



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.beds.sch.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr Will Atkinson

atkinsonw@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Head of Year Seven:

Mrs Anthea Jones

jonesa@goldington.beds.sch.uk

School Safeguarding Governor:

Mrs Kate Reynier

reynierk@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Special Educational Needs Coordinator:

Mr Sailesh Roopnarain

roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Head of Year Eight:

Mrs Louise McCarthy-Gardner

mccarthy-gardnerl@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Head of Year Nine:

Mr Michael Lincoln

lincolnm@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Head of Year Ten:

Mr Liam Hall

halll@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Head of Year Eleven:

Mr James Pinkney

pinkneyj@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 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 **forced marriage** and **Omegle**. Our staff are trained to recognise and report the signs of potential forced marriage and we train our pupil to be safe on the internet through our Life Skills curriculum and through assemblies led by our external partners, such as Bedfordshire Police.

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**

Forced marriage

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement still remains with the prospective spouses. However, in forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

The UK Government regards forced marriage as an abuse of human rights and a form of domestic abuse and where it affects children and young people, child abuse. It is a criminal offence. It can happen to both women and men, although many of the reported cases involve young women and girls aged between 16 and 25. There is no "typical" victim of forced marriage. Some may be over or under 18 years of age, some may have a disability, some may have young children and some may also be spouses from overseas.

If you know someone who is in danger of being forced to marry, the contacts below may be of use.

Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151

Email: fmunit@fco.gov.uk

Email for outreach work: fmunitoutreach@fco.gov.uk

Facebook: [Forced Marriage page](#)

Twitter: [@FMUnit](#)

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/>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about Snapchat

<https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>

A free online safety guide on Snapchat.

Snapchat is a photo and video-sharing app through which users can chat with friends via text or audio. Images and videos can be shared with specific friends, or as a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) which is visible to a person's entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose significantly during the lockdown periods with many young people utilising it to stay connected with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivalling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

In the guide, you will find tips on avoiding potential risks such as sexting, visible location and contact from strangers.

<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.