

Safeguarding Newsletter



Autumn 2017 edition

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to the first 'Safeguarding Newsletter' of the new academic year at St Francis Catholic Primary School. I will be sending the newsletter out termly and keeping you informed of any issues, debates or updates. It will hopefully be a reminder of who you can go to if there is a problem and will be a good source of information in how we are keeping your child/ren safe and how you can keep them safe too. If there are any concerns, or if you are interested in learning more about a particular issue, please let me know and we will feature information in the next newsletter.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Mrs Cox

What Parents Must Do:





Parents are the most important people to keep their children safe. You should always

- *Feel confident to raise concerns about your child.
 - *Talk to school if you need help or support.
- Read the school policies about safety issues.
- *Let school know if your child has a medical condition.
 - *Let school know if you have any court orders relating to the safety of your child.
 - *Let school know if there is a change in your circumstances such as a house move, a new contact number, a change of name, a change of parental responsibility.
 - *Let us know who will be dropping off or collecting your child and two other emergency contact names and numbers. You must inform school of any changes to agreed arrangements.
 - *Let school know if your child is going to be absent and the reasons why.

What School Must Do:

A child should be able to go to school and feel safe so that they can achieve their very best.

- *Anybody who works or volunteers at St Francis will be checked by the Police (vetted) to make sure they are safe to work with children and then trained to identify child abuse and what to do if they are concerned.
- *The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs D Cox, who has had extra training to know what to do when a concern is brought to her.
- *We will always listen to you and work closely with you if we are concerned about your child but, sometimes, we may not be able to discuss our concern and a referral may have to be made to Children's Services or the Police. The school has a Child Protection Policy which tells you more about this and this is available on our school website.
- *We will help your child to learn about keeping themselves safe. Lessons can include healthy eating, anti-bullying, e-safety, road safety, healthy relationships, drug and alcohol awareness. As part of the lessons your child will be told what to do if they are worried or concerned about their safety.

			
<p>Mrs Cox Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) SPOC Deputy Headteacher</p>	<p>Miss Richards Child Protection / Safeguarding Headteacher</p>	<p>Miss Hussey Child Protection / Safeguarding SENDCO / SLT Year 5 Teacher</p>	<p>Mr Turner Child Protection / Safeguarding SLT Year 5 Teacher</p>

Home Alone

Strange as it may seem, there's no set age for leaving children home alone.

The law simply says that you shouldn't leave a child alone if they'll be at risk.

There's such a wide variation in the rate that children mature that it would be almost impossible to come up with a "one size fits all" law. Instead, the choice is left to parents. They know their children best and can use their own judgement.

That's not to say that there are no laws on leaving children home alone. Parents and carers can be prosecuted for neglect. This means that they can be fined or sent to prison if they are judged to have placed a child at risk of harm by leaving them at home alone.

There might not be a specific legal age to leave children alone but it's safe to say babies, toddlers and young children should **never** be left alone, even if it's just while you pop down the road. Even if they're sleeping peacefully when you leave they could well wake up and get very upset when you're not there to look after them. They would not be able to protect themselves in an emergency and may even try to leave the property to find you. For more advice go to

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/leaving-child-home-alone/>



TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME?

Research in 2016 from Action for Children suggests nearly a quarter of parents struggle to get their kids to unplug and take part in activities away from TV, phone and computer screens.

If you think your children are spending too long on their screens it may be time to set limits. That might be tough depending on the age of the child and how much of a free reign they've had previously.

Be the parent - acknowledge that it's your role to set the limit for the good of your child, no matter how much they moan and complain. Once you have set a limit make sure the kids are aware of it and make sure they stick to it. If necessary you can reinforce limits by switching off the Wi-Fi or keeping the router under lock and key.

Negotiate - Explain in age appropriate terms the reasons for setting limits. Ask their opinion and perhaps come to an agreement about a limit. Maybe extra screen time at weekends.

Stick to age guidelines - Make sure you don't let your children have games that are too old for them. Even if they say all of their 12 year old friends are playing Grand Theft Auto or Call of Duty don't give in and allow them to get it.

Right content - Try to encourage the right type of screen time. The right choice of content can help children do better at school, encourage their creativity, prepare them for adulthood surrounded by screens."

Share aware

Do you know what your child is accessing online?

1. Explore sites and apps together and talk about any concerns.
2. Ask your child if they know how to stay safe online.
3. Talk about personal information and what to share online.

Helping children deal with divorce or separation

Separation may involve bad feelings between the parents. Children can pick up on this, which may make them confused.

To support children during a separation and help them with their worries, you should:

- remind them that they are loved by both parents
- be honest when talking about it but keep in mind the child's age and understanding
- avoid blame - don't share any negative feelings the adults have about each other
- keep up routines such as going to school and specific meal times
- let them know they can talk about their feelings with you - explain that it's okay to be sad, confused or angry.

- listen more than you speak - answering questions will help them to open up.