

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

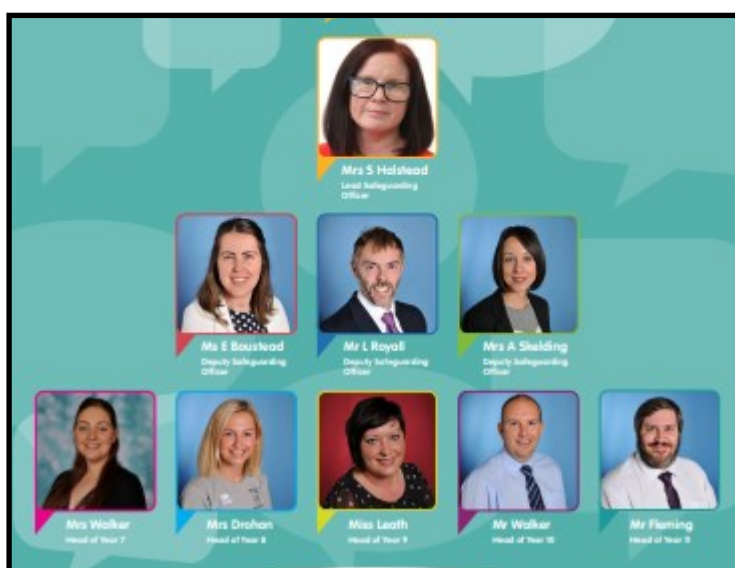
Our Promise at Madeley School

Madeley School recognises its legal duty under Education Act 2002 (section 157 in relation to independent schools and academies) and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all pupils.

The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations. Safeguarding incidents can happen anywhere and staff should be alert to any concerns being raised. All staff may raise safeguarding concerns directly with Children's Social Care Services (see making referrals section of this policy).

Welcome to our second newsletter of the academic year. In this edition we would like to focus primarily on Mental Health, and also remind you of our safeguarding team here at Madeley School.

Our safeguarding team



If you have a concern about any student of Madeley High please phone the school reception and ask for

- Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer: Sara Halstead (sara.halstead@madeley.set.org)
- Deputy Safeguarding Leads: alexa.skelding@madeley.set.org / em-ma.boustead@madeley.set.org / lee.royal@madeley.set.org
- You can also speak to any of the safeguarding team highlighted above on the main school number or via their email address.

Please also take a look at our safeguarding pages on the school website.

Christmas and your mental health

Christmas and New Year are often associated with excitement and joy but it can also be a difficult time, straining us mentally, emotionally, physically and financially. There are many reasons why this time of year can be challenging. It's okay if you're not feeling full of joy during the festive season.

In this edition we would like to give you some tips on looking after your mental health during the festive season.

Looking after yourself:

- It's ok to prioritise what's best for you, even if others don't seem to understand.
- Let people know you're struggling. It can often feel like it's just you when it's not.
- Tell people how they can support you. For example, you could let them know any activities you'd like to be involved in, and those that you want to avoid. Or you might give them some examples of situations that might be triggering for you.

Think about what might be difficult about this time for you, and if there's anything that might help you cope. It might be useful to write this down.

For example:

If you're planning on going away from home, e.g. to visit family or friends, think about what you need to help you cope. Are there things you can bring to make you feel more comfortable? Or is there somewhere you can go to take a break?

We can sometimes over commit to joining in everyone's celebrations. If you're feeling overwhelmed by what you have committed try to think about if you need to go to a particular event. Could you agree to go for a limited time? Will there be people who you really want to spend time with? Could you arrange to meet friends at another time or location?

If you're going to be alone this Christmas, plan some activities that you enjoy to pass the time. Make a list of things that you can do that you know would make you happy. Buy yourself some delicious treats to eat. Plan some fun movies to watch. Get outside and go for a nature walk. Spending time in nature is a great way to connect with the environment around you, whilst getting some mood-boosting exercise.

If you celebrate other religious festivals or holidays, you might feel overshadowed by the focus on Christmas. Think about how you can share the traditions and activities you take part in with colleagues and friends.

Plan something nice to do after the festive period. Having something to look forward to next year could make a real difference.

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/blog/why-christmas-isnt-easy-for-everyone-and-how-to-cope/>



I try not to think too much about Christmas. If it turns out to be good then that's a bonus, if not then at least I haven't got myself worked up over nothing!

mind



<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-coping-tips/>

Supporting others at Christmas

There are lots of reasons that someone in your life might find Christmas difficult. They might worry that they're a burden, or feel like they can't participate. Or they might have mental health problems that make some parts of Christmas more difficult.

THINGS THAT CAN HELP

- ◆ **Understand that Christmas means something different to other people**, and may bring up very different feelings. You might feel like you're sharing a celebration, but they might not feel the same way.
- ◆ **Let them know you understand Christmas can be difficult**, and that you're there for them.
- ◆ **Tell them they're not alone**. Reassure them that it's common to find things hard at this time of year.
- ◆ **Listen to what they say, and accept their feelings**.
- ◆ Ask them if there are certain things about Christmas that are difficult for them. And **ask what they think might help**. For example, it could be helping them plan how to deal with difficult conversations. You could also support them if they want to avoid certain situations, such as religious celebrations or visiting family.
- ◆ Try to **make Christmas more inclusive**. For example, if someone has caring responsibilities at Christmas, try to arrange activities around their schedule so they can join in.
- ◆ **Think carefully about gifts**. Some presents may not be appropriate for everyone, such as food or alcohol-related gifts. Or if someone you know has problems with **hoarding**, it may be unhelpful to give them new items as Christmas gifts. You could think of alternatives, like going out to do something together.
- ◆ **Remember they aren't trying to spoil Christmas**. No one chooses to find things hard.
- ◆ **Let people know you're thinking of them**. If someone you know is struggling or feeling lonely at Christmas, it might mean a lot to them to hear from you. You could give them a call, send a card or pop by to see them.
- ◆ **Look after yourself**. Supporting someone else can be difficult. For example, you might feel sad or conflicted. It might help to talk to someone you trust about how this is affecting you.



I would like Christmas to be a time of giving, care, love and attention, to really listen to someone who needs to be heard. To empathise and try to understand that we are unique and our basic needs are met through understanding, showing compassion for someone who is hurting.



Mind



<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/looking-after-your-mental-health-at-christmas/?scrlybrkr=42a0ca28>

YOUNGMINDS

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/blog/mental-health-christmas-cope-anxiety-stress/>



<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/blogs/tips-looking-after-your-mental-health-christmas?scrlybrkr=42a0ca28>



Be kind to yourself this festive season



Talk about your feelings

Sharing how you feel about Christmas with someone you trust may help them understand how best to support you during this time.



Take time for yourself

Christmas can feel quite daunting with various demands and expectations. Remember to take a break from it and do something that restores you.



Be who you are

You might feel pressured to buy presents, cook or entertain but you don't have to. Everyone has a right to be who they are and walk their own path.



Eat a balanced diet

Christmas can be a time of overindulging on food and alcohol but an excess of sugar or alcohol can have an effect on your mental health and wellbeing. Moderation is key.



Take a winter walk

Winter weather can make us stay at home and feel sluggish but getting outside for a walk will not only make you feel better but is a chance to connect with nature as well as others.



Do more of what you enjoy

You might join a local group, take up a new hobby or volunteer at a local charity. Whatever makes you feel happy and positive can boost your sense of wellbeing.

Further support for your child's wellbeing

If you have a child who is struggling with their wellbeing and needs to talk to someone when away from school, please use the contacts below:

Samaritans

[116 123](tel:116123) (freephone)

jo@samaritans.org

Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS

samaritans.org

Samaritans are open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk. You can [visit some Samaritans branches in person](#). Samaritans also have a Welsh Language Line on [0808 164 0123](tel:08081640123) (7pm–11pm every day).

Samaritans' helplines are open every day of the year.

North Staffordshire urgent mental health helpline: call [0800 0 328 728](tel:08000328728) option 1 (covers Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs Moorlands).

Advice for children & their families, from early help support through to safeguarding call Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service on [0300 111 8007](tel:03001118007)

For mental health support:

Visyon Call [01260 290000](tel:01260290000), out of hours support The Staffordshire Crisis Team on [0300 123 0907](tel:03001230907)

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk

For help with any sort of worry, big or small:

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline www.childline.org.uk

The Trussell Trust

[0808 208 2138](tel:08082082138) (Help through Hardship helpline)

trusselltrust.org

Emergency food and support for people in need. Includes a searchable list of local foodbanks.

The Help through Hardship line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. The helpline is closed on public holidays.