



Watlington Primary School

Safeguarding Update

October 2024

Welcome to our first Safeguarding Update for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility** and our top priority at Watlington Primary School. Anyone who comes in to contact with children and their families has a role to play.

The purpose of these newsletters is to share helpful updates that may support children and families within our community, pointing you in right direction for help and advice, should it ever be needed.

Should you have any safeguarding concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us - our details are below.

Best wishes

Jonathan Gale

Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead

What is Early Help?



All agencies that work with children, young people and families are responsible for listening to your concerns and worries and working closely with you to make sure you and your family get the right support at the right time.

This includes schools.

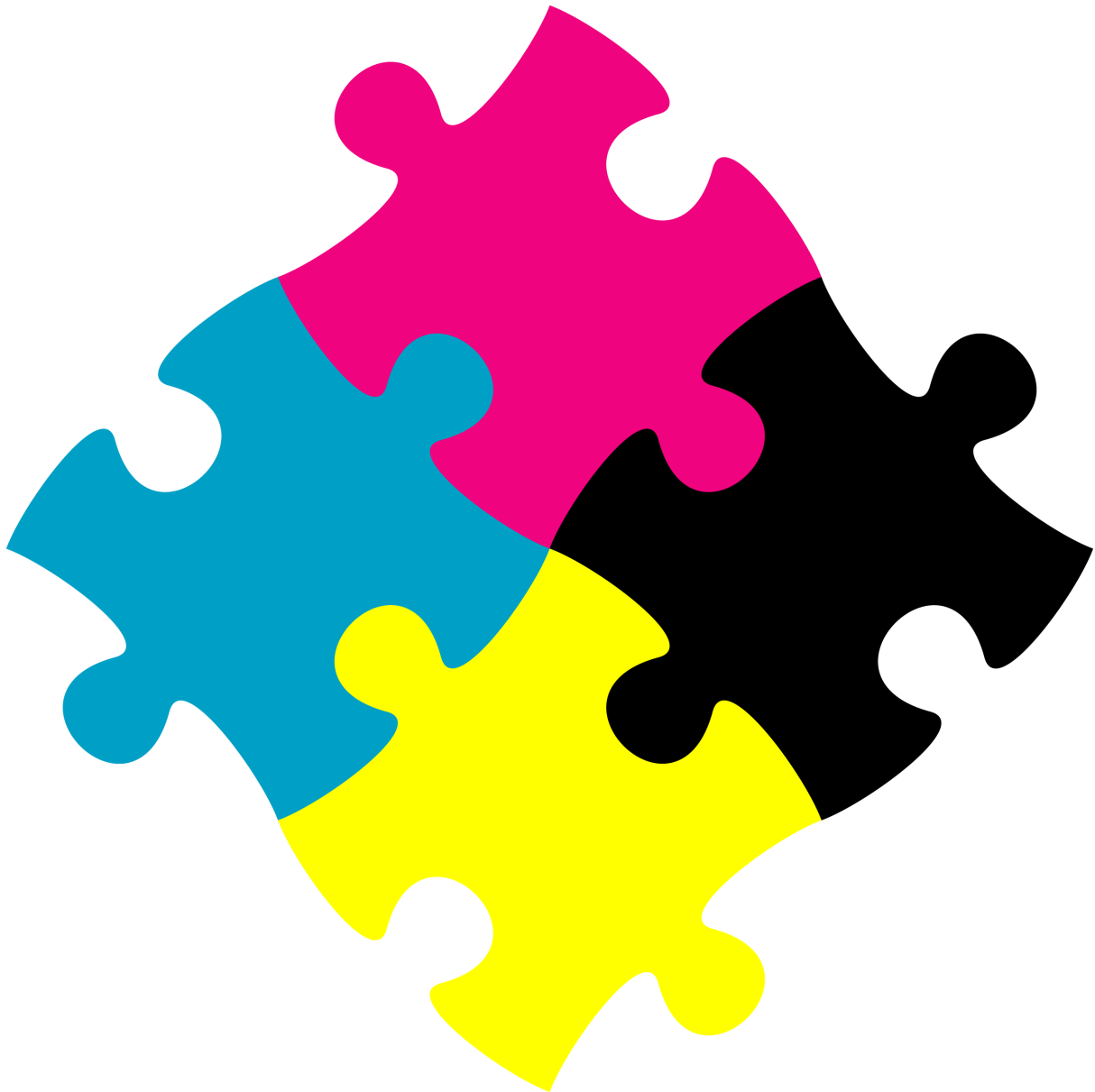
At times, children and families need a bit of extra support – and when that happens, it's ok to ask for help. Early help is there to make sure worries don't become bigger and you get the support you need at the right time.

There are lots of different reasons you might need early help:

- You could be worried about your own or your child's health, development or behaviour, or how things are going at school or nursery.
- You could be caring for others, or maybe you've had a bereavement in the family, and it's made life a real challenge.
- It may be that you're worried about money or housing and how it's affecting your family.
- Maybe you or your family are affected by domestic abuse, mental health, drugs, alcohol or crime.

If you feel you need early help, or just want some more information, please don't hesitate to contact the school for more information, [or click here to read the Early Help Guide for Families.](#)

Jigsaw



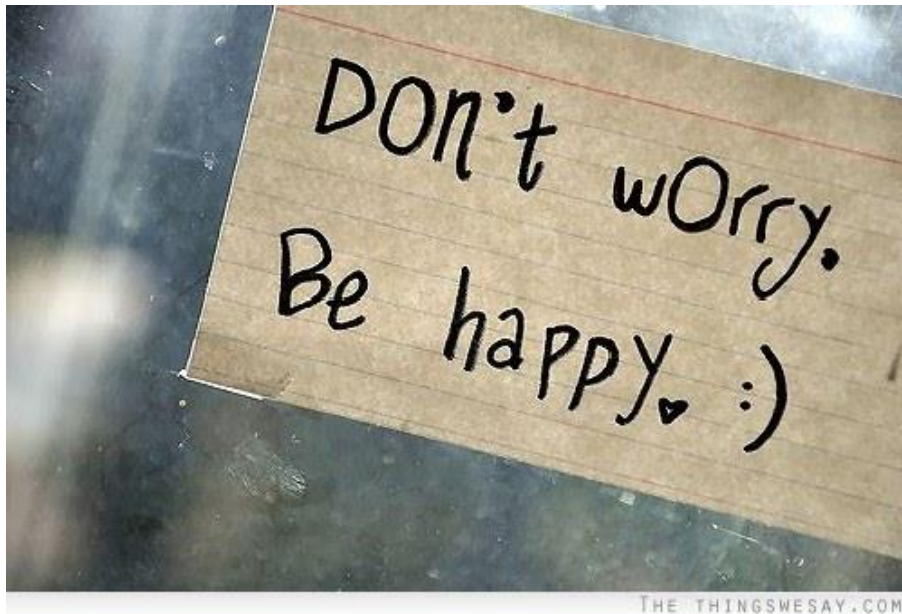
Our Jigsaw focus for this and next term is:

Being Me In My World (Term 1) covers a wide range of topics, including a sense of belonging, welcoming others and being part of a school community, a wider community, and a global community; it also looks at children's rights and responsibilities, working and socialising with others, and pupil voice.

Celebrating Difference (Term 2) focuses on similarities and differences and teaches about diversity, such as disability, racism, power, friendships, and conflict; children learn to accept everyone's right to 'difference', and most year groups explore the concept of 'normality'. Anti-bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, is an important aspect of this Puzzle.

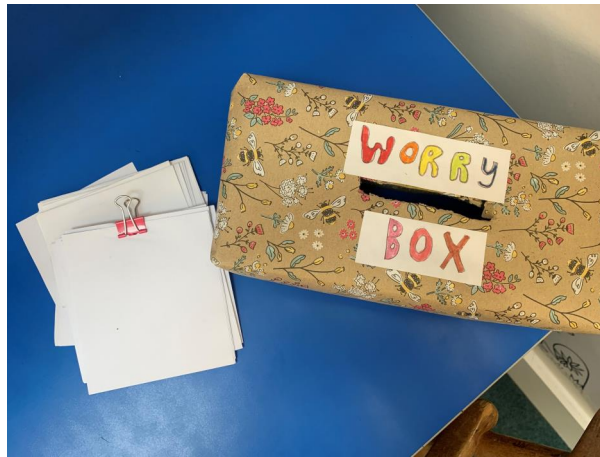
A reminder that, we have access to a parent portal, which allows parents and carers to view the standard lesson plans for their child's year group. Due to copyright reasons, we are unable to send out a blanket login code to parents, but we are able to set up individual parents with access, should they wish to view the materials. If you would like to have access to this, please email the school office (admin.2459@watlington.oxon.sch.uk) and we can arrange this for you.

How can my child report any concerns?



Did you know that each class has a system for your child to report how they are feeling to their class teacher? Some classes have 'Worry Monsters' or 'Worry' boxes, and the younger classes have more visual ways of the children expressing if they have a concern to share. We check these regularly and discuss any issues with the children, so that they know they are being listened to and their concerns are being taken seriously.





Young Carers



We are committed to ensuring that all pupils get the support they need to have a positive school experience, are happy in school and can achieve their full potential.

We know that for some pupils, factors outside of school can have a big impact on this, particularly if there is someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction. We think there could be as many as 2 pupils in each class who are helping to support someone because of one of these factors – we call these pupils **young carers**.

Pupils can be young carers for lots of different reasons:

- They might be providing physical support to a parent with a physical illness such as fibromyalgia or ME, such as cooking, fetching things or helping with things like putting shoes on or doing the shopping
- They might be helping a parent with a disability who needs help with more personal tasks such as getting dressed, bathing or changing dressings
- Or it could be more emotional support – like being there if their autistic sibling is upset, taking responsibility for young siblings whilst parents attend health appointments, or checking that a parent with depression/anxiety is ok.

Some young carers might be doing lots of caring, others just a small amount but are impacted by the situation at home for example by worrying about the person with the health condition, or needing to do more things for themselves compared to other pupils.

We are currently reviewing our Young Carer provision in school, and considering ways that we can offer more support to these children. If you would like to support us through this process, please contact the school office via admin.2459@watlington.oxon.sch.uk

For more information about Young Carers, please visit [Be Free Young Carers](#)

What Parents Need to Know about Worry & Anxiety

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **WORRY AND ANXIETY**

Worry and anxiety are common emotions experienced by children, often triggered by uncertainty or fear. While worry involves concern about future events, anxiety is a persistent feeling of dread or apprehension. Current statistics indicate a rising prevalence of anxiety disorders among children, and this guide has some expert advice on understanding and addressing these concerns.

UNDERSTANDING WORRY AND ANXIETY

Worry and anxiety are emotional responses to stress or uncertainty. Worry is typically associated with potential misfortune, while anxiety is characterised by feelings of fear, apprehension or unease. Both can manifest physically through symptoms such as restlessness, fatigue or muscle tension. Understanding the distinction between worry and anxiety is crucial for effectively addressing these concerns in children.

DIFFERENTIATING WORRY FROM ANXIETY

While worry and anxiety share similarities – in that they both involve concerns about possible trouble – anxiety tends to be more constant and overwhelming. Worry may come and go depending on circumstances, whereas anxiety can linger regardless of the situation. It's essential to recognise when the former crosses into the latter, as anxiety can significantly impact a child's daily functioning and wellbeing.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

Untreated worry and anxiety in childhood can have potentially lifelong impacts on a person's mental health and wellbeing. Chronic anxiety may increase the risk of developing anxiety disorders, depression or other mental health conditions later in life. Additionally, unresolved worry and anxiety can negatively impact self-esteem, confidence and overall resilience. It's essential to address these concerns proactively and provide appropriate support and intervention.

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Excessive worry and anxiety can have profound effects on children's mental and emotional health. It may interfere with their ability to concentrate, sleep or participate in daily activities. Chronic worry and anxiety can also lead to physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach aches or difficulty breathing. Left unchecked, these concerns can escalate and potentially contribute to the development of anxiety disorders later in life.

THE EMOTIONAL TOLL

The emotional impact of worry and anxiety on children can be significant, affecting their overall quality of life and wellbeing. Children experiencing chronic worry or anxiety may feel overwhelmed, irritable or helpless. They may also withdraw from social activities or avoid situations that trigger their anxiety, leading to feelings of isolation or loneliness. Addressing these concerns early can help prevent long-term emotional distress and promote healthy coping strategies.

ACADEMIC & SOCIAL IMPACTS

Impacts on the academic performance and social interactions of children and young people are very possible. Frequent worry or anxiety may impair concentration, memory and problem-solving skills, making it difficult for children to succeed in education. Anxiety can also hinder social development by causing children and young people to avoid social situations or to struggle with communication and interpersonal relationships, potentially leading to feelings of isolation or exclusion.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Parents and educators can foster a supportive environment by encouraging children to express their worries and anxieties openly. Actively listening and acknowledging young people's emotions can help them feel understood and supported, reducing the situation's intensity. Creating opportunities for regular check-ins and discussions about one's feelings can promote healthy coping strategies and strengthen communication bonds.

CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Parents and educators play a crucial role in creating a supportive environment that promotes emotional wellbeing. Establishing routines, providing predictability and offering reassurance can help relieve anxiety and create a sense of security for children. Foster a culture of empathy and understanding, where children feel safe enough to express their emotions and seek support when needed.

TEACH COPING STRATEGIES

Empowering children with effective coping strategies is essential for managing worry and anxiety. Encourage the use of relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness or progressive muscle relaxation to calm anxious thoughts and promote a sense of composure. Additionally, teaching positive self-talk and problem-solving skills can help children develop resilience and confidence in managing challenging situations.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Recognising when to seek professional help is vital for addressing significant or persistent worry and anxiety in children. If worry or anxiety significantly impacts a child's daily functioning, interferes with their relationships or academic performance, or causes significant distress, it may be necessary to consult with a mental health practitioner. Early intervention can prevent long-term consequences and promote positive outcomes for children's psychological wellbeing.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which collaborates with schools on improving their mental health provisions.



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WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD



If you are worried about a child's safety please do not hesitate to contact any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads straight away.

The following members of staff are Designated Safeguarding Leads for Watlington Primary School:

Mr Gale (DSL)

Mrs Sterjo

Miss Sharman

Mrs Doran

They can be contacted via the school office, or by telephone on 01491 612474.

You can also contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on: 0345 050 7666.

If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police immediately on 999.