

# Safeguarding Newsletter

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## DIARY DATES

**Safer Internet Day**  
Tuesday 5 February 2019

**Safeguarding Conference**  
Thursday 21 March 2019

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## Save the date: Safer Internet Day Tuesday 5 February 2019

Each year Safer Internet Day grows and grows, and in 2018, 45% of young people were aware of the day.

Following the success of last year, the [UK Safer Internet Centre](http://www.saferinternetcentre.org) which organise the day are very excited about Safer Internet Day 2019, which will be held on Tuesday 5 February with the global theme of 'Together for a Better Internet'.

The UK Safer Internet Centre commented: "In the UK each year a theme is chosen that best suits the landscape of online safety and the issues that young people may face online. The theme for Safer Internet Day 2019 is consent and through this we will look at the way we give, ask and receive consent in an online context".

Coordinated in the UK, by the UK Safer Internet Centre, the celebration sees hundreds of organisations getting involved to promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people.

The campaign continues to grow from strength to strength, and for Safer Internet Day 2018, an incredible 1,700 organisations were involved in supporting the day, which reached 45% of 8-17-year-olds in the UK.

The day offers the opportunity to highlight positive uses of technology and to explore the role we all play in helping to create a better and safer online community. It calls upon young people, parents, carers, teachers, social workers, law enforcement, companies, policymakers and a wider audience to join together in helping to create a better internet.

Each year to help schools to celebrate Safer Internet Day there are a range of Education Packs that look at the theme in a way that are suitable for children and young people of different ages.

For Safer Internet Day 2018 the Education Packs were downloaded over 800,000 times, with teachers reporting on the positive impact these lessons had on their pupils.

The Safer Internet Day 2019 resources have been released by UK Safer Internet Centre and they are available on the [ATT Safeguarding Portal](http://www.att.gov.uk/safeguarding).

## Student poll finds significant gaps in sex education in England

Sex education classes are failing to include appropriate discussions of pornography, according to a survey, despite concern among experts about young people's unfettered access to online porn sites.

A poll of 16-17-year-olds revealed significant gaps in relationship and sex education (RSE) in schools, according to the Sex Education Forum. More than half (52%) of those who took part in the survey said they thought more time should be spent on RSE. More than a quarter said there was no teaching about pornography. Three out of 10 said they were taught nothing about sexual pleasure and two out of 10 did not receive teaching about signs of an abusive relationship.

The survey of 1,000 students in England, conducted on behalf of the [Sex Education Forum](#) and the [National Education Union](#) (NEU), also found that 23% of students were not taught how to recognise when someone was being groomed for sexual exploitation, among other worrying findings, 18% said they were not told anything about how to find help if they were sexually assaulted and 23% were not taught how to tell if a particular relationship was healthy.

Other gaps in teaching included Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which was neglected for a third of students; 22% said they were not taught about LGBT+ issues; 12% learned nothing about HIV.

Although 45% of students rated the quality of their RSE as good or very good, 34% said they wanted the subject to be taken more seriously.

For more information and the full article from The Guardian, please follow this [link](#).

## Schools should have consistent policy on phones

Pupils in schools where smartphones are banned like being free of the associated pressures, says England's Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield.

Ms Longfield said: "Schools across England should have a consistent approach to the use of mobile phones".

She told the Commons Science and Technology Committee that every school seemed to have its own policy on whether pupils could use phones. The select committee was taking evidence about the impact of social media and screen use on young people's health.

Ms Longfield said research from her office had shown that children's social media use increased dramatically when they made the transition between primary and secondary school.

She said children spoke to her about an avalanche of pressure, particularly in the first year of secondary school, to be popular and successful on social media, and we need to prepare children in Year 6 at primary school for these pressures.

For the full article from BBC, please follow this [link](#).

## Parents must not abdicate duties to teachers, says Ofsted

Parents should not expect schools to police children's eating and exercise, or toilet train pupils, Ofsted boss Amanda Spielman said.

England's Chief Inspector for schools will argue the answer to the obesity crisis lies in the home, and parents should not abdicate responsibility. Neither can schools be a panacea for knife crime or child neglect, she added in her second annual report.

Two studies have this year queried the benefit of school anti-obesity schemes. In February, the British Medical Journal reported that a year-long anti-obesity programme involving more than 600 West Midlands primary school pupils yielded no improvements. And in July, an Ofsted study of 60 schools found no link between efforts to tackle obesity and pupils' weight.

Ms Spielman, who recently presented Ofsted's annual report, will highlight concerns that, by the time they start primary school, almost a quarter of children in England are overweight or obese.

For more information and the full article, please follow this [link](#).

## Schools must be prepared for peer-on-peer sexual assault

It's an uncomfortable subject for many, but a recent court case has highlighted the need for schools to have robust guidelines in place that address the problem of sexual abuse perpetrated by young children.

With Barnardo's reporting to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee that children as young as five are perpetrating sexual abuse on their peers, and the recent report of a high settlement paid to parents of an abused pupil, it's important for schools to know how to protect themselves and their pupils.

Sexual assault on children is an emotive and highly charged issue. When the assault is committed by another child, adults often shy away. With the recovery of the victim being so strongly linked to the way in which these incidents are dealt with, schools need to ensure the availability of adequate training, sanctions and counselling.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are often designed to protect children and adults. While behaviour policies might cover allegations of sexual assault, they often do not deal with allegations where the perpetrator and the victim are both pupils.

Ways to minimise the fallout:

- Adapt behaviour policies to deal with situations where both parties are pupils
- Train staff in how to identify and challenge risky behaviour
- Enable staff to understand when to escalate and report concerns
- If the worst does happen, follow your adapted policies and procedures. They provide you with a clear decision path and justify your actions
- Don't assume that waiting for it to go away will be the best way of protecting the school's reputation
- Engage early with professional advisers who can provide you with the toolkit to interact with parents and pupils.

For the full article from Schools week and more information about this issue, please follow this [link](#).

## Record number of UK children excluded for racist bullying

A record number of children are being excluded for racist bullying, a Guardian analysis has found, prompting calls for an urgent government intervention to tackle bigotry and prejudice in schools across Britain.

Last year, 4,590 cases of racial abuse among school students were deemed serious enough to warrant fixed or permanent exclusions, up from 4,085 in the previous year.

The increase of more than 500 is the highest leap in a decade, after remaining relatively stable since 2008-2009, when the figure was 3,950. The number is rising at a faster rate than student population growth. The findings were echoed by data separately obtained by the Guardian in a snapshot of 39 local authorities which shows a similar rise in racist incidents, surging from 2,694 to 3,651 in three years.

For more information and the full article from The Guardian, please follow this [link](#).

## FGM cases more than double in a year in UK

The number of girls in England who have experienced or are believed to be at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has more than doubled in a year, according to assessments by council social workers.

Analysis of government figures shows that FGM featured in 1,960 social work assessments in 2017-18 – more than twice the 970 cases reported in the previous year.

The figures were described as alarming by those working in the field, who said the increase is due, mainly to better detection by social workers. Experts said the real incidence of FGM is likely to be far higher, however, as it remains a largely hidden crime.

The analysis, by the Local Government Association, also reveals that abuse of children linked to faith or belief (including witchcraft and spirit possession) has gone up by 12%.

For more information and the full article from The Guardian, please follow this [link](#).

## Fortnite is making children aggressive, schools warn parents

Several schools have written to parents with concerns over Fortnite saying it's changing children's behaviour and creating anger, aggression attitude and bad language.

The multiplayer online game pits players against 99 others in a frantic fight for survival, where the last gamer standing is the winner. But some parents and teachers have seen their children's behaviour change while playing.

School officials say they are hearing children talking about killing people in the game which is also causing bad behaviour in class. A number of primary schools in Gloucestershire have written to parents, expressing their concerns.

The schools have seen pupils come in with special Fortnite bags and hooded tops after becoming fixated with the game, which has an official age rating of 12.

For more information and the full article, please follow this [link](#).

## 1 in 3 girls feel overwhelmed by worry, often or all the time

Nearly one in three (31%) girls feel overwhelmed by worry often or all the time, compared with 11% of boys, according to a [report](#) published recently by public health charity [Addaction](#).

- More than one in five (21%) girls aged 13-17 said they think about hurting themselves some or all of the time, twice the rate of boys
- Nearly one in five girls (19%) said they have a close friend who self-harms, compared with 11% of boys
- 40% of girls think many or most people their age self-harm, compared with 20% of boys.

The findings are based on a survey of more than 8,500 students from 51 secondary schools in Kent, Cornwall and Lancashire.

The survey was carried out as part of Addaction's Mind and Body programme, aimed at young people who self-harm or are vulnerable to self-harming behaviours.

For the full article, please follow this [link](#).

## Students with mental health disorders spend more time online

Students with mental health disorders tend to spend more than twice as much time on social media as their peers, according to research by the NHS. A major survey, recently published, shows that youth mental health problems have grown over the past 20 years to the extent that three children in every classroom are now likely to have a disorder.

The study of more than 9,000 students from across England also found a strong link between social media use, cyber-bullying and conditions such as anxiety and depression.

Two-thirds of 11-19-year-olds without a mental health disorder who were asked, said that they spent up to two hours per day on social media. By contrast, more than half of those with a disorder spent more than two hours a day using social networks, including nearly 30% who said they spent more than four hours per day.

Students with disorders were more likely to feel the negative effects of social media, including feeling compelled to compare themselves to others and not being honest about their feelings. Students with mental health disorders were also more than twice as likely to both be cyber-bullied or bully others online, compared to their peers.

Katharine Sadler, Research Director at NatCen for Social Research said: "We collected data on social media and found that 11-19-year-olds with a mental disorder spend more time on social media. We found that a higher proportion with a mental disorder spend more than four hours on social media on a typical school day, compared to those without a disorder".

For more information about this research and for the full article from TES, please follow this [link](#).