



# SAFEGUARDING is everyone's responsibility

## Newsletter Autumn 2023

**There is nothing more important than safeguarding our children.**

### **Safeguarding Definition:**

Mental health is explicitly included in the definition of safeguarding, which now includes “preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health and development. The full definition of safeguarding is:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and;
- Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes
- Recognising harms linked to specific behaviours and child needs of support
- Protecting children from Online Harms.



Rachel Otter

Senior Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



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Schools have very strict guidelines on how to safeguard children and we work very hard as a school to ensure we follow procedures in regards to training our staff on all things safeguarding. There are many documents that we have to write and adhere to around safeguarding.

Some of the documents of paramount importance to us as a school are:

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
2. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
3. Pinewood Child Protection Policy

**All of these can be found on the school website so please take a look.**

At Pinewood we do lots of work to keep children safe including:

- We attend external safeguarding training every 3 years (last attended 11th January 2023)
- We run an annual staff refresher training meeting
- We engage in frequent discussions around safeguarding in staff meetings
- We write a safeguarding action plan
- The Head Teacher and Safeguarding Governor (who is also the Killisick Junior School safeguarding governor) meet termly regarding all things safeguarding
- We use CPOMs an electronic system to log concerns
- We have useful safeguarding information for staff to access on TEAMS and a safeguarding noticeboard
- The Head Teacher attends Designated Safeguarding Lead meetings termly
- The Head Teacher attends and sits on the Nottinghamshire Children’s Safeguarding Partnership as a Head Teacher representative
- We educate the children into how they can keep themselves safe through assemblies and our PSHE curriculum.

## I thought it might be helpful as your child starts school or as your child moves into their next year group to give you some information on healthy sexual development in

### Healthy Sexual Development - Under 5 – years old

Whereas these kinds of actions are perhaps not appropriate in the school environment, at this stage it is common to notice that your child might be starting to naturally explore their body parts in an environment that they feel safe and comfortable. This includes:

- Having no inhibitions about nudity
- Touching their own body parts
- Showing curiosity about the body parts of others
- Talking about bodily functions such as 'wee' and 'poo'
- Consensually role playing with their peers, exploring different relationships or roles such as 'playing house', 'playing mummies and daddies' or 'playing doctors'.

**This is healthy sexual behaviour for children under 5 years old.**

**What is not healthy is if young children seem to know more about sexual acts, use explicit sexual language or show adult like sexual contact with others.**

### Healthy Sexual Development 5-9 Year Olds

As children get a little older, it's common to see children displaying behaviour like:

- Becoming more modest and wanting some privacy
- Asking questions about sex and relationships such about where babies come from , same sex relationships, different family structures
- Consensually exploring relationships with peers, for example mimicking adult relationships such as holding hands, kissing on the cheek, calling each other boyfriend and girlfriend.

**This is healthy sexual behaviour for children under 5 years old.**

As children become more aware of social norms and 'rules' around sexualised behaviour, it's common for them to test boundaries. This might include using 'naughty' words they have heard. We understand this can be upsetting for parents but it can happen in schools.

**What is not healthy is if children between this age mimic adult like sexual interactions, discuss specific sexual acts or self-stimulate in public.**

More information can be found on the 'Stop it Now' website which also has a helpline and access to further advice if needed: <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk>



It is worth ensuring you have tight parental controls on electronic devices and if there are older children in the household that your children know what is and isn't appropriate behaviour to demonstrate in front of the younger children.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) in young people is defined at: 'one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are **inappropriate for their age or stage of development**.'

### Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Under 12's

Harmful sexual behaviour in under 12s is often due to environmental factors. Children at this age understand the world through play and re-enactment which means they might mimic sexual behaviour as a learnt behaviour from something that they have seen. They have little understanding of the actions being sexual but it may be a safeguarding issue in terms of what they have seen or it may be an attempt to meet an unmet emotional need. The majority of the behaviours will be seen as inappropriate or problematic and many can be managed by home, school and support services working together.

Under our PSHE programme we use the following vocabulary:

- **Penis**
- **Testicles**
- **Vagina**
- **Vulva**



It is recommended that these are the words you use at home too.

We teach about private parts belonging to ourselves and keeping private parts private.



We do a lot of work with our children at school regarding staying safe on line and they should be able to tell you about our school SMART rules. Please ask them about them and see what they remember!

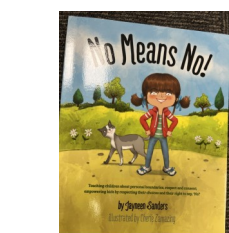
**Gaming:** Gaming is an enjoyable source of entertainment, but many popular titles can expose children to inappropriate material such as violence, horror, gambling or even sexually explicit content. Playing games unsuitable for their age risks 'normalising' to children what they are seeing. Some games also include in-game chat, where other (usually older) online players often use language that you probably wouldn't want your child to hear or repeat. It is worth thinking about.

**Age-inappropriate Content:** "Inappropriate" means different things to different people. What's acceptable for one age group, for example, may be unsuitable for a slightly younger audience. Online, young people can chance upon inappropriate content in various ways — from pop-up ads to TikTok videos. The increasingly young age at which children become active in the digital world heightens the risk of them innocently running into something that they find upsetting or frightening. Trusted adults need to be able to help children be aware of what to do if they're exposed to age-inappropriate content.

### How can parents/carers support?

**Connect, don't correct**—If your child has been particularly distressed by exposure to content that wasn't suitable for their age, it's important to offer guidance to prevent them from repeating the same mistake- but it's equally vital to help them deal with the emotions that the situation has raised.

**Talk it through**—Embarrassment or fear of getting into trouble can make it difficult for children to talk openly about age-inappropriate content they've watched or played. Remind your children they can always come to you if they're troubled by something they've seen online, without worrying about consequences. Talk to your child about the games that are age-appropriate for them, explaining why.



We work with our children about the Pants rule designed by the NSPCC. This teaches children about appropriate and inappropriate touch in a very child friendly way. The NSPCC 'Talk PANTS' activity pack: [nspcc.org.uk/pants](http://nspcc.org.uk/pants) is available on their website if you want to have a look.

In addition to this their website there has some useful information about how to talk with children about appropriate behavior. Children can be interested in 'private parts' at this age and many behaviours are what we call 'green' age appropriate behaviours—but they still require a response. How you can help at home: talk to your child about our bodies and appropriate behavior but never make them feel ashamed for being interested and inquisitive in their own body and the body of others. This is perfectly normal. But we need to teach them what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior so they learn what is socially acceptable and what is not.

We work with the children on keeping happy and safe, educating them in an age appropriate way about stranger danger. We read books with the children such as 'No Means No'. We have a collection of books in our entrance area that we use with the children should you ever wish to come and see them.

Please contact me if you would like any more information around safeguarding . Thanks for reading . Ms Otter