



**The Abbey
School**

“Be The Best You Can Be”

Safeguarding Newsletter

2025/26

Issue Number: 5

Date: 22/05/26



Safeguarding Newsletter: What Parents Need to Know This Term

Supporting young people in a changing online and social world!

As we move into the summer term, secondary schools often see an increase in safeguarding concerns linked to online behaviour, peer relationships, social pressures, and increased independence outside school. Longer evenings, exam stress, social events, and greater online activity can all increase vulnerability for young people.

This newsletter highlights some of the key safeguarding themes currently affecting secondary-aged pupils and offers guidance for parents and carers on how to support children safely and confidently.

What Is “Contextual Safeguarding”?

Contextual Safeguarding Network describes contextual safeguarding as understanding that risks to young people can occur beyond the family home — in places such as:

- 
- Online spaces
 - Friendships and peer groups
 - Public spaces
 - Parks and shopping centres
 - Parties and sleepovers
 - Gaming platforms and social media
 - Public transport and journeys to and from school

Teenagers are increasingly influenced by peer culture, online interactions, and external environments. Parents may notice that risks emerge not only from strangers, but also from friendship groups, older peers, or online communities.

Current Safeguarding Themes for Secondary Schools

1. Sharing Sexualised Images (“Nudes”)

Please see the article within this newsletter which is a spotlight on Sharing Sexualised Images (“Nudes”)

2. Online Exploitation and Coercion

Young people can be vulnerable to manipulation online through:

- Fake profiles
- Grooming
- Pressure for images or money
 - Threats to share content
- Online dares and challenges

Some children may not recognise exploitation because the communication feels friendly or flattering at first. Warning Signs May Include:

- Sudden secrecy around devices
 - Distress after being online
- Multiple accounts or hidden apps
 - Withdrawal from family
- Anxiety about notifications or messages

Parents should remind children:

- They never have to continue conversations that make them uncomfortable
 - Blocking and reporting are always okay
- Trusted adults can help without immediate blame or punishment

3. Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Safeguarding concerns between young people remain a significant issue nationally.

This can include:

- Sexual harassment
- Inappropriate comments
- Sharing rumours online
- Bullying in group chats



- Image-sharing without consent
- Intimidation within friendship groups

Children sometimes minimise harmful behaviour as “banter,” but repeated or sexualised behaviour can cause serious emotional harm.

Parents can support by discussing:

- Respectful relationships
 - Consent
 - Boundaries
 - Speaking up safely
- How to support friends who may be vulnerable

4. Exam Pressure and Mental Health

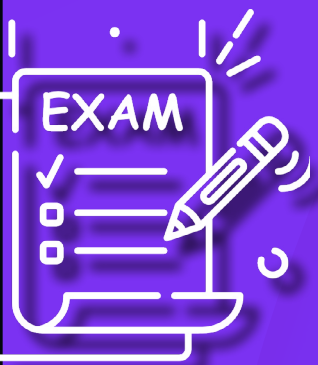
This time of year, can bring heightened stress for pupils preparing for assessments and exams.

Some young people may experience:

- Anxiety
- Sleep difficulties
- Low mood
- Social withdrawal
- Increased emotional sensitivity

Parents can help by:

- Keeping routines predictable
- Encouraging breaks and sleep
- Reducing pressure where possible
- Focusing on effort rather than perfection
- Checking in regularly without overwhelming questioning



5. Increased Independence Over the Summer

As evenings become longer and social activities increase, young people often spend more time away from home or online.

Risks can include:

- Meeting online contacts in person
 - Unsupervised gatherings
- Alcohol or substance experimentation
 - Risk-taking behaviour
 - Travelling without adults
- Exposure to older peer groups

Clear boundaries and open communication remain important, particularly for secondary-aged pupils seeking greater independence.

A Parent’s Guide to Contextual Safeguarding Questions to Consider

Online:

- Which apps is my child using?
 - Who can contact them?
- Do they know how to block/report users?
 - Are privacy settings enabled?

Friendships:

- Who are their friendship groups?
- Do friendships appear healthy and respectful?
 - Are older peers involved?

Community:

- Where do they spend time after school?
 - How do they travel?
- Are there adults supervising activities?



How Parents Can Help

Build Regular Conversations
Short, frequent conversations work better than one “big talk.”

Try:

- Asking open questions
- Listening without interrupting
- Avoiding immediate judgement
- Staying curious about online life

Create a Safe Space for Mistakes

Children are more likely to ask for help if they know:

- They will be listened to
- They will not immediately lose devices
- Adults will help them solve problems safely

Keep Safety Messages Clear

Children should know:

- They can always say no
- Healthy relationships respect boundaries
- Online actions can have real-world consequences
- Help is available if something goes wrong

Useful Resources for Parents

- [NSPCC Online Safety Hub](#)
- [Internet Matters Parent Guides](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Childline Report Remove Tool](#)
- [CEOP Safety Centre](#)

Final Message for Parents and Carers

Teenagers are navigating a complex world both online and offline. While technology brings many positives, it also creates new safeguarding challenges that young people may not always feel equipped to manage alone. Strong relationships between home and school remain one of the most effective protective factors for children. Open conversations, clear boundaries, and calm support can make a significant difference in helping young people stay safe, confident, and resilient.

Supporting Young People in a Digital World: Conversations About Pornography

As parents, carers and educators, many of us are navigating a digital world that looks very different from the one young people experienced even a few years ago. Online content is now more accessible, more immediate and often encountered accidentally through social media, group chats or online platforms.

Research from the Children’s Commissioner for England found that the average age children first see pornography online is 13, with more than a quarter reporting exposure by age 11. This means conversations around online safety, relationships and healthy attitudes are increasingly important both at home and in school.

At The Abbey School, we know this can feel like a difficult topic for families to navigate. Through our Personal Development and RSHE curriculum from KS3–KS5, we aim to support students in developing healthy attitudes towards relationships, consent, respect and online safety in an age-appropriate and carefully sequenced way.

Across KS3–KS5, students explore topics including:

- healthy relationships and consent
- online pressure and harmful influences
- misogyny and harmful stereotypes
- the impact pornography can have on expectations and wellbeing
- exploitation and image-sharing
- digital behaviour and online law
- where and how to seek support if something online worries or influences them



Lessons are factual, sensitive and safeguarding-led. Students are never asked to share personal experiences. We know many parents worry about “saying the wrong thing”. In reality, calm, open and non-judgemental conversations are often the most helpful. Young people are far more likely to seek support when they feel listened to rather than frightened or embarrassed.

Some helpful approaches at home may include:

- keeping devices and online activity part of normal family conversation
- avoiding shame or panic if a child discloses, they have seen something upsetting
 - discussing respect, consent and healthy relationships regularly
- using TV programmes, news stories or social media as natural conversation starters
- reminding children, they can always come to a trusted adult if something online makes them uncomfortable

Simple questions such as:

- “What do young people your age see online?”
- “Do you think social media creates pressure around relationships?”
- “What would you do if something online made you uncomfortable?”
can help keep communication open without judgement or fear.

It is also important to remember that many young people encounter explicit content accidentally through social media, group chats or pop-ups.

If a young person is struggling, support is available through Heads of Year, safeguarding staff (purple lanyard wearers) and pastoral teams. Families may also find support and guidance through national organisations such as NSPCC, Childline and Internet Matters, which provide advice for both young people and parents around online safety and digital wellbeing.

Families are always encouraged to contact the school if they would like guidance or support around these conversations.

Ultimately, while the online world continues to evolve rapidly, the most powerful protective factors for young people remain strong relationships, trusted adults and open conversation. By working together calmly and supportively, schools and families can help young people navigate these challenges safely, responsibly and with confidence.

**If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact
Mrs A Le Brun –Healey Assistant Principal Senior Leadership Team
alebrun-healey@abbey-school-faversham.co.uk**

Talking to Children About Sharing Sexualised Images Online

Children and teenagers are growing up in a digital world where sharing photos, videos, and messages online is part of everyday life. Alongside the positives, there are serious risks linked to sharing sexualised or nude images. Many young people do not fully understand the emotional, social, and legal consequences of sending or sharing these images.

Schools and families play a vital role in helping children stay safe online. Open, calm conversations at home can make a significant difference.

What Do We Mean by “Sharing Sexualised Images”?

This can include:

- Nude or semi-nude selfies
- Images shared privately between friends or partners
- Screenshots or forwarding images without consent
- Sexualised videos shared through apps, messaging platforms, or social media

Children may hear terms such as “nudes,” “pics,” or “sexting.” Professionals increasingly use the term “sharing nude or semi-nude images” because it reflects the seriousness of the issue without blaming young people.





What Does UK Law Say?

In the UK, it is illegal to create, possess, or share indecent images of anyone under 18 — even if the young person took the image themselves willingly.

This means that:

- A young person who sends a nude image of themselves could technically be committing an offence.
- A child or adult who forwards, saves, screenshots, or shares the image may also be breaking the law.
- Sharing images without consent can lead to serious emotional harm and, in some cases, police involvement.

However, the law is intended to protect children rather than criminalise them unnecessarily. In many cases involving young people, schools, safeguarding professionals, and police focus on education, support, and reducing harm.

More serious action may be taken where:

- There is coercion, blackmail, or exploitation
 - An adult is involved
 - Images are widely distributed
- There is bullying, harassment, or malicious intent

Parents can find further guidance from the NSPCC and UK Safer Internet Centre.

Why Young People Share These Images

Children and teenagers may share images because:

- They feel pressured by peers or partners
- They want acceptance, attention, or reassurance
 - They believe “everyone is doing it”
 - They trust the person receiving the image
- They do not fully understand how quickly images can spread online

It is important to remember that many young people do not intend harm and may not recognise the risks until something goes wrong.

How Parents Can Start Difficult Conversations

These conversations can feel uncomfortable, but they are one of the most effective ways to protect children online.

Keep Conversations Calm and Non-Judgemental

Children are more likely to seek help if they know they will not immediately lose devices or be blamed.

Try saying:

- “Has school ever talked about sharing pictures online?”
- “What do young people your age think about sending photos?”
- “What would you do if someone asked you for a picture?”

Avoid shock, anger, or embarrassment where possible.

Key Messages Children Need to Hear

1. Once an Image Is Shared, Control Is Lost

Even trusted friends or partners can forward images, save screenshots, or share content after arguments or relationship breakdowns.

2. Consent Matters

Forwarding someone else’s image without permission is harmful and can have serious consequences.

3. Pressure Is Never Okay

Children should know:

- It is okay to say no
- Healthy friendships and relationships respect boundaries
- Repeated requests for images are a warning sign



4. They Can Always Ask for Help

Children should know they can come to a trusted adult if:

- An image has been shared
- Someone is pressuring them
- They are worried about a friend
- They have made a mistake online

Practical Tips for Parents

- Keep devices in shared family spaces where appropriate
 - Talk regularly about apps your child uses
 - Review privacy settings together
- Encourage critical thinking about online behaviour
- Remind children that not everything online disappears
 - Model respectful digital behaviour yourself

Short, regular conversations are often more effective than one “big talk.”

If an Image Has Already Been Shared

If your child tells you an image has been shared:

Do:

- Stay calm
- Reassure them they have done the right thing by telling you
 - Avoid blame or punishment in the first conversation
 - Save evidence if needed
 - Report the image to the platform

You Can Also:

- Contact the school safeguarding team for support
- Use the Childline and Internet Watch Foundation Report Remove Tool to help remove images of under-18s online
- Seek advice from the police if there are concerns about exploitation, threats, or coercion

Supporting Healthy Digital Relationships

Online safety is not only about rules — it is also about helping children develop:

- Confidence
- Respect for themselves and others
 - Healthy boundaries
 - Good judgement online
 - The ability to ask for help

Young people benefit most when schools and families work together with consistent messages and open communication.

Useful Support and Advice

- [NSPCC Online Safety Hub](#)
- [Internet Matters Parent Guides](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Childline Report Remove Tool](#)
- [CEOP Safety Centre](#)

If you have concerns about a child’s safety or wellbeing, please contact the school safeguarding team.



Online Updates & Useful information

Omoggle - What is Omoggle?

Omoggle is a new anonymous video chat site where users are paired with strangers and rated on their appearance by an AI algorithm. It's become a popular platform within the "mogging" trend where people are compared and ranked based on their looks - which has been growing quickly across platforms like Twitch and TikTok.

Why is it a concern?

The site's anonymous nature means young people can end up in an unmoderated space being judged on how they look, with no oversight. This kind of content is linked to body image issues, low self-esteem, and bullying, and it's particularly concerning for younger, more impressionable users.

School Filtering & monitoring

In school students will not be able to access 'Omoggle' any attempts to access the site will be automatically blocked. Our filtering & monitoring systems do pick on inappropriate language and age restricted content if attempts are made to access. Students are spoken with and parents notified.

Some Helpful Parental Tips

Do follow the links to NSPCC for more information

- Follow age requirements - Many popular Apps, sites and games are 13+, it's important to check and follow these with pre-teens.
- Speak to phone providers - If your child owns their own smartphone then contact the service provider to make sure it is registered as a child's device. This means additional safety restrictions can be put in place.
- Support your child with their settings - Support your child to manage their safety and wellbeing settings across devices and accounts.
- Focus on regular safety conversations – It's important to keep conversations regular at this age. Check our advice on tackling challenging conversations including tips for how to use technology to support you with this.
- Share youth facing help and support - Make sure your child knows about services that can help like Childline. You could start by sharing the online safety advice content and the Report Remove tool created by the IWF and Childline.
- Revisit parental controls – you will likely need to revisit your parental controls again at this age and adjust them. Keep checking these regularly to make sure they are in place.
- Explore healthy habits together – Healthy habits work best when all the family agrees to following them. This could be agreeing to charge devices away from beds to support sleep and not using devices during mealtimes to help take breaks

Age Restrictions – Did you know?

As a parent/carer/guardian it is important you are aware of the age restrictions regarding social media and gaming sites. You need to be aware of the following:

- Age limits are legal minimums, not recommendations
- Always enable privacy settings and parental controls
- Talk regularly with children about online safety and behaviour
 - Be aware of in-app purchases and chat features



Social Media Age Restrictions (UK / Global Standards)

Platform	Minimum Age	Notes for Parents
WhatsApp	13	Messaging app; group chats and media sharing
Snapchat	13	Ephemeral messages; location sharing feature (Snap Map)
TikTok	13	Short-form videos; content algorithm can expose varied material
Instagram	13	Photo/video sharing; private accounts recommended for younger users
Facebook	13	Social networking; includes messaging and groups
Messenger (Facebook)	13 (or Messenger Kids below with parental controls)	Messaging app with supervision options for children
YouTube	13 (or supervised/YouTube Kids under 13)	Wide range of content—use parental controls
Discord	13	Chat platform often used by gamers; includes voice channels
X (formerly Twitter)	13	Public posting platform; less content filtering
Reddit	13	Community forum; content varies widely and may be unsuitable

Video Game Age Ratings (PEGI – UK Standard)

Rating	Age	What It Means	Examples
PEGI 3	3+	Suitable for all ages; no frightening or violent content	Mario Kart, Minecraft (E10 equivalent content)
PEGI 7	7+	Mild violence or potentially frightening scenes	Pokémon, Lego games
PEGI 12	12+	Moderate violence, mild bad language	Fortnite, Rocket League
PEGI 16	16+	Realistic violence, stronger language, mature themes	Call of Duty, Apex Legends
PEGI 18	18+	Strong violence, sexual content, drugs, gambling	GTA V, Red Dead Redemption 2



Popular Online Games (Combined with Age Guidance)

Game	PEGI Rating	Online Interaction Notes
Fortnite	12	Chat with strangers; in-game purchases
Minecraft (online)	7 / 12	Safe offline; online servers vary widely
Roblox	7+ (platform guidance 13+)	User-generated content—quality and safety varies
Call of Duty	18	Strong violence; voice chat with others
FIFA / EA Sports FC	3	Online play; includes in-game purchases (loot boxes concern)
GTA V	18	Highly unsuitable for children despite popularity
Among Us	7	Online interaction; text chat risks

We would like to highlight a local issue involving catapults there has been reported incidents locally. We are working closely with our Community Police Officer PC Tyler and would urge if you see anything please do contact the Police

Catapults – Know the law

Catapults can be classed as offensive weapons.

If you **carry one in public** without a reasonable excuse, you could face up to **four years in prison**.

If you use it to **threaten** or **injure someone**, or **damage property**, the penalties could be even higher.

Is it worth it?

Remember – A criminal record can change your life.

- You may not be offered a college or university place.
- Getting a job will be more difficult.
- It can even prevent you from travelling to some countries.



Example of catapult



**Kent
Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
 Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
 In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
 If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.
 Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.
www.kent.police.uk   



SWALE COMMUNITY DAY

Sunday 7 June 2026

**FREE
entry**

Come along to learn all about services and support available in Swale!

- Bike marking available
- Domestic abuse support
- Housing support
- Hands-on animal encounters
- Fire safety, rail safety and water safety advice
- Health and other advice services
- Sateda Community Share wear clothing scheme
- Community Projects
- Face painting
- Youth engagement
- Come have a go at archery, football, climbing wall and more
- Music by Sheppey FM and Kent Police Band

APPLEYARD SPORTS GROUND

**GORE COURT RD,
SITTINGBOURNE,
ME10 1QN**

10AM-3PM

Food, drinks, ice cream and activities available on site. Displays to watch throughout the day



**Kent
Police**





We hope you can all enjoy the half term break and stay safe please see below a list of useful contacts should you need additional support during the holiday

Mental Health Support

For immediate assistance regarding mental health support and resources, please refer to the following organisations:

- [Home - Kooth](#)
- [YoungMinds](#)
- [Shout](#) - Text "SHOUT" to 85258 for 24/7 support
- [Qwell](#): If you are an adult requiring mental health
 - [Kent Resilience Hub](#)

If you have any urgent concerns for a young person (self harming/attempted suicide) please take directly to A&E and request Crisis Team or 999

For financial/ cost of living difficulties

- [Citizens Advice](#)
- [Faversham Foodbank](#)

For support around domestic abuse

- [SATEDA](#)
- [Refuge](#)
- [Oasis Domestic Abuse Service](#)

For support with homelessness or housing issues

- [Porchlight](#)
- [Shelter England](#)

If you have urgent child protection concern please contact:
[Kent Children's Portal](#) or call 03000 411111

Or call 999 and report to Kent Police.

NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE

At The Abbey School, we strive to create a **safe and secure** environment for the school community. Our school is a **welcoming and inclusive place** where we all show one another respect and look out for each other.

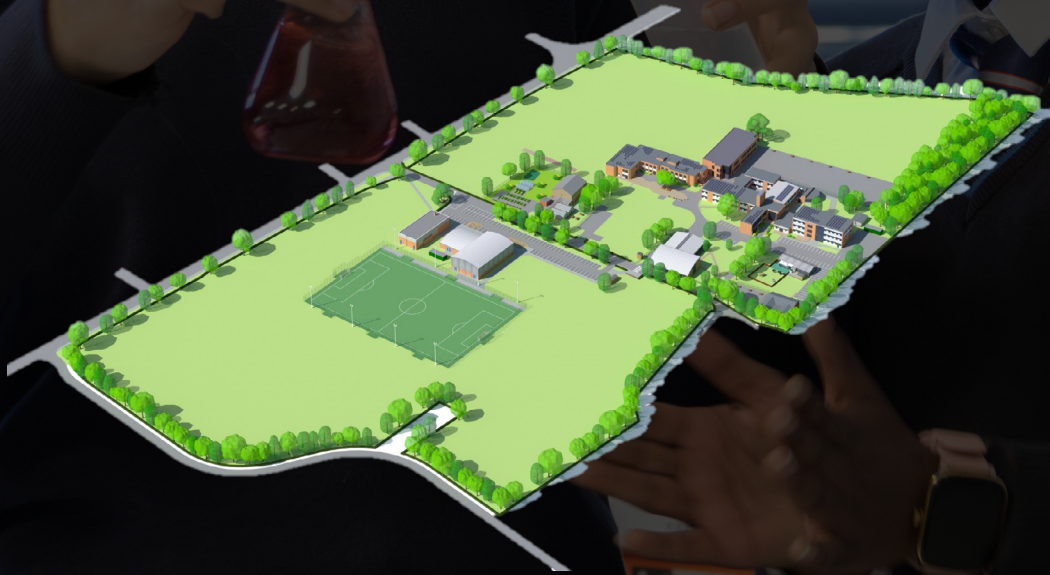
We will not tolerate any **threatening, abusive or violent** behaviour and action will be taken when necessary.





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