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Headteacher: Mr. Aaron Wanford MA, B.Ed. (Hons), NPQH

Tuesday, 7th September 2021

Safeguarding Information Update – September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Green Ridge, our core priority is the safety and welfare of our pupils. Creating a happy, safe and secure learning environment is a key part in ensuring that all our pupils have a school setting where they can reach their potential and enjoy their learning. As is customary at Green Ridge at the start of each academic year, particularly for new parents and carers, we would like to share with you some of the key information and messages that we impart to our staff, visitors, volunteers and indeed pupils to enable this environment to be created and maintained.

We have a moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at Green Ridge – and this includes both in and out of school. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. We have several policies and procedures in place that contribute to our safeguarding commitment, which are referenced in this letter. Our [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) is available on our website.

We have also put together this communication to give you some information about how we meet our safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. We have also included some tips to help you to keep your child safe.

As the school continues to grow and roles and responsibilities develop, there are some changes to our safeguarding personnel this year. From September, I have taken over as the main Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall responsibility for safeguarding at Green Ridge. Mr. Wanford and I already work very closely and will continue to over the remainder of the autumn term to ensure that there is continuity for our safeguarding practices.








Our policies at Green Ridge are in place to ensure that there is a consistent approach to practices throughout the school and that they are understood and adhered to by staff, governors, parents/carers and volunteers. Adults have a tremendous impact on young people and the stability of school is an essential part of providing young people with the consistency they need to be successful. There are numerous policies in place to safeguard our children and these are available on the school [website](#).

We know that all children thrive better and can reach their full potential when school and families work closely together. All of us here at Green Ridge are totally committed to this and we look forward to our continuing close partnership with you in the future. As part of this partnership we would greatly value your input into what aspects of safeguarding you would like further support/advice/information on. In our parent/carer survey later this term, we will ask for your input to workshops we can deliver which you would be interested in learning more about, so

that we can ensure any planning is aimed at working together with you to support our continued work in this area.

What do you do if you have a safeguarding concern?

If you have any questions about this letter or if you ever have any concerns about the welfare of a child attending Green Ridge, please see the names and details of our trained Safeguarding Leads within the academy, who can all be contacted via the school's telephone number, 01926 326320 (please ask to speak to relevant person and state that it is a safeguarding concern):

			
Mr. Sean English <i>Deputy Headteacher Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	Mr. Aaron Wanford <i>Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	Mrs. Tara Erdos <i>School Business Manager Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	Mrs. Claire Cavanagh <i>Education, Welfare and Pastoral Support Lead Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>
			
Mr. Stephen Foster <i>Assistant Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	Mr. Sam Kaye <i>Assistant Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	Mrs. Nikki Mackie <i>Assistant Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OR WELFARE OF YOUR CHILD, OR A CHILD YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULD ACT WITHOUT DELAY.

Child Abuse and what to look for

No parent or carer wants to think about the possibility of their child becoming a victim of abuse, and most children are never abused. Even so, it is important for parents to be aware of the possibility and to know that help is available if the unthinkable does happen.

Most children know their abusers; research tells us that abuse survivors are abused by someone who they already know. They may be family members or friends of family, someone who works with the child or someone who lives in the community. There are many signs or indicators that a child might be suffering abuse. There may be injuries, but it is more likely that you will notice some change in your child's behaviour. If you notice anything that concerns you, talk to your child to see if you can find out what is happening. Remember that, if your child is being harmed, she or he may be too frightened to tell you. If your child becomes distressed or you are not happy with the explanations, you could talk to an adult you trust or call a helpline or children's social care services.

Some signs to look for are:

- Bruises or other injuries.
- A change in behaviour – from quiet to loud, or from happy-go-lucky to withdrawn.
- Pain or discomfort.
- Fear of a particular person.
- Secrecy around a relationship with a particular person.
- Reluctance to discuss where they go, or who they are with.
- Sexual talk or knowledge beyond their years.
- Being watchful, or always on edge.
- Losing interest in their appearance, hobbies or family life.
- Alcohol or drug taking.
- Having money and refusing to say where it has come from.
- Wetting the bed.
- Becoming clingy.

What we will do if we have a concern about your child

If we are concerned that your child may be at risk of abuse or neglect we must follow the agreed safeguarding procedures. The procedures have been written to protect all pupils. They comply with our statutory responsibilities and are designed to support pupils, families and staff. The procedures are based on the principle that the welfare of the child is the most important consideration. In almost all circumstances, we will talk to you about our concerns and we will also tell you if we feel we must refer our concerns to children's social care. If we think that talking to you first might in some way increase the risk to your child, we will report our concerns to children's social care and take advice from them. All child protection records are kept separate from your child's general school file. The only members of staff who have access to the records are those who need to know about the concerns to protect and support your child, including the Safeguarding Leads.

Child protection is a very sensitive issue and it raises many questions and a range of strong emotions. We will do everything we can to support our pupils and you can be assured that any action we take will be in the best interests of your child.

Online/E- Safety

Mobile phones and Internet devices such as computers, I pads, and X Box are a part of everyday life for many children and young people. Used correctly, they are an exciting source of communication, fun and educational but used incorrectly, or in the wrong hands they can be threatening and dangerous.

The risks include:

- Peer-on-Peer abuse, including Cyber-bullying, where hurtful texts, e-messages or e-mails are sent to children, or inappropriate messages left on social networking sites.
- Children accidentally or deliberately accessing violent or sexually explicit websites, either on a computer or a mobile phone.
- Paedophiles talking to children by mobile phone or online and enticing them to engage in sexual conversations, photographs, video or actual meetings.

Here are some tips to help you to manage the risks:

- Try to put the computer in a family room where it will be easier for you to supervise your child's online activity.
- Ensure that your child knows they should never give their full name, address and contact details to people they chat to on the internet.
- Explain that some people they talk to on the internet may not be who they say they are.
- Investigate whether the 'parental controls' available from some internet service providers will be helpful.
- Install software that can filter out inappropriate material.
- Impress on your child that they can talk to you if they are worried about something that has happened during their internet use.

- Make it very clear that your child must never arrange to meet someone they have chatted to online without your permission. Their new "friend" might well be a local young person of similar age, but they might not.

You may be alerted to question your child's online activity if they are:

- Spending more and more time on the internet.
- Being secretive – reluctant to talk about their internet activity, closing the screen page when you are close by; spending less time with the family, or giving up previous hobbies and interests, losing interest in their schoolwork, regularly failing to complete homework.
- Starting to talk about "new friends" that you have not met and who do not visit your home.
- Being overly possessive of their mobile phone or computer – perhaps overreacting if someone picks it up or asks to borrow it.
- Showing fear or discomfort when their phone rings, or quickly turning it off without answering.
- Undergoing a change in personality that you cannot attribute to any obvious cause.

Remember that none of these signs prove that your child is at risk in any way, but if you notice anything that confuses or worries you try talking things over with them.

Through our newsletters and specific tailored Online/E-Safety updates we attempt to raise parental awareness of the continually prevalent risks posed through online communities and the use of the internet. The key messages around online safety are also continually revisited with pupils in assemblies and in lessons as part of our computing and PSHE curriculum. Continual refreshment of how to safely use and maintain privacy settings on social media is an ongoing element of our online safety work. We have also done a lot of work through our PSHE curriculum on making pupils aware of the dangers of online social media. The prevalence of grooming through social media and the growing concerns about the posting of improper images of young people on the internet is a major concern and we work hard to ensure pupils are aware of the dangers.

Anti-bullying

Our [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) can be found on our website, and clearly explains all the necessary preventative steps we take to minimise any form of bullying and how we deal with any incidents of bullying that are identified. Every year we address all aspects of bullying including racial, physical, social, verbal, cyberbullying and homophobic.

Intimate Care

It is likely that at some point in your child's time at Green Ridge, they will need some form of intimate care. Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas, and this includes menstrual care.

In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and requires staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues – staff behaviour may be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible. Our [Intimate Care Policy](#) gives further information about how this policy is put into practice.

Positive Handling

At Green Ridge Primary Academy, we believe that pupils need to be safe, to know how to behave, and to know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. Only for a very small minority of pupils will the use of physical intervention be needed. On such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention are used to safeguard a child themselves, other children or members of staff. The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Positive handling will be used for some pupils because of their additional needs which require additional handling, or when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical handling may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Physical contact is never made as a punishment, or to inflict pain.

If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that positive handling will be required, a positive handling plan will be completed, discussed and agreed with parents/carers and the child in question. This Plan will help the pupil and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing. Our [Positive Handling Policy](#) can be found on our website, along with further detailed information about how this relates to our practice and procedures.

Staff Training

All staff undertake annual child protection and safeguarding training as a minimum, in addition to regular training updates throughout the academic year. Peer-on-peer abuse, mental health, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation are key themes our staff are having training and development in over this academic year. Ensuring staff are well equipped to identify and manage concerns over these areas of safeguarding is fundamental in keeping your children safe. We share the appropriate aspects of all this with our young people to support their growth and development in becoming considerate and well-rounded individuals. We ask that you as parents support us in reinforcing these key issues to help our young people understand the importance of these messages.

Further support

If you still have concerns or want to find out further information about safeguarding in general and some of the topics in this letter, you could contact one of the agencies listed below:

National Child Protection Agencies

- NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000 - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- Childline: 0800 1111 – <http://www.childline.org.uk/>
- Kidscape: 08451 205 204 – www.kidscape.co.uk

National Mental Health Agencies

- Young Minds: 0808 802 5544 - www.youngminds.org.uk
- Mental Health Foundation: 020 7803 1100 - www.mentalhealth.org.uk
- Mind: 0845 766 0163 - www.mind.org.uk

Parents'/Carers Support Agencies

ParentlinePlus: 0808 800 2222 - www.parentlineplus.org.uk

National Internet Safety Agencies

- ChildNet International: www.childnet.com
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection: 0870 000 3344 - www.ceop.gov.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation – www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: 0870 000 3344 - www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Thank you again for your continued support in this important area of Green Ridge, and if you do have any further questions, please do not hesitate to come and speak with myself or one of the safeguarding leads.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. Sean English

Deputy Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead