

# Safeguarding and Personal Development



AN 'OUTSTANDING' CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

DISCOVER

DEVELOP

REJOICE

This week Mr Hewitt delivered an assembly to all year groups about the concept of healthy sexual development as well as looking at unhealthy behaviours which could be sexual harassment/violence. The definition of consent and how to discuss or report concerns with a trusted adult in school was covered and emphasised as a supportive platform for pupils to go to. Our pupils are now more likely to see or come across sexual images and videos at a younger age than their parents would have done. This is due to the way the online world has evolved and material can be accessed through films, music videos or on the world wide web. It's natural for teenagers to show interest in sex and relationships for example, or for children to be curious about the changes that happen during puberty. Many sexual behaviours children and teenagers show as they grow up are normal and healthy, so long as they're not causing harm to others or to the children themselves.

DSL – Mr Hewitt  
Deputy DSL Miss Bethwaite  
Deputy DSL Mrs Lewis



On Tuesday 10th January, two of our DSLs, Mr Hewitt and Miss Bethwaite, held an assembly on 'commitment', inspired by the Gospel of Matthew (3:13-17). As a school, we used the various teaching of Jesus and Saints (Oscar Romero in this instance) to look at how Catholic leaders have demonstrated commitment to worthy causes for the greater good.

It was a perfect platform to introduce our newly appointed team of Anti-bullying ambassadors. Our team of 10 Y10 students all proudly stood and educated our pupils on the meaning of the word 'discrimination' and in similar fashion, they named all of the protected characteristics. They made the link that some of the protected characteristics can also lead to instances of bullying. Following on from the Anti-bullying week in November 2022, the team clarified the definition of bullying and how as a school, we do not tolerate any form of bullying.

They reassured our pupils what to do if they know any instances of bullying and finished by informing pupils that they could go to any member of staff to report their concerns or chat to the pupil ambassador team themselves before talking to a member of staff. Finally, our Designated Safeguard Lead, Mr Hewitt, concluded the assembly by stressing that our whole school commitment is to be kind to one another and treat people as we would like to be treated ourselves.





# WhatsApp

## WhatsApp

You're probably well aware of WhatsApp and its huge user-base. The app has become a go-to for a convenient and easy way to keep in touch on an individual basis as well as in groups.

But are there any possible risks, and how safe is it for children? Here's everything you need to know.

## What is WhatsApp?

WhatsApp is a free app that allows users to send encrypted messages to other users, so long as they have an internet connection. It is available on all major mobile operating systems. Users must verify their account with a standard mobile number to start using the app.

WhatsApp offers users the ability to send images, voice notes and a wide range of emojis, in addition to voice and video calls. As of 2022, it is estimated that WhatsApp has 2 billion active monthly users worldwide.

## Why is it so popular?

WhatsApp is a hugely popular messaging app; it's free, secure and the fact that it uses Wi-Fi or data rather than your phone credit makes it great for keeping in contact with people internationally.





# WhatsApp

## What do parents need to be aware of?

### Age restrictions

In Europe and the UK, the minimum age of use for WhatsApp is 16 years old. It had previously dropped to 13 years old but in April 2018 returned to 16, as a response to data-protection legislation.

Like many n social media apps, some children may choose to ignore this and sign up for WhatsApp when they're younger.

WhatsApp's main purpose is to send messages to friends. It isn't public in the same way that Twitter is, and people can only message friends who are already added on their phone. As long as a child only has trusted people as contacts on their phone, it is a relatively safe social media app.

The main thing to discuss with them is how to act in group chats, as here people not in their contacts will be able to see all the messages and send them messages.

### Group chats

The group chat function allows up to 512 people to chat in one conversation stream. Each group is set up by one person, known as the group admin, who is the only person who can add or remove participants and change or add further group administrators.

Anybody in the group, even if they're not one of your phone contacts, will be able to see messages that you post, and you will be able to see theirs. If you are added to a group with someone you have blocked, that person will still be able to contact you in the group chat. You can't always control if you're added to a group chat; but remind children that they can always control their own participation within it – they can leave whenever they want to. To do this, when on the group's page, tap the three dots in the top right (or the name of the group at the top of the screen on an iPhone), then tap Group info, then EXIT GROUP in the red box at the bottom of the screen (or scroll down to Exit Group on an iPhone).

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>



# SnapChat

## Snapchat

Originally launched in 2011, Snapchat has evolved into more than simply a photo messaging app. Although it still uses its signature time-sensitive messages, it's grown to include many more features.

So what are these new features, and how can children use the app safely? Here's everything you need to know.

## What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a popular photo-messaging app that allows users to take photos, record videos, add drawings and send them to their friends. A message on Snapchat only appears for a few seconds, but once you click away or the time limit expires, it disappears permanently.

Snapchat has a number of different features. These include 'stories', that disappear after 24 hours, 'memories', that act as a kind of personal archive, 'Snap Maps', that share your location whilst you're online, 'streaks', when you send messages back and forth for several consecutive days, and filters.

There is also a 'live streaming' option, in which you create a story with other users based on your location. This is only available when your geo-location is enabled.

## Why is it so popular?

As of 2022 Snapchat has over 330 million daily active users, and young people are particularly prominent among its user base. Its popularity among teenagers can be explained by its fun, visual nature and the immediacy it offers in interactions between young people.



# SnapChat

## What do parents need to be aware of?

### Age restrictions

Snapchat states that young people under the age of 13 years are not able to create an account. However, there is no strict age verification in place when signing up to the app, allowing underage children to sign up by giving a false date of birth.

### Privacy settings

By default, only 'Friends' can make direct contact or view a user's story. However, users can change their profile to 'public, which means that anyone can view your stories and Snapchat users you haven't added will be able to send you images and messages.

In August 2022 Snapchat introduced their '**Family Centre**', an in-app tool that allows parents to see who their children have been speaking to (and how frequently they communicate). The Family Centre will not, however, reveal the content of any messages.

### Inappropriate content

Because of the 'disappearing' effect of images, Snapchat has been used for sharing inappropriate images. The momentary nature of Snapchat can mean that young people may be more inclined to take images on impulse that they might later regret.

It's important to remember that images can be screen-shotted or recorded with another device, perhaps against the wishes of the sender.

Like many other apps, there is a concern that strangers can contact young people directly by sending images and requesting to become 'friends'. You can set the privacy settings so that you can only receive Snapchats from 'friends' rather than 'Everyone'.

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/snapchat>

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about DISCORD

AGE RATING

13+

Servers and channels marked as 'NSFW' require users to be 18 or older to join.

Discord is a free app which allows users to communicate in real time via text, video or voice chat. Available on desktop and mobile devices, it was originally designed to help gamers cooperate – but has evolved into a more general networking platform for a range of online communities, discussing topics like TV series, music, Web3 and more. Discord is organised around closed groups, referred to as 'servers'. To join a server, users must be invited or provided with a unique link. It's a space for users to interact with friends, meet others with shared interests and collaborate privately online – but it's also a place where young people can be exposed to risks if the right precautions aren't taken.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### CYBERBULLYING

Discord's easy accessibility and connectivity, unfortunately, makes it an ideal place for cyberbullying to occur – especially as audio and video streams disappear once they've ended, meaning that bullying could take place without leaving any evidence. Closed groups can also be created, giving young people the opportunity to exclude their peers or send cruel messages without adult oversight.

### DIFFICULT TO MODERATE

Like many private communication apps, Discord's real-time messaging can be difficult to control. The system enables content moderation through each individual server – so different groups can set their own rules for what's acceptable, and some groups may not monitor for unsuitable content. Anything that happens in an audio or video stream is also virtually untraceable once the stream has concluded.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Discord mainly hosts private groups, making it easier for unsuitable or explicit content to be shared on channels. Pornography, racism and inappropriate language can be found in some groups. Server owners are required to add an age-restriction gate to channels where 18+ content is being shared – but this solution isn't foolproof, as the platform doesn't always verify users' ages when they sign up.

### ACCESSIBLE TO PREDATORS

On many chat platforms, users can lie about their age or true identity – and Discord is no exception. Predators have attempted to abuse the platform by using it to contact and communicate with underage users – by initially chatting with a child on an age-appropriate channel, for example. While Discord has improved its safety settings, some users will still try to bypass them for malicious reasons.

### CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Discord does have strict Terms of Service and Community Guidelines to protect its users – but, sadly, not everyone adheres to them. Criminal activity including grooming, hate speech, harassment, exploitative content, doxing and extremist or violent material have all been found on Discord servers over the last two years. In 2020, Discord received almost 27,000 reports of illegal activity on the platform.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### REVIEW SAFETY SETTINGS

Discord has a series of safety settings, enabling users to choose who can direct message them or send them friend requests. Your child's experience on Discord will be much safer if the app's privacy and safety settings are configured to only allow messages or friend requests from server members. This will minimise the chances of potential predators from outside the group contacting them.

### EXPLAIN AGE FILTERING

While Discord requires users to be at least 13 to sign up, many servers geared towards older users are flagged as NSFW (not safe for work), which indicates they probably contain material that's inappropriate for children. It can be easy to click through settings without properly reviewing them, so ensure your child understands why age filtering is important and that it's there to protect them.

### SCREEN OUT EXPLICIT CONTENT

In the privacy and safety settings, Discord users are offered the ability to filter direct messages for inappropriate content: a setting that should be enabled if your child uses the platform. Discord automatically tries to flag images that are explicit, but the setting must be manually enabled for text. If a young user is sent explicit content in a direct message, Discord will scan and (if necessary) delete it.

### MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's wise to regularly review your child's activity on Discord. This can include checking their safety settings to ensure they're correctly enabled, talking about which servers they've joined and reviewing some of their friends and direct messages. Ask if anything has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Things can change quickly online, so plan routine check-ins and follow up frequently.

### DISCUSS GOOD ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

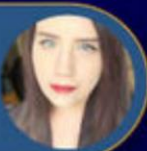
The anonymity offered by the internet often leads people to communicate more openly online and behave differently than they would at school or home. It's crucial to bear in mind, though, that every internet user is still a real person. Talk to your child about the severe and lasting consequences that cyberbullying or exchanging inappropriate material online can have in the real world.

### HAVE CANDID CONVERSATIONS

It can sometimes be awkward to discuss topics like grooming, pornography, racism or explicit content with your child – but it's important to ensure they're aware of the harms these things can pose. Talking openly about these subjects is a great way to help your child feel more comfortable about coming to you if they experience an unwanted encounter on Discord (or anywhere else online).

## Meet Our Expert

Coral Cripps is a Canadian-born, London-based tech journalist at [gmw3.com](http://gmw3.com): a website specialising in all things Web3, gaming and XR (extended reality). With a focus on brands and culture, she researches and writes about the ways that our current innovations – including the metaverse and Web3 – are impacting people, places and things.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/what-is-discord/> - steps regarding users on popular chat app | <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/discord/> - a roller for gamers and social explorers | <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/discord/> - details thousands of violent extremist and crim. 8/02/2021



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 18.05.2022

# REACHOUT

## How to teach your teenager about consent

Consent is when everybody involved in a sexual experience actively and freely agrees to what is happening without threat, pressure, being intoxicated, or being too young (the exact age is slightly different in each state). Read our article on ReachOut.com for more information about what active sexual consent is. Yes, we know this is probably an awkward topic of conversation, but it's also really important. Talking to your teens about sex and consent helps them understand their rights and what safe and healthy sex should be like.

If you're after a few tips around communication, we spoke to some parents about what works for them when having general chats and talking about sex specifically.

### **Here are some ways to teach your teen about consent: Discuss what consent means for them**

**Don't assume** your teenager knows (or doesn't know) what consent means - take this opportunity to ask them. This will give you an idea of what you need to talk about, and any confused or harmful understanding of consent they may have. Most importantly, consent must be explicit (i.e. only 'yes' means 'yes') and any sexual activity without consent is sexual assault. Sexual consent is a conversation - that's because someone can change their mind at any point during sexual activity to stop, even if they have already started having sex. If that happens, their partner must respect them and immediately stop.

### **Talk about their changing lives**

When your teen is in the midst of growing up and going through puberty, it can sometimes make it hard to think clearly. Make sure your teen knows that these new, possibly overwhelming, feelings are okay and that they can always talk to you about them. Help them understand that, despite these feelings, they still must respect themselves and others.



# REACHOUT

## Let them figure out their own boundaries...and respect others

The goal is to give your teen the tools to work out what they are comfortable with, and feel confident to communicate those boundaries to their partner in the future.

### You can help do that by:

- Encouraging them to ask themselves questions, such as: why do I want to have sex? Do I feel pressured to have sex? Do I feel safe? Am I more anxious than excited? These aren't questions they need to tell you the answers to; they are just good prompts for them to reflect on when working out if they are ready to have sex.
  - Reminding them that they don't owe anybody sex. It doesn't matter if they are in a romantic relationship with someone else, or are already comfortable with kissing or touching their partner. It doesn't matter if they have previously had sex. It's also important to know that saying 'I love you' or giving gifts also does not mean they have to have sex or do anything in response.
- Telling them that it's important to talk about sex and intimacy with any partner. They should feel comfortable expressing what they do and do not want to do, and if that changes over the course of a relationship or interaction.
- Discuss what impact they think their actions may have on other people. If you hear your teen objectifying other people, remind them that those people they are talking about are human beings – not just sexual objects.

<https://parents.au.reachout.com>

# Engagement Plan for the 2022 - 2023 School Year

***Kooth.com is a free, safe, and anonymous sites that offer confidential support to young people via community spaces, self-help tools and access to online counselling.***

Kooth is available throughout the UK the areas I am responsible for are Blackburn **with Darwen** age ranges **10-18 (extended to 25 for SEND and care leavers in. In Lancashire 10-18. Cumbria aged 11-18.**

Engagement Lead: Heather Hook

[hhook@kooth.com](mailto:hhook@kooth.com)

*What we offer here is a suggested guideline for accessing Kooth over the school year. We urge you to book in early for any session you require, there is no such thing as booking too early.*

## **All Year Round**

- ***Access to our monthly mailing list containing newly released resources and virtual event listings***
- ***Promotional copy and social media templates for the school's website and social media accounts***
- ***Information about our bi-monthly webinars for Education Professionals to be trained on Kooth service provision***
- ***Physical materials available (posters, flyers, cards)***

## **September - October**

- **Book in either introductory or refresher assemblies**
  - > ***Purpose:*** To either highlight from the beginning of the year or to remind students from the beginning of the year that if they should have a hard time at any point over their coming school year to check out Kooth. This can be booked around World Mental Health Day (10th October).
  - > ***Offer:*** 15-30 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f, or access to recording**
  - > ***Audience:*** Whole school
- **Book in Sign Up sessions**
  - > ***Purpose:*** As a direct follow up to assemblies, students are introduced to the website itself with an assisted facilitation through the website registration process and then navigating the various support features on the site. This can be booked around World Mental Health Day (10th October). This session is also useful all year round for smaller groups of



students experiencing social and emotional issues, a minimum of 12 students max of 20.

> **Offer:** 30-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f, or access to recording**

> **Audience:** Targeted year groups / classes

## November

- **Book in male targeted mental health workshop with male students**
  - > **Purpose:** For November, highlight the importance to male students of being open with our mental health and ways Kooth can support them.
  - > **Offer:** 45-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted year groups / classes / students (male students)
- **Book in Stress & Anxiety workshops**
  - > **Purpose:** With Stress Awareness Day happening on 2nd November, this workshop on stress and anxiety awareness and management can support student wellbeing.
  - > **Offer:** 45-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted year groups / classes

## December - January

- **Set up Kooth Champions scheme**
  - > **Purpose:** An opportunity to embed Kooth engagement in your school and to upskill selected students to be Kooth Champions.
  - > **Offer:** Bespoke. Includes Champions training, regular check-ins with the local Engagement Lead, and option to access Peer Support workshop for students. Can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted students
- **Plan Mental Health talk and Kooth service overview**
  - > **Purpose:** To raise mental health awareness and provide resources to parents/carers of students. To deliver information on how Kooth can support their children
  - > **Offer:** 30-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f, or access to recording**
  - > **Audience:** Parents/carers
- **Book in Kindness workshop and Kooth service overview**
  - > **Purpose:** To raise mental health awareness and consider the positive impact we can have on others. Raising our own self – esteem and that of other's. (Can be used as an anti – bullying workshop)
  - > **Offer:** 60-90 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f,**
  - > **Audience:** From Y6 – Y9



## February - May

- **Optional: Book in either introductory or refresher assemblies**
  - > **Purpose:** For Children's Mental Health Week (6-12th February), there's the option to either highlight or remind students that Kooth is available for the week's theme of mental health awareness.
  - > **Offer:** 15-30 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f, or access to recording**
  - > **Audience:** Whole school
- **Book in Exam focused Stress & Anxiety workshops**
  - > **Purpose:** In the approach to the GCSE exam period, this workshop on stress and anxiety awareness and management can support Y10 and Y11 student wellbeing.
  - > **Offer:** 45-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted year groups / classes (Y10 students taking Mocks or Y11 students taking GCSEs)
- **Book in Young Carers writing workshop**
  - > **Purpose:** For Young Carers Action Day (16th March), a writing workshop around the theme of self-care is tailored for young carer students to access.
  - > **Offer:** 45-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted students (young carers)

## June

- **Book in LGBTQ+ Wellbeing workshop**
  - > **Purpose:** For Pride Month, this workshop focusing on LGBTQ wellbeing and ways to support this community's wellbeing can be part of a school's celebrations of all things Pride.
  - > **Offer:** 45-60 min length, can be booked for **virtual or f2f**
  - > **Audience:** Targeted year groups / classes / students (LGBTQ+ student group)

## July

- **Book in End of year refresher assemblies**
  - > **Purpose:** To remind students at the end of the year as they're about to break up for summer that if they're looking for any support during the holidays to check out Kooth.
  - > **Offer:** 15-30 min length, can be booked for **virtual, f2f, or access to recording**
  - > **Audience:** Whole school





## **Online Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for young people**

Dear Parents/Carers

Over the coming weeks your child may mention they have been made aware by school or a professional of a service called Kooth. It provides a safe, secure means of accessing online emotional health support from a professional team of qualified counsellors and emotional wellbeing practitioners for ages 10-18 in Lancashire.

Kooth offers wellbeing support 365 days a year via a range of self-help materials and peer to peer support which young people are able to contribute to. Kooth also has an online wellbeing team from 12pm- 10pm on weekdays and 6pm- 10pm on weekends offering 1:1 text- based online counselling via live chat or messaging.

Kooth is free to access via any internet- enabled device. Your child simply needs to visit [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) and click 'Join Kooth'. Everything is pre-moderated and age appropriate, in order to safeguard our users, so you know that what your child is accessing is safe.

Kooth will be working with all schools and professionals across 93% of the UK and growing to support students' mental health and wellbeing, both in and out of school. Alongside this, Kooth provides parent sessions, so keep in touch with the school or agencies to find out when the next ones are. I have pre-recorded 2 sessions for you to watch. The 5 minute overview can be found [Here](#) and a more in-depth 15 minute recording can be found [Here](#). I have also included a selection of parent/Carer resources that can be accessed using this link: [Parents/Carers resources](#)

If you have any questions or would like to discuss what Kooth.com can offer, please address them to the school. If you would prefer to contact Kooth directly, simply email [parents@kooth.com](mailto:parents@kooth.com).

Kind Regards  
Heather



# PSHE and Sextortion



**This week some of our Year 10 pupils had a lesson on Sextortion where pupils watched a YouTube clip provided by the police that explained to pupils about the dangers and law surrounding sextortion. Mrs Hall then led on group discussion based on three scenarios where pupils analysed what they felt had been done well and mistakes made.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvUML0ZJGXU&t=2s>

What is  
**SEXTORTION?**



Lancashire  
Constabulary

# Half Term Events

Free For 0 -11 Years Old  
Half Term Drop In Sessions  
Everyone Welcome  
No Booking Required

Monday 13th February - Tuesday 14th February

## Bee Kind

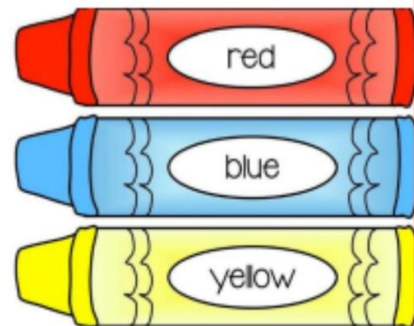
### Spread The Smiles



**FREE - 0-11 Yrs Old**  
**Drop in half term session**  
**Everyone welcome**

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February**  
**The Zone Clitheroe,**  
**Wesleyan Row BB7 2JY**  
**13.30 - 15.00**

ARTS AND CRAFTS



**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February**  
**New Era, Paradise Street,**  
**Accrington BB5 1PB**  
**10.30 - 12.00**  
**No Booking Required**  
**01200 420 460**

PLANTING!



Games

