



Online Safety, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Bulletin



Safeguarding & Wellbeing contact details

Safeguarding Team 020 8769 3294

Safeguarding Lead: Mrs O'Donovan, Assistant Headteacher

Safeguarding Team: Ms Westlake, Mr Todd, Miss Forde, Ms Odewale, Ms Wellington, Ms Gardner

Email: safeguarding@btg-secondary.lambeth.sch.uk

Governor responsible for safeguarding in school: Mrs O'Donohue

Mental Health Lead: Ms Forde **Wellbeing Co-Ordinator:** Ms Henry

Email: wellbeing@btg-secondary.lambeth.sch.uk

Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator: Ms Wellington

Email: jwellington@btg-secondary.lambeth.sch.uk

Racial Justice, Pupil Voice & Reward: Ms Odewale, Assistant Headteacher

Email: lodewale@btg-secondary.lambeth.sch.uk

Designated Ward Officer – Child and Young People - PC A Brooke



BTG Safeguarding during Summer holidays:

During the school holidays, the safeguarding team only monitors safeguarding@btg-secondary.lambeth.sch.uk periodically, If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Children and young people can contact  free and confidentially on **0800 1111**.

Parents and carers can contact the  helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

If a child or young person is struggling with their mental health, they can text YM  for free, 24/7 crisis support. Parents wanting advice can also contact the  Parents Helpline on **0808 802 5544**.

You may contact the safeguarding number 07398252782 for very serious or urgent issues or contact your local Children's services directly rather than waiting for a reply here.

Please visit our safeguarding page on the Bishop
Thomas Grant School Website
for further support and guidance

<https://www.btg.ac/Information/Safe-Guarding/>

As we settle into the autumn term, we hope that students and families have enjoyed a positive start to the new school year. Autumn brings fresh opportunities, new challenges and a return to familiar routines. As the days grow shorter and the weather becomes colder, it is important to take time to look after our physical and emotional wellbeing.

This time of year, can also present challenges for children and young people as they balance schoolwork, friendships, extracurricular activities and their online lives. With this in mind, we have included some useful information and practical reminders to help keep your child safe, happy and supported throughout the autumn months.

At BTG, we recognise the importance of promoting positive wellbeing for both students and families and remain committed to providing a safe, caring and supportive school community.



“O God of creation,
you have blessed us with the change of the seasons
As we welcome the autumn months, may the earlier setting of the sun
remind us to take time to rest.
May the brilliant colours of the leaves
remind us of the wonder of your creation.
May the steam of our breath in the cool air
remind us that it is you who gave us the breath of life.
May the harvest from the fields
remind us of the abundance we have been given and
bounty we are to share with others.
May the dying of summer’s spirit
remind us of your great promise that death is temporary and life is eternal.
We praise you for your goodness Forever and ever.”

Contents

Wellbeing half term reflection	2
Fireworks: How to stay safe while enjoying fireworks	3
Places for kids to eat free (or for £1)	4
Looksmxing	5
10 Tips dealing with traumatic and challenging events	6
Checking in with your friends	7
Ward Officer for Child & Young Person	8
Personal Safety	8
Young Carers	9
School Avoidance	10
Safeguarding - Attendance	11
Further Guidance & Support	12

How are you feeling today?





Wellbeing Bulletin



Half-Term Reflection

PAUSE • REST • CONNECT • RECHARGE



A busy and positive start



As we reach the end of the first half-term, it is important to recognise how much everyone has managed and achieved since September.

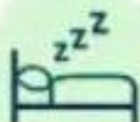
Looking after ourselves



The start of a new school year can bring excitement, new opportunities and positive experiences, but it can also bring pressure, tiredness and change.

Everyone has mental health, just as everyone has physical health. It is important to notice how we are feeling and to seek support when we need it.

Ways to look after your wellbeing over the half-term



Get enough rest and sleep



Be active and get outside



Spend time with family and friends



Do things that you enjoy



Take time to slow down and be mindful



Try something new or do something kind for others



For students with upcoming assessments or exams:

Use the half-term to revise in manageable chunks, take regular breaks and remember that rest is an important part of doing well.

Look out for one another

A simple conversation, a kind word or asking someone "Are you OK?" can make a real difference. Let's continue to be a supportive and caring school community.



Remember to seek support

If you or your child are feeling worried, stressed or low, please do talk to a trusted adult at school or at home. There is always someone who can listen and help.



"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

MATTHEW 11:28

Take care of yourself, enjoy the half-term break and come back ready for the next chapter!

Fireworks: How to stay safe while enjoying fireworks

Firework season is upon us, the availability of fireworks can bring anti-social behaviour as well as extremely dangers behaviour. Please speak with your children about the dangers of mis-using fireworks, you could be prosecuted!!

What is firework misuse?

- Possessing 'adult' fireworks (category 2 and 3) whilst aged 18 or under
- Letting off fireworks between 11pm and 7am (exceptions below)
- Throwing or setting off fireworks in a public place

You can be fined an unlimited amount and imprisoned for up to 6 months for selling or using fireworks illegally. You could also get an on-the-spot fine of £90.

For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/fireworks-the-law>



Public firework displays We recommend that you enjoy a public firework display, rather than buy your own fireworks. Public displays are bigger, more fun and a lot safer. But if you really want to have your own display, read the safety tips from the London Fire Brigade below

When can you buy fireworks You can buy fireworks and sparklers from registered sellers, for private use, at certain times year:

- Between 15 October and 10 November
- Between 26 to 31 December
- Three days before Diwali
- Three days before Chinese New Year

You can buy fireworks outside these dates, but only from shops with a special licence.



What fireworks to buy When buying fireworks, always look for a CE or UKCA mark to make sure they're safe to use and only buy fireworks up to Category 3. Fireworks come in 4 categories,

- Category 1 fireworks are low hazard fireworks. They pose the least danger, make very little noise and are for use in a limited space (including indoors). Examples include party poppers and Christmas crackers.
- Category 2 and 3 are 'adult fireworks' and are available in shops and supermarkets. These will have Category F2 or F3 on the box.
- Category 4 fireworks are banned for sale to the public and are for professional displays only. These are available at specialist suppliers.

Sparkler safety Sparklers are often viewed as being harmless, but they burn at fierce temperatures, equivalent to a welding torch. Follow these top tips for sparkler safety:

- Don't give sparklers to children under 5.
- Make sure everyone handling sparklers wears gloves.
- Hold sparklers at arm's length while being lit and light them one at a time.
- Don't wave sparklers about close to other people.
- Never hold a baby in your arms while you're holding a sparkler.
- When the sparkler has finished put it in a bucket of cold water.



When can you let off fireworks For the majority of the year, it is illegal to set off fireworks (including sparklers) between 11pm and 7am.

However, for Bonfire Night the curfew is extended to midnight and for New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year the cut off is 1am.

Safety tips for bonfires and fireworks; Planning

- If you're having your own fireworks display, plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable, and ensure it finishes before 11pm.
- Only buy fireworks which carry the CE or UKCA mark, keep them in a closed box and use them one at a time.
- Build your bonfire clear of buildings, sheds, fences and hedges.
- Always keep a bucket of water or a hosepipe nearby in case of emergency.



Safety tips for bonfires and fireworks; Using the fireworks

- Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary, not a match or candle.
- Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back.
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks.
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit.
- Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them.
- Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators.
- Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire.

Safety tips for bonfires and fireworks; Clearing up

- Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.
- Don't leave bonfires unattended. An adult should supervise it until it has burnt out. If it has to be left, damp it down with water.

For further information, please click on the link below

<https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/fireworks/>





KIDS EAT FREE (OR FOR £1) OCTOBER HALF TERM 2026

moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free



ANGUS STEAKHOUSE

Kids under 8 eat FREE daily, 12pm to 5pm

ASDA

Kids eat for £1 daily, with no adult spend

ASK ITALIAN

Kids Eat Free October 9th - 31st via Perks App

BANANA TREE

Kids eat free this october with an adult

BELLA ITALIA

Children eat for £1 with any adult main

BILLS

Kids Eat Free Monday 26th – Friday 30th October

BREWDOG

Kids eat free this Oct with **KIDS EAT FREE** bookings

CAFE ROUGE

Kids Eat FREE 12-4pm every day of the week

CHIQUITO

Kids eat FREE during all school holidays

COCONUT TREE

Kids eat free Sun 18th Oct - Sun 1st Nov 2026

DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRES

Kids eat for £1 with an adult breakfast or lunch

FARMHOUSE INNS

2 Kids eat free during the October Half Term

FLAMING GRILL

1 Kid eats free weekdays this October half term

FRANKIE & BENNY'S

Kids eat FREE during school holidays

FUTURE INNS

Under 5s eat for free with any adult meal

GORDON RAMSEY RESTAURANTS

Kids under 10 eat FREE all day, every day

HARVESTER

Kids eat for £1 until November 1st 2026 via App

HUNGRY HORSE

2 Kids eat for £1 this October Half Term

IKEA

Kids get a meal from 95p daily from 11am

LAS IGUANAS

Kids eat FREE with 'My Las Iguanas' App

MARCO PIERRE WHITE

Kids under 12 Eat FREE daily with an adult spend

MARSTON PUBS

kids eat for £1 during the october half term

MORRISONS

Kids Eat FREE all day, every day with a £5 spend

PAUSA CAFE @ DUNELM

Kids eat FREE with every £4 spend all day

PREMIER INN

2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast

PRETO

Kids up to age 10 eat free with 1 paying adult

PUREZZA

Kids under 10 get free pizza with every adult meal

SA BRAINS PUBS

Kids eat for £1 on Wednesdays

SIZZLING PUBS

Kids eat for £1, Every Monday to Friday, 3 - 7pm

TESCO

Kids Eat free weekdays with an adult purchase

TGI FRIDAYS

Kids Eat Free with any adult meal (Via App)

THE REAL GREEK

Kids under 12 eat FREE Sundays with £10 spend

TOBY CARVERY

Kids eat for £1 until November 1st 2026 via App

TRAVELODGE

2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast

TURTLE BAY

Kids eat free with a £15 adult spend via app

VILLAGE HOTELS

Kids eat free via the village app

YO! SUSHI

Kids eat free all day (weekdays) in school holidays

ZIZZI

Kids eat free weekdays in school holidays

Copyright of MONEY SAVING CENTRAL

Looksmaxxing: When appearance becomes an obsession

Young people are increasingly encountering online content that promises to improve their looks, attractiveness or social status. One trend, known as “looksmaxxing”, is particularly visible in some male-focused online communities. While ordinary grooming, exercise and self-care can be positive, some content promotes unrealistic beauty standards and potentially harmful ways to change

What is looksmaxxing?

“Softmaxxing” usually refers to everyday changes such as hairstyles, skincare or clothing. “Hardmaxxing” can involve extreme dieting, excessive exercise, unregulated products or dangerous attempts to alter facial features. Videos may rank facial characteristics, promise quick transformations or suggest that appearance determines someone’s worth or success.

Why should families be aware?

Repeated exposure to idealised or edited images can fuel comparison, low self-esteem and anxiety about body image. Some influencers sell dubious advice or products, while certain online spaces overlap with misogynistic or “incel” narratives. These risks are not limited to boys: young people of any gender can experience pressure to look a particular way.



Possible warning signs

Look for changes rather than assuming an interest in fitness or skincare is a problem: persistent negative comments about appearance; frequent mirror-checking or comparisons; secrecy around online activity; sudden restrictive eating, overtraining or supplement use; withdrawal from friends; or distress when appearance-related goals are not met.

How parents and carers can help

- **Start a conversation.** Ask what your child is seeing online and how it makes them feel. Listen calmly and avoid ridicule or judgement.
- **Question the content.** Discuss filters, editing, algorithms and the financial motives behind influencers promoting products or “fixes”.
- **Focus on wellbeing.** Praise qualities beyond appearance, and encourage balanced eating, movement, sleep and offline interests.
- **Know when to seek support.** If concerns about body image, eating, mood or unsafe practices persist, speak to your GP and contact the school safeguarding team.

A conversation starter: “I’ve heard about videos that rate people’s looks or promise ways to change your face. Have you come across anything like that? What do you think of it?”

The National College: nationalcollege.com | **Internet Matters:** internetmatters.org | **UK Safer Internet Centre:** saferinternet.org.uk | **Childline:** childline.org.uk (0800 1111)

If you are worried about a young person’s safety or wellbeing, please contact the school safeguarding team. In an immediate emergency, call 999.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

DEALING WITH TRAUMATIC & CHALLENGING EVENTS

Children and young people may face a wide range of traumatic or challenging events – from bereavement and illness to bullying, family breakdowns, or witnessing violence. These experiences can affect their mental health, behaviour, relationships, and academic progress. With the right support from trusted adults, children can begin to feel safe, rebuild resilience, and develop healthy coping strategies. This guide offers practical and empathetic ways to provide support and promote positive outcomes.

1 A PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENT

Children who have experienced trauma often feel unsafe or uncertain. Creating routines, setting clear expectations, and maintaining consistency can help restore a sense of security. This structure offers reassurance and helps children feel more in control of their surroundings.

2 USE LANGUAGE THAT MATCHES THEIR AGE

Speak clearly and sensitively, choosing words that are appropriate for the child's age. Avoid overwhelming them with too much information at once. Offer gentle, honest explanations and focus on reassurance, especially when talking about difficult or sensitive subjects.

3 TRAUMA AND THE BODY

Mention briefly that trauma can show up in physical ways, such as changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, or as physical aches and pains. Consider this before labelling behaviour as 'difficult' or 'lazy'. Some children may become withdrawn, while others may be more outwardly challenging. Highlight that there's no 'one way' children respond.

4 AVOID RETELLING OR RELIVING TRAUMA

Children sometimes get asked to explain or repeat their experience multiple times. Striking a balance of when to listen and when to gently redirect can help to avoid unnecessary re-traumatisation. Acknowledge, but don't probe for detail unless safeguarding procedures require it.

5 AVOID DISMISSING OR MINIMISING FEELINGS

Seemingly well-meaning comments like "It's not that bad" or "You're okay" may shut down children's emotional expression and are often not helpful. Instead, acknowledge what they're feeling, even if it seems small. Validating a child's emotions helps them feel seen and encourages open communication in future.

6 UNDERSTAND HOW THEY'RE FEELING

Many children don't have the words to express their emotions, especially during distress. Supporting them to name what they're feeling – such as angry, scared or sad – builds emotional literacy. Tools like emotion charts, drawing, or storytelling can help externalise feelings in a safe, manageable way.

7 BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN RESPONSES

Children pick up on adult emotions and reactions, often mirroring them. Staying calm, even in challenging situations, helps children feel more secure. Practising your own self-regulation is an important way to model healthy stress management and encourages children to do the same.

8 SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

While many children benefit from everyday emotional support, some will need more specialised help. If symptoms persist, worsen, or disrupt their daily life, consult with school safeguarding leads, a GP, or a mental health professional. Early intervention can prevent long-term difficulties and support healthy recovery.

9 MAINTAIN CONNECTION

Isolation can worsen the impact of trauma. Encourage involvement in group activities, praise their efforts, and ensure they feel like a valued part of the school or family community. Meaningful connection with trusted adults and peers builds resilience and a sense of belonging.

10 BE PATIENT – HEALING TAKES TIME

There's no quick fix for emotional recovery. Children may have good days and setbacks, and progress may not always be visible or linear. Your ongoing support, patience, and presence can help them move forward at their own pace, knowing they are not alone.

Meet Our Expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school by integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture, and systems. She has been a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



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/www.thenationalcollege



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CHECK IN WITH YOUR FRIENDS

If one of your friends doesn't seem OK, checking in on them can make a huge difference. One in every five children struggles with their mental health, so let's make sure we support each other through any difficult times.

**BE A GOOD
LISTENER**

**ASK HOW
YOU CAN
HELP**

**SHOW
EMPATHY**

**SEND A
NICE
MESSAGE**

BE KIND

**★ BE ★
SUPPORTIVE**

**IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A FRIEND
TELL A
TRUSTED
ADULT**

**I SAW THIS AND
THOUGHT OF YOU!**

**WANTED TO LET YOU
KNOW I'M THINKING
OF YOU!**

**I'M HERE WHEN YOU
NEED ME.**

**MISSED YOU AT
SCHOOL TODAY.
EVERYTHING OK?**

NOS
**National
Online
Safety®**
#WakeUpWednesday

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Ward Officer for Child & Young Person

**Designated Ward Officer – Child & Young person
PC Adam Brooke**

It's better to hand items over than risk your own safety.

If you are ever in immediate danger, or if you see a robbery taking place, call 999 for an emergency response.

Victim of Robbery Although following crime prevention advice can really help reduce your chances of being robbed, it may still happen. It can be a frightening experience and leave you feeling worried. Never confront a thief – it's not worth risking your own safety for possessions that can be replaced.

- Fearless is the youth service of independent charity Crimestoppers. Fearless is 100% anonymous but they are unable to take reports from victims. It is a space for Children to give information anonymously.
- If you have been a victim of robbery, it's really important that you talk to a parent, guardian, an adult you trust, the Safeguarding Team or report it to the police
- If your mobile phone is stolen you must get it blocked by calling your Network Service Provider. If you need help to do this, ask your parent or guardian.
- Robbery or attempted robbery are serious crimes and should **be reported**. It's important you seek help straight away by dialing 999 from a friend's or trusted adults phone. This gives the Police the best chance to catch the suspects, recover any stolen property and ensure your safety. If you have returned home you should still report online www.met.police.uk or call 101.
- Whether you have a phone or not, **memorise** or keep a contact phone number (parent/carer/partner) in a separate place in your bag/zipped pocket in case of emergency.
- Victim Support have trained staff to support 0809168911 or www.victimsupport.org.uk/children-and-young-people

Personal Safety

Look confident *Move with purpose and try to be aware of your surroundings and avoid distractions like phones or loud music when walking *Plan your route and think about what to take with you, especially if you're going somewhere you haven't been before *Keep to busy, well-lit streets, walkways and paths which are more likely to be covered by CCTV and avoid shortcuts through isolated areas.

Know Emergency Contacts *Learn your address and phone number by heart *Memorize or have quick access to important phone numbers, such as parents, guardians, or a trusted adult. *Ensure you know how to contact emergency services (999 for urgent help).

Hide it *Keep your mobile phone and valuables out of sight. If you're using your phone it's more likely to be snatched from your hand as you're not paying attention to your surroundings, so look around you *Never leave a mobile, any device, wallet or purse on the table of an outdoor café or restaurant. Same goes for any jewellery you might be wearing – keep it covered when walking down the street *Share your live location with a family member and/or trusted friend or use apps that have safety check-ins such as 'Findmyfriend'

Travel in groups *Walking or commuting with friends can be safer than traveling alone *If traveling by bus or train, try to sit near other passengers or near the driver

Avoid Talking to Strangers *Do not engage in conversations with strangers or accept rides or gifts from people you don't know *Always tell an adult /parent if someone you don't know approaches or tries to interact with you *If you think someone is following you, cross the road or go to a place with a lot of people around, like a bus stop or shop

Use Trusted Transport *If you take public transport, know your bus or train routes and where to get on and off *If someone is bothering you on public transport, move to another seat and alert the driver or conductor if necessary

Practice Internet Safety *Be cautious about what you share online and who you connect with on social media *Avoid sharing your location or personal details publicly *Talk with parents, teachers, or school staff about any safety concerns you have or if you need advice

Recognize Safe Places *Identify safe places along your route to school where you can seek help, such as shops, cafes, or public libraries.* Some areas in London have designated "safe spaces" where trained staff can offer assistance

Finally – and this is so important to remember – if you're threatened with violence, don't risk your personal safety. Property can be replaced, you can't.

"MY DAD HAS *bipolar disorder.*"
 "My brother has *AUTISM.*"
 "My mom has *CANCER.*"
 "I *translate* for my parents."
 "My sister has *special needs.*"
 "My grandfather has *Alzheimers.*"
 "My mother has an *addiction.*"
 "MY FATHER HAS *Multiple Sclerosis.*"

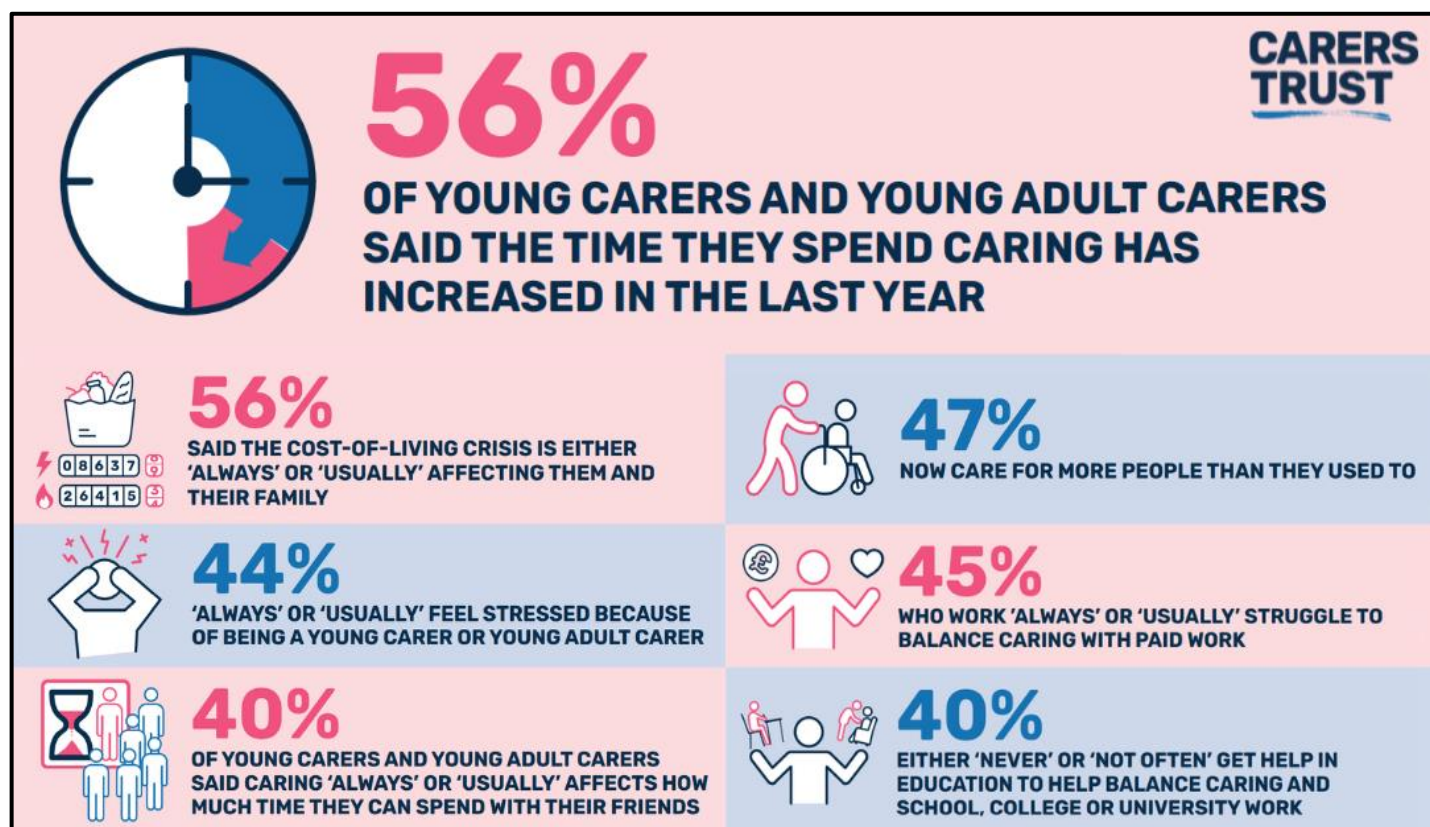


We recognise young carers as children and young people under the age of 18, who provide unpaid care for mums, dads, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and in some cases other family members/ friends because of a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug and/or alcohol addiction. They often take on practical and /or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

We are aware that the demands of this caring role can sometimes affect a student's emotional, physical and social wellbeing and their prospects in education and life.

All young carers are different their caring roles are different too. If you think you are a young carer or know someone who is a young carer, please let us know.

We would like to thank the Lambeth Young Carer project for the invaluable support they have given and continue to give our Young Carers and their families. [Carers Hub Lambeth](#) | [Carers Hub](#) | [Greater London](#)



Lambeth: 020 7501 8970
connect@carershub.org.uk

Merton: 0300 3031 555
hello@carersfirst.org.uk

Bromley: 0808 278 7898
youngcarers@bromleywell.org.uk

Croydon: 07522 046 395
youngcarers@talkofftherecord.org

Lewisham: 020 3886 2295
youngcarers@lewisham.gov.uk

Wandsworth: 07394 573 379
eleanor@wandsworthcarers.org.uk

Southwark: 0300 111 1110
youngcarers@imago.community

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **SCHOOL AVOIDANCE**

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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Safeguarding → Attendance

Attendance is a safeguarding issue. The Government requires children to attend school for 190 days a year
<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/02/29/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/> .

School attendance

Your child should attend school every day unless there is an unavoidable cause, like illness. Good school attendance gives your child the opportunity to success and helps develop skills for life. Missing school damage's a pupil's learning and their grades, disrupts routines and make's pupils vulnerable to crime.

If your child is off school Phone the Attendance Office

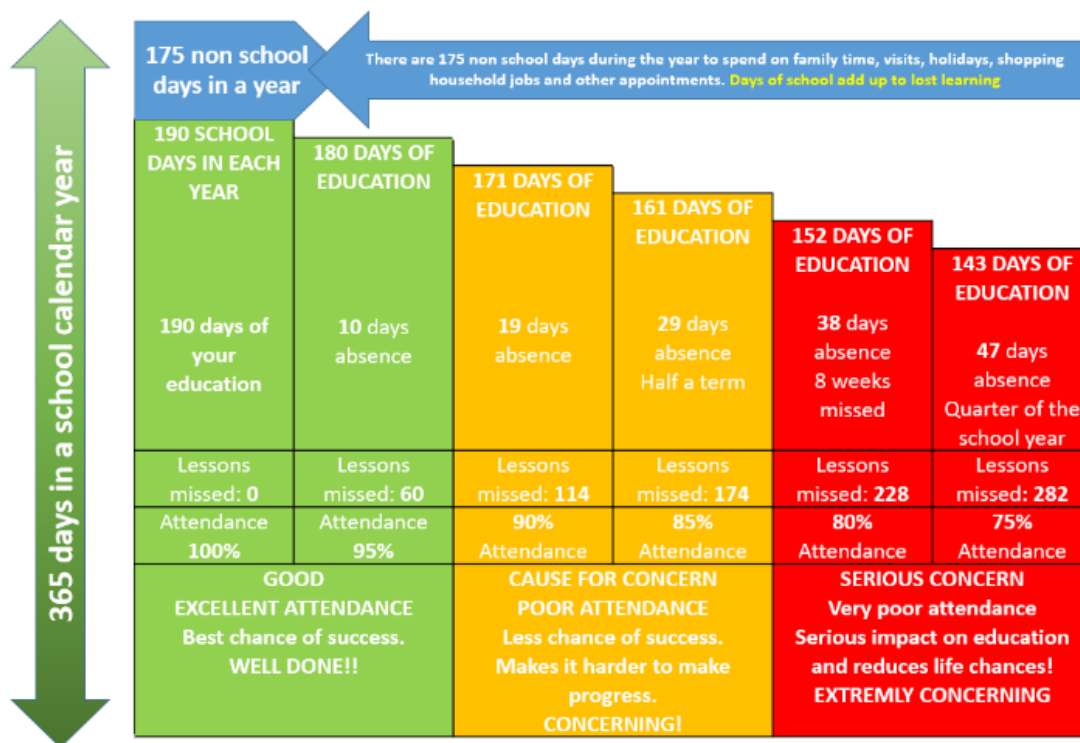
as soon as possible on the morning of absence to give a reason. Make routine dentist and doctor appointments after school or during holidays. If you have to make an appointment during school time, help your child to be at school for most of the day and let the school know about the appointment. You will be asked for a medical certificate or appointment card. Holidays in term time are only authorised in exceptional circumstances.

How can you be sure parent fines are fair? Fines are a last resort, and parents will be offered support to help improve their child's attendance first. The vast majority of fines for unauthorised absence (89%) are issued for term time holidays. If your child is facing barriers to school attendance due to special education needs or disabilities (SEND), schools, local authorities and wider services are required to work together to provide the right support in the first place.

When Penalty Notices are used When the school agrees for your child to miss school in advance, or accepts your explanation, absence is 'authorised'. All other absence is 'unauthorised'. Penalty notices may be used where absence is unauthorised, for example: * A parent has taken their child on holiday during term time without authorisation, especially when this means pupils miss exams or GCSE's. * Pupils are regularly late for school after the register has closed. * A pupil has eight or more unauthorised absences within the previous 10 week period. * Enquires made at school after a truancy sweep show the pupil's absence at that time as unauthorised. * Non-medical or medical meetings which are not related to your child.

If attendance does not improve or there has been no engagement with any support plan, we will issue you a notice to improve your child's attendance. You will be given a fixed period to improve your child's absence. If attendance does not improve and there is an overall absence of 10 sessions (5 school days) over 10 weeks, a fine can be issued.

How much could I be fined if my child misses school? In the majority of cases, schools and local authorities will try and provide support to help you improve your child's attendance first, if this isn't effective or the absence is for unauthorised term time holiday, parents may face paying a fine. Under the new national framework, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons. From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days**, or **£160 if paid within 28 days**. If you have already received Fixed Penalty Notice, a second FPN will result in an automatic £160 fine. If you received 2 fines within a 3-year rolling period, your child's school will have to consider a referral to the local authority for legal escalation, which could be a referral to the Magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to a fine of up to £2500 and a possible 3-months custodial sentence. Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.





Further guidance and support

Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility

How to start a conversation about mental health – Mentally Healthy Schools 	Guide for parents of children who have got in trouble online (inappropriate or illegal behaviour)	Text SHOUT to 85258 	 https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless/more-info/youth-support-services Youth Support	 https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/	Family Lives – Support with all aspects of family life  <i>We listen, support and never judge</i>
YOUNGmINDS fighting for young people's mental health https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/self-harm/	YOUNGmINDS fighting for young people's mental health Supporting young people with mental health and wellbeing – Parents Survival Guide https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/self-harm/	YOUNGmINDS fighting for young people's mental health YoungMinds – ADHD and Mental Health https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/adhd-and-mental-health/	YOUNGmINDS fighting for young people's mental health Young Minds autism and mental health: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/autism-and-mental-health/	YOUNGmINDS fighting for young people's mental health Young Minds – how to look after your mental health during revision and exams: https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/how-to-look-after-your-mental-health-during-revision-and-exams/	https://www.operationencompass.org/  In every force. In every school. For every child.
 NSPCC HELPLINE 0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk	NSPCC – Advice for talking about difficult topics https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children	NSPCC - Keeping children safe on-line https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/child-safe-settings-tiktok/	NSPCC – Let children know you are listening 	www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/families-children-with-send/supporting-children-with-send-talking-online/	 For women and children. Against domestic violence.
South East London  https://selmind.org.uk/	 https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/feelings-and-experience/exam-stress/#WhatsExamStress	 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk	childline 0800 1111 Childline – coping with anxiety and stress https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/coping-with-stress/	childline 0800 1111 Online bullying https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-social-media	https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/deal/deal-resources/coping-strategies/exam-stress-coping-strategies/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAlaQobChMIy4eyh9OAhQMVIUIQBh19CgFYEAAYASAEglqG D BwE
Parent Zone Local - advice, resources and information: www.pzlocal.org.uk	Recording of previous live streams for parents: https://www.youtube.com/user/theparentszone/videos?view=2	Parent guides - games, apps, platforms and emerging technologies: https://parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides	Setting up games consoles: https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-family-basics-games-consoles	Setting up phones and tablets https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-family-basics-smartphones-tablets	Setting up smartwatches and fitness trackers: https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-family-basics-smart-watches-fitness-trackers
https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/what-is-county-lines?gad_source=1&gclid=EAlaQobChMIz5335vedgwMVcpRQBh1c4gSpEAYASAAEgltdFdBwE	Free school meals https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-mayor-does/priorities-london/free-school-meals/guidance-and-support-families?ac=180594=200498	Attendance https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-and-exclusions/school-attendance	 Kooth is a free online service offering emotional and mental health support for children and young people www.kooth.com	 https://www.cifas.org.uk/youngpeople	Setting up smart speakers and connected toys: https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-family-basics-smart-speakers-toys
Young Carer Referrals by Borough Bromley https://www.bromley.gov.uk/carers/young-carers Croydon https://www.talkofftherecord.org/croydon/young-carers-service/ Lambeth https://www.carershub.org.uk/young-carers Merton https://www.carersfirst.org.uk/young-carers/ Wandsworth https://carerswandsworth.org.uk/youngcarers/ Southwark https://www.carersfirst.org.uk/young-carers/			 https://mhfaengland.org/g/mhfa-centre/blog/What-does-a-good-nights-rest-mean-to-you/	 https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/schools/#resources	 https://www.coram.org.uk/ work with families using creative techniques to explore ways of strengthening family relationships creativetherapyadmin@coram.org.uk

Local Social Service Child Protection Referrals

Bromley	https://www.bromley.gov.uk/children-families
Croydon	https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families
Lambeth	https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/children-young-people-families
Lewisham	https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/children-and-families
Merton	https://www.merton.gov.uk/social-care
Southwark	https://www.southwark.gov.uk/allservices
Wandsworth	https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/community-safety/

<https://www.btg.ac/Information/Policies/> The school operates several policies which acts on statutory guidance and uses procedures that have been agreed by the local authority and are fully supported by the governing body and the staff

<https://www.btg.ac/Information/UK-GDPR/> UK GDPR legislation focuses on the way we gather, handle, store and dispose of data on our pupils, parents, staff and alumni. We have robust and secure systems for both our electronic and paper records

Safeguarding and Well-Being Bulletin can be found on the school website: www.btg.ac
The school website contains lots of useful information

