

BAS INCLUSIVE

Safeguarding together



Autumn 2022- Issue One

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of this Academic year's newsletters from the Battle Abbey School Safeguarding and Welfare team. We aim to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues we feel will be of importance to you.

This first issue will be focused on introducing you to the Safeguarding and wider Welfare team, as well as identifying key trends in the world of Welfare and Young people.

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried about a Child's safety or welfare, please do not hesitate to contact any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads straight away via the school office or via safeguarding@battleabbey.school

The following members of staff are the DSLs for Battle Abbey School:

Whole School DSL: Rebecca Ingall
Senior School Deputy DSLs: Debbie White and Gary Wells
Prep School Deputy DSLs: Joshua Barraclough and Trudy Golding
Nursery/EYFS: Amy Lee and Jackie Richards

NOTE FROM THE DSL

This term seemed to disappear in a blink of an eye, and now the balmy summery evenings are a very distant memory and summer seems as far away as it lasted. We recognize that as we move into these winter months, and with the rising cost of living, things may seem darker and more challenging in lots of ways. This first edition gives you as Parents and Guardians, safety tips for the darker evenings, advice about mental health and the changing seasons, together with support and advice for online safety. The winter months mean more screen time, so you need to be equipped with the latest trends and advice to support you and your child with keeping safe and promoting positive mental health as we move through the season.

We want to foster a greater connection with Parents and Guardians around Welfare and Wellbeing, and know that for some it can be a difficult area to navigate. Please know that the team are on hand to support, and the Welfare team work closely alongside the Heads of Year, Heads of Boarding and Form tutors to provide pastoral care when needed. Finally, keep your eyes peeled in the coming months as we begin to re-introduce visiting speakers, Parent education sessions and other sessions designed to support our young people and their families.

I hope that this newsletter will help to develop our link with you with you and provide support and advice should you need it.

THE SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAM

At Battle Abbey School, Safeguarding, Welfare and Wellbeing are of paramount importance. We have a dedicated Safeguarding team in place to support all children across our setting, from the Nursery, Prep and Senior School. The team is made up of a variety of staff at the Nursery, Prep and Senior sites and below is a little introduction to who they are...

Rebecca Ingall



Rebecca has been at Battle Abbey School now for seven years, and in that time, she has held had a variety of roles. Most recently, she handed over the role as Head of Key Stage 3 and stepped into the role of Head of Welfare and Whole School Designated Safeguarding Lead. Rebecca is passionate about effective pastoral support for young people, by building an inclusive culture at BAS; working with families to foster a good working relationship to ensure each child has the chance to feel heard, empowered and to thrive as they progress. Rebecca is a Mental Health First Aider, Suicide First Aider, Safer Recruitment trained, a Restorative Practitioner and the Designated teacher for Looked After Children.

Debbie White

Debbie has been an integral part of Battle Abbey School for many years, both in the Boarding House and as part of the Surgery and Welfare team, in which she is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Senior School. Debbie is currently training to be our Senior school Mental Health Lead and is a firm believer in advocating for those with mental health issues and working with families to support them in school. As part of this, Debbie is also trained in Mental Health first aid, self-harm and suicide awareness, and in helping children manage bereavement. Prior to joining Battle Abbey School, Debbie worked in the inner city of London working with children from deprived areas, supporting mental health and delivering workshops and youth projects.



Gary Wells



Gary joined the BAS family in November of 2021, as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral Support Officer at the Senior School- a role that has been hugely effective in supporting the Heads of Year and wider pastoral teams, as well as the individual pupils.

As an ex-Judo coach, and originally from Greenwich, Gary has worked with vulnerable at risk children and young people for over two decades. Gary prides himself on imbuing a culture of compassion, striving to go beyond the conventional, empowering our students to engage

positively in their choices and thrive in their education.

As a constant for students in what can seem uncertain times, he aims is to listen to their voices, guiding and pulling solutions they seek from within them, empowering them to make informed choices, valuing their decisions and ensuring they feel safe, secure, and cared for through their journey at BAS.

Joshua Barraclough

Having graduated from the University of Exeter with a BSc in Sports Science, Josh turned his attention to teaching having been inspired by presenting Science shows at Herstmonceux Science Centre . Josh graduated as a Specialist Primary Maths teacher and is an integral part of the Science Leader Network in East Sussex. His passion for sport also benefits our pupils. Josh is an FA qualified football coach as well as being a keen hockey player and a passable batsman during the cricket season! Josh has introduced a bespoke STEAM curriculum at Battle Abbey Prep to help prepare students for the rich opportunities available at the Abbey in these fields. Josh is one of our Prep School Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.



Trudy Golding



Trudy is an invaluable member of the Prep School team. Having graduated from Cambridge University with a degree in Education and Music, Trudy is well placed to cope with the distinct roles she holds within the school. Trudy is currently our SENCO, Director of Enrichment as well as teaching Reception, French and Music. Trudy speaks French and has a CELTA qualification, further strengthening the school's specialist teaching. Trudy is also a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school. Trudy has been at the school for 11 years so is a keen defender of the school's ethos and values.

Jackie Richards

Jackie joined the Battle Abbey Nursery family very recently, and has settled in to the role of Nursery Manager quickly. She originally trained as a primary school teacher and taught in the private sector in Kent; later becoming a tutor and childcare assessor. Having spent several years managing the training of childminders across East Sussex, and running her own childcare training business, Jackie took a leap and set up a nursery which she ran for 9 years. Jackie is one of our EYFS/Nursery DDSLs.



Amy Lee



Amy Lee has been a part of the Nursery team for 15 years and is currently the deputy manager and the room leader for the pre-school Oaks room, as well as the EYFS/Nursery DDSL. Amy loves being fortunate enough to watch the children develop, grow and flourish from Nursery age all the way through to 6th Form at the Senior School. In her spare time she enjoys walking, catching up with friends and family as well as volunteering for local charities.

Emma Maxwell



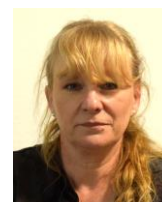
Emma is our School Counsellor and has been with the school for a little over a year now, at both the Prep and Senior sites. In that time, Emma has been hugely instrumental in supporting a great number of our pupils. She works with some on a 1:1 basis, providing counselling sessions, but also works more widely with the Welfare team, running the Welfare Society, running lunch time drop in sessions, Peer group work, supporting with Mental Health awareness days and being involved in other events. If you think your child would benefit from some sessions with Emma, please do contact the school for more information.

Our fabulous Senior school surgery staff are:

Chloe Field

Laura Minty (currently on Maternity Leave)

and Sue Ticehurst



There are also a number of staff in the school who are trained to DSL Level 3, including members of the SLT, Boarding team, and wider academic and support staff.

ONLINE SAFETY

Online safety is by far one of the most important aspects of Safeguarding children and young people in today's climate and being aware of the possible threats and how to deal with them will help tackle this.

These risk groups can be identified in four ways:

- Conduct: children's behaviour may put them at risk
- Content: access to inappropriate or unreliable content may put children at risk
- Contact: interaction with unsuitable, unpleasant or dangerous people may put children at risk
- Commercialism: children's use of platforms with hidden costs may put them at risk

We recognise that children and young people today, do not have an 'Online life' and 'Offline life' that are mutually exclusive; for many young people, they conduct the majority of their academic, social and leisure lives through a device that accesses the internet. There is clear evidence that for most online users, the Internet and Cyber space can be a dangerous place for those who are not educated on how to manage and navigate themselves and their lives online.



“As online technologies and services become more embedded in people’s day-to-day activities and habits, it is increasingly hard, and increasingly less meaningful, to draw a distinction between online and offline life.”

Statistics from the CYP, 'Children & Young People' organization highlight the trends among children regarding accessing online content, with 97% of 16-17 year olds using a Social Media site. What is also being highlighted as a rising trend is the fact that this is not exclusive to teenagers alone: 39% of children aged 3-4 use a mobile phone and a frightening 24% of this age range have control over their own social media profile, with little to no parental or adult input.

Teenagers in particular tend to have an inability to manage, appreciate and understand risk and often have little to no thought about consequence. When they are connected with people online, it can leave them vulnerable to scams, pressure and grooming.

Talking to Children about Online safety

This can be a daunting prospect, but it's important. Our children and young people need to know they can talk to you if something does go wrong. Talking to them about their online activity in the same way you would do about anything else will help them to relax and, if anything is troubling them, they'll be more likely to tell you about it.

At Battle Abbey School, we are always working hard to make our setting as safe as possible, and to educate our young people to recognise the dangers in their world; helping them to utilise their education to navigate these areas and manage the content they are faced with. This also includes ensuring they feel they have an adult or trusted member of staff they can talk to about concerns they have online.

Our Online Safety leads, Fiona Usher and Ika Torok also work closely with the DSL, Rebecca Ingall and the Boarding team to support our boarders; Reminding them about staying safe online, making informed choices about what to access, and monitor carefully the information and sites they are visiting.

We are committed to developing these skills and working in partnership with organisations to support. As part of this, our Online Safety leads are working behind the scenes to develop training, practice, policy and implementation to ensure that Online Safety is embedded across the curriculum, and we aim to introduce an exciting new partnership with the Online Safety Alliance in the New Year. More on this in later editions!

So what resources are available to Parents?



For some parents, it might be incredibly daunting to know how to manage and support your young people through a digital and online world. **Parent Zone** has some brilliant advice and resources that you can access to help these discussions:

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

The **UK Safer Internet** Centre is a useful resource, and work actively to help Parents and Guardians manage the concerns

they might have around Safe internet usage. There are some helpful Blog posts, and an option to ask keyworded questions for advice and support. The Parents and Carers page is here:

www.saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers



Online grooming and sexual abuse affect many children and young people every day. For a number of families, they don't know where to turn to when they experience this grooming, as it can feel scary, overwhelming or even shameful. **CEOP**, Child Exploitation and Online Protection are the first port of call for any young person or Parent who is worried about online grooming, bullying, account hacking or fake accounts. www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/



Websites such as the **NSPCC** have some helpful guides to online safety for Parents and Guardians that are easily accessible www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/ and provide useful and practical support for Parents to ensure your children

stay safe when accessing social media, online games and interacting on the internet with connected devices.

Internet Matters has some engaging leaflets for Parents and Guardians that are age specific from age 0-14+, focus on keeping safe online, screen time, supporting children young people with cyberbullying, digital reputation... the list is endless. The resources can be found here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/esafety-leaflets-resources/>



There are relatively few resources to help children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. **Childnet** has created a set of free, adaptable resources that cover the important topics of healthy relationships, digital

wellbeing and online pornography and are designed to equip and enable parents and carers, to support young people aged 11 and over with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). [Parents and Carers Toolkit | Childnet](#)

Online challenges



The rising trend of platforms such as Tik Tok encourage young people to take part in risky behaviour has been widely reported on the news in recent years. These challenges encourage young people to engage in dares, games or mimic behaviour in order to gain attention or validation from their friendship groups.

Alexa 'challenges' young girl to touch live plug with penny

The dangerous activity, known as 'the penny challenge', began circulating on TikTok and other social media websites about a year ago



Technology

TikTok skull-breaker challenge danger warning

By Jane Wakefield
Technology reporter

© 4 March 2020

Share



Teens jumping in front of moving trucks: 'Angel of death' TikTok challenge kills 2

By Brooke Kato and Asia Grace

June 8, 2022 | 1:09pm | Updated



While not every challenge is a risk to young people, some trends do come with potential dangers and as Parents/Guardians, it is really important that you know how to manage a potential challenge that may present itself as a concern for your child.

The **INEQE Safeguarding group** have a fantastic resource online that helps Parents to respond to the potential online harms that these challenges impose. [Their resource can be found here.](#)

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is any form of bullying or harassment via technology or online. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. There are ways to help prevent a child from being bullied. [This Leaflet](#) was issued by the DfE to give advice to Parents and Guardians about Cyberbullying.

At Battle Abbey School, we do not tolerate any form of Bullying, including Cyberbullying. Please contact your Child's Form tutor or Head of Year if you have any concerns.



SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF-HARM

There is no denying that since the start of the pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children and young people suffering poor mental health and facing the symptoms of this. 1 in 6 children aged 5 to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2020 and this has only increased as we have reverted to our 'new normal'. 83% of young people with mental health needs agree that the coronavirus pandemic made their mental health worse.



One major symptom of children and young people attempting to cope with their mental health has been self-harm ideations or actions. 1 in 4 young women, and 1 in 10 young men report having self-harmed at some point in their lives, though this gap is ever closing.

Self-harm can be seen as a frightening prospect for any Parent or Guardian to know how to manage or respond to. Recognising signs and symptoms is one step closer to then getting the help your child may need.

Many children and young people find self-harming actions as a way of trying to manage their very real and very difficult feelings and use self-harming methods.

Some children and young people have described self-harm as an action to:

- express something that is hard to put into words
- turn invisible thoughts or feelings into something visible
- change emotional pain into physical pain
- reduce overwhelming emotions or thoughts
- have a sense of being in control
- escape traumatic memories
- have something in life that they can rely on
- punish themselves for their feelings and experiences
- stop feeling numb, disconnected or dissociated
- create a reason to physically care for themselves
- express potentially suicidal feelings and thoughts without necessarily taking their own life.

Things to look for if you're worried your child may be self-harming:

- **Withdrawing from friends and family and isolating themselves from social activities**
- **Outbursts of extreme emotion such as anger or being argumentative**
- **Keeping themselves covered up with long sleeves in hot weather or even not wanting to go swimming**
- **Unexplained injuries such as scratches, cuts, burns, bruises, bite marks or even bald patches**

For many children and young people, they feel a sense of relief after self-harming, though this is a temporary measure, and it is important to recognize that the underlying issue or circumstance that causes them to harm is imperative to address, in a calm, empathetic and non-judgmental way.

If we know your child or young person is self-harming, a member of our Welfare team will always inform you in the first instance. We will then recommend seeking help from your GP or that we can put a referral through to **CAMHS, Children & Adolescent Mental Health** Service for support. If you have any worries, you can always contact a member of the team.

For further Information and support with Mental health and Self harm:

YoungMinds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Parents helpline: 08088025544 (Monday to Friday 09:30-16:00)

YoungMinds provides information and free resources to help young people, Parents and professionals understand more how a child or young person might be feeling and to access support.

Childline: www.childline.org.uk or **0800 1111 (24hr)**

Childline work tirelessly to support children and young people with their mental health, bullying and protection. They are mainly aimed at young people, but the resources are useful for any parent wanting to help.

Mind UK <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Mind UK have a wealth of information out there for anyone worried about a person's mental health. They have a specific page for Parents and Carers to support if your child or young person is struggling with Self harm.

i-Rock East Sussex <https://www.irocksussex.com/>
Email: irockeastsussex@spft.nhs.uk

i-Rock is a local service in Hastings, run by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and works in collaboration with East Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group and Department for Education. It is a service designed to support children and young people aged 14-25 with their Mental health.

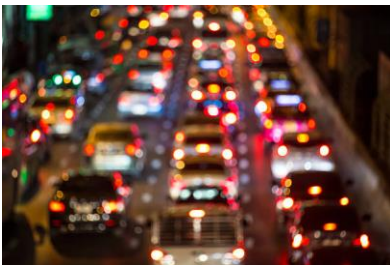
Mind Out www.mindout.org.uk

MindOut is a mental health service run by and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer people.

Sussex Mental Health Helpline 0800 030 9500 24 hours

FamilyLine. Tel: 0808 800 5678 (free) Non-mental health specific support for parents
www.familyline.org.uk

Sussex CAMHS website
www.sussexcamhs.nhs.uk



DARK NIGHTS

The weekend of 30th October saw us putting the clocks back an hour, marking the end of British Summertime. Typically, road traffic collisions increase by 20% in the fortnight after the time change. Sadly, some of those collisions will involve child pedestrians and cyclists. We are very aware that a number of our children and young people walk or cycle to school, and we want to make sure that they are keeping safe as they do so.

Children under-16 are one of the most vulnerable groups of road users. The latest available government statistics (2015) show that 58% of children who die or are seriously injured in a road collision are involved in incidents between 3 and 7pm. Whilst younger children are at risk, the data shows that 11-15-year olds are actually more at risk from accidents that kill or result in serious injury. The resource link will help you to remind your children, especially teenagers, about road safety and safe cycling. [Teaching Road Safety: A Guide for Parents](#)

PARENT DETAILS

Are all your contact details up-to-date? If you change your home phone/email/mobile number, please let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details. This is an important part of Safeguarding your child or young person, and will help us ensure that information is sent out in a timely manner.

CHRISTMAS ANXIETY

It's that time of year! We have heard the songs in the shops, seen lights going up and perhaps attended various Pantomimes and Nativities. For most children, young people and their families, this creates feelings of excitement and joyful anticipation as they recall their memories of Christmas past; family coming together, the magic, the surprise, the gifts, the food... Unfortunately, Christmas isn't like that for everyone.

Some children and young people recall Christmas as the time when things are more unpredictable, sensorially overwhelming and difficult to manage due to a variety of factors. For these children and young people, Christmas may be anticipated with more anxiety and stress.

What can you do to help a child or young person who is struggling with the lack of routine around Christmas?

- The key focus is having a clear routines and structure. Do more of what works (rather than less) Children may need more of your presence, more supervision, and more support than usual.
- As Parents or Guardians, build up your own emotional reserves to give you the energy you need. It's exhausting for us too!
- Make the Christmas schedule explicit and predictable. This lowers stress for all. Draw it out, write it out, repeat it lots, keep as much as you can as the same as usual.
- Provide opportunities for emotional regulation: Build in quiet times to the festive days, after each exciting point providing time to calm, regulate and touch base.
- Explore the anticipation of Christmas: "Christmas is coming, what's that like for you?"
- Anticipating that excitement can often feel the same as stress for overwhelmed children. It's okay to keep things low key and by reducing excitement you are reducing stress.
- Try to connect with each other, then reflect upon the experience: "I can have a hard time when Christmas is over too—especially when I was a kid.... Here's what we could do together to get back into a routine we enjoy..."
- Naughty or Nice list: Help the child to know that giving and receiving presents is not dependent on them being good. They are loved and worthy regardless of their behaviour. This can help reduce the stress for a child who is struggling with the feeling of shame or rejection.



This [blog](#) from the Safeguarding Company contains advice about how to support children and young people during the Christmas period.

For children and young people who might feel sensory overload this Christmas, the team at Sensory Integration Education have a [free downloadable pack](#) designed to support Parents and Guardians. For any Parent of a child with Autism, the National Autistic Society have some useful tips too: [Tips \(autism.org.uk\)](https://www.autism.org.uk/tips)