



# Safeguarding and Wellbeing Bulletin September 2022

We are continually working to support students in feeling well and safe at school, to enable them to “live life to the full”. Within school, Mrs Gardner, Mrs Denham and Miss Lambert make up the safeguarding team and are available, alongside the Head of Houses, Mr Cartmail and Student Support, to offer support and guidance when needed. We also continue to grow our relationship with the NHS Wellbeing in Mind Team, and three members of their team will be in weekly to support our students.

## Online Safety

With children and adults spending extended periods of time online, online safety is always a hot topic.

Here are the **National Online Safety's** Top Tips:

- Monitor viewing habits
- Check online content
- Check age-ratings of apps to ensure that children have appropriate apps downloaded
- Change privacy settings, making accounts private and set content filters
- Let children know you're there, ensuring that there is support and advice should they need it
- Learn how to report and block on social media apps



## Nude Images

Students in all year groups are taught about online safety and consent, at an age-appropriate level within PSHE. The sending of indecent images is covered within this content.

If a student does share these images we need to support them and ensure they are safe. If your child discloses they have shared such images:

- Stay calm and refrain from getting angry with your child
- Help them to delete the images on their social media accounts (including from cloud photo backups) if they have uploaded the images
- Help the child use the Report Remove: Remove a nude image shared online | Childline. This tool allows under 18s to report nude images or videos of themselves and the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) will work to have these images or videos removed.
- Contact us at school if you have concerns about any bullying behaviour.
- Do not intentionally view these images.



## Key Safeguarding Contacts:

Mrs Denham (Designated Safeguarding Lead): [s.denham@bhs.hlt.academy](mailto:s.denham@bhs.hlt.academy)

Miss Lambert: (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead): [s.lambert@bhs.hlt.academy](mailto:s.lambert@bhs.hlt.academy)

Further information can be found on the school website.



## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# REDDIT

R/FUNNY

R/TRENDING

AGE RATING

13+

R/MEME

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Reddit describes itself as a social news website where users connect and share stories, opinions and support; debate issues; ask questions; and chat to people with similar interests. Discussion topics are organised into communities (known as subreddits) that are created, run and populated by users, who remain anonymous throughout. Free speech is encouraged, and users – or 'redditors' – can vote posts 'up' or 'down' so they get more (or less) attention. Reddit is free to join, although signing up to Reddit Premium unlocks an advert-free version of the platform.

### MINIMAL MODERATION

As sharing opinions on Reddit is easy (and anonymous), offensive or age-inappropriate content is frequently posted. Moderation by admins and bots does occur, but can't cover every community – so Reddit relies on users voluntarily moderating these spaces. Subreddits marked NSFW ('not safe for work') can contain anything from profanity to pornography, so are not suitable for under 18s.

### HARASSMENT AND TROLLING

If someone on Reddit doesn't agree with your child's opinion, they may feel compelled to say so – in no uncertain terms. This could lead to a public bombardment of hurtful messages. Likewise, Reddit users are highly likely to encounter trolling (where someone posts a deliberately inflammatory comment to provoke a reaction) on the platform, which can be distressing.

### FAKE NEWS

Absolutely anyone can post a story on Reddit, so sub-reddits are occasionally prone to bias, misinformation and opinions being repeated as if they are facts. Fake news articles often grab users' attention with catchy or controversial headlines, and Reddit is no exception. It's important that young people are able to identify fake news – and disregard it rather than sharing it.

### GIFTING AND SPENDING

Users can gift awards to the authors of posts that they like (thereby encouraging their favourite redditors to keep contributing) by spending Reddit Coins. This virtual currency can be bought on demand (with real money) or received as part of the paid-for premium package. Users sending a gift can also leave an anonymous private message, a feature which has been abused by groomers.

### 'SUPPORTIVE' STRANGERS

By definition, Reddit users interact with strangers in public through their community – but also have the option to do so privately. Groomers could repeatedly up-vote a child's comments or respond encouragingly to their posts to win their trust. Once they've built a rapport, the predator then begins messaging the child in private to obtain personal details or try to lure them into meeting in person.

### NEVER-ENDING NOTIFICATIONS

Reddit's default is for all notifications to be on. There are a total of 26 types of notification on the platform, ranging from chat messages and comments to updates and mentions of usernames. This would lead to a child's device being pinged almost constantly with alerts, frequently causing them to be distracted by incoming notifications rather than being present in the moment.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### SORT THE SETTINGS

Reddit's user settings can help ensure that minors don't view adult material. Under the 'Feed Settings' tab, switch the Adult Content toggle to 'off', and enable Safe Browsing Mode (this blurs out any explicit images). Also in settings, you can turn off all unnecessary notifications, to prevent your child being distracted by every post or comment on Reddit, allowing them some tech-free time.

### ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

It can often be difficult to tell if something online is real or fake – particularly for young people. It's important to encourage your child to double-check with reputable sources if what they've read is genuine. Remind them to consider what motives might be in the message – and to watch out for scams. Chatting about this regularly helps to develop critical thinking skills and good online habits.

### RISE ABOVE IT

If a person says something critical or offensive to your child on Reddit, it's natural that they'll want to respond. Explain to them, however, that is exactly the reaction that trolls look for. Don't give them the satisfaction; instead, report the comment to Reddit Support for investigation. Blocking a user stops them from messaging or following your child on the platform.

### AVOID PRIVATE MESSAGING

Through their Reddit profile, young people can control who's able to message them privately – with options including 'no-one' and 'accounts older than 30 days'. These controls help ensure potential groomers can't talk to your child in private, and that Reddit's admins and other users will be able to moderate and report anything they spot which causes them concern.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at eCyberaware. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



<https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers/parents-carers-2022-09> | <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers/parents-carers-2022-09>



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