



# Termly Safeguarding Newsletter

## Spring Term 2025

### Useful Telephone Numbers

[Citizens Advice Bureau](#)  
Chelmsford 0800 144 8848

### National helplines:

[National Domestic Violence Helpline](#) 0808 2000 247

[National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) 0800 999 5428

[Respect](#) 0808 802 4040

[Men's Advice Line](#) 0808 801 0327

[Shelter](#) 0800 800 4444

[NSPCC Helpline](#) 0808 800 5000

[ChildLine](#) 0800 1111

[Samaritans](#) 116 123

[PACE \(Parents Against Child Exploitation\)](#) 0113 240 3040

If you have any concerns about a child in our school please do not hesitate to contact one of the school's **Designated Leaders**.



**Mrs Walker**  
Headteacher  
(DSL)



**Mr Austin**  
(DDSL)



**Mr Taverner**  
(Safeguarding  
Governor)

If you are concerned that a child or young person is being harmed, neglected or is at risk you should contact Essex Social Care (Children and Families Hub) on **0345 603 7627**

### Out of hours:

**Monday - Thursday—5.30pm - 9.00am**  
**Friday and Bank holidays—4.30pm-9.00am**

**Telephone: 0345 606 1212 or [email](#).**  
**In an emergency call the Police on 999.**

### Online Safety: Helping Children Stay Safe in the Digital World

Technology offers amazing opportunities for learning and creativity—but it also comes with risks. It's essential that children understand how to stay safe online. This term, we've covered key topics in class, including:

- How to create strong passwords
- The importance of not sharing personal information
- What to do if something online makes you feel uncomfortable

#### Top Tips for Parents:

- **Know what your child is accessing** – Sit with them while they use apps or games.
- **Check age ratings** – Many apps and games are not suitable for primary-aged children.
- **Use parental controls** – Set limits on screen time and filter content.
- **Talk regularly** – Keep the conversation open. Ask them what they enjoy online and if anything has ever worried them.
- **Visit reliable sites** – Try [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) for helpful guides.





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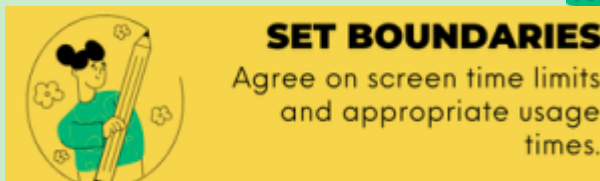
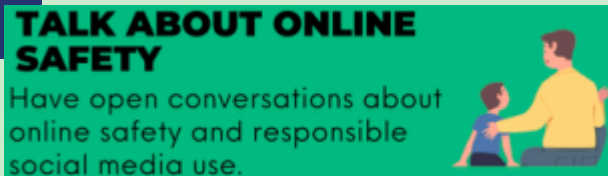
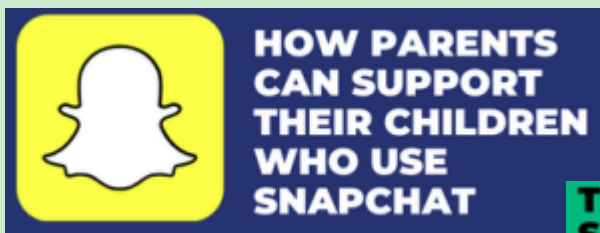
### Supporting Emotional Well-being

We know that emotional well-being is crucial for effective learning and healthy development. Our staff are trained in recognising signs of distress and work closely with children to help them express how they feel.

- Pupils can use our "Worry Monster" or talk to a trusted adult in school.
- We promote the use of the **The Colour Monster** to help children identify and manage their feelings.
- Forest School sessions continue to be a wonderful outlet for pupils who benefit from time in nature and practical learning.

### Keeping your child safe on Snapchat: A parent's guide

Many children become more engaged with social media at a young age and Snapchat is one of the most popular apps among them. It is important to note that the minimum age requirement for using Snapchat is 13 years old. While Snapchat can be a fun way for children to stay connected with friends, it also comes with risks.



**Stranger danger:** strangers can contact your child if their privacy settings are not secure.

**Snap Maps:** this feature shows a user's location in real-time, which can put children at risk if not managed properly.



## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAP STREAK

97

DAYS

# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION

13+

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnosis, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

#### PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they've paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapKlaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

#### MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

#### SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

#### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

#### ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

#### UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

#### BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

#### FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

#### ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

#### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>

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## Sleep Hygiene

Sleep Hygiene is just a fancy term for describing habits and strategies for getting a good sleep on a regular basis. It's not only about what children do at bedtime, there are lots of things you can do to help them sleep better.



Good sleep hygiene begins in the day. Things like what your child eats and drinks and when can make a real difference. Caffeine for instance, is a stimulant and could be causing a child to stay awake longer than they should. It is found in most energy and fizzy drinks, tea and coffee.

We need to eat healthy, balanced diets to keep our bodies and minds in shape so the impact food can have will be no surprise. Eating a large meal before bedtime can also contribute to a child struggling to drift off. On school nights, it's especially important that they eat earlier as they are more likely to need to get up in the morning at an earlier time.

### Keeping a sleep journal

It is important to get things off our chests. This is especially true when it comes to sleep. If a young person is having difficulties with homework or they are feeling anxious about something they are far more likely to have problems sleeping. That is where a sleep journal comes in.

A sleep journal is somewhere a child can record their thoughts and feelings before bed to help them spot negative thoughts and behaviours. It is meant to be a place to express themselves and let their minds wander, as they get it all down on paper. There is no right or wrong way to do this. They can draw, decorate the cover and use images from magazines to let their creativity lead them. This is best done a few hours before bed so the thoughts and feelings can settle, making it easier to sleep.

## GOOD TO KNOW – MINIMUM AGES FOR POPULAR APPS



**Facebook (minimum age 13)** – lets users create their own profiles, share status updates, pictures, videos and chat with other users and also has a messenger app.



**Instagram (minimum age 13)** – allows users to alter photos, upload them and share to other social networking sites. Photos and videos can be sent directly to specific users.



**Snapchat (minimum age 13)** – a photo-sharing app where users can send photos or videos to their friends. These will display on screen for up to ten seconds before being deleted, although it is possible to take screenshots of messages and download other apps designed to capture and save Snapchat content.



**TikTok (minimum age 13)** – TikTok users can make their own short videos on the mobile app and often like to have music accompany these. The users have creative control over the videos. Other TikTok users can 'react' to videos they see by filming their responses alongside the original video, or 'duet' by making a video alongside another video.



**X (minimum age 13)** – a social network that lets users send and read messages limited to 280 characters.



**Tumblr (minimum age 16)** – a social networking site where users can post blogs and follow other people's blogs. Some of the content on this site includes sexual and/or pornographic images.



**WhatsApp (minimum age 13)** – a free-of-charge, real-time messaging service. Users can share images and videos, take part in 'group chats' and share locations. As it's based on knowing the user's phone number, you can only message users if you already have this information.



**YouTube (minimum age 13)** – allows users to watch, create and comment on videos. The dislike button can create insecurities with content posted even if comments are turned off for the video.