




# St John's Green Primary School

Learn to Live, Live to Learn

Headteacher Mr Simon Billings  
Deputy Headteacher Mrs Tina Bourne  
Assistant Headteacher Mrs Fiona Bullivant

We   
Maths

We are all  
writers ...

We are growing  
our learning 

Telephone: 01206 762884 Fax: 01206 570760 Email: [admin@st-johnsgreen.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-johnsgreen.essex.sch.uk) Website: <http://st-johns-green.eschools.co.uk>

9<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Dear Parents,

Alongside this letter, is a letter from Simon Hart who is the chair of the Essex Safeguarding Board. Simon Hart has asked all schools to send this letter on his behalf.

The letter is self-explanatory and refers specifically to Child Sexual Exploitation and the possible risks to all children from predators who are seeking to harm our children rather than protect them. Please do read the letter.

You will also find some resources on the school's website under the heading 'Online Protection' which I would urge you to read.

**The following is an extract from a letter that another local primary school had to send out to their parents just before half term.**

*'Recently we have had an instance of a stranger attempting to groom children from our school, using social media. The individual, using OOVVOO, had sent flattering messages, asked for pictures and then had proceeded to send a graphic and obscene picture of themselves. They have persisted in making contact and started to suggest that the child might like to play some 'games' with them...*

*School staff have spoken to the local police and the National Crime Agency and the message they have sent back is clear. Most of the social media sights are designed for children over 13. The school and parents have a duty of care to ensure that children are not using social media aimed at older children. It is their advice that children should be removed from sites that allow strangers to make contact, send pictures or attempt to video conference with them....*

*...steps to take to minimise the risk your child is at*

- Any devices should be kept downstairs or in a parent's room at night
- Talk to your child about what they are using the internet for. Know which social media sites they are using
- If they tell you something they have seen or done, don't tell them off as they'll be less likely to tell you in the future. Explain that they have done the right thing. Talk to them about the experiences and make changes to ensure it can't happen again
- Children should use the devices in sight or sound of the parents. Avoid them being in their room or on their own using devices

As a parent this is a very scary insight into what all our children who use social media are at risk from. The above incident was dealt with by a Colchester primary school and as I'm sure you can appreciate would have been very upsetting for all involved.

I cannot stress enough, as a parent, how important it is that we teach our children how to use the internet and social media safely.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask either Mrs Bourne, Mrs Bullivant or myself.

Regards,

  
Simon Billings  
Headteacher

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and parental/carers awareness**

I am writing to you about the important and sensitive subject of child sexual exploitation. You may have seen information about this over the last few years through national and local press, and it has also been featured recently in some documentaries and television programme story lines.

Child sexual exploitation is a type of Sexual Abuse which involves someone or several people forcing or manipulating a child or young person into sexual acts in exchange for something. This 'exchange' could be for money, gifts, alcohol or drugs, or it could be for 'status' in a group or gang. Sexual exploitation does not have to be done through direct contact but can also occur online through computers and mobile phones.

The impact on young people can be immense and in efforts to tackle this appalling form of sexual abuse to children, Essex Safeguarding Children Board has decided to write directly to all parents and carers of secondary and primary aged children within the County, via their secondary and primary schools and academies. We want to tell you about a campaign that has been launched across Essex in partnership with Essex Police to provide information about child sexual exploitation to the general public, communities, businesses, as well as those working with children and young people. It's called the 'I DIDN'T KNOW Campaign' and here is the link to the website [http://www.essex.police.uk/be\\_safe/child\\_sexual\\_exploitation.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/be_safe/child_sexual_exploitation.aspx)

Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime, and children and young people will seldom be aware that they are being exploited, even if they are 16 or 17 year olds. I say this because young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. We do know that child sexual exploitation can happen to any child or young person, in any community; it can affect girls and young women as well as boys and young men.

To understand more about child sexual exploitation please visit the website which has further advice on spotting the signs, where to go for help, advice on speaking with your child or teenager and lots of other useful information, such as how to stay safe online.

Parents and carers can undertake a free online course provided by a national charity called Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) and I would certainly encourage you to complete this simple short course. You can access it via the link

below or through the PACE website (once you have completed a simple registration process): <http://www.paceuk.info/the-problem/keep-them-safe/>

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Remember, if you are concerned that your child is at risk of being sexually exploited then you can telephone Essex County Council, Family Operations Hub on 03456037627 (you can of course contact the Police, if you have concerns ring 101 or in an emergency always ring 999). You can also discuss your concern with a member of staff at school if you have any worries.

Yours sincerely



Simon Hart  
Independent Chair  
Essex Safeguarding Children Board