

**Summer Safeguarding Update from the DSL Team**

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of the summer term, we are writing to provide you with an update on Safeguarding topics and highlight the support available.

**County Lines**

During the holidays there are often reports on the news about child exploitation with gangs using children to move drugs, cigarettes etc around the country, this is called County Lines.

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation. It is when criminals befriend children, either online of offline, and then manipulate them into drug dealing. The 'lines' refer to mobile phones that are used to control a young person who is delivering drugs, often to towns outside their home county.

Young people aged 14-17 are most likely to be targeted by criminal groups but there are reports of children as young as seven-year-old being groomed into county lines.

Pupils (where appropriate) and staff have had contextual safeguarding training and education about this topic, and the implications this could have for them. We have a good relationship with Northumbria Police and consult with them as needed. A guide to spotting County Lines activity can be found within the Safeguarding section of our Website, in the Parents and Carers tab.

**Prevent**

Prevent is a national safeguarding programme that supports people who are at risk of becoming involved with terrorism through radicalisation. Radicalisation means someone is being encouraged to develop extreme views or beliefs in support of terrorist groups and activities. There are different types of terrorism and Prevent deals with all of them. Prevent is run locally by experts who understand the risks and issues in their area, and how best to support their communities.

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These experts include local authorities, the police, charities, and community organisations.

Radicalisation can happen both face to face or online. It is easier than ever to be groomed by terrorist recruiters on the internet and to find extremist materials, even when searching for seemingly innocent things, especially on YouTube. Everyone is different, and there is no checklist that can tell us if someone is being radicalised or becoming involved in terrorism.

Further information can be found on Tips for talking about radicalisation | ACT Early and on the safeguarding link on our website. If you are worried about a child, report it.

**Domestic Abuse**

During sporting events, which often happen over the summer, levels of Domestic Violence rise. Children are now classed as victims of Domestic Violence whether they have witnessed it or not.

Domestic abuse isn’t just physical. It includes controlling, coercive, threatening, and degrading behaviour, usually by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer. It can also include financial control, belittling someone, isolating them from their friends and family, making threats to children or pets, controlling who they see or what they do or sexual violence. Living with domestic abuse can cause long term emotional as well as physical harm to everyone involved.

Further support can be found online at Harbour (myharbour.org.uk), who work with all domestic abuse cases including child on parents and Man Kind which has been set up for male victims of Domestic Abuse (mankind.org.uk).

**Water Safety**

When the weather is sunny and warm it is tempting to go for a splash, but would you know what to do if you or anyone else got into trouble in the water?

Water may look safe, but it can be dangerous, children should always go swimming with an adult. You may swim well in a warm indoor pool, but that does not mean that you will be able to swim in cold water outside. Further information can be found online at Summer Water Safety | Royal Life Saving Society UK ( RLSS UK ).

**Self-care**

Self-care is all about what you can do to help yourself feel better or to keep yourself feeling good. It can help to reduce stress, improve wellbeing, and help young people develop healthy coping strategies as they grow through life. Parents/carers, educators and family members can give young people a helping hand when it comes to learning essential self-care skills. We are aware that during the summer holidays, some young people may struggle without the routine, structure and support of the school network, therefore further information regarding self-care can be found online at Self-care summer | Resources for primary schools, secondary schools and staff (annafreud.org)

We hope you find this information useful; it is our responsibility to work together to ensure all our pupils are safe. We hope you and your families enjoy the summer break.

Yours sincerely

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Team at PHS