feel. And they may become withdrawn – not developing independence.

Please note, in Scotland and Jersey (and, from March 2022, in Wales), the law no longer permits any type of physical punishment of children.

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 Finding the right balance of rewards and discipline is a key part of positive parenting.  
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## Rewards and discipline

Different parents will have different views about the best ways to encourage children to adapt their behaviour. While some younger children may respond well to incentives like reward charts, and some older children may respond to the offer of being allowed to stay out a bit later, other children won't.





## NSPCC—Positive Parenting Advice

When stress takes over, it can make you lose your temper and say or do things you later regret. You might find yourself saying something hurtful or smacking your child. Living in a stressful home can also impact on your child's feelings and healthy development. But you can avoid this by managing stress and anger.

• **Accept support**

This may be from your family, a friend or by using online forums. Knowing that there are other parents in the same situation can be a great encouragement.

• **Make time for yourself**

This may involve doing things like exercising or listening to music. It can be as simple as a long soak in the bath, watching a film or going for a walk. If you live with a partner, agree a way to make sure you both get time off.

• **Get help**

This is a positive step to take and not a sign of weakness. If you're feeling stressed and anxious all the time, seek some outside advice. A range of difficulties may get in the way of being a parent and it's important to get help. Talk to your GP or health visitor, or call the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

• **Be as prepared as possible**

Parenting can of course be stressful at certain times, so consider ways of dealing with this in advance. For example, if your child gets bored and irritable on long journeys, or waiting for things like doctor's appointments, take a couple of books or activities to keep them busy.

• **Don't overlook success**

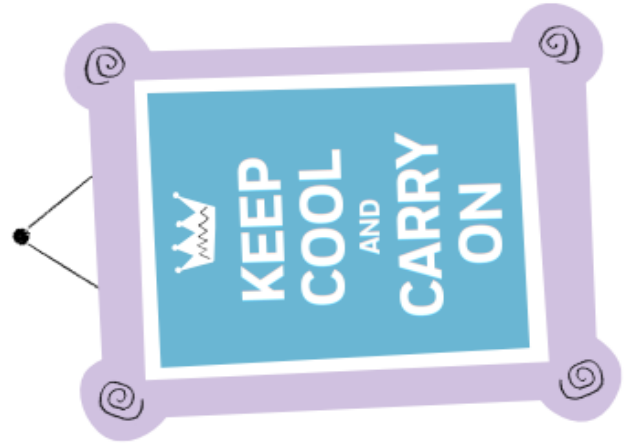
If you have coped well with something difficult, be proud of what you've achieved. Celebrate your children's successes too.

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**Look after yourself**

Being a parent or carer is so important. While it's common to feel less needed as children get older, or to feel more like a taxi driver or cleaner, you are the person your child will look to for help. Finding time for yourself is something you shouldn't overlook or feel guilty about. It may take planning but having a break can help you to be the best parent you can be.  
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# Keeping your cool

It's important to find ways to relieve your stress and manage if you're feeling upset or angry. Lots of things, not only children's behaviour, can make us feel stressed – from family relationships to managing a work-life balance, health, housing, poverty, unemployment and much more. You want to be the best parent you can, but being stressed is stressful!





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 \_\_\_\_\_



## 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
- Bengali
- English
- Farsi
- French
- Hindi
- Punjabi
- Somali
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Urdu
- 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/>

## SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS (FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION)

Every week millions of children are playing football, many of whom do so with organised clubs and organisations. The Football Association, as part of its safeguarding response, has devised, and created a safeguarding course for parents/carers. The course aim is to help parents make informed choices about the football settings where they enrol their children. The course helps parents to recognise best practice and see where there may be concerns, so that they can act and report them quickly and effectively.

The free course can be accessed here: <https://learn.englishfootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-awareness-for-parents-and-carers>

