



# Watlington Primary School Safeguarding Update February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our latest Safeguarding Update for Spring 2025.

We have been focusing on children's mental health in school over the last week as we mark Children's Mental Health week 2025. During February we will be marking Online Safety day and have included some information below about ways we ensure children stay safe online in school - and ways you can support with this at home.

Best wishes

Jonathan Gale

Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead

## Filtering and monitoring

Schools are expected to have filtering and monitoring systems in place on their computer systems to restrict access to inappropriate online content (filtering) and track student activity on school devices (monitoring). This acts as a safety measure to protect children from harmful material while they are online at school. At Watlington Primary School, we have extensive filtering systems in place to block access to inappropriate websites.

As part of our annual cycle, children, staff and volunteers agree to abide by our Acceptable Use Policies and have responsibility to report any concerns to a senior member of staff. All users are informed that our systems can be monitored.

We monitor internet use on all school-owned internet enabled devices. This is achieved by: physical monitoring through supervision in lessons, and remotely, by using our online

monitoring tool, Securly. In the situation of a pupil accessing (or attempting to access) inappropriate material, Securly sends alert e-mails to Mrs Sterjo and Mr Gale who then take appropriate action.

If a concern is identified, we will respond in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Any material believed to be illegal will be reported immediately to appropriate agencies and / or parents.

## Image Sharing



Capturing and sharing photos with friends and family has become an integral part of daily life for many of us.

With young children now having access to camera phones and tablets, the risk of inappropriate images being sent or received has significantly increased.

In 2022, the NSPCC reported an 82% rise in online grooming of children over a five-year period, with a quarter of these cases involving primary school-aged children.

Research indicates that many individuals grooming children aim to obtain Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), often in the form of images that are generated by the children themselves. This highlights the critical need for safety measures to be implemented when a child has access to a device with a camera.

Young children may share images online in various contexts, frequently without considering potential risks. Here are some common situations where they may wish to share images:

- Excited about a moment: Children want to share a photo of a new activity, toy or pet with friends or family.
- In group chats: Some children use messaging apps to stay connected with friends, classmates or family members.
- Unintentionally whilst gaming: Many games allow children to share in-game moments or screenshots. They may also share other photos from the camera roll.
- Clicking buttons unintentionally: Sometimes children may not realise that clicking certain buttons may share an image online.
- Responding to requests from friends: A friend may ask them for a picture, such as a selfie.
- Responding to a request from a stranger: In some cases children may be manipulated or coerced into sending a stranger a picture of themselves.
- Joining online challenges: They may be encouraged to take part in photo challenges online or post selfies for fun.
- Learning to use new devices: Children often experiment with cameras and social media functions, especially if they are new to them.

In these situations, children may often lack the judgement or understanding of a risky situation and therefore education, guidance and boundaries are important.

### **Understanding consent**

Consent means giving clear, informed, and voluntary permission to do something.

While it's often used when talking about sexual activities, it's also important in other situations, like setting boundaries in relationships and making decisions.

For children, this means making sure they can say “yes” or “no” without feeling pressured, forced, or tricked into it.

### **Why is it important for children to understand consent?**

- Teaching consent encourages children to respect their own and others’ physical and emotional boundaries.
- Consent fosters open communication, mutual respect and equality in relationships.
- Educating children about consent helps prevent situations of sexual assault, harassment and coercion.
- Understanding consent gives children the tools to make informed choices about their body and relationships.
- Consent creates a culture of respect which helps to reduce harmful behaviours like victim-blaming.

The 4 C’s of consent help children know if consent has and is been given:

**Clear:** Yes means yes. If it isn’t a yes, it’s a no.

**Continuous:** Keep checking that it is still a yes; yes now doesn’t necessarily mean yes later.

**Coercion-free:** It isn’t yes if pressure has been put on someone to do something.

**Conscious:** The person giving consent must be fully capable of giving consent.

## Children's Mental Health Week 2025



Last week we marked Children's Mental Health week. The theme was 'Know yourself, Grow yourself' and classes across the school participated in activities to discuss and understand what this means.

We launched the week with a whole-school assembly, discussing how when we take notice of ourselves and how we feel, we are able to make better choices and be more connected with our feelings and behaviours. Noticing these things can help us recognise when we need support. We then thought about the things we love doing - and those that fill us with fear and how we can help manage these emotions.

On Thursday we held our annual 'Dress to Express' day where children came in wearing an item of clothing that expresses their personality. Have a look on our class website pages to see what we got up to in individual classes.

We have some useful information about children's mental health on our [school website](#).

## National Online safety



The National College has a huge number of parent information leaflets, podcasts and courses on a range of topics including how to keep children safe online, children's mental health and other skills such as building emotional resilience.

To access this fantastic resource, please click [here](#).

## Are your children playing age-appropriate games?



We are increasingly aware of young children playing games which are not designed for primary aged children. The international PEGI rating gives an indication of the game's suitability. Please consider the suitability of these games for your children.

As well as PEGI age ratings, game packaging also carries PEGI descriptors that help explain the kind of content that might be found in a particular game. Descriptors appear as a set of icons that cover themes such as fear, bad language, violence and drugs. [Click here](#) for more information.

## Car Park Safety

Please be mindful of your conduct in the car park. Recently, there have been a number of near missed putting our community at risk. Our priority is to ensure that the children are safe when on site, so with that in mind, please consider the following,

- Walking to school
- Parking further away and walking in
- Lift sharing
- Ensure your children walk on the pedestrianised areas of the car park
- Do not block staff cars or the gates

Thank you for keeping our children and other users of the car park safe.

## 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 Tanner

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.**