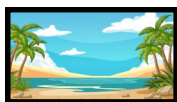


Ridgmont Lower School ~ Safeguarding Newsletter



Ridgmont Lower
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The summer holidays are almost upon us!

Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Attendance Update

Attendance is good and remains above national average.

The most up-to-date national figure available is for w/e 26th June 2026. The national figure stood at 89.07% and the school's figure was 95.2%. Ideally this figure should be in excess of 96%.

A reminder or two!

School Keep Clear Signs

Please help keep our children safe by not parking on the zig-zags and do not use the car park as a thoroughfare.

Please ensure you use the designated paths at all times.

Who to contact if you have a concern about a child.

Report any concerns if you suspect a child is being harmed or at risk of being harmed. Please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.

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

You can also contact the Integrated Front Door - Children's Services

☎ 0300 300 8585 (Mon-Thurs 0845-1720hrs & Fri 0845-1620hrs)

0300 300 8123 (Out of Hours)

✉ IFD@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Summer 2 ~ 2026

What's included?

- Managing screentime -(device boundaries) part two
- Community Safety Drop-in Sessions
- AI and children's photographs
- Supporting your child with transitions
- Smart Glasses
- What to be aware of whilst on holiday
- Staying home alone
- How to pass the time during a long car journey

Ridgmont's Safeguarding Team

The Designated
Safeguarding Lead

(DSL)

is

Allison Jakes
Headteacher

The Deputy
Designated
Safeguarding Lead

(DDSL)

is

Jane Stringall
Senior Teacher

You may recall in the Summer 1 edition of our Safeguarding Newsletter, I said I would share further information on how to have a conversation with your child on why boundaries where screentime is concerned are in place. Open, ongoing conversations are one of the **most powerful safeguarding tools** you have as a parent. When children feel safe talking to you about what they see and experience online, they are far less likely to be harmed by it and much more likely to come to you when something goes wrong.

Explain to your child:

- ⇒ That online spaces, like games and videos, aren't always made for children - even when they seem fun
- ⇒ That some people online pretend to be someone they are not and may try to trick or manipulate
- ⇒ That not all content is safe or real - boundaries help protect their brain, body and feeling

Try these conversation starters regularly:

- * *"What are you playing/watching right now? Show me how it works."*

This encourages sharing and lets you check the content and chat features together.

- * *"Has anything ever popped up that made you feel weird or unsure?"*

Helps children recognise red flags and open the door for them to share worries without shame.

- * *"What do you do if someone you don't know sends you a message or wants to play?"*

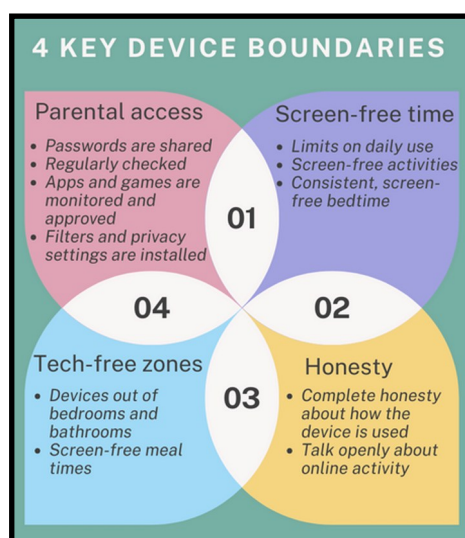
Reinforce that they should never respond to strangers online.

- * *"Why do you think we/I set limits on screen time and certain apps?"*

Encourage reflection and understanding that boundaries are there to protect their mental health, sleep and safety.

- * *"If a friend showed you something upsetting or made you feel uncomfortable online, what would you do?"*

Teach them it's okay to say 'no', walk away, and always tell an adult - even if someone says, 'Don't tell.'



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Over the summer break, there will be the opportunity to speak with a Community Safety Office about YOUR safety concerns in YOUR area. These are drop-in session, so no appointment is necessary.

4th August at Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre in Biggleswade from 1330-1430hrs
4th August at Biggleswade Library from 1530-1630hrs

11th August at Shefford Library from 1330-1430hrs
11th August at Sandy Library from 1530-1630hrs

NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY AND INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION

AI is being used to turn ordinary photos of children into sexual abuse material. The National Crime Agency and Internet Watch Foundation have issued new guidance to help parents make informed choices about sharing images of their children online. It covers reviewing privacy settings, revising consent with your child as they grow and what to do if you're worried.

The parents' guidance can be found here :

<https://www.iwf.org.uk/resources/ai-child-abuse-imagery-parent-guide/>

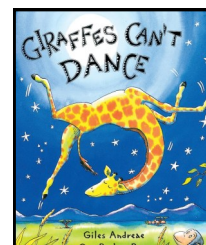
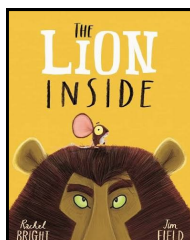
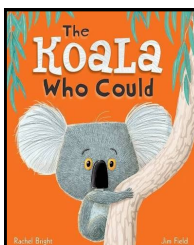
SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH TRANSITION

Just like adults, children cope with changes and transitions in different ways. Some people breeze through with excitement and others feel anxious and need more support. You may find the following books helpful:

The Koala Who Could by Rachel Bright, *"a funny tale for anyone who finds change a little bit worrisome"*

The Lion Inside also by Rachel Bright, *"a story about confidence, self-esteem and a shy little mouse who sets out to find his roar"*

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae, *"a story about confidence, self-esteem and developing a positive mindset about trying new things"*



SMART GLASSES ~ WHAT ARE THEY?

Meta glasses. Glasses with cameras. Glasses that you can link to your phone to take still photos. Or something else?

Meta Ray-Bans and similar devices can record HD video and audio continuously, livestream in real time and upload footage to third-party servers. Not only are they available in high street opticians, but in retailers too, like Argos, John Lewis and Currys. Prices start at £220.

Once only the preserve of James Bond, the public can now buy glasses that could be used to film you without your knowledge or consent. There is a small indicator light to show the glasses are recording, but it is easily missed, and in some cases, people have it deliberately disabled.

Meta is perhaps the best known-brand, but other cheaper, unbranded camera glasses with no indicator light at all are available online for as little as £20.

With all of this in mind, our safeguarding and other relevant policies will be updated to reflect, that under no circumstances, will such devices be permitted to be worn in school, by pupils, staff, visitors, parents and contractors. Their use may potentially breach UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

ADDITIONAL THINGS TO BE AWARE OF WHEN ON HOLIDAY

Cold water shock - Most children think the question is 'can I swim?' The real danger on a hot day is the sudden drop in temperature when they jump into a river, quarry or the sea, which can cause involuntary gasping and panic, even in strong swimmers.

Language and signage barriers abroad - A warning sign in a foreign language, or a lifeguard who doesn't speak English, may simply not register as a warning to a child used to relying on words.

Getting lost - On a big family holiday, a child may wander off without anyone registering they've gone, especially in a large resort or unfamiliar town or city.

Silent drowning - In open water, a child who is out of their depth often won't shout or wave, because that's not what drowning looks like. People need to know that silence and stillness are the warning signs, not splashing.

Heat as a risk of its own - Long walks, cycling or sport in unfamiliar heat, especially abroad, can cause heatstroke and dehydration, especially in children.

Staying Home Alone

It's the holidays! It's already nearly lunch time and you've just about managed to get the children out of bed, let alone dressed and ready to face the day but you were planning on just nipping to the shops to buy a few things including something for lunch. It would be so much easier if you could pop out on your own; after all you'll only be gone 45 minutes, tops. You have a mobile; your eldest has one too so can call in the case of an emergency.

There is no legal age a child can be left at home alone, but it's against the law to leave a child alone if it puts them at risk. Every child matures differently, and because of this, it would be almost impossible to have a "one size fits all" law.

The NSPCC have developed a questionnaire that may be useful in deciding whether to leave you child home alone.

[Is my child ready to be home or out alone? | NSPCC](#)



Going on a long journey and want to minimise screen time to pass the time?

The AA have a section on their website with 10 games that can be played in the car, to help pass the time.

[Games to play in the car | The AA](#)