Safeguarding Newsletter

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This half termly newsletter has been focused around Social media and E-safety to support keeping our whole community safe whilst they are online.

The Safeguarding Leadership Team.

Mrs Wilkinson   Ms Stacey   Mrs West

TGGS is a phone free school. We are proud of this as we witness students engaging in our extra curricular clubs, the art of conversation and spending quality time with their friends during social times. We are committed to ensure students are safe from online harm both in and outside of school. A phone free environment encourages students to take a break from the lure of: checking apps, playing online games or, being targeted by online groomers when they are away from the safety of their family unit.

6th form students do have more freedom around phone use, but we recognise they are still at risk and ensure they are educated through their tutorial sessions.

We have an effective monitoring system across our IT infrastructure called Lightspeed. This system prevents students accessing harmful content online and also alerts the safeguarding team if there is a concern over something a student has accessed / sent. We do not allow students to access YouTube and have a clear system where our staff have to quality assure new websites they want to use as part of our curriculum.

As part of our 60 hours outside strategy, we will also be challenging our students to reduce their screen time over the coming weeks outside of school, in preparation for the summer holidays when they have more time on their hands, and may be at more risk online. The following pages of this newsletter are intended to give parents more detailed information regarding the specific risks to your children. Research shows that parents are still not taking an active role in checking what their children are viewing online. Harmful content and online influencers have led to you people coming to harm both physically, sexually and emotionally. In 2022 research showed that 97% of homes with a child aged 0-18 living there have access to the internet and 69% of children within this age accessed the internet via a mobile phone.

This newsletter is dedicated to sharing information with our community on e-safety and some of the risks to children online. Whilst there are many benefits of social media, the negative impacts on young people continue to grow.

Recently we have undertaken a review of our social media use as a school. We will now be sharing information with our community through 6 official social media channels. These are managed safely and with consideration regarding frequency, timing and content of posts. We want to embrace social media as is impossible not to in 2024, but we do not want our community to depend on it.

Our official social media pages are -

@torquaygirls

torquaygirlsgrammar & tggs_sixthform

Torquay Girls' Grammar School

Torquay Girls' Grammar School 6675

Torquay Girls Grammar School

It is easy to forget that children have the same access as adults when using their phones and can access anything that is not 'private' on all social media platforms they have accounts with.

What is Harmful content?

The UK Safer internet centre outline harmful content as - anything online which causes a person distress or harm. This encompasses a huge amount of content and can be very subjective depending on who is doing the viewing; what may be harmful to one person might not be considered an issue by someone else.

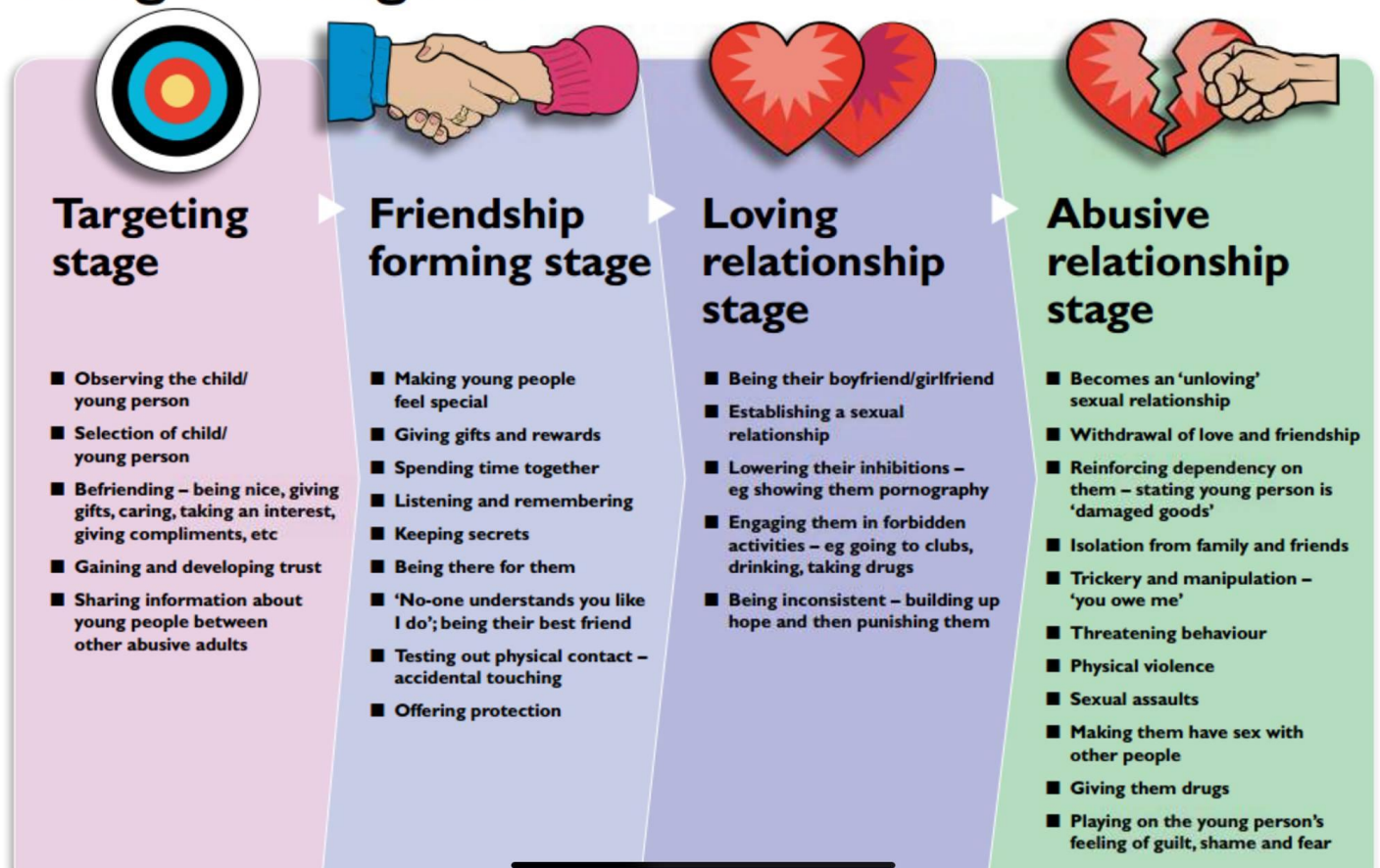Content that is likely to violate terms are -

Online Abuse
Bullying or Harassment
Threats
Impersonation
Unwanted Sexual Advances (Not Image Based)
Violent Content
Self-Harm or Suicide Content
Pornographic Content
Harmful content can be reported but only by someone above the age of 13. If you are a parent of a younger student, you would need to do this on their behalf. You can do so by following this

link Report Harmful Content - We Help You Remove Content

The grooming line

Targeting stage

- Observing the child/ young person
- Selection of child/ young person
- Befriending – being nice, giving gifts, caring, taking an interest, giving compliments, etc
- Gaining and developing trust
- Sharing information about young people between other abusive adults

Friendship forming stage

- Making young people feel special
- Giving gifts and rewards
- Spending time together
- Listening and remembering
- Keeping secrets
- Being there for them
- 'No-one understands you like I do'; being their best friend
- Testing out physical contact – accidental touching
- Offering protection

Loving relationship stage

- Being their boyfriend/girlfriend
- Establishing a sexual relationship
- Lowering their inhibitions – eg showing them pornography
- Engaging them in forbidden activities – eg going to clubs, drinking, taking drugs
- Being inconsistent – building up hope and then punishing them

Abusive relationship stage

- Becomes an 'unloving' sexual relationship
- Withdrawal of love and friendship
- Reinforcing dependency on them – stating young person is 'damaged goods'
- Isolation from family and friends
- Trickery and manipulation – 'you owe me'
- Threatening behaviour
- Physical violence
- Sexual assaults
- Making them have sex with other people
- Giving them drugs
- Playing on the young person's feeling of guilt, shame and fear

Some ways children are at risk online.

Sextortion

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often referred to in the media as 'sextortion') is a form of blackmail that can force any individual into paying money to an offender who is threatening to share nude or semi-nude images of them. This can also include forcing them to provide further intimate content or agreeing to do something against their will. Typically perpetrated by organised crime groups operating outside of the UK, sextortion can target any individual regardless of their age or gender.

- Targeting young people through social online sites.
- Moving conversations towards an end-to-end encrypted platform.
- Starting sexual conversations or sharing an initial nude image.
- Requesting and pressuring the child for images or videos.
- Blackmailing them for money or further intimate content with the threat of sharing images with family members or friends.
- Claiming they have hacked their accounts and have access to information, images and videos.

If a child is in immediate danger call the police on 999
Sextortion - UK Safer Internet Centre

Online gaming

Online gaming is hugely popular with children and young people. Annual research conducted by OFCOM shows that gaming is still one of the top activities enjoyed online by 5–16 year olds, with many of them gaming on mobile phones, games consoles, tablets or computers.

Consider age and game rating

Check who your child is chatting with

Discuss how to report or block unkind messages

Gaming - UK Safer Internet Centre

Cyberflashing

'**Cyberflashing**' is where somebody digitally sends sexual images or pornography to an unsuspecting person. Due to the nature of channels used to send these images, the victim will not know they have been cyberflashed until they have actively opened the notification or gone into the app.

AirDrop is a file and image sharing app, bespoke for Apple devices, which enables users to drop content for nearby devices to accept or reject. Cyberflashing most commonly occurs using Apple AirDrop, as strangers can send images to a victim's phone without having their details saved. Cyberflashing can also occur through **file sharing apps** and **social media**, especially if the perpetrator has the victim's details.Cyberflashing - UK Safer Internet Centre

Pornography

Online pornography can be images or videos online of naked adults, adults having sexual intercourse, or showing sexual behavior. Some people may enjoy looking at or watching these for pleasure. Pornography, both online and offline, can influence how they think about sex, relationships and their own body image. It's important that we talk to children about the sexualised content they see, including online pornography, to help them interpret and critique this information and to help them develop healthy and positive attitudes towards sex, relationships and their own body.

Have age appropriate conversations

You can explain that there are some things online that are for adults only and that if they ever see anything that worries them online that they should come and tell you. Make sure they know to always tell you if anyone ever shows them a picture of a naked person, or if anyone wants to take a picture of their private parts. The NSPCC Pants Rule is a great way to start a conversation about private parts of our bodies.

Give your child strategies for dealing with anything inappropriate online

It can help to give your child strategies for dealing with any online content they are not comfortable with – such as turning off the screen, closing the laptop lid or turning over the tablet or phone and then coming to speak to you.

Make sure your children know they can turn to you, even if they have viewed something on purpose

If they do tell you they have seen something inappropriate, don't panic. Reassure them they've done the right thing, turning to you. It may help to practice what you would say if you found out, or if your child told you, that they had seen something pornographic online. Be prepared that it may prompt questions about sex and relationships, and it is important to answer questions in an age appropriate way.

Make use of parental control tools

With young children, we recommend that you make use of parental control tools available. These can be applied at device level or the platform and from your internet service provider. See our guides for setting up parental controls. Be aware that parental controls are never 100% effective, but they do help limit the chances of your child being accidentally exposed to pornographic content.

Pornography - UK Safer Internet Centre

Livestreaming

Livestreaming is when an individual or a group of people broadcast themselves or others to an audience online in real-time. Many social media platforms offer a livestreaming feature that is available to anyone but often used by gamers, celebrities or influencers to communicate with a chosen audience. Livestreaming can be an enjoyable way to share content with followers but can also present risks around privacy and coercion as well as potential harm towards those watching.

Livestreaming - UK Safer Internet Centre

Social Media

Social media is a website or app that enables users to communicate and engage with others online. Users can share information such as posts, pictures, or videos, and users can respond through varying levels of engagement such as comments, reactions, or 'likes'.

Know what privacy features are available

There are a range of privacy features and parental controls you can set up on social media accounts. These often include preventing unwanted contact from strangers and limiting the exposure of posts. Consider what restrictions work best for your family, ensure age restrictions are adhered to, develop understanding within the household of safer internet use and consider how privacy features could be lifted as time goes on.

Have a conversation

Social media gives a lot of freedom towards how children and young people express themselves. It's important to discuss the risks associated with engaging with strangers online, giving out too much personal information, sharing content that may be harmful or posting content that can damage someone's reputation. Discussing these areas can help them navigate social media in a way that allows them to experience the benefits whilst also being aware of the potential risks.

Be available to talk

Children and young people can encounter issues online that may cause upset or panic. Ensure that you or someone you trust is available to talk to them no matter what issue they may be having. Try to help them resolve the problem without causing more worry and know where to go for further support if the situation calls for it e.g. correct reporting channels and helplines such as Childline etc. Allowing family members to feel confident to come forward for support can help prevent problems from growing.

Prioritise wellbeing

Social media can offer many benefits towards children and young people throughout their development but it can sometimes bring negative effects that may result in poor mental health if not managed correctly. Ensure rules and boundaries are in place at home to make sure family members are able to step away from social media and enjoy family time offline. Maintain a healthy offline/ online balance and know when to put devices down.

Social Media - UK Safer Internet Centre

SMART tips based on resources from www.thinkuknow.co.uk

S Stay **Safe** — Don't give out your personal information to people / places you don't know.

M Don't **Meet Up** — Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Always check with an adult you trust.

A **Accepting** Files — Accepting emails, files, pictures or texts from people you don't know can cause problems.

R **Reliable?** — Check information before you believe it. Is the person or website telling the truth?

T **Tell** Someone — Tell an adult if someone or something makes you feel worried or uncomfortable.

Follow these SMART tips to keep yourself safe online!

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Please encourage your children to be **SMART online**. If you have any concerns with any content your child has received you can report this through the following sites:
www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre **https://reportharmfulcontent.com/**

It is highly recommended that you do not allow your child to have access to their mobile phone overnight in their bedrooms.

Online Safety We constantly remind our students of their digital footprint. The average teenager spends up to 3 hours a day on their phone accessing social media. It is so important that parents use the advice in this newsletter to take an active role in ensuring children access the internet safely. We continue to publish advice through our website for our whole community. There is advice on our parent specific online safety page through our website Online Safety - Parents | Torquay Girls' Grammar School (tggsacademy.org).

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

A child being picked up by a friend? **OR** A child being taken away to be sexually exploited?
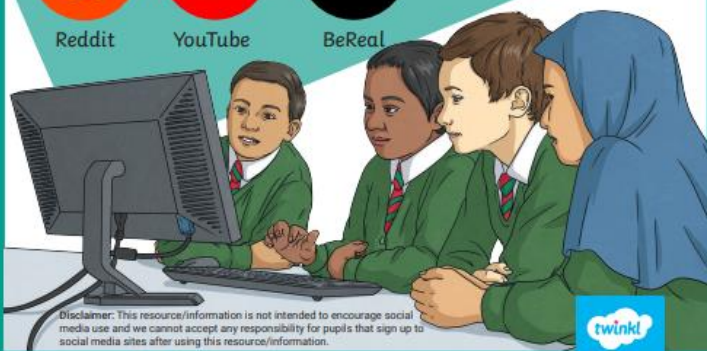
WHAT DO YOU SEE?

A child doing her homework? **OR** A child being groomed or exploited on social media?

Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

13 is the minimum age for account holders on these social media sites and apps.

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Messenger

Tik Tok, Discord, Snapchat, Twitch, Yubo

Reddit, YouTube, BeReal

Disclaimer: This resource/information is not intended to encourage social media use and we cannot accept any responsibility for pupils that sign up to social media sites after using this resource/information.

twinkl

Contacts if you are concerned about a child.

If you are worried about a child, or if you are a child worried about your own safety, or your query is of a safeguarding nature, please call the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub):

For Torbay residents call 01803 08100 or email mash@torbay.gov.uk

For out of office hours please call 0300 4564876

For Devon residents call 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

If you or a child is at immediate risk, please call 999.

If you need support there is lots of helpful information such as websites available here.