



**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.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead  
Head of Year Nine:**

Mr Will Atkinson  
[atkinsonw@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:atkinsonw@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

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

Mrs Anthea Jones  
[jonesa@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:jonesa@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

**School Safeguarding Governor:**

Mrs Kate Reynier  
[reynierk@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:reynierk@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

**Special Educational Needs Coordinator:**

Mr Sailesh Roopnarain  
[roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

**Head of Year Eight:**

Mr Michael Lincoln  
[lincolnm@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:lincolnm@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

**Head of Year Ten:**

Mr James Pinkney  
[pinkneyj@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:pinkneyj@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

**Head of Year Eleven:**

Mr Liam Hall  
[halll@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:halll@goldington.beds.sch.uk)

All can be contacted via the school office or 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 seventh edition of the 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 **Omegle** and **knife crime**, which was the focus of our assemblies last week.

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**

**Knife crime**

With a steady rise in knife related crimes being reported over recent years, there is a concern that it is fast becoming an epidemic across the country, specifically impacting on young people, families and communities. National and local research continues to determine root causes of why young people are carrying knives. Although not exhaustive, below are some common factors known to influence young people to carry knives:

- County lines – organised drug networks
- Gang affiliation – protection/status
- Media attention/glamorisation
- Fear of crime – being attacked/self-protection
- Victim of bullying – self-protection
- Peer pressure

The common factor is the 'vicious circle' young people find themselves in, for example in a gang/drug network it is an expectation for gang members to be armed: 'fear or be feared', 'live or die' regarding fear of crime and thinking 'I need to defend myself'.

The biggest risk is that if a young person carries a knife, they will almost definitely use it in situations where they feel the need to protect themselves, commit a crime, cause fear or reinforce their status/reputation.

Further information can be found at: <https://benkinsella.org.uk/resources-for-parents/>

## WHAT IS OMEGLE?

Omegle is one of the more popular video chat sites available online. It pairs random users identified as 'You' and 'Stranger' to chat online via 'Text', 'Video' or both. A user can choose to add their interests, and Omegle will try to pair a user with someone who has similar interests. If not, you could meet anyone. Chats are anonymous unless the user states who they are. It has been around for about 15 years and has been a concern for experts trying to protect children. It is free, and no account sign up or registration is required. This has the risk of allowing under-18s to easily use the platform, without needing parental assistance, money or even an email address.

Like most social media sites, Omegle has a minimum age rating of 13 years with parental permission; users must be over 18 years old without parental permission. It is extremely popular among children and young people because a lot of social media influencers use and post about it. For example, the #omegle hashtag has approximately 5 billion views on TikTok. There are no parental controls - according to Omegle, they monitor conversations, but despite stating 'video is monitored, keep it clean', children and young people visiting this section are likely to encounter numerous other users engaging in sexually explicit chat and activity putting them at risk.

For further advice: Internet Matters: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-omegle-whatparents-need-to-know/>

Childline: <https://www.childnet.com/blog/what-is-omegle-key-things-parents-and-carersneed-to-know/>

## Looking After Your Wellbeing Online

This free online safety guide has tips for looking after children's wellbeing when they are online, including going tech free before bed, avoiding comparisons with others and pausing before they post. The online world and digital technology has become such a significant part of our lives, and integral to so many aspects of our daily routine, that we should not be surprised at the degree of influence it can wield over what we think and how we feel. Many experiences that young people have on the internet are hugely positive and uplifting but sadly, that is not always the case. Negative incidents online, such as, disagreements with other users, stumbling across upsetting content or feeling left out by friends can be intensely damaging to a child's emotional state.

<https://nationalcollege.com/guides/looking-after-your-wellbeing-online>

<https://nationalcollege.com/guides/combat-online-bullying>

Please find below the URL you will need. Complete your details and select "I am a: Parent/Carer" from the dropdown:

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.