



Mawsley CP School Newsletter– Safeguarding at the Heart of Our Community

Welcome to the Spring 2 safeguarding newsletter, helping everyone in our school community to feel safe, supported and happy.

Northamptonshire Schools Safeguarding Conference 2023
Corby, Northamptonshire

6th March 2023

rising to the challenge

Brooke Weston Trust | Northamptonshire Teaching School Hub | Impero | Great Oakley Ltd/ De Capell Brooke family

60,000+

reports show imagery of **7-10-year-old children** who've been coerced into sexual acts by an online predator. Each report could contain one, to thousands of images.

Northamptonshire Schools' Safeguarding Conference 2023

Safeguarding leaders from schools across the county attended the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Conference 2023 this week, where keynote speakers were able to deliver information relating to many safeguarding themes relating to children in our county's schools.

One of the main reoccurring themes that runs throughout many areas of safeguarding concerns is the impact of online influences on our children's safety and wellbeing. This is particularly **difficult for parents** who may be digitally naive to a range of online influences, and raising a generation of children who are more digitally active than ever before. This makes them incredibly vulnerable to potentially damaging online content than ever before.

Sexual Abuse Imagery: Parents, Be Informed

The **Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)** was established to investigate online child sexual abuse and works to actively stop the illegal distribution of sexual images and videos that feature children.

The IWF has found a sharp, threefold increase in the number of sexual images and videos featuring children aged 7 – 10 years and now consider this age group to be the fastest growing group relating to the generation and distribution of sexual images / videos.

97% of these images and videos features girls, and there is often no physical presence of the perpetrators in the room of the children; the children are usually alone in their bedrooms or with a sibling and connect with unsafe adults online, often through live feeds.

Exploiting Young People into Abusive Situations

Is there a stranger in your child's bedroom?

87% of all sexual material involving children is self generated – often in the child's bedroom.

The **Internet Watch Foundation** lists the main ways that perpetrators target children to perform sexual acts that generate images and videos by:

- Relentlessly repeating requests for them to do inappropriate acts, so that it wears the children down into performing
- Coercing children to do things by telling them they are pretty or beautiful, reassuring the child that the image is just between them, or promising not to share the images etc
- Encouraging children to play games e.g. bouncing on the bed or asking them to do handstands, but asking them to remove their underwear first
- Showing children recordings of other children doing similar acts in order to 'normalise' their requests

This invasion has been compared to opening your front door to sexual abusers and is a shocking and deeply disturbing reality of the dangers that our children face by online perpetrators.



What Can Parents Do?

Abusers know that children (especially those in the 7 – 10 yrs age group) are easily influenced by anything that makes them feel popular, games, their naivety or SEN vulnerabilities.

Many children state that they are convinced that they would be able to spot an adult pretending to be somebody else – despite online safety messages delivered in schools.

Empowering parents to empower their children is important.

The IWF recommends:

- Having open, age-appropriate discussions with your children regularly about staying safe online
- Sharing the content on your children's phone regularly
- Having a 'Digital devices in shared areas' rule

They have designed a web page especially for parents, to help facilitate discussions regarding this topic, using TALK guidance at:

<https://talk.iwf.org.uk/>

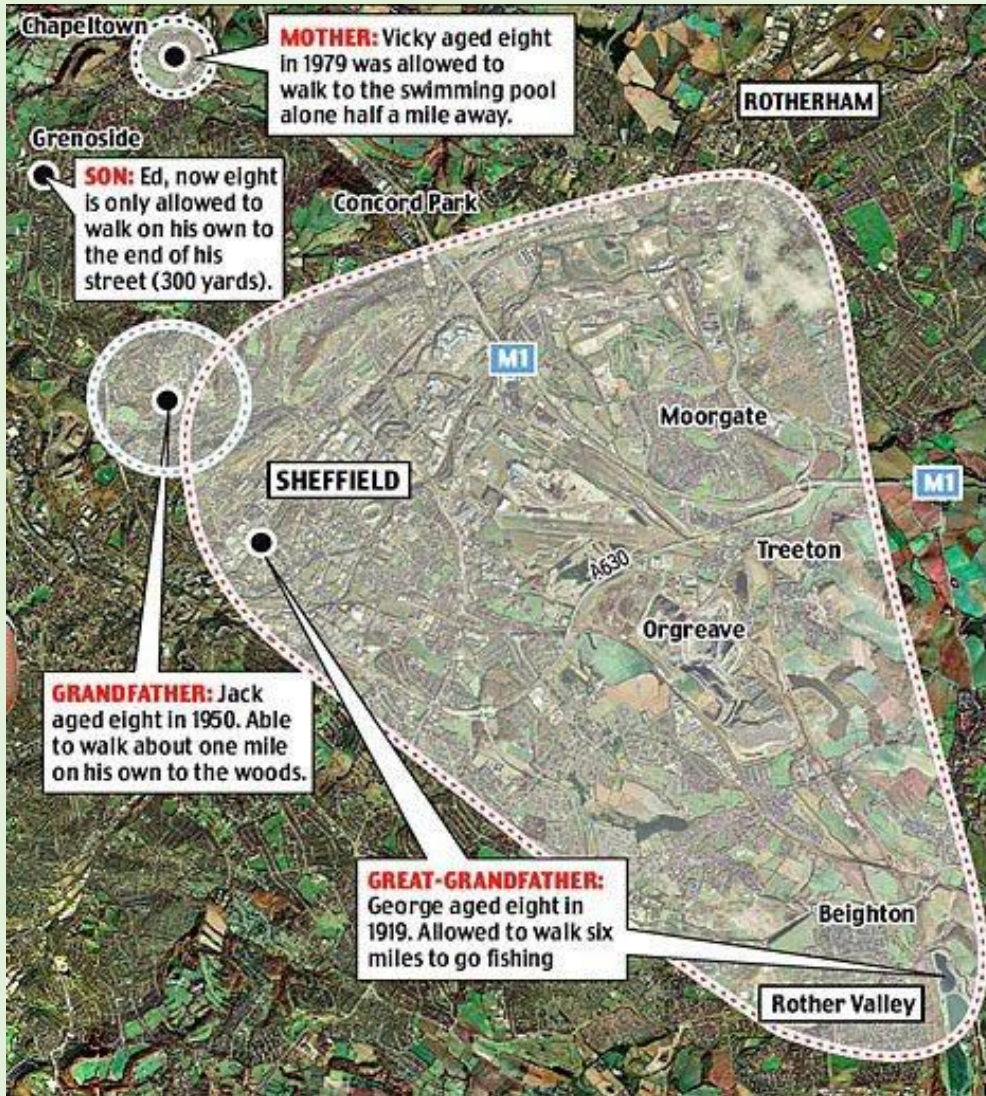
Out of Hours Safeguarding

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child outside of school hours, please contact the MASH team on 0300 126 1000 (option 1) or e-mail them at MASH@nctrust.co.uk

If you think a child is in immediate danger or missing, please contact the police and/or an ambulance directly by phoning 999

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, who is not in immediate danger of harm, please speak to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads.

How Far Away Is Safe Enough For Playing Out?



Tips for Safe Outdoor Play

Playing outdoors, and roaming and exploring, allows children to develop self-confidence, independence and self-esteem. They also become aware of limits, boundaries and challenge in their play. When children are used to playing outdoors, they are more likely to:

- try new activities
- engage with others
- solve problems
- explore the natural environment
- make friends
- show resilience



However, many parents feel concerned about many potential dangers of playing out and letting their children wander beyond what feels like a comfortable distance away from home. This NSPCC has a list of topics, appropriate for different age groups, to help parents and carers talk to their children about playing safely and growing independence when outside. You may find this helpful, now that the days are getting warmer and brighter, and children begin to look beyond their screens for things to do!

- Provide safe places to play & explore, that have agreed boundaries to roam
- Send children on simple age-appropriate errands to encourage independence
- Stranger danger advice for if someone tries to talk to them or take them somewhere
- Strategies for if someone is unkind / tries to bully them
- Strategies for if someone offers them alcohol or drugs
- Strategies for if someone asks them to do something they're not comfortable with
- Knowing what to do if their phone battery dies (if they have one)
- Having a plan for if they get hurt