St. Edward's CE Academy Cheddleton

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Newsletter

Autumn 2025

Safeguarding children is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, which is everyone's responsibility.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we have a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to this, one of which includes Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

We also talk to the children about keeping safe and who they can talk to if they have any worries.

Everyone in school has regular safeguarding training and the Safeguarding Team have received specialist training in their role in school.

Every single person who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in keeping our children safe.

We also promote looking after our mental health and wellbeing too and we are very proud of our Wellbeing Award which provides formal recognition that a school has met very high standards of provision for emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Please have a read through the newsletter which covers the following topics:

- **Families Health and Wellbeing Service 0-19**
- **NHS head lice advice**
- **Slushie drinks**
- **Absence and Illness**
- **Operation Encompass**
- **Emotional Health and Wellbeing**
- **Online Safety**
- **Sleep advice**

The Safeguarding Team

Mrs Machin
Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Leese
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Curley
Brambles Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

If you have any concerns about a child's welfare or safety, please speak to a member of the schools safeguarding team.

Families' Health and Wellbeing Serice 0-19

The Families' Health and Wellbeing (0-19) Service is the local Health Visiting and School Nursing service. They offer support to schools and parents of children aged 0 to 19 years around lots of health-related topics to help children.

Please follow the link to an e-leaflet, which introduces your local School Nurses and shares some development and health information which parents/carers of reception aged children may find useful. https://sway.cloud.microsoft/N43TcNEtn94cwfaL?ref=Link

The e-leaflet also contains a link to a contact form. This form is confidential, which means the answers you give will be returned to the Families' Health and Wellbeing Service and will not be shared with the school.

The Families' Health and Wellbeing Service can also be contacted through the Children and Families Health and Wellbeing Single Point of Access (CaFSPA), often referred to as the Hub, or their ChatHealth (text) services.
CaFSPA Freephone: 0808 178 0611

ChatHealth (cost of standard rate message) text: 07520 615 722

Head lice is common in children and their families, we would advise that you make it part of your regular routine to check your child's hair.

The following link has advice on how to detect and treat head lice.

Head lice and nits - NHS

Advice

These slush ice drinks or 'slushies' contain glycerol

- Children under 7 should not consume these drinks
- Children under 10 should have a maximum of one 350ml 'slushie' per day – that's about the size of a fizzy drink can.

Glycerol can cause sickness and headaches in young children

More information on glycerol:

- Visit food.gov.uk/glycerol
- Scan this QR code:

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Back to School: Why Sleep Matters

As many children return to school or begin nursery or school for the very first time, it can be a challenge to shift out of holiday mode and back into the rhythm of early mornings and structured routines.

Just like eating well and staying active, getting enough sleep is essential for good health. A consistent bedtime routine helps children wind down, and while they sleep, their brains build new connections, their bodies repair themselves, and their energy is restored for the day ahead.

How Much Sleep Does My Child Need?
While every child is different, The Sleep Charity offers helpful guidance on recommended sleep durations:

Toddlers: Around 12 hours per night
Children aged 3–6: 10–12 hours
Children aged 7–12: 10–11 hours
Teenagers: Around 8–9 hours

It's important to remember that these figures are guidelines, not strict rules. What matters most is sleep quality, not just quantity. Establishing a calming bedtime routine can make a big difference and just like adults, some children naturally need more sleep, while others may need less.

Support for Families
The Sleep Charity offers fantastic resources to help families build healthy sleep habits. You can explore their advice and tools through the links below:

Children https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/
Teenagers https://teensleephub.org.uk/
Adults https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/adults/

Let's help our children start the school year feeling rested, refreshed, and ready to learn!

Attendance and Illness

ABSENCE AND ILLNESS

It is important that you call the absence line (01538 714840) by 9am if your child is absent from school. Please leave the child's name, class and reason for absence. This forms part of our safeguarding procedures.

Please call this number even if you have messaged the class teacher. Please contact Mrs. Leese if you are unsure if your child should be in school due to illness.

The link below has some useful advice on childhood illness:

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS

We expect children to attend school every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
Because we have a duty of care for safeguarding your child, we will contact you if we do not receive a call to say why they are absent, to ensure we know your child is safe.
A key factor in academic success is regular attendance and we aim to work together with families to support attendance in schools.
Please contact Mrs Leese if you have any concerns about your child's attendance.

We are an Operation Encompass School

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Operation Encompass is a national scheme that operates jointly between schools and all police forces.

"Children who live in homes where there is domestic abuse, or who experience domestic abuse in their own teenage relationships, can be negatively impacted by this experience."

"Children who experience domestic abuse are recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right[1]."

"We have ensured that a member of our staff, (Designated Safeguarding Lead) known as a Key Adult, has been trained about Operation Encompass procedures. This allows us to use the information that has been confidentially shared with us by the police, to understand how a child may be impacted by domestic abuse and to then offer support to the child/ren in our care."

"Operation Encompass means that our school will be told, prior to the start of the next school day, when police have attended an incident of domestic abuse where there is a child or young person who attends our school who is related to any of those involved in the incident."

"This information means that we can understand a child's behaviour and support that child in whatever way they may need or want."

"We are keen to offer the very best support possible to all our pupils and we believe that being part of Operation Encompass helps us to do this."

[1] Domestic Abuse Act 2021

www.operationencompass.org

OPERATION ENCOMPASS
In every force. In every school. For every child.

ST EDWARD'S CE ACADEMY CHEDDLETON

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

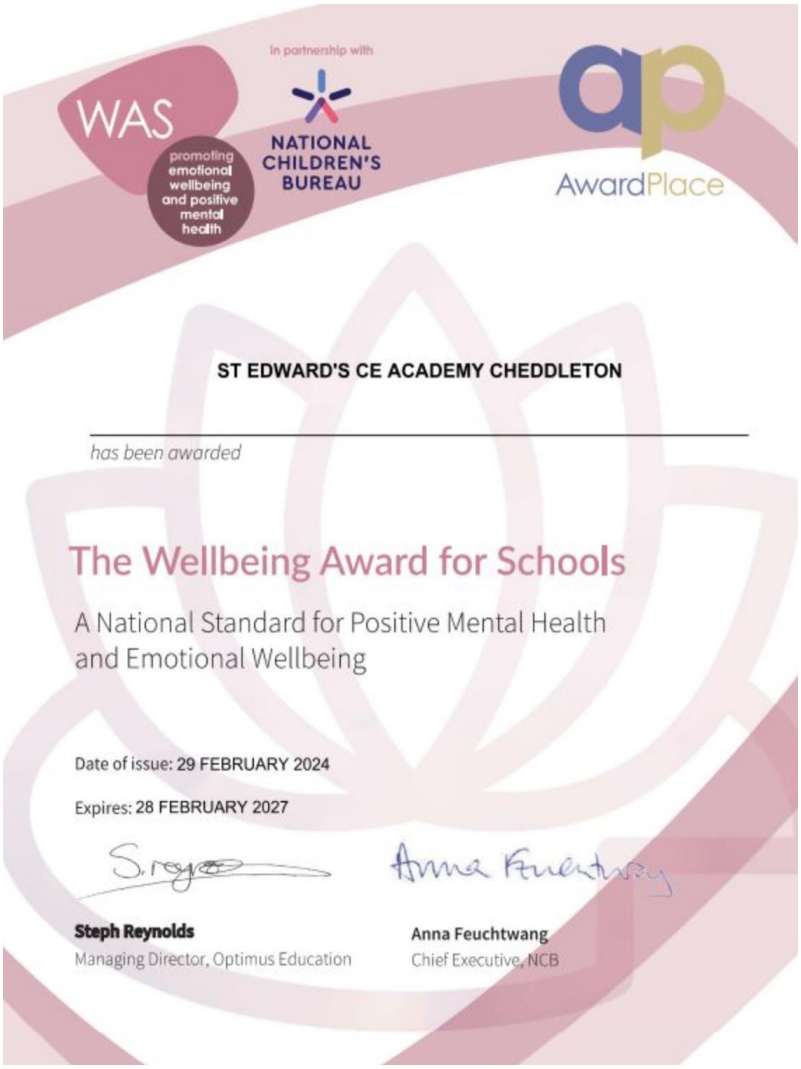
Emotional Health and Wellbeing

The wellbeing of the children is one of our main priorities. As well as teaching the children how to be physically healthy, we also promote looking after our mental health too and are able to provide support in school.

We promote wellbeing in many ways, including:

- **delivery of a high quality Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum**
- **celebrating national and international emotional health and wellbeing days**
- **promoting pupil voice**
- **recognising achievements in celebration worship**
- **providing opportunities to complete mindfulness activities**
- **offering a wide range of after school clubs**
- **offering support to families and pupils**
- **helping children to develop emotional resilience**

If you have any concerns please speak to your child's class teacher or contact Mrs Leese.



We are very proud of our Wellbeing Award.

The award provides formal recognition that a school has met very high standards of provision for emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence has seen significant development over the recent months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat). One form of AI that has become especially popular has been the 'AI friend' or chatbot. There are now numerous 'virtual friend' apps available, with other successful platforms likely to adopt it soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. As a result, there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could possibly hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour. As many chatbots originate from the USA or UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview. This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours if they interact with the AI consistently.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, their creativity and their ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts warn that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (for instance, the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If a child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, then a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with children and perhaps do your own research to ensure that you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit and explore the range of AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If a child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside children to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children still get plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps children can download and interact with. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to them. Emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something inaccurate or skewed by bias.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

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Worry monster

Design your own worry monster.
What shape and colour will it be? Cut him out and stick in your room somewhere
You can imagine feeding the monster all your worries and letting them go. Have a try!

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