

Safeguarding Newsletter

Lent 2024

The Safeguarding Team

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DSL



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If you are concerned about a child's welfare, health or safety or if you have concerns about the behaviour of any adult - parent, member of staff or member of the general public - please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy immediately.



EAGLE HOUSE
SCHOOL

A note from the Director of Safeguarding

The Lent term is always an interesting one – it's the jam in the sandwich, the thin layer of time when exam years really start to focus on what's ahead, the 3rd form grow in confidence and thankfully it starts getting lighter and warmer. It is, however, the time that the pastoral and safeguarding teams are at their busiest for a variety of different reasons: anxiety increases as public examinations loom ever closer, our U6th face life changing decisions – university and gap years, and the combination of dark nights and the boarding environment blend together in various different recipes which can mean students – and staff – leading with their emotional mind, rather than their wise mind.



I have spent the first few weeks of this term going into year group assemblies and speaking about the results of the annual 'Feeling Safe' survey. Parents were sent a link to the podcast where the safeguarding team discussed the main highlights from the survey and I did just want to draw your attention to them in this newsletter as well (see 'What's going on at Wellington'). I spoke to the students about their 'wise mind': young people are often driven by their emotional mind which can lead to them not stopping and thinking about a consequence of a particular decision and whether their action is in line with the College values. We have also used the weekly staff email to emphasise this to staff too. Good relationships are built on a foundation of trust and openness and staff not only need to role model wise decision making to each other, but – more importantly – to the students.

Life in the Lynch household was thrown into a degree of chaos when we welcomed Fudge in mid-January. I thought I had said goodbye to night time waking, crying and the mopping up of bodily fluids..... as you will see below, Fudge is going to join Coco as the new school therapy dog and she starts her training with Canine Assisted Learning after half-term. She has already drawn in the masses through the Rainbow door, and the staff are now getting used to students coming to see Fudge....rather than us....

I do hope that you are able to find some useful information in the newsletter and, as always, please do feed back about any issues or topics that you would like to see featured in the future.

Stay Safe

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jelyth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Introducing Coco and Fudge

Ok – who is going first? Fudge? Yes, you can as I know you have a very short attention span.

So, Fudge – tell us your journey. How did you get to be at Wellington?

I was born in Virginia Water on November 17th 2023. I am one of 7 siblings and my Mum is a Cavachon and my Dad is a toy poodle. I moved to Wellington on the 13th January and although I missed my old family to start with, I love being here. I especially

like the woods and going for walks without the very loud cars driving around me.

Do you enjoy being a therapy dog?

I haven't started my formal training yet, but as part of my early socialisation I have been in the Rainbow team offices getting used to lots of faces and loving all of the cuddles I get from everyone. I love the bean bags in my office; if I jump on them I often can't get out.... I start my proper training after half term and am very excited. I can already sit, lie down and am walking quite well on the lead. I will do anything provided I get some chicken.....

What is your biggest challenge in this role?

I think I might be quite busy and I must make sure that I get enough rest and sleep so that I can always be relaxed and refreshed. I am looking forward to working with young people who might be sad or having a difficult time. I know that I will be able to cheer them up and respond to them with unconditional love.

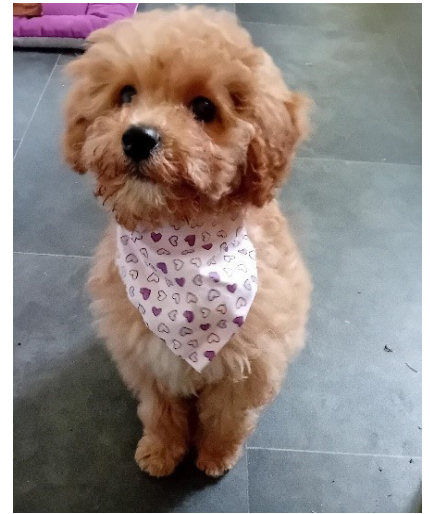
Tell us something no one knows about you....

I am very good at pretending. In the garden I react to my name and bound towards my owners. Sometimes, when we are out, I simply pretend that I have forgotten that and don't bother coming back....(Sshhh – don't tell anyone)

OK – Coco, over to you!

Tell us your journey – how did you get to be at Wellington?

I was born in Wales but when I was 8 weeks old I went to live with the Kirkhams. I missed my Mum and my brothers and sisters at first, but I soon settled in with my new family and I loved all the attention they gave me. I started training as a therapy dog straight away – my new human 'Mum' made it really fun and gave me lots of tasty treats while I was learning, so I really enjoyed it and was always keen to practise. I started to come into school when I was about 6 months old and I loved it straight away. I met so many people and I made lots of doggy friends too – my best dog friend is Peggy who lives in the Hopetoun – we have so much fun running around together in the woods.



Do you enjoy being a therapy dog?

I absolutely love being a therapy dog. I love putting on my jacket and coming in to school every day because I get to meet lots of people who like to play with me and give me cuddles. I'm never bored, and I love showing off my clever tricks because I earn lots of treats and help to make people smile. I can sense when people are feeling sad, and I love to cheer them up by giving them my paw to hold or letting them give me a cuddle. People seem to find it much easier to talk about problems while sitting with me and stroking my soft coat helps my visitors to feel less anxious and stressed. My Mum always makes sure that I'm ok too - I get to go for lots of walks around campus and I have a lovely comfy bed in MFL 3 where I can have a little snooze if I get tired.



What is your biggest challenge in this role?

My biggest challenge is not being able to solve everyone's problems, but I do, at least, help them to feel a bit better, even if only for a little while. I also find it quite hard not to chase squirrels and pigeons when I'm working, but I do get a treat for resisting the temptation.

Tell us something that no one knows about you.....

I once stole a three-layered chocolate cake from the dining room table. I told my family that I was very sorry, but I didn't really mean it - the cake was delicious.

Introducing Lynne Franklin

Lynne, tell us your story - how have you ended up working at Eagle House?

I had long ago worked out that I had one of those faces people love to talk to so I completed lots of counselling courses and voluntary work, whilst raising a family. I had intended to pursue a mediation path, but ended up coming to Eagle House about 16 years ago to do one term working with a lovely little boy called Charlie who had an acquired brain injury and needed one on one support in the classroom. I ended up working with Charlie for nearly 3 years until he left to go to Bredon School. Andrew Barnard asked me to stay on and I seem to have been here ever since!

Can you tell us a bit about the role you play at Eagle House and within the Well Being Hub?

My role at Eagle House is emotional support in whatever form that takes and in the Well Being Hub it is to offer support to any child - or sometimes adult! - that needs it. I'm there to listen and to help to find ways of dealing with situations or feelings and emotions that have brought the person to see me. Sometimes it is just to offer a chance to be heard and other times it is to talk over possible ways of dealing with things or sometimes I am a first contact, and we can make a plan together of who we need to talk to next.

What do you think your biggest challenge will be and how will you aim to overcome it?

I think my biggest challenge will be getting the message across to everyone in school that looking after your mental health should be as much a part of your daily routine as brushing your teeth and washing your face. We all need to be as kind to ourselves as we are to each other. I aim to overcome this with the help of everyone in school all working together to make sure that this happens.

What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?

When I am not working, I like to walk accompanied by my nine-month-old Briard puppy, Shabi. He already weighs 35 kg which is about the same weight as a fully grown kangaroo, and he bounces around like one too! I keep trying to tire him out so that he is less naughty at home but it's not working out too well for me!

Tell us one thing that no one at Eagle House will know about you.

I make the worst gravy in the world despite my Mum having patiently taught me for years. On one occasion a friend of ours who is a chef threw the entire saucepan of gravy, saucepan and all, out of the back door and started again from scratch!



IN THE SPOTLIGHT **Supporting and listening to your children,** **by Steph Evers**

Getting a child or young person to talk to you about something that they CLEARLY do not want to talk to you about can feel like the most frustrating and hardest task we come across as parents and professionals working with young people. However, we learnt from our recent Staying Safe survey that our students are more likely to talk to you, as parents about issues in school than they are us as adults working with them. This is why it is imperative that you, as parents, feel equipped to encourage your children to talk to you about their issues and know how to manage them within our school context. In the article below, we look at some of the ways in which you can help foster a relationship with your child where they come to you with the 'big stuff' such as bullying and abuse, as well as the smaller things that can impact their everyday wellbeing.

The strategies that encourage children to open up will often differ depending on their age and stage of development as well as their personal preferences. However, one common theme that we find with many of the children and young people we work with across Eagle House and Wellington is that they will often feel more at ease to talk when they are doing something else. Examples of this could be, colouring in, walking the dog, playing sport or anything that your child likes to do.

Younger children may express their worries through play. Observing their play to look out for signs of distress or immersing yourself in their imaginary world can be helpful tools in understanding what is going on for your child. You might find that they are mimicking exchanges they have had with their friends throughout the day, they might even be modelling those behaviours they have seen with their siblings. In those situations, it is important to remain curious in your response rather than chastising or criticising the behaviour. Trying to understand the 'why' is important when we think about whether you need to raise the concerns with the school.

As children get older and move into the prep school age group, the way that they communicate will change and develop. In this age group you might find that they are more willing to tell you what their perception of what is happening is. A word of caution here, perception and reality at this age and stage of development can be poles apart. It is important to accept your child's perception and validate their feelings, whilst also being open to the fact that it might not match the reality they are experiencing.

By the time young people come to us at Wellington, you may see another change in communication style. Your lovely, bubbly, communicative child may have become a sullen teenager overnight. Sometimes the instinct can be to let them get on with it and emerge as a fully eloquent 20 year old, however that is less than ideal! Coming alongside your child is really important here and putting in the work to understand their world is key. Take time to understand what their friendships are like, what music they listen to, what apps they use, find out what (or who) they love. You can do this by approaching conversations in an open, curious and non-judgemental way. Teenagers are especially aware of the way in which we as adults react to certain circumstances. When your teen brings you a problem, be that big or small try to be mindful of your reactions. If they perceive you have overreacted to a situation, they are less likely to tell if something else happens, which can leave them in a vulnerable place.

For all ages making sure that you maintain that open, trusting relationship with your children is the cornerstone of ensuring that they come to you when something happens to them.

If at any point you become worried about your child, or another child it is important that you remember that you are not alone. Wellington and Eagle House have pastoral staff that can support you and your child with whatever you need. If you are not sure if you are worried or not, the Safeguarding Teams at either School would be happy to talk to you on a 'no names basis'.

Further information advice and support can be found below:

[Talking to your teenager - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Talking to your child about feelings - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Problems at school | How To Deal With Problems At School | YoungMinds](#)

[School anxiety and refusal: How parents can help their child get through tough times - BBC Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize](#)

Youth Vaping

by Rebecca Mills (Eagle House DDSL & Year 1 teacher)

I recently attended a safeguarding course with local Bracknell primary and secondary schools. I was shocked (and perhaps naive) to hear many schools reporting that children as young as 9 in their settings were known to vape. Figures from NHS England show there were 15 cases where children aged nine or under needed to be admitted to hospital because of vaping in 2023, this was up from 12 in 2022 and two the year before that.

The DfE state that the number of children using vapes has tripled in the last three years and there is strong evidence to suggest that cheap and easy-to-use disposable vapes are partly to blame. Children's awareness of promotion of vapes has also grown, particularly in shops

where more than half of all children report seeing e-cigarettes being promoted, and online where nearly a third report e-cigarette promotion on sites like TikTok and YouTube. We know it is illegal to sell vapes to under-18s and the boxes are clearly labelled. But, it's easy to see why certain products would appeal to children.

Thankfully, in January 2024 the government announced some positive action against children vaping. The sale and supply of disposable vapes is being banned in England, Scotland and Wales because of their appeal to young people. Alongside this, to make vapes less attractive to children, they are strengthening the regulation of vape flavours, packaging and how they are displayed in shops. There will also be an 'on the spot' fine of up to £100 when they spot the sale of tobacco and vapes to children in England and Wales. The ban is being introduced after a public consultation on smoking and vaping showed nearly 70 percent of respondents including parents, teachers, healthcare professionals were in favour of the measure.

Although this is very positive news there is no finite date on when this will be in place and the government have said there will need to be a buffer period for retailers to adjust.

As parents and as educational professionals we all need to be aware of the dangers and exposures that our young people may have had or will have to vaping in the future. With the appointment of a new Head of LFL (our PSHE programme) at Eagle House, we will be reviewing our curriculum and ensuring that these current issues are addressed in an age-appropriate programme which covers EYFS through to Year 8.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

An insight into the world of safeguarding at Wellington and Eagle House

Eagle House

Filtering & Monitoring systems: This term has seen a concerted effort to address various aspects of online safety and to promote healthy digital habits amongst our pupils.

Early on this term the Online Safety Team met along with Tony Whelton (Director of IT services and development at Wellington) and Andrew Milne (Senior IT infrastructure engineer at Wellington) in order to discuss and assess the effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring systems. This is a key aspect of safeguarding our young people at Eagle House and we were able to identify key areas for enhancement, emphasising proactive measures to mitigate online risks whilst the pupils are in our care.

Safer Internet Day: A highlight of the term was the observance of Safer Internet Day, the UK's biggest celebration of online safety with a focus on promoting the safe and positive use of digital technology. We marked the occasion with all LFL lessons throughout the school covering online safety sessions where pupils were encouraged to reflect on their online behaviours, recognise potential risks and learn strategies to navigate the digital world safely. Our Digital Leaders were also introduced to the community via our social media channels – these are 8 pupils (Year 5 and 7) who are completing an 8 week Digital Leader course with Childnet. We look forward to the work they will do throughout the school in the summer term and beyond.

LFL Digital Matters sessions: Jess also delivered an LFL session to our Year 5 and 6 pupils around the issue of healthy online relationships using Digital Matters material. Parents are encouraged to use this free platform which allows your child to explore their understanding of how to use the internet safely while still having fun. To access the platform use the following link: <https://internetmatters.com/digital-matters> and select 'Begin as a parent.' You'll then be able to see the range of topics along with resources for you to help support your child's learning.

BSA Safeguarding Audit: Rounding off the term, Eagle House underwent a safeguarding audit conducted by the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA). Claire Dan (Director of Safeguarding and SACPA) spent a day getting under the skin of Eagle House – touring the school and meeting with groups of children from EYFS to Year 7 and groups of staff. She has provided valuable insights into the school's safeguarding practices, highlighting areas of excellence and identifying opportunities for further enhancement which we will action over the coming months.

Eagle House Feeling Safe Survey results (Dee Guest): We asked all Eagle House students to complete a Feeling Safe survey in November 2023. Children from Year 3 to Year 8 complete the survey independently with their tutors who are on hand to answer any questions and children from nursery to year 2 complete the survey with their Pastoral Year Heads (Jane White and Claire Rhodes). Where the Eagle House survey differs from the College is that it is not anonymous – this gives us the opportunity to be able to talk to the children about any concerns that have been raised. We are working hard to ensure that not only do the children feel heard but we want them to see that we are wanting to act on their concerns and for them to see the changes.

Highlights from the Eagle House survey were:

- All EYFS children felt safe at school and were able to name several people that they trusted to talk to if they were worried. They all felt that there were people at school who noticed if they did something well.
- All Year 1 and 2 children agreed that there were people in school who cared for them and could name someone they could talk to if they were worried.
- The children in Year 3 and 4 were able to identify an amazing range of activities and lessons across a wide spectrum where they felt happy and fulfilled at school. The children were all very open in their responses and their tutors were able to have meaningful conversations with them about how they can be supported in school – these coaching style conversations are such a valuable teaching opportunity, and we are starting to help the children understand that asking for help is always beneficial and a lifelong skill.
- 91% of the Upper school children felt that if they felt unsafe or unhappy they had someone they could talk to. This is a big improvement on last year when only 84% of children felt the same way. Any child who felt that they were being bullied or that someone was being unkind to them has been spoken to by their tutor and an action plan put in place. There were several children who displayed courage by raising their peers as someone that they were concerned about and felt they needed support.

Our action plan includes the following points:

- Addressing feelings amongst senior pupils that girls are treated differently to boys, this has been highlighted to teachers.
- Helping children understand how they are recognised in different ways for their achievements.
- Improving site security – many children gave excellent ideas on how they felt we could help them feel safer, these have all been considered and have either been implemented or form part of our action plan.
- Improving supervision in both change rooms and during playtimes ensuring that duty staff are visible and able to manage situations as they arise.
- Tackling the ‘snitch’ idea that the children have about telling adults about unkindness – this is a culture shift and building trust between children and adults is key.

As Ed Venables has highlighted, we are working hard with teachers and children to build relationships, it is through relationships and a culture of trust that we can ensure that all children at Eagle House feel safe and able to flourish!

Wellington College

The 'Staying Safe survey results': In October, students completed that annual 'staying safe' survey. This is a completely anonymous survey undertaken by the safeguarding team is carried out in order to take a deep dive into many aspects of College life but especially around whether they feel safe, what they would do if in a certain situation as well as analyse any trends and patterns, particularly around child-on-child abuse. We always listen and respond to the results; this is not a tick box exercise but done to inform the safeguarding annual development plan and also see where we can improve the student experience. The key highlights were:

- A progressive upward trend of students feeling able to report any incident (involving a member of staff or a student) to a member of staff.
- Passive by-standing continues to decrease (those who are most likely to ignore an incident of unkindness were 4th and 5th form boys).
- Students are more likely to confide in a parent if there has been an incident involving a member of staff, but more likely to speak to a member of staff or friend if an incident has involved another student.
- House staff – especially HMs – are the most likely staff that students turn to for help and support.
- Feeling intimidated by larger groups of students (both boys and girls) was highlighted as something which made pupils feel more unsafe and the dining hall was also stressed as a source of anxiety, particularly the younger years.

An action plan has been written and several pieces of work are already in progress; our works team have improved (and continue to improve) campus lighting in the areas that students highlighted as a concern and there is a working party looking at the dining hall space and safety along the Kilometre. Recognising that you – our parents – are often the main source of support to your young people, Steph has written a piece on building those positive and open relationships with your children. These are just a few of the many action points that we will look to work on over the coming months. More information can be found in the podcast (link given above) and some of the key statistics are listed below:

How safe do you feel at Wellington? (out of 10) 8.5 (8.7 in 2022)

94% students said they felt they were respected and treated fairly by staff (91% last year)

94% students said they were respected and treated fairly by their peers and older pupils (92% last year)

How likely are you to report a member of staff being unkind to you (out of 10)? 7.1 (6.6 last year)

How likely are you to report another student for being unkind to you (out of 10)? 6.4 (6.0 last year)

How many of our students have been sexually harassed in the last year? 9% (2021: 27%; 2022: 16%) What percentage of these incidents had been carried out by a Wellingtonian? 19% (2021: 69%; 2022: 31%)

% of students who reported being bullied currently (including previous data)

Year	%
20	6.0
2010	4.4
2013	4.8
2015	6.1
2017	2.5
2020	4.0
2021	2.7
2022	2.2
2023	2.5

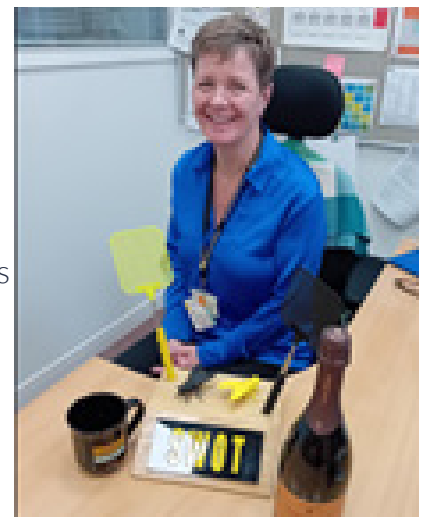
Safer Internet Day: Safer Internet Day (6th February) was also recognised at Wellington. Several students spoke to the whole school about what the day meant and how they could make a difference. As part of Safer Internet Day, the NSPCC launched this very helpful resource page for parents about how you can go about talking to your children about all online matters – [Keeping Children Safe Online](#).

Parental Online Safety Group: The group met for the first time at the start of the Lent Term. Although disappointing that more interest was not shown from the parental body, the small number of parents who did meet discussed a variety of issues and it was exceptionally helpful to get feedback about experiences and provision. One parent mentioned how useful Qustodio was with regards monitoring and controlling social media use on mobile devices. This is something all parents should be aware of and [this site](#) offers some useful advice about all of the parental control apps that are available in 2024.

Mental Health

The L6th mental health ambassadors have had a busy term. The week beginning 5th February was children’s mental health awareness week and the ambassadors spoke to raise awareness of this in whole school assembly, and, with the theme of “My Voice Matters”, organised karaoke evenings in houses. Two of the ambassador chairs spoke with the communications team to help raise awareness in the wider community - ‘[Your Voice Matters](#)’ this [Children’s Mental Health Week](#) - Wellington College. In addition, some of the ambassadors met with the parent mental health committee to talk about their role, and all ambassadors have continued running events in their houses to help the mental health and wellbeing of students.

Safeguarding Winner of the Term (Michaelmas 2023): We were delighted to award Emma Chatterton with the SWOT in December. Emma joined the safeguarding team to help with the training admin and did a remarkable job in transferring all of the training data to the SCR tracker system in order to make the process more efficient. Sadly Emma has recently left the team in order to concentrate on a different project, but she will have left an important legacy. Dee Varcoe now takes over this important role.



New policies and updates: One of the main Government Guidance documents, “Working Together to Safeguard children” was updated in December. Although it did not directly impact any policy changes in the College, all references to the guidance needed to be updated. The DfE is currently consulting on the draft guidance for ‘Gender Questioning Children’. The consultation is [here](#). The College has had a Transgender Policy in place for several years now; in light of the draft guidance Naima Charlier has been amending the policy alongside the Safeguarding team and Katherine Baker (Director of Legal and Compliance). It is likely that the guidance will come into force on the 1st September 2024.

The transfer of safeguarding information to new schools is becoming ever more complex and it is important that we get this right – passing on relevant information to help a student in a new setting but also being mindful that we need to think about GDPR and not share – inadvertently – any information about another pupil as part of those records. We therefore have a new ‘Transfer of Information’ policy to ensure that we get this right. Another internal safeguarding protocol that we have put into place this term is a ‘Referral Checklist’. There are some issues that we are duty-bound to report to external authorities and, again, it is important that we get this right, making the correct level of referral and to the relevant area of Children’s Social Care. Our new checklist will ensure that we are correct in our referral process and are supporting the young person involved and parents whilst also fulfilling our duty of care and statutory responsibilities.

Departmental Visits: The team have a cyclical programme of visits to various departments in the College. This year we are focussing on the ‘non-teaching’ side of the College. These departments (ranging from Admissions to Finance and Administration to Cleaning – and all of those in between) completed an audit prior to the meetings which looked at the culture in their teams and their current level of safeguarding engagement. Steph and Delyth have really enjoyed the visits – they have been insightful and informative and we hope to be able to support this incredibly important area of College life more in the future. Our non-teaching staff are not only the beating heart of the school but they are also our ‘safeguarding eyes and ears’ – all need to have a high sense of awareness with regards their responsibility in this area and it is a real privilege to work alongside so many gifted and committed people.

Cyber Security training: At the start of term, Tony Whelton (Director of IT) and Delyth delivered training to staff on this important area. Whilst also highlighting to staff how important their own actions are (defending against phishing attempts, using strong passwords, securing devices), Tony also cited the sorts of threats that are posed to Wellington’s IT network on a daily basis and how he and his team ensure that we are protected. Chesley Cole (online safety committee and teacher of IT) has also delivered two excellent talks this term to the Middle School on the same topic.

Safeguarding email themes: All staff receive a weekly email which takes a deep dive into a particular area of safeguarding. Over the last few months, subject areas which have been covered include:

- Safeguarding adults
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Communications and record keeping
- What happens next?’ - after a disclosure or a referral
- Banter versus bullying in sport
- Confidentiality – what does this mean in safeguarding?

Wellington College and Eagle House – joint work

Courses: Continued professional learning is an area which is taken very seriously at Wellington. Not only do our safeguarding team have ongoing training in a variety of different areas (for example Steph Evers is currently completing her SACPA Advanced Certificate in Safeguarding Practice, and Delyth is completing her NSPCC Accredited trainers assessment), but all staff complete both statutory and recommended safeguarding training over the year as well. We try and make these as relevant to Wellington as possible and in March, Delyth delivers VBA (Values, Behaviours and Attitudes) interview training to our international schools. This term, a new strand of EDI questions are also being trialled as part of the process. An accredited Lucy Faithfull Safer Recruitment trainer, she also delivers the first bespoke course to Eagle House and Wellington staff next term.

Transition work: The transition between schools can often be fraught with anxiety for both young people and parents. We were delighted that the extensive work that Wellington has put into this area was recognised when the Safeguarding team were awarded the ‘SACPA outstanding initiative award’ for their work in this area. The team are looking to work closely with Eagle House on this area over the next few months and also extend the work to new 6th Form students as well.

Annual Audit: Always keen to improve and ensure that we are meeting the needs of our whole community, Wellington College and Eagle House will start their annual external safeguarding audit in the second half of the Lent Term. This year, we have chosen the safeguarding arm of the Boarding School’s Association to undertake this piece of work. Several staff from the BSA will be forensically analysing our policies and procedures, but also spending periods of time in school to ensure that they can feel the culture and look at the interactions between staff and students. As part of these visits, the students will be invited to see the auditors at various times: student voice is incredibly important. The audit is not about passing with flying colours or giving ourselves a pat on the back for all we do. It is designed to find holes and areas for improvement so that we can continue to strive for excellence in all we do.

What’s going on in safeguarding in the UK?

A closer look at CTE Earlier this term, the Telegraph published an [article](#) suggesting that rugby is a form of child abuse. Chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) is a brain disorder likely caused by repeated head injuries and although first described 100 years ago, it continues to be a serious risk and is associated with high impact sports, such as boxing, American football and rugby. You can understand more about CTE in this [YouTube clip](#). CTE has recently received media attention due to the growing number of lawsuits; the NFL has paid out almost 1 million pounds to former players suffering the effects of sport-induced brain trauma and high profile rugby players are now also taking legal action over brain injuries.

A recent paper (you can read it [here](#)) written by Jack Hardwicke has questioned whether it is right for children to participate in sports that intentionally feature impact, arguing that allowing under-18s to participate in high impact sports should be viewed as a form of child brain abuse. As you can imagine there are many sides to the debate; opponents of prohibiting children from playing high-impact sports argue that boys are naturally aggressive and heavy contact sport helps them to learn how to control their feelings. The NSPCC has said that physical neglect is a form of abuse that occurs if a child is not kept safe and allowing children to participate in sports whilst being unaware of the harm they can cause is “a failure to keep children safe.”

Wellington has a strong rugby tradition; many of the students who play (both boys and girls) love it and continue to play when they have left the School. It will be interesting to see how this debate continues as the Government Ministers are asked to privilege children’s brains over corporate sporting bodies.

You can watch a heated debate on Lunchtime Live at the beginning of February on this issue [here](#).

'Concussion – is rugby safe for kids?' a Newsround report can be viewed [here](#).

E-guarding – A guide for parents

Karl Hopwood podcast: The safeguarding team were lucky enough to be joined by Karl Hopwood at the end of last term. We looked into the current trends and patterns surrounding online safety and why it is incredibly hard to engage parents with this topic. You can listen to the podcast [here](#).

Safer Internet Day resources: Childnet released this resource: 'A conversation guide to talking about online issues with my child' [here](#). You can also read the research report which provided the basis for the Safer Internet Day theme [here](#).

Cyber Choices programme: Led by the National Crime Agency. The Cyber Choices programme is offering a series of webinars to parents with children aged 7 – 18 years old in order to help parents and guardians to understand: what computer misuse is, what the risks to young people are, to recognise some of the indicators that young people may be involved in committing cybercrimes, and how the Cyber Choices programme supports at-risk individuals. The registration links are below:

[March 4th 11am](#)

[March 4th 8pm](#)

Talking to girls: Parents are urged not to delay speaking to girls about online safety. You can read more [here](#).

AI and children: The Children's Commissioner for England has published a blog post on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the UK and the impact on children. The Commissioner raises concerns around potential risks that AI poses for child protection such as: cyberbullying and sexual harassment; generative child sexual abuse material; and impacts on children's learning. Read the blog [here](#).

Internet Watch Foundation TALK checklist: Research done by the Internet Watch Foundation, shows that 1 in every 4 teens has received unwanted sexual messages online. Awareness of how to mitigate this issue is vital to securing the young people of tomorrow, and to help in that endeavour the Internet Watch Foundation has created a resource pack. You can access the resource [here](#).

OfCom- How video-sharing platforms protect children from encountering harmful videos: [This report](#) looks at how social media platforms are protecting children from accessing potentially harmful videos.

Better Internet for Kids: This is an [excellent resource page](#) for parents and teachers. There are deep dives into topics such as sexting, online gaming and algorithms.

Teenagers and social media: How teenagers navigate the nuances of social media and what adults can learn from them. Read the article [here](#).

Undressed: The Undressed song by the London Grid for Learning is designed to educate the youngest of children on what should and should not be done online. To find out more, click [here](#).

Instagram and other social media checklists: Privacy is optional on Instagram, and there is a wide spectrum of privacy options. To understand these options better the Southwest Grid for Learning has published resources aimed at achieving this goal. Please click on the [link](#) to find out more.

What is doxing? A guide for parents. Find it [here](#).

JOIN THE DEBATE.....

The Guardian is interested to hear views from UK parents about boys' attitudes towards girls and what they believe is shaping them. You can share your experiences [here](#).

Safeguarding Initiative Award

Read more about Wellington's safeguarding team winning the Safeguarding Initiative Award for a second year running [here](#).

