

Rothbury First School Safeguarding Newsletter February 2023



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 Leads straight away.

The following members of staff are Designated Safeguarding Leads at Rothbury First School
Mrs C Auld
Mrs H Duffield

Our safeguarding governor is Diane Pringle

They can be contacted on 01669 620283 or via email

For further information on safeguarding at our school, please look on the safeguarding page on the school website.

[RFS Safeguarding](#)

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

While we all experience things differently, it helps to have a general understanding of these terms;

Mental Health is about how we think, feel and behave. Our mental health is on a spectrum and can range from good to poor. We can also experience mental health problems.

Mental Wellbeing is about how we're feeling right now, and how well we can cope with daily life. Our wellbeing can change from moment to moment, day to day, or month to month.

Our mental health and wellbeing can change all the time. Because of this, it can help to check in regularly and make time for young people to talk about how they're feeling. You don't have to wait until they're struggling.

Signs that a young person may be experiencing poor mental health

It can be hard to know if a young person is struggling with their mental health or wellbeing. We all act in different ways when we're going through a tough time. You might notice some of the following signs, you might see something different, or you might not notice anything at all. These signs could also be linked to a young person's physical health, or something else entirely.

Some of the ways they might act differently include:

- Seeming distant, or not themselves
- Not meeting up with friends
- Spending more time alone than usual
- Not chatting, smiling or laughing as much
- Seeming less confident
- Talking about feelings that worry you
- Losing interest in or not doing activities they normally love
- Crying, shouting or feeling angry
- Being restless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs when they didn't before
- Using social media in a different way, or more or less than before

Some of the physical changes you might notice include:

- Not dressing with as much care as they used to
- Eating too much or too little
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Looking tired
- Not washing or taking care of themselves like they used to
- Hurting themselves on purpose
- Repetitive behaviour, like tapping or checking things a lot



Information taken
from **mind.org.uk**

How to start a conversation about their mental health

It's okay to feel uncertain about talking about mental health – you're not alone. If you're worried about speaking to a young person about their mental health and wellbeing, it can help to feel prepared. You don't need to have a long conversation every time, you might just want to check in to see how they're feeling.

- Try to find a time and place that suits you both. The time may never feel perfect, but it can help if you both feel calm and comfortable. This could mean talking in a quiet place, or it could mean doing an activity together.
- It can help to practise what you want to say. You could write things down too, or talk to someone on a helpline, like the YoungMinds Parents and Carers Helpline.
- There's no perfect way to begin a conversation. However you choose to do it, try your best to start in a calm and open-minded way. You might not understand exactly what they're going through, and that's okay.
- Try not to feel disheartened at your first attempt. They might not respond well the first time, or might not want to engage at all. You can try again at a different time when they're ready.
- Give them the space they need. Pressuring them to talk can push them away. Let them know you're there for them and let them come to you. It's important to respect their boundaries – there are some things they might not want to share or talk about with you.

Here are some useful contact details

Action for Children

parents.actionforchildren.org.uk

Emotional and practical care for children, young people and families in England. Includes a parenting hub, information for foster and adoptive parents, and local services for families.

Barnardos

barnardos.org.uk

Practical information and emotional support for children, young people and families. Includes specific information on mental health problems.

MindEd for Families

mindedforfamilies.org.uk/young-people

Information and advice on supporting young people's mental health, created by experts and parents. Covers topics like parenting and mental health services.



ONLINE SAFETY

The impact of exposing children to harmful content and why age restrictions matter.

Children often view age restrictions as another restrictive tool put in place to ruin their fun, and research shows that some parents may agree.

However, the dangers of allowing sensitive and impressionable viewers to be exposed to harmful content can have a long-lasting negative impact.

Age restrictions are put in place to protect children from viewing potentially harmful content in films, games or televised shows.

The age restrictions also help parents and carers decide what is appropriate for their children to watch based on which developmental stage they are at.

Given that children are impressionable and there is plenty of harmful content readily available on the internet and on television, even in the form of animation and cartoons, it is imperative for parents to know the dangers of exposing children to harmful content.

'Harmful content' can be information, images or videos that can be distressing, misleading, promote dangerous behaviours or are directed at adults. This includes: Violence or graphic imagery, Nudity Drugs or alcohol abuse, Prejudice or hate, Adult sexual content, Strong or offensive language.

If children are exposed to this content and have not yet matured to a point where they are able to understand and identify the difference between reality and make-believe, watching harmful content could have a detrimental effect on their psychological development.

For example, when children are shown content in which the heroic character is admired for committing violent acts against the villains or 'bad guys', this may create a 'warped' perception of violence - a perception that violence is applauded.

According to Kids Health, exposure to harmful content could also lead to the following behavioural changes in children:

- Behavioural issues, such as fighting
- Risky behaviour, such as experimental drinking or smoking.
- Sleeping issues, such as nightmares or insomnia
- Heightened anxiety

For this reason, it is vital that parents pay attention to age restrictions and parental guidance instructions where applicable.



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What parents need to know about AGE RATINGS



If you have children, it is understandable to have concerns about the films and TV shows they watch, as well as the games they play. In this guide, we take a look at the two official ways you can assess if a particular title is suitable for your child. Both the BBFC and PEGI have search facilities on their websites that can be used to look up individual titles so you can check their ratings.



RATINGS FOR FILMS, TV & MUSIC VIDEOS

Since 1912, the BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) has informed UK residents of the age suitability of films, TV and music videos - providing parents with the information needed to assess whether or not it is appropriate for their child's age. This applies to cinema releases, DVDs and streaming video services such as Netflix.

WHAT ARE THE BBFC RATINGS?

BBFC ratings are broken down into seven age categories:



WHAT ELSE CAN BBFC REVEAL?

Accompanied with the age suitability rating, BBFC also provide an additional warning regarding the content and what to expect, such as swearing, sexual content, violence and anything you may consider to be inappropriate for your child. In addition to this, the content is also rated in three levels: frequent, mild or strong.

LIMITATIONS OF BBFC RATINGS

It's important to note that there is no obligation on streaming video services to use or display BBFC ratings. Due to this, we advise that you check the rating online before your child streams the content. It may also be a good idea to watch the content first yourself or discuss it with other parents to help you decide whether or not it is suitable for your child.

Source: www.bbfc.co.uk

RATINGS FOR GAMES

PEGI (Pan European Game Information) is a content rating system that ensures all video games are labelled with a minimum age recommendation. These age recommendations are based on the types of content featured within a game. With each game, PEGI also provide a content descriptor that indicates the potential issues and concerns, including sex, violence, bad language and drugs.

WHAT ARE THE PEGI RATINGS?

PEGI ratings are split into age restriction and content descriptors. Additional 'content descriptors' help parents and children to understand the type of content featured within a particular game, including sex, fear, bad language, discrimination, gambling, drugs, violence, and in-game purchases. In combination, the two different ratings can provide a good level of information to help make informed decisions regarding the suitability for your child.

PEGI age ratings are broken down into five categories:



PEGI content descriptors are broken down into eight categories:



LIMITATIONS OF PEGI RATINGS

It's possible for young people to buy games online without a required proof of age, opening them up to age-inappropriate content without you knowing. We advise that you regularly monitor your child's gaming activities and maintain a honest and healthy dialogue with them about the online world.

PARENTAL CONTROLS

It is a good idea to put in place parental controls for all online accounts which your child may use to purchase or download online games e.g. The App Store, Google Play Store, PlayStation Store and Microsoft Xbox Store etc.

Source: www.pegi.info