



MGGS Safeguarding Bulletin

Term 5 - 2023-2024

Please see below an update on key safeguarding information. Once a term we will share the MGGS Safeguarding Bulletin to all members of our school community to refresh our memories on safeguarding related matters.

MGGS Safeguarding Team

At MGGS there has always been a culture of safeguarding our students. The school archive has records showing that during the second world war Mrs Bartels (Headteacher) would often walk students home if there had been a bombing. This story reflects our school motto of 'non sibi sed omnibus' - not for oneself but for all. It is also a reflection of our core values of RISE – Resilient, Inspirational, Supportive and Excellence, which underpins our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

If you have a safeguarding concern please contact any member of our safeguarding team below who will support you. For further information about how MGGS keeps you safe please visit our school website. <https://www.mggs.org/key-information/how-mggs-keeps-you-safe/>

Mr N Walker	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Miss D Stanley	Headteacher
Mrs J Cox	Deputy DSL
Miss L Morris	Deputy DSL
Mrs L Shimmin	Deputy DSL
Mrs N Lawrence	Deputy DSL
Mr B White	Deputy DSL
Mr C Green	Deputy DSL

- General Enquiries - central@mggs.org
- Attendance - attendance@mggs.org
- Safeguarding Concerns - safeguarding@mggs.org
- Website - <https://www.mggs.org/>



Being Supportive

In this term's safeguarding newsletter we are focusing on being supportive, especially if you are worried about a young person's wellbeing. Young people told us that how others approach them to discuss mental health and wellbeing is just as important as what they say. They explained what they needed to feel safe and comfortable enough to talk openly and honestly.

How to be supportive

- **LISTEN** – Offer to talk to them somewhere more appropriate, if there is a risk of being interrupted or overheard by others. Listening can make a huge difference to how someone feels. If they're finding it difficult to talk, let them know you're there when they're ready. They may prefer to write down how they are feeling. Let them know that's ok too. Listen carefully when a young person opens up to you about how they are feeling. Let them share without interrupting or judging them. Show you are listening by nodding or repeating what they say to show you have understood.
- **REASSURE** – A young person struggling with their mental health can feel isolated and alone. By letting them know how they feel is valid, you are letting them know that they are not alone. Using kind and reassuring language like 'it's okay to feel like that' or, 'what you're going through sounds really tough'.
- **VALIDATE** – Often, when a young person has opened up about how they are feeling, they might immediately feel worried that they've said the wrong thing or shared too much. They may be worried that they will be in trouble. The first way you could respond to them is to reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking about it. You could say, 'I'm really glad you told me this', or 'it might have felt difficult but it's good that you spoke to me about it.'
- **ACT** – encourage them to access support, either by talking to a parent, teacher or doctor. Remember, this can seem overwhelming. If possible, consider offering to go with them to talk to them. Understanding how they have managed similar situations can help you support them too. They may already have things that help them like listening to music, quiet time or going for a walk.

You don't need all the answers to ask if someone is ok. Finding the words to start talking to someone else about how they're feeling can be difficult. If someone has shared how they are feeling, it might be the first time they have spoken to someone about their mental health and they may struggle to put their thoughts into words. They may say something like 'I'm finding things hard right now' or 'actually, I'm not fine'. Or they might share things they are struggling with at home or school.

On the next page is a poster with information on how to start a supportive conversation.



How to start the conversation

Finding the words to start talking to someone else about how they're feeling can be difficult. But really, there's no wrong way to begin and however you do it, they'll probably just appreciate you trying. Here are some examples of conversation starters to get an idea:

**We haven't talked in a while.
What's happening with you?**

**You've not seemed like
yourself lately. How are you?**

**You're my friend, I'm here for
you whenever.**

If they don't want to talk, try not to pressure them. They will open up to you, or someone else they trust, when they're ready.



Safeguarding Support and Links

External support	In school MGGS support
<p>Young Minds Tools to look after your mental health. We empower adults to be the best support they can be to the young people in their lives. And we give young people the space to get their voices heard.</p>	Speak to your tutor or Head of Study or a trusted member of staff.
<p>Childline Get help and advice about a wide range of issues, call on 0800 1111, talk to a counsellor online, send Childline an email or post on the message boards.</p>	Speak to the Student Support Team
<p>https://www.kooth.com/ At Kooth, our sole purpose is to create easy to access online mental health services that work alongside a young person to provide compassionate and effective support.</p>	Speak to a member of the safeguarding team or refer online
<p>Mind the mental health charity. We're here to make sure no one has to face mental health problems alone.</p>	Referral to in school counselling
<p>Mood spark is a place where young people can learn how to look after their emotional and mental health and find ways to help bounce back when life gets tough.</p>	Referral to in school mentoring with Kings Reach
<p>Papyrus A UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people.</p>	RISE days and Personal Development curriculum
<p>Young Minds Parents Helpline You can seek support aimed directly at parents by contacting the Helpline on 0808 802 5544, Monday - Friday 9:30am - 4:00pm.</p>	Attendance to a variety of enrichment and wellbeing clubs
<p>Kent Youth Health Kent Youth Health has lots of information and resources on feelings, sex, health and relationships for teenagers in Kent.</p>	

Report a Safeguarding Concern

If you are in crisis or in immediate risk please contact 999 and ask for an emergency service.

If you have a safeguarding concern and you have not been able to speak to a member of staff whilst at school, please report your concern online using our **REPORT A CONCERN** button located on the school website and a member of the safeguarding team will contact you. Please click the link below

<https://www.mggs.org/key-information/contact-us/>

<https://www.mggs.org/key-information/how-mggs-keeps-you-safe/>