

**Safeguarding Bulletin**

**Michaelmas Term 2024 ~ Issue 01**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to our newsletter from the Safeguarding Team at Bredon School. Our aim is to provide you with the latest support and advice which could affect you and your children’s lives.

**AI-generated Child Sexual Abuse Material**

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published a news story on the increase of artificial intelligence (AI) generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) being found on publicly accessible areas of the internet. It discusses: the prevalence of AI-generated CSAM online; the difficulty for agencies in knowing if there is a real child being harmed; and the law relating to AI-generated CSAM.

**Read the news story:** [Public exposure to ‘chilling’ AI child sexual abuse images and videos increases](https://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/14rz4iZfBuCb4yeGLCJyVERisdl)

*Source: NSPCC, 2024*

**Online Harm Statistics**

NSPCC Learning has published a new statistics briefing on online abuse and harm. This briefing looks at the available data and statistics, as well as Freedom of Information requests to the Home Office, about online abuse and harm to help professionals, and the organisations they work for, make evidence-based decisions. Findings include: over 9,000 child sexual abuse offences involved an online element in 2022/23; and under 18-year-olds were the subject of around a quarter of reported offences of online blackmail.

For further information please click the following link from the NSPCC: [Online harm and abuse: statistics briefing](https://email.nspcc.org.uk/c/14sbjQ24RvG5f88b2xP1vA2AMcO)

*Source: NSPCC, 2024*

**Surge in Sextortion Scams Targeting Younger Victims**

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) reports a significant rise in sextortion cases targeting younger children, with a notable increase in female victims. In the first half of 2024, the IWF confirmed 89 cases of child sexual abuse imagery involving sextortion, marking a 19% increase from the same period in 2023.

Alarmingly, there has been a 25% rise in cases involving 14 to 15-year-olds, with some victims as young as 11. While boys remain the majority of victims, reports involving girls have surged by 2,600%. The IWF highlights that organized criminals are becoming more adept at extorting money from children, causing severe psychological distress.

The organization emphasizes the importance of awareness and vigilance to protect children from these predatory practices.

For further information, please click the following link from the Internet Watch Foundation: ['Exponential increase in cruelty’ as sextortion scams hit younger victims](https://www.iwf.org.uk/news-media/news/exponential-increase-in-cruelty-as-sextortion-scams-hit-younger-victims/?utm_source=Brook%27s+Learning+Network&utm_campaign=4270df80e0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_sextortion&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-535aa7804d-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=4270df80e0&mc_eid=0e1f620477)

**Understanding and Addressing the Rise of Sextortion Among Young People**

Sextortion, a form of blackmail using explicit material to extort money, is on the rise, with a growing number of cases involving children as young as 11. Perpetrators often pose as romantic interests or friends, gaining victims’ trust online before threatening to release explicit material unless demands are met. This alarming trend has been highlighted by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and the National Crime Agency (NCA).

**Key Points for Parents to Help Protect Their Children:**

1. **Education and Awareness:** Teach children the importance of online privacy, recognising grooming tactics, and how to respond if approached for explicit content.
2. **Spot Warning Signs:** Watch for changes in behaviour, mood, or sudden requests for money, which may indicate sextortion.
3. **Creating a Safe Space:** Encourage open communication so children feel safe sharing concerns without fear of judgment or punishment.

**What to Do If Your Child Is Targeted:**

* Do not pay any ransom. Block all communication with the perpetrator.
* Preserve evidence, such as messages and contact details.
* Report incidents to the police (101 or 999) or via the CEOP Safety Centre.

**Additional resources:**

Children and young people who have been affected by sextortion can also find emotional and wellbeing support from our [website](https://www.brook.org.uk/topics/health-and-wellbeing/), [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/)and [Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk/). You can [report online abuse on the CEOP website.](https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/Should-I-make-a-report-to-CEOP-YP/)

Further information for parents and carers on how you can support you child can be found in the [CEOP Education’s online blackmail article](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/online-blackmail/).

If you’re a teacher or professional, [Think Before You Share](https://www.thinkbeforeyoushare.org/teachers-and-educators-resources) has some useful resources. Brook also offers [professional training](https://www.brook.org.uk/education/training/) and [education sessions for young people.](https://www.brook.org.uk/education/rse-workshops-for-young-people/)

By staying informed and proactive, parents can play a vital role in safeguarding their children against the risks of sextortion. Visit the links above for further support and information.

*Source: Brook, 2024*

**4 Ways to Tackle Misogyny Among Young People**

Brook's blog post, "4 Ways to Tackle Misogyny Among Young People," offers strategies for parents to address and reduce misogynistic attitudes:

1. **Educate and Raise Awareness**: Engage in open discussions about gender equality, challenge stereotypes, and promote respectful behaviour.
2. **Model Positive Behaviour**: Demonstrate respect and equality in your interactions, serving as a role model for young people.
3. **Encourage Critical Thinking**: Help young people critically assess media and online content, fostering an understanding of the impact of misogyny.
4. **Support Positive Role Models**: Introduce young people to individuals who exemplify respectful and equitable behaviour, both in real life and through media.

Implementing these approaches can help combat misogyny and promote a culture of respect among young people.

For further information, please click on the following link: [4 ways to tackle misogyny among young people](https://www.brook.org.uk/blog/4-ways-to-tackle-misogyny-among-young-people/)

*Source: Brook, 2024*



Best wishes,



Miss Charmain Eaton

**Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding) & CCF Contingent Commander**

