



THE BRUNTS ACADEMY

Safeguarding Newsletter

Mansfield Safeguarding Partnership



We had our second meeting of the Mansfield Safeguarding Partnership at Queen Elizabeth's Academy on March 12th. The group continues to grow in number and now involves all secondary schools across the area, some primary schools, a special school, the local authority, district council and the police. Additionally, all our alternative provision partners have joined and other external agencies that support young people and families including Change Grow Live and the Youth service. We are actively collaborating and communicating to keep young people safe and the Local Authority are monitoring the work of the group, with a view to replicating this model across other districts in Nottinghamshire. This is great news in support of children and families, multi-agencies working together effectively.

The outcomes from the meeting included the local authority supporting a group to meet at the Civic Centre to create a resource pack for parents and carers to better support their child (children) through their childhood and to prevent/tackle the challenges that are faced during this time. The MSP members will support the group and the resources will be created by parents –carers, for parents-carers. This is likely to be a significant piece of collaboration, informed by you, our parents and carers, across the district, to get you the support and advice that **YOU** need, not what we think you need.

Brunts staff are proud to have formed the MSP and continue to lead its work and development. The next meeting is at Samworth Church Academy in May.

Safeguarding Supervision

Nottinghamshire County Council are kindly starting to provide safeguarding supervision for our safeguarding team. Historically, education has been the poor partner in providing this important aspect of support compared to colleagues in other employment sectors such as social care, probation and health.

Regular supervision of our staff will support:

1. Keeping children safer and keeping their best interests **first**
2. Improved multi-agency working to keep children safe
3. Improved welfare/wellbeing for our team
4. Improved academy outcomes that enhance children's welfare and wellbeing

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Safeguarding is:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Preventing harm to children's development
- Providing safe and effective care
- Promoting the best outcomes for children

#StrongerTogether

#SafeguardingFirst



Site and Community Safety

Thank-you for continuing to support safe entry and exit from the site. This remains very important especially from 8am onwards, and on exit from 2:45pm.

We have had a couple of recent instances where parents/carers have driven along Windmill Lane to drop their child off as close to the academy as possible, including when there are pedestrians walking along this route. Please avoid driving down this short stretch of road as it is very narrow. We would like you to drop your child off on 'The Park', without having to drive along this very narrow stretch. Thank-you for your support with this (see image here →)

We are hoping that the warmer, drier weather (!) will result in more children being able to walk, or cycle to and from the academy.

Please Note Access on arrival to the academy from 15 April, for the first week, will be via Bath Lane only. This has been communicated through three messages over Easter. Please do allow additional time for your journeys. Apologies for any short term inconvenience this may cause.

Parents evenings and other after school functions: We still have a small minority of parents and visitors trying to access the academy from Bath Lane or Windmill Lane. We will not allow access from these points due to safeguarding our children onsite. Please always arrive and depart to/from **Park Avenue**. If you do arrive at other locations, we will politely ask you to go to Park Avenue, please respect that this is not to cause inconvenience, but to safeguard our students.

Please always sign in on arrival at **main reception** and collect a visitor's lanyard. **You must always be accompanied on site.**

At our recent parents' evenings, we have had parents trying to access site from the Bath Lane entrance. Please avoid this because there are still children onsite until around 4:30pm and we need to safeguard them. Please always arrive for after school functions like parents' evenings **via Park Avenue**. We will direct visitors to signing in areas upon arrival.

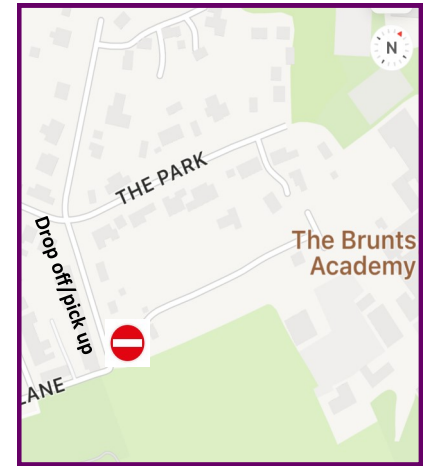
Arrival time (students)

Thank-you for sending your child to the academy for a prompt start: #OnTimeIsLate. Unfortunately, we cannot have students onsite before **0730**. If your child does arrive 'early' they **MUST** either go to breakfast club at the SDC or to McBrunts. These areas are fully supervised by staff.

Bath Lane Entrance and Exit

Can we please remind those parents and carers who drop off and collect their child/children in a vehicle, regarding keeping children safe? We would respectfully ask:

- **Does your child really need a lift?** Are they able to walk, or partly walk to school to avoid a large volume of traffic each morning and evening?
- If dropping your child off, this needs to be **before 0820 please**, to support a prompt start to the academy day. Please allow for local roadworks, which continue to cause congestion
- If your child has a mobility issue or additional need—please use the accessible parking area
- Please continue to queue and not park on the Bath Lane driveway. The gate will remain closed until 2:30pm—please use the pick up area rather than park in the turning circle
- The Bath Lane driveway has a speed limit of **10mph** for child safety— please stick to this limit. 10mph is very slow, but this is in place for a reason. Thank-you for driving safely.



Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE

A number of children across the Mansfield district are being exploited by criminals. Other children are at risk of being exploited.

Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it often occurs through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation often happens alongside sexual or other forms of exploitation.

Criminal exploitation takes many forms, the most commonly known relating to the supply and movement of drugs, often referred to as County Lines, offences in relation to guns and other weapons, money laundering, violent offences and in some cases cuckooing, where criminals forcibly take over control of a person's home.

Child Criminal exploitation is broader than just county lines and includes, for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms, to commit theft, shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.



Signs that your child might be involved in criminal exploitation

There are some signs to look out for if you're worried your child has joined a gang, or is being criminally exploited. It may be hard to spot at first, but the sooner you're able to talk to your child, the more you'll be able to help.

- They are getting lots of texts and phone calls but are being secretive about who they're talking to.
- You have noticed a drop in school progress and a reluctance from them to go to school.
- They are not showing up at home, school or their clubs and activities.
- They have new clothes, phones or games and can't explain how they paid for them.
- They are not hanging around their usual friends but are spending time with new people, who are sometimes older.
- Going missing from home or not showing up to school or regular after-school groups or clubs.
- Become involved in low-level criminality such as antisocial behaviour.

What can parents do?

Talk to your child about the dangers and consequences of gangs, child criminal exploitation and county lines. They may think that these people are their friends and won't be aware they're caught up in something more sinister.

Be available and take an interest. Don't pile on the pressure for them to tell you exactly what they're up to, but encourage them to talk about how they feel and what's happening inside and outside of school.

Let your child know that you're there to **listen to them**, with no judgement. If they can come to you and talk without fear of being told off, they are more likely to open up.

Talk to our safeguarding team and other parents, the more trusted people there are that can keep an eye on your child, the safer they may feel.

Let your child know that gangs who undertake child criminal exploitation make young people feel like they have no choice, and will scare them into not speaking out about what is happening. But there is always a choice.

Contact the police (101) or Nottinghamshire Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0300 500 80 80 if you feel your child is at risk of serious harm.

Vaping

The Law states that under 18 cannot buy e-cigarettes and vaping equipment, it is also illegal to provide them to a child if you are an adult...

“Vaping is not for children and young people. Their developing lungs and brains mean they are more sensitive to its effects” (NHS website)

We have received recent local alerts from external agencies that some vapes being circulated locally contain harmful substances in addition to nicotine...use of e-cigarettes remains a significant concerns for young people.

We feel it is important to make parents aware that they are vigilant and respond appropriately if young people report adverse experiences when vaping. This alert is related to disposable vapes which contained a synthetic cannabinoid (SCRA known as Spice). This has led to several recent incidents in London where young people were hospitalised.

The safeguarding team is sending an additional resource with this newsletter to support parents’ understanding of vaping to support communications with their own children. Please do try to find time to use this...



Online Safety

We have shared and asked our students to sign **acceptable use agreements** last half term.

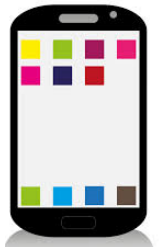
These agreements make explicit what is expected with technology use in **and** outside the academy. Main aims:

- our students are responsible in their use of Academy and other ICT equipment and use it appropriately, showing respect for others in their online activities, both in and out of the Academy
- young people will be responsible users of ICT and stay safe while using the internet and other communications and technologies for educational, personal, and recreational use.
- The Academy’s ICT systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could put the security of the systems and users at risk.

We are **ALL** responsible for supporting children’s safe and responsible use of technology. **Do you know:**

- What applications and software your child uses?
- What content they access on the internet—is it all age appropriate?
- What they share and post online—are their personal details secure?
- How many contacts your child has and if they are all ‘known’ individuals?
- How they communicate with others online—are they ‘kind’ and respectful in every communication?

If you don’t know the answers to **any** of these questions, it might be a good place to start to talk to your child about their technology use. The academy can and will support parents and carers who want help.



Academy attendance, do you know:

Our academy attendance is in line with the national average for secondary academies/schools **BUT**, the national average has fallen significantly since the pandemic. Pre-Covid, national attendance was 94.8%, it is now 91.5%. Numbers of children who are classed as persistently absent from school (<90%) have increased significantly. Every child is expected to aim for 100% attendance, with 97% the Government expectation. This is fewer than 5 days off per year. A child absent from school may become a safeguarding concern. Please do call or email the academy if your child cannot attend (01623 623149 option 1 or attendance@bruntsacademy.org). Three days of absence with no notification will trigger an academy **safeguarding home visit**. Additionally, even with notice, a home visit is likely after 5 days of absence so that we can securely know that a child is safe, This is part of safeguarding compliance.

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In the next issue... Discrimination and equality. Dealing with bereavement