

# Safe At Summerhill

**At Summerhill School we are committed to Safeguarding our children and young people as well as promoting positive well-being for all.**

This Safeguarding newsletter, aims to help staff, parents and students alike to be aware of the safeguarding and mental health issues, giving you useful links and resources to use if you have concerns. If you have concerns or ideas for future topics please do not hesitate to contact us on the main school number 01384 816165 or via email on [studentssupport@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:studentssupport@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk)

## Chroming Challenge

What is "Chroming"? The term "chroming" refers to a recent drug trend in which individuals inhale the fumes of intoxicants such as aerosols, paint, or solvents to experience a high. The name came from the original act of sniffing chrome-based paint. Although using inhalants isn't new, recent social media trends are adding a new dimension of peer pressure through the 'TikTok Challenge'. The challenge, also known as 'WhipTok' has sparked renewed interest, especially among teenagers, who are being encouraged to try this dangerous practice. Why is it dangerous? As well as the short-term effects typical of substance abuse, experts have warned that 'chroming' can lead to long term brain damage and damage to internal organs. We have already seen stories of teenage deaths in Australia and Ireland resulting from chroming.

## Hot Water Bottle Safety

Doctors and nurses across the UK are urging us to use hot water bottles correctly as they can cause serious burns. Do hot water bottles expire? Yes, they do. Yes, they do. Rubber deteriorates over time so old hot water bottles can break and cause serious burns. It is advised to regularly check for signs of wear and tear and not use hot water bottles that are more than two years old. This flower symbol, found on hot water bottles, indicates exactly when it was made. The number in the middle is the year it was made, the flower segments represent the 12 months of the year and the dots inside those represent the number of weeks. What to do in an emergency. COOL the burn for 20 minutes under cool running water. CALL for help. COVER the burn loosely with cling film. If you would like to read to more please follow this link [Hot Water Bottle Safety](#)

## National Grief Awareness Week

National Grief Awareness Week is taking place 2 to 8 December 2023. Grief affects people in different ways. If your partner, relative or friend has died, you may find it hard to cope with your emotions and the practical things you have to do. Grief is a word for some of the feelings you may have after the death of someone close to you. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Some people describe being overcome or frightened by their feelings, others say they feel numb. The thoughts and feelings you have will vary. Sometimes, they may be very intense and stop you doing things. At other times, they may be in the background and you can still do your day-to-day activities. Your feelings may change day to day or even hour to hour. It is quite normal to have ups and downs. If you continue to be overwhelmed by your feelings, it is important to get the right help and support. You should talk to your GP or another health or social care professional. If you would like to read more please follow this link [Grief Awareness](#).

## What Schools Need to Know about The Online Safety Act

After a lengthy gestation period, the UK Government's wide-ranging changes to the legislation around digital safeguarding have become enshrined in law as the Online Safety Act. The first of its kind in Britain, the act aims to improve protection for children online and clamp down on illegal material. Regulated by Ofcom, it will primarily impact social media platforms and companies which host user-generated content. The new legislation, however, also carries implications for schools and their staff. Although further developments are expected, our #WakeUpWednesday guide summarises the main points of the act that schools need to be aware of so far – outlining some specific areas that the new laws address and what effect, in practical terms, this will have on education providers.



Mrs Sprouting  
Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead



Mr Randle  
Deputy  
Safeguarding  
Lead



Ms Gordon  
Deputy  
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Mr Quirke  
Deputy  
Safeguarding  
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Mr Cresswell  
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# What Schools Need to Know about THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT

The Online Safety Act was passed into UK law in October 2023, with the aim of establishing major new layers of protection for children when they're online. The government has pledged "a zero-tolerance approach to protecting children from online harm" – and the act certainly includes more powerful legislation which should help to safeguard young people in the digital world. Our guide summarises the key points for schools ...

## WHAT THE ACT WILL DO

### HARMFUL CONTENT

Social media sites must rapidly remove illegal and/or harmful content such as bullying or harassing comments; pornography; and content that supports extremist activity or encourages or depicts violence, suicide, self harm or eating disorders. If they fail to do so, they can be fined up to 10% of their global revenue while their executives may even face jail time.

### ANIMAL CRUELTY

Content featuring cruelty to animals is now prohibited, even if it originates from abroad (where the law may be different). Again, it is the platform's responsibility to remove this.

### MORE TRANSPARENCY

Sites must be transparent about the hazards that any children using them could encounter – by publishing risk assessments for their platforms, for instance.

### HOSTING MISLEADING ADVERTS

Scams and fraudulent adverts must be blocked or removed, or the hosting companies are liable to be fined.

### NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING

It's now easier to convict online abusers or people who share intimate images without consent, while legislation on the criminality of deep/fakes has been clarified. The new laws also relate to any individuals who even threaten to share such images. This should help to protect women and girls in particular online.

### REPORTING AND FILTERING

Sites should have easy reporting mechanisms for children (or their parents and carers) to flag up problems quickly. They must also provide options to filter out unwanted content.

### AGE-RESTRICTED MATERIAL

Sites must prevent children from accessing age-inappropriate material. This includes enforcing age limits and implementing robust age verification.

## What this means for you

The act has some specific implications for schools: it's essential that leaders understand the new legislation's scope and limitations. The act is certainly a positive step, but as artificial intelligence and other advances in tech continue to produce new challenges, schools will still need to remain extremely vigilant.

### KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

Look out for the Code of Conduct that Ofcom is creating in response to the Online Safety Act. Note that the new legislation doesn't mean an instant change; many of its elements will only come into force at the end of 2023. An Ofcom consultation on 'protecting people from illegal harms online' will be running until February 2024.

### REMEMBER THE ESSENTIALS

Remain mindful of your organisation's own online activities: the legal duty for schools to maintain appropriate software monitoring and filtering, for example, will not change.

### WATCH FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There are some issues on which the legislation remains less clear for now: whether it's possible for Ofcom to scan encrypted private messages (such as on WhatsApp) has yet to be resolved, for instance – making this an area where, for the moment, young people have less legal protection.

### UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN

Staff should learn how to raise concerns with tech companies whose platforms contain anything upsetting or unpleasant. Students also need to be made aware of the newly strengthened laws relating to cyber-bullying, sexting or posting inappropriate content. Young people do make mistakes online – so the clearer their understanding of the possible consequences, the better.

### ENGAGE WITH PARENTS

Schools should also explain to parents and carers the new possibilities that the Online Safety Act affords them in terms of protecting their children. Many parents may have previously felt that there was little they could do about changing online platforms' content; they now have a far greater level of support when complaining about a company or the behaviour of an individual.

### Meet Our Expert

Luke Ramsden is Senior Deputy Headmaster and Director of Safeguarding for the St Benedict's family of schools. He is a regular speaker at conferences and writes in the TES (among other journals) on school leadership, pastoral care and safeguarding. In 2022, he was named Pastoral Leader of the Year at the National Awards for Pastoral Care in Education.



National Online Safety®

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