



Ready - Respectful - Responsible

Parent Briefing 13.10.23

Dear Parent/Carer,

I thought I would draw to your attention how **student chrome books are monitored for safeguarding purposes**. We operate a very robust system called **'Smoothwall'** and this is a 24 hour monitoring system that picks up any concerns or issues that may arise from **any chrome book associated with the school**. This can take the form of inappropriate content or concerns over well-being related to content that students may produce or view. As soon as any inappropriate or concerning activity takes place both myself and Mr Crawford are informed by email. This then gets followed up accordingly. I mention this as it has come to our attention that **many young people are using their chrome books quite late at night**. You as parents/carers may not be aware of this and it might be worth checking or having a conversation about managing devices.

In terms of **content** that young people may stumble across or become party to without actively seeking it out, this week's safeguarding advice focuses on how you might support your son/daughter **if they encounter upsetting content**. Much as the internet is a wonderful landscape of opportunity it has many dark by-roads that young people can stumble across or be lured into. Keeping open and honest dialogue about content is critical and this guidance may help you in managing this.

We are always looking for people to join our **team of casual invigilators** and for **people who speak Spanish or French fluently** and could spare a little time to volunteer in our languages department - often we find people from our pool of parents. If you are interested or would like to inquire as to opportunities then the advert and application form for invigilators can be found [here](#), for volunteers in the MFL department please could they contact Ms Simpson (STL for MFL) directly: isimpson@johncolet.co.uk.

Requests for changes for options have now CLOSED. If your child has recently moved their option then they will need to catch up on work if they have joined a new class. Well done to Year 9 who have started so positively with their new option classes.

After an **incredibly well attended open evening** last Thursday staff spent our INSET day focussed on developing **new literacy materials as part of our literacy strategy** as well as reviewing and setting new appraisal priorities for the coming year. The leadership team also began working on the school vision for the coming years focussing on what John Colet should be doing to develop its young people in preparation for the world at large. This is the beginning of creating key 'drivers' that underpin every aspect of how the school is run and these will be shared with all stakeholders later in the year as we refine them.

Finally, I had the great pleasure of attending our 3G pitch steering committee this week organised by Mr Rosier, our football development officer, and met with key stakeholders who utilise our excellent 3G facilities. I was proud and impressed with the incredible work that our local youth football clubs have put in to grow opportunities for the local community on a competitive and social level. It is special and I am sure it will continue to flourish moving forward.

Take care - Ian Brierly -Headteacher

REMINDERS & NOTICES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **Year 11 GCSE Art Trip** - 2 November
- **Year 11 Consultation Evening** - 2 November (4.00-7.30pm)

OPPORTUNITIES

COVER SUPERVISOR REQUIRED : An excellent opportunity for any person who has just finished education or any who may be considering a future career in education, or for anyone who would like a role which can fit around their family life. If interested please contact Mrs Perry: cperry@johncolet.co.uk

CASUAL INVIGILATORS: We are always looking for people to join our **team of casual invigilators** If you are interested or would like to inquire as to opportunities then the advert and application form for invigilators can be found [here](#).

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES VOLUNTEERS: If you speak French or Spanish and would like to support our MFL department please contact Mrs Simpson, our Head of MFL, directly: isimpson@johncolet.co.uk.

SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION



Mr Crawford
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



**Be Safe,
Be Kind**



Mrs Rowland
*Operational Safeguarding Lead
DDSL

If parents have any concerns about this practice or, believe that any young person at John Colet School might be at risk, then please do contact one of the members of our Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk

Committed To Excellence

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalcollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to the war in Ukraine and the conflict in Israel, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

1 FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.



2 RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.



3 KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.



4 EMPHASISE HOPE

Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.



5 MONITOR REACTIONS

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.



6 CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process: adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.



7 SET LIMITS

Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example). It's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.



8 TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once: instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.



9 ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.



10 FIND A BALANCE

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.



11 BUILD RESILIENCE

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.



12 IDENTIFY HELP

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It is essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.



Meet Our Expert

Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-1048306> <https://www.childnet.com/blog/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/> <https://www.unicef.org/press-engage/how-talk-your-children-about-conflict-and-war>

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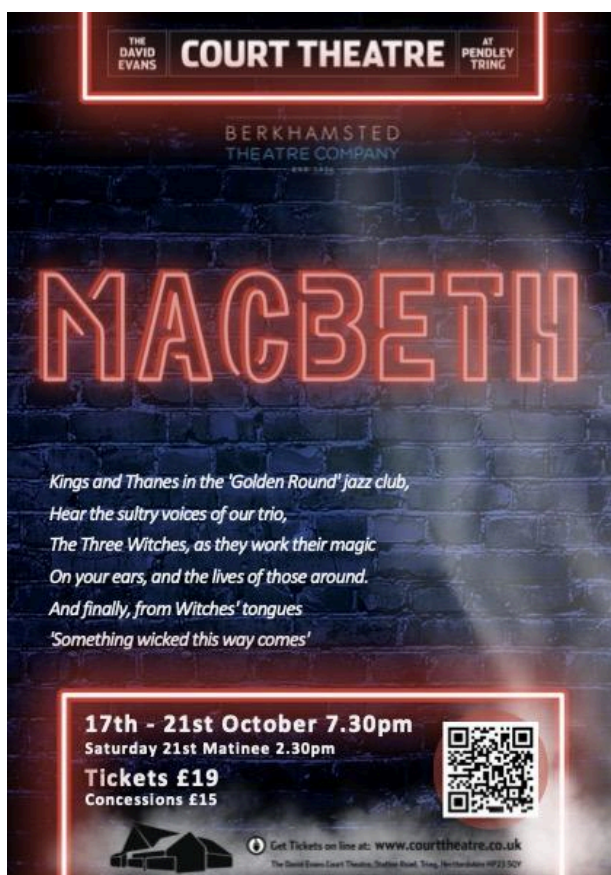
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NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

LOCAL UPDATES / EVENTS



COURT THEATRE
AT PENDLEY TRING

BERKHAMSTED
THEATRE COMPANY

MACBETH

*Kings and Thanes in the 'Golden Round' jazz club,
Hear the sultry voices of our trio,
The Three Witches, as they work their magic
On your ears, and the lives of those around.
And finally, from Witches' tongues
'Something wicked this way comes'*

17th - 21st October 7.30pm
Saturday 21st Matinee 2.30pm
Tickets £19
Concessions £15

Get Tickets on line at: www.courttheatre.co.uk

The David Evans Court Theatre, Shillier Road, Tring, Berkhamsted HP23 5DZ



AYLESBURY RUGBY WOMEN

ANY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE
AMAZING FACILITIES INCLUDING
GYM AND PHYSIO
NC3 MIDLANDS (SOUTH) LEAGUE
WOMENSRUGBY@AYLESBURYRFC.CO.UK

TRAINING TIMES:
WEDNESDAY 19:30-21:00
SUNDAY 12:30-14:00

ARFC HP22 5RN

UNIFORM

- **Shoes** - Please check that they will conform - there are diagrams on the website to help.
- **Piercings** - the rule is for a small, single, plain stud in the earlobe of each ear. Getting additional piercings that are not healed in time for the start of term means spending time in isolation until the item can be removed.
- Optional plain black v-neck jumper (worn with, not instead of the blazer). **A number of black sweatshirts have crept in. These are not acceptable.**
- **Plain outdoor coat**, no large logos. So no hoodies, zipped or otherwise.
- **No visible body art**, please ensure holiday tattoos are removed.
- Clear nail varnish may be worn but **fingernails must be short and nail extensions of any kind are not permitted.**
- **False eyelashes are not permitted.**
- **Jewellery** (except a watch and earrings as stated above) is not permitted. In the case of jewellery and other accessories, the student will be asked to remove the item, which will be confiscated. A parent/carer will then need to come into school to collect the item in line with school policy.

The full uniform policy can be viewed in the policies section of the school website.