Safeguarding at GWJS

Our school Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

Mrs Petchey, Mrs Stolworthy, Mrs Eaglen, Miss Alderton, Mrs Derer and Mrs Burman

Please speak to one of these members of staff if you are worried or concerned about the safety of a child.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child out of school hours, the number to ring is:

CADS – Children's Advice and Duty Service – 0344 800 8020

Mrs Derer our school Parent Support Advisor and
Mrs Burman and Miss Alderton our school Pastoral Leads and ELSA trained staff are on our school playground every morning from 8:45am. Mrs Derer our school Parent Support Advisor is on our playground every Monday, Thursday and Friday morning from 8:45am.

Mrs Burman, Miss Alderton and Mrs Derer are always happy to talk to you about any worries or concerns relating to your child at home or any further support we may be able to offer or signpost you to.

ONLINE SAFETY

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SHARING INTIMATE IMAGES

An intimate image depicts sensitive – often sexual – content, and sharing these photos or videos is commonly known as 'sexting'. As of January 2024, it is a criminal offence to distribute any intimate images shared by a third party without consent, with offenders facing prison time. Naturally, misuse of intimate images can lead to emotional distress and reputational damage.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Victims of the misuse of intimate images and so-called 'sextortion' (blackmail involving sexual material) often experience significant emotional distress. The threat of having these photos or videos shared publicly can lead to anxiety, depression and a sense of helplessness. This emotional turmoil can affect daily life, academic performance and personal relationships.

DAMAGE TO REPUTATION

Intimate images being made public can severely damage a person's reputation. This can lead to bullying, social ostracisation and long-term impacts on personal and professional relationships. If a blackmailer gets their hands on any intimate images, the fear of reputational damage can also make a victim far more vulnerable to ongoing extortion.

PRIVACY VIOLATIONS

Once intimate images are shared online, it can be difficult to quickly control where they wind up and who else sees them. This loss of privacy can have lifelong repercussions, including identity theft and persistent online harassment.



FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

Perpetrators of sextortion may demand money from victims under the threat of releasing their intimate images publicly. This can lead to severe financial problems for victims and their families, compounding their emotional and psychological distress.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

If a child or young person creates and/or sends intimate images to others – especially adults – this is considered a form of child abuse under UK law. Having to disclose this type of abuse, although necessary, can be harrowing, leading to further trauma. It's crucial for parents, carers and educators to understand the legal processes and be able to provide proper guidance and support.

TRUST ISSUES

Sharing of intimate images without consent can lead to long-term trust issues. Victims may find it difficult to trust others, impacting future relationships and their ability to form healthy, supportive connections. This erosion of trust can have profound effects on mental health and social wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOSTER A CULTURE OF OPEN COMMUNICATION

It's vital to encourage open communication with children and young people about the dangers of sharing intimate images. Create a safe space where they feel comfortable discussing their online activities and any concerns they may have without fear of judgement. Be sure to respond to any worrying information with an attitude of support and learning.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Digital literacy is incredibly important for children and young people to understand how to protect their privacy online. Teach them about secure online practices, such as using strong passwords, enabling privacy settings and recognising suspicious behaviour. This empowers them to be proactive in terms of their own safety.

EDUCATE CHILDREN ON THE RISKS

Children and young people often want to understand why certain rules are in place. Educate them about the risks of sharing intimate images online, explaining the reasons for monitoring and other security measures. Highlight the potential for misuse, including sextortion, and the long-term consequences that can arise from these actions.

PROVIDE SUPPORT RESOURCES

Ensure that children and young people know where to seek help if they become victims of sextortion or any other online abuse. Help them identify in advance which adults they can turn to and provide them with information about trusted resources like helplines (e.g. Childline) that they can access if they need help.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding and neurodiversity consultant with over 20 years' experience working with children, families and adults in education, local authority and mental health settings in the UK and abroad.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: what-parents-need-to-know-about-sharing-intimate-images