



Perschore High Safeguarding Newsletter

May 2023

Exam season is upon us and our students in Year 11 and Year 13 (plus Year 10 with their English Literature exam) are working their hardest to achieve success. A very intense time. In the meantime we continue to try to meet the needs of the whole school community. In this edition we are sharing advice and support on some key areas, currently in the news: vaping, community needs, fraud and child employment. We hope these prove useful to you all.

Who is on the Perschore High Safeguarding Team?

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Fiona Lovecy

Email: fl@perschore.worcs.sch.uk or contact your child's tutor, pastoral manager or Head of House. They will be able to help or seek further advice for you. The 6th form team, Zoe Starkey and Jo Robinson, also provide dedicated support for pastoral, social and emotional needs.

Community Action

Perschore Community Programme

We were delighted to launch, alongside our community providers P and E Sports, a series of new sports activities for students in Perschore and the surrounding areas. Funding for the Perschore Community Program has been secured to ensure the sports are free for all. Students do not need to sign up or go every week—a casual approach without commitment to ensure there is no pressure. Hopefully you will have seen this flyer which outlines details, alongside information on more established local clubs and activities. We are looking to work with other partners to widen this provision to arts/crafts based activities and a cooking/baking group. Please encourage your children and their friends to give it a go. A great change to get away from their phones and other devices and be active in the community!



Encourage Active Lifestyles

Working alongside Wychavon District Council we are developing other ways to engage with local clubs and activities in order to support and promote their provision. If you or your children are involved in anything locally please email Fiona Lovecy on fl@perschore.worcs.sch.uk and we will make sure they are included.

Further advice: [Worcestershire County Council](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) or [Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)

Child Employment

We welcome that many young people have secured themselves 'Saturday jobs' or will look to get some work over the summer holidays. As well as the obvious benefit of gaining some limited financial independent, part-time working will do much too boost a child's independence, confidence, skills and understanding of the work place.

There are several restrictions on when and where children are allowed to work. Children are not allowed to work:

- without an employment permit issued by the education department of the local council, if this is required by local bylaws
- in places like a factory or industrial site
- during school hours
- before 7am or after 7pm
- for more than one hour before school (unless local bylaws allow it)
- for more than 4 hours without taking a break of at least 1 hour
- in any work that may be harmful to their health, well-being or education
- without having a 2-week break from any work during the school holidays in each calendar year

Term time rules

During term time children can only work a maximum of 12 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 2 hours on school days and Sundays
- a maximum of 5 hours on Saturdays for 13 to 14-year-olds, or 8 hours for 15 to 16-year-olds

School holiday rules

During school holidays 13 to 14-year-olds are only allowed to work a maximum of 25 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 5 hours on weekdays and Saturdays
- a maximum of 2 hours on Sunday

During school holidays 15 to 16-year-olds can only work a maximum of 35 hours a week. This includes:

- a maximum of 8 hours on weekdays and Saturdays
- a maximum of 2 hours on Sunday

There are also local rules on what children are allowed to do. See the link here to find out more or contact

[Children in employment and entertainment | Worcestershire](#)



Health Matters

Risks of Vaping

You may have seen recently in the news worrying information on the dangers of vaping. We work hard in PSHE and tutor sessions to educate students on the risks of vaping and smoking but the recent reports make it vital that we work with parents to ensure students understand vaping is not a healthy alternative. Students generally acquire vapes from other students which are often bought off the internet, many of which are illegal. It is of course illegal to sell vapes to under 18s, but it is evident the sale of vapes to children is on the rise.

Vapes from Baxter College in Kidderminster were tested in a laboratory with some concerning results. Some of the vapes meant that children would be inhaling more than twice the daily safe amount of lead and nine times the amount of nickel. Some vapes also contained harmful chemicals like those in cigarette smoke. The World Health Organization says that high levels of lead exposure can affect their central nervous system and brain development. Also concerning was the discovery of carbonyls in the vapes. These break down as the e-liquid heats up and become formaldehyde and acetaldehyde at levels 10 times the level in a legal vape. Carbonyls will also increase the risk in cancer.

The Government has allocated additional funding to tackle the sale of illegal vapes in England. It wants to fund more test purchases and remove inappropriate products from the shops and is looking more widely at the dangers. We will of course continue to try and educate our young people on the dangers, confiscate any vapes found in school and contact home. We appeal to parents to reinforce the risks and help restrict access to these products.

Advice about having a conversation with your child about vaping

Find the right moment: when you see someone vaping, walk past a vape shop or see advertisements.

Ask questions: what do they think about vaping? Do they know people who vape? Why do they think people vape? How could they refuse the offer of a vape? Give them an effective response if they are invited to try.

Listen to them: learn from them, but also use your knowledge to help them understand the facts and that vapes are not harmless.

Talk about your expectations: explain your concerns and tell them why you don't want them to vape or smoke and to make it clear that although neither are recommended, smoking is a far greater risk.

Let them know you care about them: explain that those who knowingly sell vapes to under 18s don't care who they sell to and they are just interested in making money .

Get Safe

OPERATION
SCEPTRE TACKLING
KNIFE CRIME

West Mercia Police have recently taken part in Operation Sceptre, a national knife crime awareness and prevention campaign. Officers are taking part in activities to raise awareness of the risks of carrying knives and other forms of knife crime. In the eyes of the law a knife is any article that is bladed or sharply pointed. Taking a knife onto school premises is a serious offence. The police have a priority to keep young people safe from harm and to encourage those who have been carrying knives to make better choices. Schools will work with the Police and the Youth Justice Board to ensure students are educated and not criminalized for many behaviours.



Fraud

OUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

We all need to think more about the trail we leave online, and how it may affect us, our families and friends now, and into the future. Every time you visit a website, send or receive a message or email, buy or book anything online, comment on a post, upload a photo or find directions on your phone, you're adding to your digital footprint. When you stream music, make a video call or use a smart speaker that adds to your digital footprint too.

What happens when you have a digital footprint?

Your digital footprint is part of your online history and can potentially be seen by other people, or tracked and held in multiple databases, however careful you are with your privacy settings. Here are just a few examples of what can happen:

- Prospective or current employers can look into your and family members' background.
- You, family members or friends could fall victim to fraud or identity theft ... or both.
- Your children could be at risk of criminal activity threatening their online or physical safety.
- Records of your online activity could fall into the wrong hands, including organised crime groups.
- Tech companies such as browser and search engine providers can track and record what you've searched and viewed. This, in turn, could be shared with other parties
- You could be refused life, medical, property or vehicle insurance based on information you have shared online.
- Advertisers can track your movement from site to site to gauge your areas of interest.
- Companies can target you with specific marketing content on social media and other websites. You could also receive emails, letters or phone calls from these companies.
- Entertainment providers (such as music or films) could target you with unwanted recommendations for content based on what you download or stream.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS?

- Think twice before sharing information about yourself, family members or friends that would be better kept private. That applies to social media, forms on websites and apps, responding to texts and messages, and when taking part in surveys and quizzes.
- Think before you post. Even if your social media privacy settings are set up correctly, there's no guarantee that your posts or photos will not be shared beyond those who you want to see them.
- Be aware that every time you visit a website, your activity is visible to tech companies like website owners, browsers and search engines.
- Read terms and conditions and data privacy policies on websites and apps before providing any personal data or making transactions. What can the providers do with your data, and why would you agree to it? If you're not comfortable with the information being requested, don't provide it.
- Check geolocation settings on mobile devices, apps and cameras. If you don't want anybody to know your whereabouts – or where you've been – disable them.

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

For further information visit: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

Online Safety Advice

We have recently had concerns from students and parents regarding incidents of grooming and inappropriate requests on an online platform: Discord. Here is some advice from a recognized agency regarding this platform.



What is Discord?

Released in 2015, Discord describes itself as a “VoIP” (Voice over Internet Protocol) and instant messaging social platform. This means that you can use your voice to communicate with other users through the app. The app was predominantly focused on providing gamers with a means of communication when playing games on their devices, especially through phones. By providing an in-app chat for gamers, Discord has filled a gap in the social media and gaming markets – over 300,000,000 people have downloaded the app worldwide.

Over the years, however, the app has broadened its demographic: the tagline has evolved from the original “Chat for Gamers”, to “chat with your communities and friends” to the current “Your place to talk”. The app is still beloved by gamers and has a list of whitelisted games that will support in-game overlay of Discord, such as Final Fantasy XIV, Minecraft and League of Legends. This means that chats or messages display on screen within the game rather than needing to be open in separate tabs or windows.

What can I do on Discord?

The communication features of Discord can be used whether you’re a gamer or not. Some people use Discord instead of a WhatsApp group chat as Discord will allow you to have multiple channels – for instance, one for general chat, one for announcements, and perhaps a private channel for coaches or management. There is also a voice room for users in a channel to tap in and out of to hang out and catch up with friends; whilst you’re talking, you can play music to listen to together, and play board games remotely.

The voice room also means you can share gaming experiences with friends, as well as use the chat channels to send emojis, memes and gifs.

On Discord’s YouTube channel there is a [“How Discord Works”](#) video for a full rundown of its features! according to [Discord’s Terms of Service](#) users must be **at least 13 years old**. The terms also state “If you’re a parent or legal guardian, and you allow your teenager to use the services, then these terms also apply to you and you’re responsible for your teenager’s activity on the services.”

The app also has an **age rating of 17+** on the Apple app store and Google Play Store have rated Discord as suitable for “teens”.

What parental controls are available?

Discord contains NSFW (Not Safe For Work) servers containing potentially adult content which would not be suitable for young people. Whilst a warning message will appear and ask the user to enter their age, Discord have not installed a verification tool, meaning that teens could still access the adult content.

If you and your child decide they can download the app, we recommend [having a conversation](#) about the importance of the safety settings, as there is currently no way of locking these from parental controls.

To access the safety settings, just go to “User Settings” > “Privacy & Settings”.

Here, you can switch “Safe direct messaging” to “Keep me safe”, disallow access to NSFW servers, and disallow direct messages and friend requests from strangers.

Parental Controls - advice and help for parents—[click here](#).

Reminder of local help

costoflivingsupport.campaign.gov.uk

- **Income Support**
- **Energy Bills—Cost of Living Payments**
- **Childcare Costs**
- **Household costs**
- **Childcare Costs**
- **Finding Work**



Help for Households

costoflivingsupport.campaign.gov.uk provides access to contacts who can provide support for households.

Visit '**Discounts and Offers**' for hot meals for children for £1 and discounted children's meals at leading supermarkets.



Pershire Foodbank is found at St. Andrews, Church Walk, Pershire

Open Tuesdays 11.00am -1.00pm and Fridays 1.00pm– 3.00pm

Website: <https://pershire.foodbank.org.uk/>

Help is available over the holidays in Pershire. To get a voucher for the foodbank contact Fiona Lovecy at fl@pershire.worcs.sch.uk or Mrs Kilmister at rk@pershire.worcs.sch.uk. The voucher will cover 3 days of emergency food. Citizens Advice attend to help people on Fridays and further help is available with fuel bills and cost of living.



Pershire community cupboard is a food project set up to help the whole of the community if they need any food. They receive donations of food from local supermarkets and want to stop as much food going to landfill as possible. This is a community project open to all. Found at Pershire Baptist Church on Broad Street, Pershire.

See the website for Opening Times: [Community Cupboard \(pershirebaptist.org.uk\)](http://Community Cupboard (pershirebaptist.org.uk))

Free advice and support is also offered at Pershire's Wellbeing Hub—as well as a free cup of tea! If you need someone to



talk to, advice, directing to support, ideas for art and entertainment, opportunities for children and young adults and health, medical and dental support visit on Tues and Fri 10am-12.30pm, Wed and Thur 10am—3pm

No. 4, High Street, Pershire

01386 555018

Pershire Wellbeing Hub

Benefits, debts, budgeting and welfare support

Managing finances such as paying bills and planning for the future can be difficult.

Benefits: It's often difficult to know which benefits you're entitled to. The [Money Advice Service](#) has a list of all the different types of benefits to help you to find out if you could be claiming something. There is also advice on what to do if your benefit changes and where to go and get help and advice about benefits at the [Department of Work and Pensions](#).

Budgeting: Managing your money through a budget is a good way to make sure you don't go into debt and make your pounds go further. [The Money Advice Service](#) has lots of advice and budget templates to help you draw up a budget that works for you.

Struggling to pay your **Council Tax**? Apply online for [Council Tax Support](#)

Need to apply for **Free School Meals**? [Click here](#)