SAFEGUARDING

Term: Autumn | Issue: 2 | Date: 28th November 2025

MESSAGE FROM MRS LAWRENCE

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week's safeguarding information centres around promoting independence in our children and when may be the best time to do this. As children move through primary school, many families start to think about independence – walking home from school, spending short periods at home, or going out with friends. It can be hard to judge what is safe and what the law expects. This newsletter shares key guidance from the NSPCC about children being home or out alone.

Is it legal to leave a child home alone?

In the UK there is **no fixed legal age** at which a child can be left home alone. However, it *is* against the law to leave a child alone if that situation puts the child at risk. NSPCC

According to NSPCC guidance: NSPCC

- **Primary-aged children (roughly 6–12 years)** are usually **too young** to:
  - be left home alone for long periods
  - walk home regularly from school without an adult
  - cook for themselves or babysit younger children

If childcare is needed for a primary-aged child, NSPCC suggests options such as trusted family members, friends, or registered childcare providers. NSPCC

Things to consider before leaving a child alone

- Does the child feel *safe* in the home and neighbourhood?
- Are there particular worries – such as the dark, strange noises, or answering the door?

Children who feel very anxious, who are prone to panic, or who have additional or complex needs may not be ready to be left, even for short periods. NSPCC

Before any trial run, NSPCC suggests agreeing simple rules, such as: NSPCC

- Answering the phone (or not answering it at all
- Never opening the door to anyone
- Activities that are **not allowed** when no adult is present (for example: cooking, lighting candles, using sharp tools, climbing on furniture)
- Whether friends are allowed to visit

It is important that children: NSPCC

- know how to contact parents or carers (numbers written down clearly)
- have phone numbers for a trusted neighbour, friend or family member
- know when and how to call emergency services
- know what to do if something goes wrong (a fire alarm, a fall, a break-in, or feeling unwell)

Build up independence slowly

NSPCC recommends a gradual approach: NSPCC

1. **Start small** – for example, leaving a child for no more than about 20 minutes while an adult remains close by and easily contactable.
2. **Check in regularly** – call the child, or ask a neighbour to pop in, especially the first few times.
3. **Increase time gradually** – only if both the child and the adults feel confident and things have gone smoothly.
4. **Avoid overnight stays** – NSPCC does **not** recommend leaving a child under 16 home alone overnight.
5. **Babysitting -** There is no legal minimum age for a babysitter, but if the babysitter is **under 16**, parents are still legally responsible for the younger child's safety.

Have a wonderful weekend,

Mrs Lawrence

Headteacher and Safeguarding Lead

House Points

Attenborough
Hawking
Holmes
Rowling

Stars of the Week

0RC - Avyaan N 0RB - Iris W 1CE - Oakley C 1T - Milani D 2E - Harrison R
2M - Harold L 3S - Nina C 3C - Hallie S 4C - Joshua H 4LT - Amelia A
5P - Isaiah S 5RKP - Isobel R 6F - Florence P 6C - Gabriella E Aspire - Milly A

Congratulations!

Cold Weather Reminder

Please can we remind all parents/carers to send children to school with a named warm waterproof coat, hat, scarf and gloves.

Children will be out on the playground for break and lunchtime, unless it is very wet.

DIARY DATES
Keep a note!

3rd December-ORC- Library Visit -9am

4th December- ORB- Library Visit-9am

10th December - PreSchool Christmas Singalong (KS1 Hall 2.30pm)

10th December - Aspire trip to the Library

11th December - Christmas Lunch & Christmas Jumper Day

11th December - Main in Red (Friends in-school event)

12th December - Christmas Fair

15th & 16th December-KS1 Christmas performance (KS1 Hall 2.15pm)

17th December KS1 - Christmas performance (KS1 Hall 9.15am)

17th December - KS2 Christmas Singalong (2.15pm KS2 Playground)

19th December - Class Christmas Parties (Information to follow from class teachers)

19th December - Last Day of term!

Festive anxiety - Article from Young Minds

Article from Young Minds website - to read the full article and for further help head to: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/blog/coping-with-festive-anxiety/

Coping with Festive anxiety - Parent article

I always used to think of Christmas as a fairly simple time of year. Although it comes with its own pressures, like buying presents, cooking dinner, and trying to tie up loose ends at work before the holidays, I would basically look forward to putting up the tree, eating too much, and having a bit of time off. When our son was younger Christmas was even more special for me and I always tried to give him the most magical time that I could.

As he got older, this got much more difficult. My son has an anxiety disorder, which comes with a different set of challenges. He finds it difficult to deal with changes in routine and is easily overstimulated - which as you can imagine is easily triggered during December.

Dealing with anxiety

Eventually, after lots of meltdowns, we understood that the change in routine, loud noises and lights, and increased social activity was seriously triggering his anxiety. Once we worked out what was going on, and after being in touch with the YoungMinds Parents Helpline, we were able to make a bit more of a plan to support him.

Firstly, we now give him a lot of control over what activities he does and doesn't do over Christmas. Christmas often comes with lots of (sometimes unwanted) family gatherings, and we let him opt in or out now rather than expecting him to attend everything.

We also try very hard to maintain a sense of routine, even when he's not at school. This means being clear about what every day will involve, giving him a bit of structure to each day, and having consistent mealtimes and bedtimes. And we constantly check in with him to see what he needs, including more space and time on his own.

YoungMinds Parents Helpline

We support parents and carers who are concerned about their child or young person's mental health. We can provide detailed information and advice, emotional support and signposting. You can speak to us over the phone or chat to us online. When we're closed, you can still leave us a message and we'll get back to you in 3-5 working days.

Opening times: 9.30am-4pm on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays; 9.30am-6pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Tel: 0808 802 5544

MAKATON
Sign of the Week

Miss Knott, SENCo

LANGUAGE OF THE MONTH
German

Hello: **hallo**

Goodbye: **auf Wiedersehen**

Thank you: **Danke**

Weekly Lunch Menus

We will continue sending out weekly menus each Friday afternoon as we feel this is working well for families and keeps this fresh in your inbox!

HAVE A FANTASTIC WEEKEND

https://www.bigginhillprimary.com/