

Rothbury First School Safeguarding Newsletter March 2024



Information taken from

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](#)

NSPCC

POSITIVE PARENTING

Positive parenting uses techniques that work well for every child. These techniques will help you build and strengthen your relationship with your child, leading to them being happier, along with less stress for you. All parents can come under pressure or stress from time to time, and it can even lead to them wanting to smack their children – although many parents regret it later. But evidence shows that it is not an effective way to discipline your children.

Understanding your child's needs

Children's needs and behaviours change as they get older, and understanding these needs will help you better understand your child. A lot has been written about the needs of children and advice for parents, and we cover some of the key areas here. If you'd like more detailed advice you can talk to the NSPCC helpline.

1. Babies

Babies behave as they do to get their needs met. For example, when they cry they're trying to tell you that they need something – maybe they're hungry, need their nappy changed or feel tired.

Older babies may show what appears like a 'stubborn streak' – spitting out food or wriggling away from a nappy change. All they are doing is trying to express their likes and dislikes in the only way they can.

When you're stressed you may feel your baby is being 'deliberately naughty' or trying to provoke you. This is not possible. Remember you should never shout at, scream at, hit, shake or smack a baby.

For more resources, see our Look, Say, Sing, Play information:
[nspcc.org.uk/looksaysingplay](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/looksaysingplay)

2. Toddlers

All toddlers test limits and have tantrums. Research shows that a child's brain is still developing during this period, so there are limits to how much they're able to control their emotions. Remember that behaviour in toddlers which is often seen as naughty is actually quite normal and part of growing up.

3. School age

School-age children are constantly learning and exploring their world. They may have lots of questions as they start to form their own views on issues. As they move towards being more independent they may seem to push boundaries and become more challenging. This is a necessary part of growing up.

4. Teenagers

As children continue to develop their own identities in their teenage years, they might become more challenging – sometimes seeming 'moody' or withdrawn, or not as talkative and open as their parents would like. They might be more inclined to disagree with their parents, or choose different views. Friends (and celebrities) will become a bigger influence and your child may not always do what you would like.



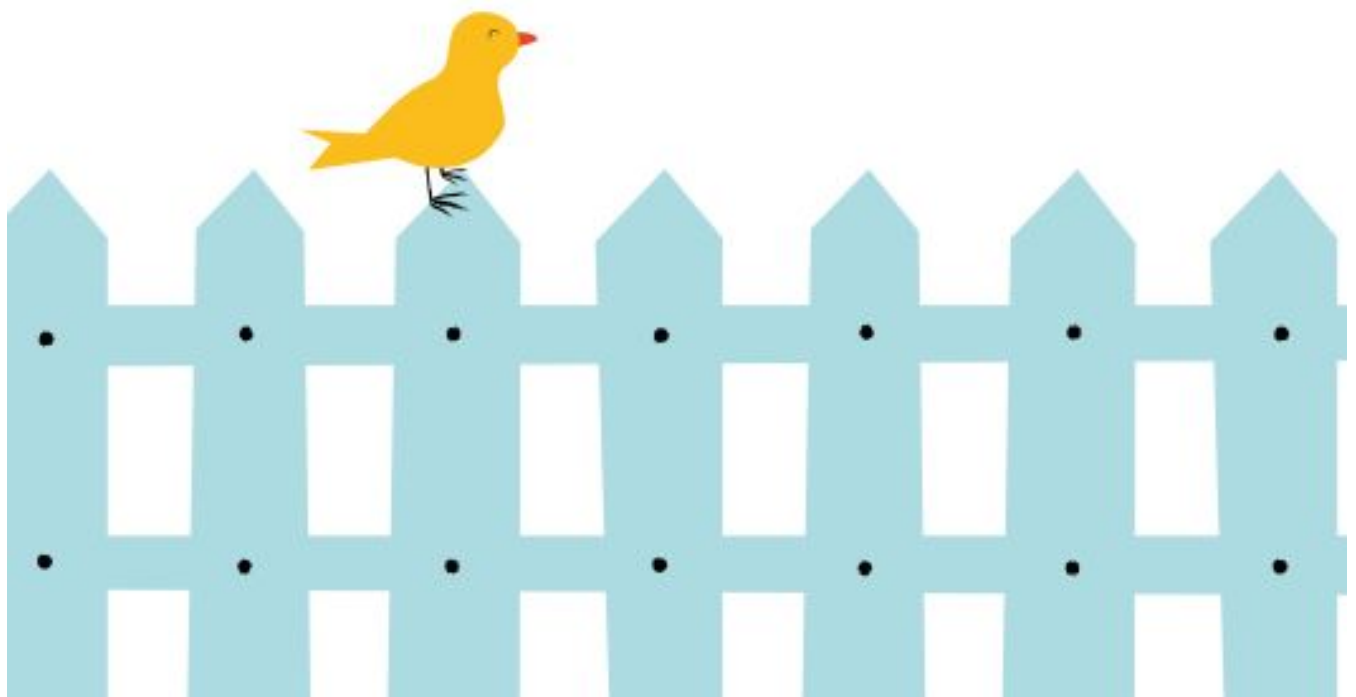
As children get older, they can experience difficult emotions. Some children find it hard to talk to their parents about feelings and may want to speak to Childline

0800 1111, [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

How can I set boundaries?

All children need love, guidance and to have rules and boundaries. Rules and boundaries help families to understand how to behave towards each other, and what's OK and not OK. But the best way to go about this will vary based on your child's age and stage of development. All children are different and develop and reach milestones at different rates.

You can find more UK-wide information at [nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development)



Top tips...

for all ages

- Keep guidance simple and consistent.
- If your child is behaving in a way you don't want them to, clearly explain what you want them to do instead.
- Be available and make time for your child, so they will come to you when they feel something is wrong or they are upset.
- Keep talking and listening to your child even if at times it feels like a challenge. Start listening from a very early age and set a pattern for life.
- Review family rules as your child gets older and recognise the different needs of children living at home. For example, you shouldn't expect the same from your 12-year-old as you would from your four-year-old.
- Get support from friends and try any good ideas they have found helpful.
- If you are struggling and feel things are getting out of hand, get advice from your GP, a health visitor, or your child's teacher.

for babies – toddlers

- Introduce boundaries from an early age.
- Reflect to your child that you know how they may be feeling – for example, saying "I know you're frustrated," if your child is struggling to do something.
- Share your own feelings if you find it helps to relieve your stress – for example, "I know you're tired but I'm tired too."
- Try to avoid using orders and ultimatums.

for school age – teenagers

- Be willing and give your child opportunities to show they can be trusted.
- Avoid criticism wherever possible. If your child has done something wrong, explain that it is the action and not them that you're unhappy with.
- Try to avoid getting trapped in petty arguments. There are rarely any winners!
- Consider ways to negotiate or offer choices as your child gets older.

Keeping your cool

It's important to find ways to relieve your stress and manage if you're feeling upset or angry. Lots of things, not only children's behaviour, can make us feel stressed – from family relationships to managing a work-life balance, health, housing, poverty, unemployment and much more. You want to be the best parent you can, but being stressed is stressful!

When stress takes over, it can make you lose your temper and say or do things you later regret. You might find yourself saying something hurtful or smacking your child. Living in a stressful home can also impact on your child's feelings and healthy development. But you can avoid this by managing stress and anger.

- **Accept support**

This may be from your family, a friend or by using online forums. Knowing that there are other parents in the same situation can be a great encouragement.

- **Make time for yourself**

This may involve doing things like exercising or listening to music. It can be as simple as a long soak in the bath, watching a film or going for a walk. If you live with a partner, agree a way to make sure you both get time off.

- **Get help**

This is a positive step to take and not a sign of weakness. If you're feeling stressed and anxious all the time, seek some outside advice. A range of difficulties may get in the way of being a parent and it's important to get help. Talk to your GP or health visitor, or call the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

- **Be as prepared as possible**

Parenting can of course be stressful at certain times, so consider ways of dealing with this in advance. For example, if your child gets bored and irritable on long journeys, or waiting for things like doctor's appointments, take a couple of books or activities to keep them busy.

- **Don't overlook success**

If you have coped well with something difficult, be proud of what you've achieved. Celebrate your children's successes too.

Look after yourself

Being a parent or carer is so important. While it's common to feel less needed as children get older, or to feel more like a taxi driver or cleaner, you are the person your child will look to for help. Finding time for yourself is something you shouldn't overlook or feel guilty about. It may take planning but having a break can help you to be the best parent you can be.

Building positive relationships

If parent-child relationships become damaged, it can affect the way a child feels or behaves. Finding ways to show unconditional love and affection to your child is important. But this can be easier said than done, especially when you're tired or juggling different needs.

Spend time with your child and learn together. This can help increase your child's confidence, strengthen your bond and also help you to better understand their needs.

Top five tips:


- Show your child you're interested in what they like. Think of enjoyable activities you can do together.
- Think of times when you have seen a positive change in your child's behaviour and anything you could learn from that experience.
- Ask your child for their views and be willing to listen. This can help you to see things from their perspective.
- Don't give up or be too hard on yourself if things don't immediately change. Focus on small steps and achievable goals.
- Be prepared to compromise and admit you've been wrong, and sometimes make mistakes yourself.



Who can I talk to?

All parents can feel stressed or unsure from time to time, or just need someone to talk to. But don't worry, there are lots of places where you can get different kinds of help. We've put together a list of some of the different places you might find helpful, and you could also talk to your **GP, health visitor** or your child's **school nurse**.

Parenting advice



Family Lives provides help and support on all aspects of parenting and family life, and runs Parentline.

0808 800 2222

familylives.org.uk

Parentline Scotland (Children 1st)

0800 028 2233

children1st.org.uk

Parentline NI

(Northern Ireland)

0808 8020 400

ci-ni.org.uk/parentline-ni

Family information services in

Wales provide information, support and guidance on all aspects of children and young people's services. Search:

gov.wales/children-families

Parenting. Give it time is a website developed by the Welsh government offering practical parenting information, tips and activities.

giveittime.gov.wales

Cry-sis provide help for parents of excessively crying, sleepless or demanding babies. Lines are open seven days a week, 9am-10pm.

08451 228669

cry-sis.org.uk

ParentClub Scotland

is the Scottish Government's advice hub for parents in Scotland.

parentclub.scot

Citizens Advice can advise on things like employment, housing and income issues which can cause stress in families.

citizensadvice.org.uk

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+

in UK and Europe;
rest of the world 13+

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'Forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original ... and might not be entirely factual, either.

ONLINE

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.



THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval; you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except ...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.



CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.



Meet Our Expert

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



...HEY OSCAR...



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

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