



WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

If you are worried about a child's safety, please do not hesitate to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies straightaway.

Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door
(children's social services) 01234 718700
Out of hours – 0300 3008123

If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999

Meet the Designated Safeguarding Team:

The Safeguarding Team oversee and coordinate all aspects of the school's work to ensure that children are kept safe
safeguarding@goldington.bedsch.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr Will Atkinson

atkinsonw@goldington.bedsch.uk

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Head of Year Seven:**

Mrs Anthea Jones

jonesa@goldington.bedsch.uk

School Safeguarding Governor:

Mrs Kate Reynier

reynierk@goldington.bedsch.uk

**Special Educational Needs &/or
Disabilities Coordinator:**

Mr Sailesh Roopnarain

roopnarains@goldington.bedsch.uk

Head of Year Eight:

Mrs Louise McCarthy-Gardner

mccarthy-gardnerl@goldington.bedsch.uk

Head of Year Nine:

Mr Michael Lincoln

lincolnm@goldington.bedsch.uk

Head of Year Ten:

Mr Liam Hall

halll@goldington.bedsch.uk

Head of Year Eleven:

Mr James Pinkney

pinkneyj@goldington.bedsch.uk

All can be contacted via the school office on
01234 261516

For a copy of our school's Child Protection Policy, please visit the Safeguarding page on our [school website](#)

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the fifteenth edition of the safeguarding newsletter from the Goldington Academy safeguarding team. Our aim is to bring you all the latest, relevant help and advice on issues that we feel will be of importance to you.

In this issue, the main focus is on **private fostering** and **County Lines** drug dealing. We educate our pupils around the dangers of County Lines and risky behaviours through our wider assembly programme.

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. If you have concerns about the safety or welfare of any child, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

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

Private fostering

Private fostering is a term used to describe a scenario where a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability) is living away from home and being cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. This is an arrangement made between the parent (or persons with parental responsibilities) and the carers and is planned to last longer than 28 days.

Children become privately fostered for many different reasons, for example parents have ill health or a parental custodial sentence. Children who are older will sometimes choose to move away from home and make their own private fostering arrangement.

A private foster carer may be a more distant relative or a family friend such as:

- a great aunt or uncle
- great grandparents
- a cousin
- a friend or the parent of a child's friend
- godparent or a neighbour
- also host families taking in exchange students for more than 28 days need to be assessed as private foster carers if the young person is under 16

By law, parents and carers must notify the local authority of a private fostering arrangement – please see <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/private-fostering>

County Lines

County lines is when gangs and organised crime groups exploit children to transport and sell drugs, normally between big cities where the exploiters are based in smaller towns, sometimes across county boundaries but also locally and within the borough. The children have dedicated mobile phone 'lines' for taking orders for drugs; children are used as they are less likely to be stopped by police, allowing adult dealers to avoid the risk of arrest.

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation, where a person or a group takes advantage of their contact with and influence over a young person to coerce or manipulate them to commit a criminal act. Children as young as six have been targeted by gangs for this purpose.

Young people may be recruited for county lines and other forms of criminal exploitation by a process of grooming: at the targeting stage, the exploiter befriends the young person and gains their trust. Young people may be recruited through social media and/or through their peer group. Parents of some of the victims of county lines have reported a sudden change in their child's behaviour. Possible indicators are:

- Unexplained money, clothes or gifts
- Frequent, unexplained phone calls
- New friendship circle that involves older children or adults
- Not attending school
- Carrying weapons

For more information, please visit [Protecting children from county lines | NSPCC Learning](#) or speak to school staff.

What parents & educators need to know about sharing intimate images

<https://nationalcollege.com/guides/what-parents-need-to-know-about-sharing-intimate-images>

The sharing of intimate images online can be a dangerous avenue through which abusers seek to exploit children and young people, forcibly exposing them to explicit material, coercing them into sharing self-generated intimate images, and extorting them with the threat of sharing such images more widely. From reputational impact to potential blackmail or emotional distress and even legal consequences, exposure to this harmful behaviour can have a severe impact.

It is important to remember that the creation and distribution of explicit material featuring under-18s, even by the child themselves, is illegal under UK law. Our guide looks at the serious concerns associated with this behaviour and lets parents and educators know how best to address these issues and protect young people.

<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:

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| • Adolescent response team | • Family Support Hub |
| • Early Help Hub | • Inclusion Support |
| • Education Welfare | • Parenting Team |
| • Family Information Service | • 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.