



Dorchester Learning Centre
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Dorset
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Telephone: 01305 261213
Website: www.dlconline.co.uk

Headteacher: Phil Midworth

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Dear Parent/Carer

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE FOR PARENTS - APRIL 2020

During school closure we thought it important to write to update you and remind you about this essential aspect of our work and what to do if you are worried about someone.

Safeguarding Concerns

If you are concerned a child is in imminent danger of harm your first call should always be to the Police via 999.

If you would like to report a situation that worries you, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (myself) and the wider safeguarding team (DSLs) are available during school hours.

You can contact the school safeguarding team in either of the following ways;

- P.midworth@dlc.dorset.sch.uk - an email address which is monitored throughout the day. Any messages received here will be responded to following the protocols in our school policy
- **01305261213** – the school telephone number – please request a call back and one of the safeguarding leads will contact you as soon as possible if they are not available to take your call.

Online Safety

Any student whilst at school is safeguarded by our filtering and monitoring systems but of course whilst at home and working remotely this will not be the case. We will operate under the following guidelines:

- Work for students is left on Doodle or Google Classroom and any messages sent between staff and students will take place via the school office email address.
- If any contact comes from someone not using a DLC email (...@dlc.dorset.sch.uk) then please let the safeguarding leads know.
- If students are conducting their own research or working on aspects of school work, outside of the specific tasks set, we would advise using all normal parental controls to help keep them safe

Hertfordshire Constabulary has published the following information and I thought it a helpful reminder of what the potential dangers might be for our young people.

'Children motivated by boredom could start to engage with new groups or individuals and this in turn could make them vulnerable to those looking to groom young people.'

Online grooming may be hard for parents to recognise and groomers may specifically warn children not



to talk to anyone about it. There are a number of signs to be aware of (although a lot of them are quite common among teens), but look out for increased instances of:

- wanting to spend more and more time on the internet
- being secretive about who they are talking to online and what sites they visit
- switching screens when you come near the computer
- possessing items – electronic devices or phones – you haven't given them
- using sexual language you wouldn't expect them to know
- becoming emotionally volatile

Groomers often target young people by sending out friend requests on popular sites and platforms to see who responds. They may strike up a conversation to build a relationship with a child and ask them to continue the chat privately. Speak to your child about who they are talking to and ensure they genuinely know them.'

The Government have also updated their information for parents:

There is a lot of support available to keep your child safe online. Below are some useful links to help parents and carers:

- Thinkyouknow www.thinkuknow.co.uk (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- Internet matters www.internetmatters.org (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Parent info www.parentinfo.org (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- LGfL www.lgfl.net (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)

If you have any concerns about online use then please follow the safeguarding steps described above.

Mental Health

These are anxious times and our children will all respond in different ways to the social distancing and other measures in place. The resources on the Childline website give some very good techniques for coping with these feelings : <https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>

We hope that you are all managing to stay well and safe. If there are any concerns about children's safety please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Phil Midworth

Phil Midworth
Headteacher

