

Safeguarding and Child Protection at St Francis Spring 2022



St Francis

Safeguarding Team:



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County Lines

It is likely you will have heard the term 'County Lines' in the news. This is a real and growing form of criminal activity that exists nationally and regionally across the West Midlands. To explain, it is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from urban areas into rural areas. The leaders of these gangs are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults, often without them realising it, to move (and store) drugs and money. They use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

There may be signs of a change in a young person's behaviour such as:

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing,
- Being found in areas away from home,
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them,
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going,
- Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work,
- Unexplained money, phones, clothes or jewellery,
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour,
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know,
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly dishevelled,
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Schools and local police are working together to spot signs of exploitation and ensure young people are safe. If you know a child that may be at risk as described they will need support and police should be advised on IOI.

Useful websites

<https://www.fearless.org/professionals/resources/gangs>

<https://www.youandco.org.uk/crimeinfo/violent-crime-facts/gangs-andstreet-violence>

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines>

<https://www.spurgeons.org/>

Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

A young person is breaking the law if they:

- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age

Useful Acronyms

DSL: Designated Safeguard Lead

SPOC: Single Point of Contact (PREVENT) - preventing children being impacted by extremism.

CPOMS—Child Protection Online Monitoring Safeguarding System.

KCSIE: Keeping Children Safe In Education—a Government Document.

CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

NSPCC: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

MASH: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (0300 555 2866)

- possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

There are many reasons why a young person may want to send a naked or semi-naked picture, video or message to someone else (sexting), these include:

- joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'
- boosting their self-esteem
- flirting with others and testing their sexual identity
- exploring their sexual feelings
- to get attention and connect with new people on social media
- they may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image,
- especially if the person asking is persistent

It's easy to send a photo or message but the sender has no control about how it's passed on.

When images are stored or shared online they become public. Some people may think that images and videos only last a few seconds on social media and then they're deleted, but they can still be saved or copied by others. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know.

Young people may think 'sexting' is harmless but it can leave them vulnerable to:

- **Blackmail** - An offender may threaten to share the pictures with the child's family and friends unless the child sends money or more images
- **Bullying** - If images are shared with their peers or in school, the child may be bullied
- **Unwanted attention** - Images posted online can attract the attention of sex offenders who know how to search for, collect and modify images
- **Emotional distress** - Children can feel embarrassed and humiliated. If they're very distressed this could lead to suicide or self-harm.

WEBSITES TO HELP WITH THIS ISSUE

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/help-for-parents-andcarers/sexting/>

<https://parentinfo.org/article/sexting>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/remove-nude-image-shared-online/>

Please be aware of what your children are doing with their mobile phones. While sexting etc. is often a teenager issue, it can also involve younger pupils.

Our children must know who to tell and why, so that they can be protected from harm.

If you have any concerns about the safety and/or welfare of a child or young person telephone Walsall MASH on 0300 555 2866 (option 2).

Please do not contact school out of hours via answer phone or email as this will not be picked up immediately. You can discuss your concerns in person or over the phone with a DSL at St Francis during school hours.

Is your child making the right Cyber Choice?

Children are becoming more and more immersed in communications and computing technology, including phones, tablets, laptops, PCs, game consoles, TVs, and of course, the internet.

Many young people are curious and want to explore how these things work, how they interact with each other and what vulnerabilities they have. This can include learning to code or experimenting with tools discovered online.

These are great skills to have and the cyber security industry needs more people with them. Those with a real interest in how tech works, could have a bright future ahead. Skills in coding, gaming, cyber security or anything digital-related, are in high demand. The average salary in the UK is £36,903 whereas in tech industry, the average is £53,318. Specialised tech roles are particularly in demand and the average for that is £85,894. However, some young people are vulnerable and make poor choices and use such skills illegally, often in ignorance of the law. The average age of someone convicted for cyber crime offences is much younger than other crime types; offenders are often teenagers.

It's important for us to understand why more young people are becoming involved in cyber crime. This enables us to ensure that proper deterrents and alternative opportunities are available to people, so that they can enhance their skills and use them positively.

For more information on how you can guide your child to make the right cyber choice go to:

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices/#Parent>

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at St Francis

We teach our children to respect themselves and others. We teach them how to stay safe in all that they do.

St Francis follow the Ten:Ten scheme of work and use resources created specifically for children. Parents can access these lesson and resources using the following details:

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/>

Username: st-francis-ws4

Password: love-animals

We encourage children to talk to their parents about the content of their lessons in school and to discuss any content that concerns them with a trusted adult.

Useful Websites:

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

Online Safety: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/6-10/>

KCSIE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

PREVENT: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>