SAFEGUARDING
NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Introducing our Hart School Autumn Safeguarding Newsletter

Safeguarding relates to many areas of life at The Hart School including children's physical health and safety, mental health issues, attendance, managing medical conditions, internet safety, substance misuse, bullying, child sexual exploitation, the dangers of radicalisation, gang culture, FGM, neglect, domestic violence, forced marriages, sexual relationships, British Values and road safety amongst other issues.

In this terms issue we focus on childrens mental health and a spotlight on social media platform Snap Chat. If you have any safeguarding concerns please do not hesitate to contact us either telephoning main reception and asking for the safeguarding team, or via email safeguarding@hartschool.org.uk

Childrens Mental Health:

February 5th—11th marked Pace 2 Be Children's Mental Health week. This years theme was 'My Voice Matters' - concentrating on empowering children and young people by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. When we feel empowered, there's a positive impact on our wellbeing. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference have a greater sense of community and self-esteem.


As part of Childrens Mental Health week the children identified how they can use their voice to express their own thoughts and feelings. There was an opportunity for children to take part in student voice in the Diary Room and with staff to discuss their views on the school and any improvements that they would like to see.

Children also completed Register and Read sessions about the topic of 'bystanders'. What this means and how students can use their voice to support the marginalised or supressed communities to bring change in society.

We launched our online reporting system for students called 'The Student Voice'. This has replaced Arcs and can be found on The Hart School website in it's place:

Students can use the online reporting tool in two ways;

- Students can report how they are feeling emotionally and any worries they may have.

- Students can report areas of the school/the community where they may feel unsafe/concerned about.
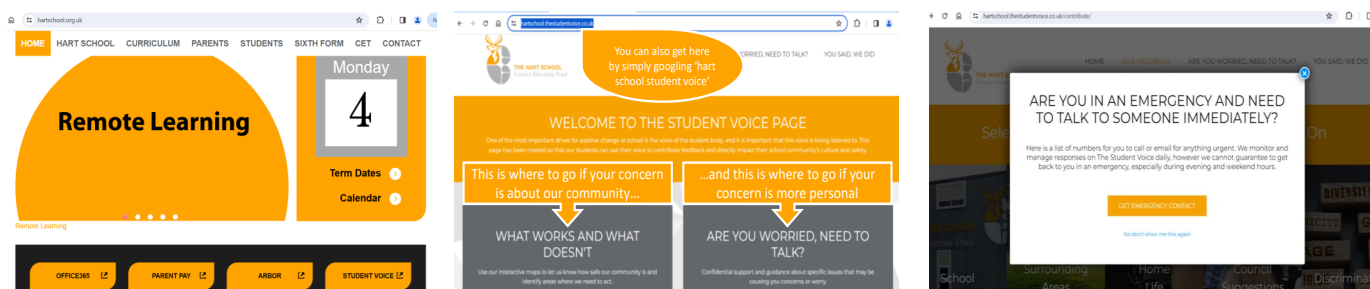
The reports are submitted to the safeguarding team who will take the appropriate action. Whichever option a student chooses, the safety message of emergency contacts will open in a 'pop up' first.

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Focus on Social Media:

In 2018 the government published a white paper on online harms, which proposed a number of measures to regulate social media platforms. These measures included requiring social media platforms to remove harmful content quickly and giving users more control over their data and privacy and requiring social media platforms to do more to protect children from harmful content. Following this white paper, the Online Safety Act, 2023 is now an Act of Parliament and will work to protect children from online harms.

Snapchat:

Age Rating: 13+

Snapchat is a popular social media messaging app that allows you to send and receive pictures and videos (called Snaps) to users. It is available for IOS and android users and is free to download. There is, however, a premium service that involves a subscription fee called Snapchat+.

It was initially designed to be a private photo sharing app, However, Snapchat features now include short videos, video chat, messaging, photo storage, generative AI and more.

Each Snap shared with your followers is temporary and is available for 24 hours unless you delete it or set a different limit. You can also add different filters, lenses, emojis and text to your Snap. Additionally, you can create a group chat to talk with friends or message individual friends.

Tips to keep your child safe on Snapchat:

1) Make sure they sign up with the correct age - Set up their account together to ensure that they put the correct age in—this automatically enables settings to keep them safe.

2) Talk to them about how to feel good on social media - Children face many different pressures online. Childline have produced advice How to feel good on social media to help them manage their wellbeing online.

3) Set rules around friends - Talk to them about who they can be friends with online. Tell them to speak to you if they receive friend request from a stranger.

4) Know where to report - There is a possibility that your child could come across inappropriate or upsetting content. To report a Snap or Story, press and hold on it and then select 'report Snap'.

5) Talk about what is okay/not okay to share - Ensure your child knows what should be kept personal and private and what is not appropriate to share.

6) Explore the safety features - Read about the safety features for example privacy settings and 'Snapchat Family Centre'.

What safety features are available on Snapchat?

Family Centre: This gives you an overview of your child's activity on the app. You can link your account to your child's which will allow you to see a list of their friends and who they have contacted in the last seven days. It also allows you to report safety concerns directly to Snapchat's Trust and Safety Team.

Ghost Mode Turning this on will stop other users seeing your child's location. Go to the cog in the right-hand corner, enable ghost mode and select until switched off.

Limit contact from adult users: Adults will not be allowed to add young people who are seventeen and under unless they have a certain number of friends in common.

Privacy Settings: There are different settings available that will help limit who can see your child's profile, who can contact them and who can view them. Go to the cog in the right hand side of the screen and select privacy.

Default chat functions: By default you cant chat to someone on Snapchat unless you are friends.

Reporting: To report another user, press and hold on their Snapchat ID, select 'more' and 'report'.

Snap Features include; Discovery feed, spotlight feed, snap map, snapchat games, cameos, streaks, snapchat messages, snapchat plus, desktop version, ghost trail and story rewatch indicator. For more information about these please visit: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/is-snapchat-safe-for-my-child

For more information about internet safety please see the NSPCC website:https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/