

# Parents' Safeguarding Bulletin

## Issue 8 February 2017

### Online Grooming

#### **What is online grooming?**

Online grooming refers to the deliberate actions taken by an adult to form a trusting relationship with a child with the intent of later facilitating sexual contact. Sexually explicit messages, images and videos may be exchanged and the offender may entice the child by sending them gifts or money.

This can take place in chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites and email. Offenders will contact dozens of young people, communication will quickly become sexually explicit and any positive response will be seized on. The grooming process can take a matter of hours or years.

#### **What are the signs my child is being groomed online?**

The majority of children who are online are not being abused and never will be. The following activities could be perfectly innocent, but it is worth being alert to potential signs:

- Becoming secretive with their phone or computer
- Excessive use of their phone or computer
- Showing aggression if asked about their online use
- Change in the use of sexual language
- Unexplained gifts or cash.

Changes in your child's behaviour may also act as indicators and these can include:

- A change in your child's self-esteem and self-confidence
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Difficulties at school
- An increased level of anxiety
- Sleeping and concentration difficulties

[More Safeguarding bulletins can be found posted on the school website in the Safeguarding tab, under the Information tab on the homepage.](#)

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On Safer Internet Day (SID) Tuesday 7th February we shared with all of our students the true story of the murder of Kayleigh Haywood, a 15 year old school girl from Leicestershire.

With the support of Kayleigh's family, Leicestershire Police made a film about aspects of the last two weeks of her life and we showed this in special assemblies .

'Kayleigh's Love Story' is as a warning to young people, both girls and boys, about the dangers of speaking to people they don't know online. The film highlights just how quick and easy it can be for young people to be groomed online without them or those around them knowing it is happening.

The film's purpose is to protect all of our students, both now and in the future and to stop another family losing a child in this way.

The following day in school we extended tutor time in the morning to allow students even more time to speak around this issue in smaller groups with their form tutor.

The video can be seen here



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsbYHI-rZOE>

There are many places you can visit for further help and advice, including:

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) - information and activities for children and teenagers aged 5+

[www.healthforteens.co.uk](http://www.healthforteens.co.uk) – information and advice on many health issues or worries

Visit [Barnardo's](http://www.barnardos.org.uk) or [NSPCC](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).

Barnardo's has a useful guide for helping to keep you and your friend's safe.

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