



# St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

## Parents' Safeguarding Newsletter- Spring 2022

Each term we will bring the latest safeguarding developments and information to you in order that we all work together to keep our school community safe.

### Safeguarding Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Harrop
Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Tiernan, Mrs Farrell
Mental Health First Aiders	Mrs Harrop, Mrs Tiernan, Mrs Farrell, Mrs Castro, Mrs Gee and Mrs Robinson.
Emergency First Aiders	All staff
Wellbeing Champions	Mrs Sheldon, Mrs Bullock, Mr Nicholls, Mrs Dreniw, Mrs Conway, Mrs Davidson and Mrs Raw.
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Donnachie
Online Safety Governor	Mrs Butler
Health and Safety Governor	Mr Thorgaard

### Safeguarding Information:

#### Stranger Danger

Whilst the risk posed by strangers is rare, there have been incidents locally in recent months and it's really important to make children aware of simple tips they can follow to keep themselves a little safer.

This video on Stranger Danger <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H95m0v2sIMY> is designed to highlight a few key points, to be used to help you have that important conversation with your child. It is aimed at children aged 4 - 11 years. For parents, carers, families, teachers, schools and centres for young people to use to raise awareness and generate discussion that helps children keep safe.

We would advise you to talk to your child about who their safe adults are and where there are safe places near you if help is needed. It's also important to think about safety on the internet and use of mobile phone apps and games that have 'chat' functions as this can be just as dangerous as a stranger in the street.

This video is one of a series of '60 Second Security' videos all around simple security advice. Designed to provide easy step by step tips, including advice on products and how to install and use them, helping to make you and your property that little bit safer.

#### What to Teach Children About Strangers

*Information about the differences between strangers children should look out for and strangers Children can trust*  
Children see strangers every day in shops, in the park, and in their community. Most of these strangers are nice, normal people, but a few may not be. Parents can protect their children from dangerous strangers by teaching them about strangers and suspicious behaviour, and by taking a few precautions of their own.

#### Who is a stranger?

A stranger is anyone that your family doesn't know well. It's common for children to think that 'bad strangers' look scary, like the villains in cartoons. This is not only not true, but it's dangerous for children to think this way. Pretty strangers can be just as dangerous as the not-so-pretty ones. When you talk to your children about strangers, explain that no one can tell if strangers are nice or not nice just by looking at them and that they should be careful around all strangers.

But don't make it seem like all strangers are bad. If children need help—whether they're lost, being threatened or being followed by a stranger—the safest thing for them to do in many cases is to ask a stranger for help. You can make this easier for them by showing them which strangers are okay to trust.

#### Who are safe strangers?

Safe strangers are people children can ask for help when they need it. Police officers and firefighters are two examples of very recognisable safe strangers. Teachers, Head Teachers and librarians are adults children can trust too, and they are easy to recognise when they're at work. But make sure that you emphasise that whenever possible, children should go to a public place to ask for help.

You can help your children recognise safe strangers by pointing them out when you're out in your town. Also show your children places they can go if they need help, such as local stores and restaurants and the homes of family friends in your neighbourhood.

### **Recognising and Handling Dangerous Situations**

Perhaps the most important way parents can protect their children is to teach them to be wary of potentially dangerous situations – this will help them when dealing with strangers as well as with known adults who may not have good intentions.

Help children recognise the warning signs of suspicious behaviour, such as when an adult asks them to disobey their parents or do something without permission, asks them to keep a secret, asks children for help, or makes them feel uncomfortable in any way. Also tell your children that an adult should never ask a child for help, and if one does ask for their help, teach them to find a trusted adult right away to tell what happened.

You should also talk to your children about how they should handle dangerous situations. One way is to teach them No, Go, Yell, Tell. If in a dangerous situations, Children should say no, run away, yell as loud as they can and tell a trusted adult what happened right away. Make sure that your children know that it is okay to say no to an adult in a dangerous situation and to yell to keep themselves safe, even if they are indoors.

It's good to practise this in different situations so that your children will feel confident in knowing what to do. Here are a few possible scenarios:

- A nice-looking stranger approaches your child in the park and asks for help finding the stranger's lost dog.
- A woman who lives in your neighbourhood but that the child has never spoken to, invites your child into her house for a snack.
- A stranger asks if your child wants a lift home from school.
- Your child thinks he or she is being followed.
- An adult your child knows says or does something that makes him or her feel bad or uncomfortable.
- While your child is walking home from a friend's house, a car pulls over and a stranger asks for directions.

### **What Else Parents Can Do**

In addition to teaching children how to recognise and handle dangerous situations and strangers, there are a few more things parents can do to help their children stay safe and avoid dangerous situations.

- **Know where your children are at all times.** Make it a rule that your children must ask permission or check in with you before going anywhere. Give your children your work and mobile phone numbers so they can reach you at all times.
- **Point out safe places.** Show your children safe places to play, safe roads and paths to take, and safe places to go if there's trouble.
- **Teach children to trust their instincts.** Explain that if they ever feel scared or uncomfortable, they should get away as fast as they can and tell an adult. Tell them that sometimes adults they know may make them feel uncomfortable, and they should still get away as fast as possible and tell another adult what happened. Reassure children that you will help them when they need it.
- **Teach your children to be assertive.** Make sure they know that it's okay to say no to an adult and to run away from adults in dangerous situations.
- **Encourage your children to play with others.** There's safety in numbers!

### **Reducing Parental Conflict**

Conflict between parents is a normal part of relationships and family life. Not all conflict is damaging, but when conflict between parents is frequent, intense and poorly resolved, it can put children's mental health and long term outcomes at risk. Conflict can be present between parents whether they are together or separated.

Some factors may lead to conflict between parents such as:

- Financial problems such as job loss
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Transition to parenthood
- Poor parental mental health
- Children with SEND
- Children starting primary or secondary schools
- Parental separation or divorce

Understanding how children of any age can be affected by conflict between parents may be helpful in recognising when support may be needed.

### **How does parental conflict affect my children?**

Parental conflict can affect children in a number of ways

- Emotionally – low mood, anxiety
- Behaviourally – increase risk taking, running away
- Socially – anti social behaviour
- Academically - truanting, exclusions

### **Coronavirus and parental conflict**

The coronavirus outbreak has led to some big changes for all of us with new ways of living and working and this can impact on all our relationships.

Relationships will play a big part in helping us get through the current situation we find ourselves in, but equally there may be added pressure and we may need support in keeping our relationships positive and happy.

### **Useful links**

Below are a number of links which provide information and support on how to maintain healthy relationships during this time, how to recognise parental conflict, tools and resources to help manage parental conflict and where to go for any further support you may need.

- [Relate](#) - has a wealth of advice on coronavirus and relationships, and also advice on how to handle arguments with your partner.
- [Cafcass](#) (for those co-parenting and with child arrangement agreements in place) - coronavirus guidance for children and families.
- [Family Rights Group](#) - advice for parents and families with a child in the care system.
- [One plus One](#) - relationship support and forums, see also their [Facebook page](#), and [Twitter](#).
- Young Minds - social distancing and self-isolation advice (for young people and parents of teenagers).
- [See it Differently](#) - four short video clips to help parents recognise what conflict may look like.
- [Space for Us Too \(Action for Children\)](#) - free text messaging service offering tips to help build positive relationships.
- [Dads Matter](#) - a Greater Manchester project that supports dads with anxiety, stress and mental health issues.
- [Build Sound Minds](#) - a campaign for parents to help improve their and their child's emotional wellbeing.

If you feel you need extra support in addition to the advice and resources mentioned in the links above [please contact Trafford Children's First Response](#).

You can find out more about the [Early Help support that's available](#) at the Trafford Directory

You can also contact Trafford Domestic Abuse Services by calling or texting 07534 066029.