Dear Parents/Carers

Firstly, a very warm welcome to all pupils returning to and starting at Goldington Academy this September. We look forward to working with pupils and their families throughout the coming year.

Welcome to the first edition of the safeguarding newsletter from the Goldington Academy Safeguarding Team for the academic year 2024-25. The newsletter is designed to support parents in deepening their understanding of safeguarding issues that may affect young people. Each newsletter will focus on different safeguarding risks including an E-Safety risk.

Safeguarding children is the action of promoting the welfare of children and protecting them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every single person who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. You will see on the left of the page who to contact if you have concerns about a child's safety or welfare, however all Goldington Academy staff are trained in safeguarding.

The focus of this edition is *Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024* from the Department of Education and advice for parents/carers and young people about the dangers of *sharing nude images*.

We hope that you will find the information in this newsletter useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or support with any of the topics raised.

 Yours sincerely

Mr W Atkinson
**Assistant Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024

Keeping Children Safe in Education is a statutory Department for Education document that all schools are required to follow when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It covers many aspects of safeguarding, including different forms of abuse, early help processes, safe-recruitment, how concerns must be reported and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best possible outcomes.

Click here for the full document: Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Sharing nude images

The social consequences of sharing nudes

Girls face more consequences for sharing nudes than boys. Research shows that girls are looked down upon when a nude is leaked and it damages their reputation; but for boys, however unfairly, it seems the opposite is true – it can be a source of validation. A recent study found that **60% of young people think that a girl would lose social status** if a nude image of her was shared on Whatsapp, while **60% thought that a boy would gain social status** in the same situation.[9]

It is important to be aware of the fact that the social consequences for a male or a female child may be different, and to be sensitive to these. You can also use your proactive conversations with your child to challenge damaging and unfair gender stereotypes around sharing intimate images.

"A lot of parents might just blame the child instantly instead of trying to support them."

The legal consequences of sharing nudes

A nude image of an under-18 is classed as child abuse imagery. And while it is important that children sharing nudes are not criminalised, it needs to be addressed.

Where there is no evidence of exploitation or grooming it is unlikely that a child would be prosecuted for sharing a nude – particularly if it is a first offence. Police may investigate but can choose to record the incident in a way that does not have a negative impact on the children involved. More info can be found on Parents Protect.

Top tips from 16–21 year-olds

Be proactive

1. Start speaking to your child about the risks of sharing pictures when you first give them a phone. You can do this in an age-appropriate way using the ThinkUKnow videos.
2. Explain to your child early on that they may be sent naked pictures by someone else. The number one rule is that they don't send it on to anyone else. If it upsets them they should speak to you so you can look after them and help them to report it.
3. Don't assume your child is not involved. Sharing nudes is a very common part of growing up for some young people - although it shouldn't be. Be prepared to support them if something goes wrong.

If your child tells you that they have shared someone else's nude:

1. Be very clear that pressuring someone for anything is wrong, especially something as personal as a naked picture. Have a conversation about how and why it happened.
2. Our young people think vulnerability is important in this situation. Remind your child we all make mistakes, and the important thing is to be honest and responsible after it has happened.
3. Seek advice from the safeguarding lead at your child's school. More information on how the school is likely to manage the situation can be found here.

If your child tells you that a nude image of them has been shared:

1. Teens want parents to offer practical advice (e.g. helping them contact tech platforms to stop images circulating.) Contact Childline/IWF Report Remove and make a report to NCA CEOP if you think the image has been shared with an adult. More advice on how to respond can be found on Internet Matters.
2. Seek advice from the safeguarding lead at your child's school. More information on how the school is likely to manage the situation can be found here.
3. Teens want parents to be emotionally supportive. The young person is in a vulnerable state, and they are likely to be feeling fear and embarrassment among other emotions. They need to hear that you love them and that you will work things out with them.

The sharing of nude images continues to be an area of risk for young people across the Globe. Peer pressure, grooming and natural inquisitiveness can lead to young people sharing images with others that they then later regret.

In addition to the advice above, please see a link to the 'Think before you share' website below, which has some useful advice for parents and carers, as well as young people.

[Need Help with Nudes? Think Before You Share Nudes Online](#)

Top Tips for Supporting Children Going Back to School

https://nationalcollege.com/guides/supporting-children-going-back-to-school

For many children and young people, change can be hard to process – and this is no different when the time comes for them to return to school. After such a long stretch of time away, they may begin to feel creeping doubts over their lessons, their teachers, their routines, or even any friends they have not seen over the summer.

Parents, educators and other trusted adults play a vital role for these children, and it is extremely important to know how to effectively support young people through this potentially difficult time. This free guide offers you expert advice on how to lend a hand to youngsters returning to education, and details what you can do to make this transition as easy as possible. **http://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/goldington-academy**

Once you have registered, you will be able to access the "Online Safety for Parents and Carers' course" and National Online Safety's Resources (which includes a wide range of online platform guides on the latest social media channels and games).   This aims to help empower parents with the knowledge to protect their children from the dangers of the internet.

Early Help Service

The Early Help service is made up of six Early Help professionals who support schools to co-ordinate early help for pupils and their families. The Early Help service includes the following teams:

- Adolescent response team
- Early Help Hub
- Education Welfare
- Family Information Service
- Family Support Hub
- Inclusion Support
- Parenting Team
- Strengthening Families Team

For further information, please visit Early Help Assessment - Overview | Bedford Borough Council or speak to any member of the school's safeguarding team.