



Ivybridge Community College Parent and Carer Bulletin

Summer Term II 2025-2026

Safeguarding and E-Safety

Safeguarding Update for Parents and Carers – #BlowTheWhistle

With the World Cup upon us, we are looking forward to the excitement, community spirit and shared moments of joy that football can bring to families and friends. At the same time, it is important to be mindful that large sporting events can sometimes come with increased pressure, heightened emotions and alcohol use, which may unfortunately lead to a rise in domestic abuse incidents. As a College community, we encourage everyone to enjoy the games safely and respectfully, keeping kindness, patience and well-being at the centre of our homes. If you or someone you know needs support, please remember you are not alone.

Help is available:

- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline (24/7) - 0808 2000 247**
- **Devon Domestic Abuse Support Services - 0345 155 1074**
- **In an emergency, always call 999**

You can also contact the College's Safeguarding Team if you have any concerns, we are here to help. Let's look out for one another and ensure this World Cup is a positive experience for all. **#BlowTheWhistle**

E-Safety focus of the term: Sextortion – What you need to know

We want to make parents and carers aware of an increasing online safeguarding risk affecting children and young people called sextortion (financially motivated sexual extortion). Sextortion happens when someone pressures a young person into sharing nude or semi-nude images online and then threatens to share these images with friends, family, or their wider community unless more images are sent or money is paid. These situations often begin with contact from someone pretending to be a young person of a similar age, commonly through social media or online platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, or gaming sites. The conversation can escalate very quickly, with increasing pressure and threats. Recent national intelligence shows that boys aged 13 - 18 are particularly vulnerable, although any young person can be affected. Many cases involve organised criminal groups based overseas, motivated purely by financial gain. The emotional impact on young people can be severe, including feelings of fear, shame, anxiety and in some cases serious harm to mental health.

Possible warning signs to look out for at home include:

- Sudden anxiety, secrecy, or distress linked to phone or social media use
- Being unusually fearful of notifications or urgently needing access to their phone
- Sudden requests for money, selling possessions or unexplained transactions
- Withdrawal, low mood or noticeable changes in behaviour
- Talking about being "hacked" or someone having access to their contacts

Offenders often move conversations to private messaging apps, apply pressure very quickly and use threats involving friends or family to increase fear and compliance. If you are able to, we strongly recommend watching the BBC iPlayer documentary [here](#) on sextortion, which highlights the reality and devastating impact this crime can have on young people and families.

If your child tells you something that worries you or you suspect sextortion:

- Stay calm and reassure them, make it clear this is not their fault and they are not in trouble
- Do not ask them to delete messages or images, these may be important and used as evidence
- Encourage them not to pay or continue engaging with the person contacting them
- Contact the College immediately and ask to speak to the Safeguarding Team
- Keep a non-judgemental, supportive approach and avoid blame

Sextortion is a form of child sexual abuse and must always be taken seriously. With the right support and swift action, young people can be protected and helped through what can be a very frightening experience. If you would like advice or support, please do not hesitate to contact the College.

Please also take a look at the 'You won't know until you ask' campaign [here](#) to help support online safety over the summer holidays.

Supporting positive behaviour in Ivybridge

Most young people in Ivybridge are making the right choices. However, a partnership that includes the police, local retailers, youth workers, the town council and the College have put this information together as recently there have been concerns raised by residents and local services about risky/antisocial behaviour in Ivybridge town centre.

This behaviour has included:

- Shoplifting
- Underage drinking
- Vaping
- "cherry-knocking" that has escalated to residents having their doors repeatedly kicked (particularly around Costly Street)
- Verbal abuse towards staff particularly at The Watermark.

Summer is approaching and with lighter evenings young people are out and about and we want them to be enjoying themselves.

Through simple conversations with young people, it could really help keep Ivybridge as a safe and welcoming environment for everyone across the summer.



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Safeguarding and E-Safety Continued

Encouraging conversations at home

Regular, open conversations can make a big difference. Consider raising these issues and asking these simple questions:

- How do you think that would feel if it happened to you?
- What would you do if your friends suggested doing this?
- How can you leave a situation if it feels wrong?
- Do you understand the potential consequences of this behaviour?

Risks linked to substance use

Some antisocial behaviour can be linked to experimentation with alcohol or other substances.

It can help to talk about:

- The risks of drugs and alcohol
- How substances affect judgement and decision making
- Consequences
- How to seek help if they feel pressured-
- If you have concerns for a young person around drugs and alcohol, visit the Y-Smart website [here](#)

Practical things that help

- Know who your child is with and where they plan to be
- Make sure their phone is fully charged
- Agree check-in times
- Consider a 'code word' they can send as a message, which means they would like to be collected
- Praise positive behaviour and good decisions
- Set clear boundaries and expectations

Working together

If you have concerns about your child or need support, consider speaking to the College or local support services.

Respect the water:

We are lucky to live in the beautiful surroundings of the South West of England, however living in the South West means being close to rivers, moorland and coast, each children **to Float to Live**, understand the dangers of cold water shock, and avoid swimming in unsafe or fast-flowing waters, learn more [here](#).

Matt Anniss
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Equality and Diversity Notices

At Ivybridge Community College, we have been proud to celebrate Diversity Week, which took place from Monday, 15 June to Thursday, 25 June 2026. This initiative provided a valuable opportunity to highlight the importance of equality, respect and compassion, ensuring that our College remains a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.

As part of the Tutor Programme, students attended an assembly that focused on key themes such as anti-discrimination, hate crime and the importance of being an upstander. These sessions encouraged students to reflect on their role in promoting a respectful and supportive community.

Throughout the fortnight, students also engaged in a wide range of enrichment activities during break times, coming together as a community to celebrate diversity. These activities included a poetry competition, Paralympic-style inclusion games, our monthly Place of Sanctuary *Hub*, a 'Culture Quiz', and French and Spanish karaoke. We are proud of the enthusiasm and respect shown throughout the week and remain committed to fostering an inclusive environment for all.

Darby Ball
Equality and Diversity Lead

