



Safeguarding at Hurstmere Newsletter

Omegle

Omegle has been a headache for those concerned with protecting children for a decade and a half.

On first glance the site is a simple internet chatroom, reminiscent of platforms from the internet's early years. It has no registration or account system. Being designed with the originally innocent objective of getting strangers to talk to each other, but this allows under-18s to easily use the platform, without needing parental assistance, money or even an email address.

This already creates a dangerous situation to young pupils, but its insistence on users needing a webcam to chat, places anyone underage in an extremely vulnerable place.

Click here to find out more about [Omegle](#) and the risks it poses.



Bexley Food Bank



Anyone can reach crisis point. [Bexley Food Bank](#) are here to help. See what they can offer and if they can assist in anyway.

Hurstmere School can issue foodbank vouchers.

Please contact us on safeguarding@hurstmere.org.uk, or call the school and ask to speak to Mrs Harvey or Mrs Parsons.

Artificial Intelligence and ChatGTP

Launched on 30th November 2022, ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence chatbot which can be found online. Similarly, to a robotic customer service often found on the corner of a website or app, ChatGPT generates content and answers based on a user's question.

Here is a useful guide for parents and carers on what you need to know about [ChatGPT](#).

Virtual Reality

Ranging from high tech devices to cardboard phone holders, you may have seen Virtual Reality (VR) headsets on TV, at friends' houses, or even have one yourself.

Whatever experience you have with VR, this blog looks to cover the key things parents and carers need to know, as well as some considerations about keeping your children safe when using VR.

A [Virtual Reality](#) guide for parents and carers will provide you with further information.

Sidcup Scheme Initiative

The scheme will link in with external agencies, such as the Safer School's Project, with the intention to help keep our young people safe.

As mentioned previously, the project will meet 3 times per year to review, to ensure that the pupil voice remains current and is at the heart of the initiative.

On Wednesday 26th April our pupil representatives received First Aid training on how to manage major bleeds and what to do in the event of someone being knocked out.

We are excited to be participating in driving this initiative forward.

This terms topics...

Capture

Capture, who is looking after the children is a powerful video produced by the Financial Times film team looking at online harm, regulation and responsibility. The video can be viewed [here](#).

Free School Meals

You can apply for your children to receive free school meals if you are receiving certain welfare benefits.

More information on how to apply and to see if you are eligible can be found [here](#).

Boys Mental Health

When it comes to emotions and talking about our feelings, it is kind of accepted that women and girls are more emotionally open. Men and boys on the other hand are typically seen as strong, fearless and less emotional.

These stereotypes have been circulating for a long time, but quite frankly they are outdated and entirely unhelpful. Of course, men and boys feel emotions – they are human, not robots. If your son would benefit from opening up, here are the [tools](#) to help him get started.

Cruse

Cruse is the UK's leading bereavement charity. Cruse offers support through their website, national helpline, group, zoom, telephone or one-to-one in person support. Cruse want to make sure everyone grieving gets the help they need in a way that works for them. They have a specially trained dedicated team of 4,000 bereavement volunteers.

If you need support for bereavement, please visit their [website](#).

Flare

Do you have responsibility for a child or young person? Feeling unsure how to reach help in supporting them? Find out how Flare can offer a listening ear, practical advice and signposting to local services that can help you help your family.

To find out more email them at flare@bexleymooringes.co.uk

This terms news...

Peer Mentoring Programme

On Thursday 18th May, 13 pupils across Year 10 and Year 9 completed their Peer Mentor Training provided by the Bexley Early Intervention Specialist Advisory Service.

Peer Mentoring schemes are proving extremely successful in helping younger pupils to make the transition from primary to secondary school, improve their confidence, and their self-esteem. For those Year 7 and Year 8 pupils who are mentored, it will provide them with a person who will listen to them and take an interest in them. It will improve their self-esteem, confidence, and give them a chance to learn to find their own solutions to problems, but with someone to talk them through it first.

Congratulations to Woody and Alfie (Year 10), Rocky, Charlie, Sonny, Cameron, Harry, Callum, Bobby, Reggie, Harry, Archie and Hayden (Year 9) who all received a certificate on completion of their training, presented by Mr Lever, Vice Principal. The training will also give them experience that can lead to qualifications and interests later in life and will help them to develop communication and interpersonal skills, problem solving and teamwork.



Useful Information

CHILDLINE – www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk

CHILD EXPLOITATION & ONLINE

PROTECTION (CEOP) – www.thinkuknow.co.uk

For more information about safeguarding please visit our website [here](#).

Please remind your son that if they have any worries or concerns, they can email hereforeyou@hurstmere.org.uk and a member of our safeguarding team will be able to help!

Remember, it's good to talk!