VISION for EDUCATION abc teachers .smart. teachers

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION UPDATE

ISSUE: 10 **March 2024**

We hope you've had a great term so far and are looking forward to the upcoming Easter break for some well-deserved rest. Enclosed are some safeguarding updates to supplement and maintain your knowledge as we progress through the academic year. Please read the next instalment of our termly Safeguarding and Child Protection Update.

Updated definition of safeguarding: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently updated the definition of safeguarding in their statutory document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'. You can find the additions to the definitions in bold below.

The document defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- **Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.**
- Protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online.**
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- **Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.**
- **Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.**
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes **in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.**

You can download the latest copy of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' online.
WEBLINK: Gov website.

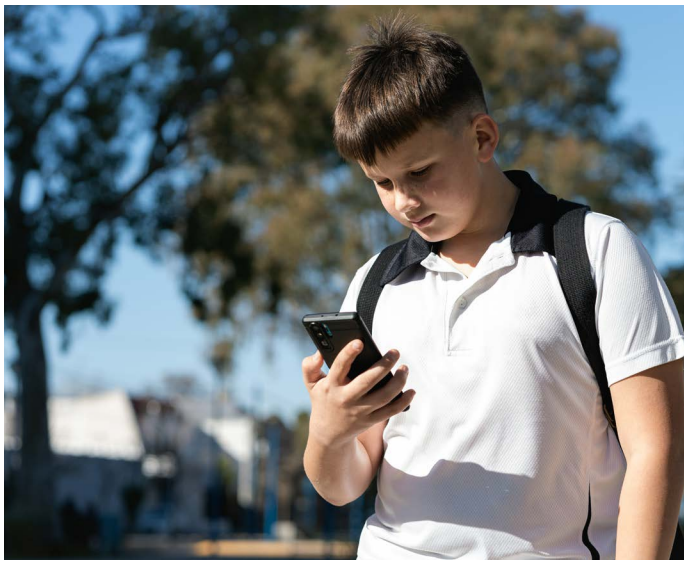
Government update on mobile phones in schools guidance

The DfE has published new guidance for schools in England prohibiting the use of mobile phones by pupils. The guidance advises schools on how to develop, implement and maintain a policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones and similar smart devices during the school day. It aims to help schools reduce distractions and disruption caused by mobile phone use, as well as reduce the risks of peer pressure and bullying.

The guidance also acknowledges the role of staff and we endorse the advice provided, particularly in relation to our supply staff:

'All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones. Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school's expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance, to issue homework, rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication.'

Read the DfE's guidance for further information.
WEBLINK: Mobile phones in schools



REMEMBER: Whilst you are on placement, you must not use your phone in a personal capacity, apart from at designated times and places. Schools may choose to terminate your placement if they believe you have used your device(s) for non-urgent personal matters whilst teaching or supporting their students.

Physical contact and proximity guidance

We operate a no contact policy for supply staff with students, which should always be adhered to apart from in the following circumstances:

- If a student is at risk of harming themselves or others.
- Where you are providing personal care as part of your agreed job role. You should carry out the task with sensitivity and respect. Ensure another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.
- Supply staff who are Team Teach trained (please provide your consultant with your proof of qualification if you have not already done so).
- Supply staff who are first aid trained and are in a situation where first aid is required (please provide your consultant with current proof of qualification if you have not already done so).

If physical contact is necessary, always be mindful that physical contact and/or close physical proximity with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted and may leave you open to scrutiny.

Usually, you should never be on your own with a child. If you cannot avoid this, make sure you keep the classroom door open and do not block any exits.

When working with students who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), ensure you have a comprehensive understanding of their individual needs. This includes considerations such as their sensory, health or social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, particularly concerning physical contact.

Online safety

Monkey app

A social networking application called Monkey or Monkey App is increasing in popularity among students. The app states it is 18+, however, there is no age verification built into the application.

This app allows individuals to video chat with strangers, which could leave children and young people very vulnerable to exploitation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ON MONKEY?

Moments – sharing short vide o clips, like what may be uploaded to Snapchat or Instagram.

Texting – via the app.

Video chatting – with strangers or connections on the app.

Swipe to match – like popular dating apps such as Tinder.

If you hear of Monkey being used by students, we recommend you share this information with the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Ineqe Safeguarding Group's Snapchat guide

Ineqe is an independent safeguarding organisation which provides online safety resources to support professionals who work with and safeguard children.

Please read the how-to guide they have produced for the social media platform Snapchat.

WEBLINK: Your how-to guide to Snapchat features

REMEMBER: When discussing Snapchat, or any other social media platform with students, you must never give out your username. Any friend requests you receive from students must not be accepted and must be flagged to the school/agency.

Private fostering

Private fostering is a term used when someone who is not a parent or a close relative is looking after a child or young person under the age of 16 (under 18 if they are disabled) for 28 days or more in their own home. The Children Act 1989 defines a close relative as a grandparent, uncle or aunt, sibling or step-parent (whether by full-blood, half-blood or by marriage).

Why do we have to report suspected private fostering?

Victoria Climbié was murdered in 2000. She moved to the UK from West Africa to live with her great aunt in London. Therefore, this was a private fostering arrangement. Within the inquiry following her death, it was determined that child protection staff missed 12 chances to save Victoria from starvation and abuse perpetrated by her carers. From this, the Children Act 1989 was amended to require a proactive approach to investigating potential private fostering arrangements.

What does this mean for you?

If you are aware that a child is living with a friend or distant relative etc, you must make sure you inform the school's DSL.

There may be times when a child is simply staying away from home for a few days, however, if this extends over 28 days, social care services will need to be notified. This is to ensure that a child's circumstances are understood, and all the correct support is in place to accommodate them happily and healthily outside of their family home.

SEND

Working with children who have special education needs and disabilities (SEND) can be both challenging and rewarding. It's important to ensure you are fully equipped to support these children effectively.

SEND is a widely used term in schools, referring to special educational needs and disabilities. These children are often more vulnerable in terms of safeguarding because they may face difficulties in expressing themselves if they feel unsafe.

Many children with additional needs also have communication challenges, which can make it harder for them to understand their surroundings and recognise abuse. They may require intimate care and rely on adults for support.

To assist you in your practice, we wanted to make you aware of some useful resources for you to read:

WEBLINK: .Gov – Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

WEBLINK: Special Needs Jungle – Top teaching tips for children with SEND

WEBLINK: Kids: Disabled children say we can – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Your data and privacy

Protecting your data is important to us. Find out more about how we comply with legislation in the Data Retention and Privacy section on our websites.

WEBLINK: www.visionforeducation.co.uk/privacy-policy

WEBLINK: www.abc-teachers.co.uk/privacy-policy

WEBLINK: www.smartteachers.co.uk/privacy-policy

Please note that some of the resources detailed in this bulletin are from third-party providers which are not part of The Edwin Group (Vision for Education/ABC Teachers/Smart Teachers/Edwin Education) and should be used at your own discretion.