

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

The Arthur Terry School

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Children’s sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

A review of Sexual abuse in schools and colleges was carried out by OFSTED and published in June 2021. In the review OFSTED visited 32 schools and spoke to more than 900 students, as well as staff and other relevant stakeholders.

This rapid thematic review revealed how prevalent sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are for children and young people. It is concerning that for some children, incidents are so commonplace that they see no point in reporting them. This review did not analyse whether the issue is more or less prevalent for different groups of young people, and there may well be differences, but it found that the issue is so widespread that it needs addressing for all children and young people. It recommends that schools, colleges and multi-agency partners act as though sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening, even when there are no specific reports.

Keeping Children safe in Education 2022 therefore outlines to schools the importance of ensuring all incidents of this nature are dealt with seriously and proportionately, making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. The guidance is also clear that schools should consistently be challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as (not an exhaustive list) grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. Here at Arthur Terry, most incidents of harassment or similar types of behaviour have come through inappropriate use of language between students. We will continue to take a zero tolerance approach to all forms of inappropriate and/or problematic sexual behaviour.

We will continue to support and educate our young people through Personal Development lessons, assemblies and wider curriculum based activities. We hope we can rely on the support of Parents/Carers in working together to minimize incidents of this nature occurring, and when they do, that we can work together to not only educate, but also take appropriate actions to ensure understanding that behaviour of this nature is not acceptable in our school community, or indeed the wider community. All students have been reminded in our ‘Be Proud’ assemblies only this week, about ensuring they are respecting eachothers personal space, as well as using language that is appropriate towards one another.

This type of behaviour has never been acceptable, and that will continue to be the case.

INTERNET SAFETY

Students are reminded that all school ICT systems are monitored by Smoothwall. This service is in place for the safety of all staff and students and will alert school if any words/searches/pictures/content is accessed/attempted to be accessed on a school device/system. Please can we therefore remind all students to ensure school devices/systems are used appropriately.

Please see www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further advice and guidance around keeping your child safe online.

FEEDBACK FROM WELL-BEING SURVEY

We would like to thank all students who took the time to complete the well-being survey which was shared at the end of last half term. Over 3/4 of students in the school took the time to complete the survey which was fantastic. School have taken and continue to take lots of actions in response to this. Please look out for updates in the well-being section of the website, which also contains lots of helpful resources.

ROAD SAFETY ON AND AROUND SCHOOL SITE

With recent building work now completed, Parents/Carers are reminded to drive and park in a safe and responsible way whilst on and around school site. Please ensure that all rules of the road are followed, including avoiding parking on double yellow lines/yellow zig zags, following local speed limits, not parking in disabled bays/other prohibited areas and ensuring the one way system around Beaton Road is used to enter the school site.

Please can we also ask Parents/Carers to remind students to observe good road safety when travelling to/ from school, whether that be by foot, bicycle or other transport method. We are aware of a recent incident where a content creator was present outside our school filming videos for Tik Tok, which potentially led to dangerous behaviour on/around surrounding roads. The police have asked us to advise students not to engage with this, as it can lead to Anti-Social behaviour, which can then result in police issuing ASB letters with conditions. We thank you for your support with this matter.