NEWPORT GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Keeping children safe

A guide for parents and carers: Recognising concerns, starting conversations and finding help

Immediate danger or a life-threatening emergency: call 999. Do not wait for a response from school.

You do not need to be certain that abuse has happened before asking for advice or reporting a concern. Small pieces of information can help build a clearer picture of a child's needs.

In this guide

- Reporting concerns and getting help
- Recognising concerns and listening to your child
- Domestic abuse and healthy relationships
- Sexual abuse, exploitation and missing children
- Online safety and radicalisation
- Mental health, family support and further information

This guide supports, but does not replace, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. It brings together advice from the specialist organisations linked throughout. It is a school information guide, not a government publication.

Reporting concerns and getting help

Contacting NGHS

Telephone 01952 797550 and ask for the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy. Explain that you are reporting a safeguarding concern. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Hayley Birch. Students can speak to any trusted member of staff.

For urgent concerns outside school hours or during holidays, contact children's services or the police directly. Do not rely on school email for an urgent response.

Children's services

- Telford & Wrekin Family Connect 01952 385385, option 1 Outside office hours: 01952 676500
- Family Connect: reporting a concern
- Shropshire First Point of Contact 0345 678 9021 Outside office hours: 0345 678 9040, option 1
- Shropshire Council: safeguarding and reporting routes

For children living elsewhere, contact children's services in their home local authority. If you are unsure which service to use, ask for advice rather than delaying.

Other reporting and advice routes

Police: 999 in an emergency; 101 for non-emergency concerns. NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 for advice about a child. Check its website for current opening hours; do not wait for the helpline if urgent action is needed.

NSPCC Helpline: contact details and opening hours

If you remain worried: contact the service again, explain what has changed and seek further advice. Do not assume that another person has shared your concern.

Recognising concerns and listening to your child

Changes in behaviour do not necessarily mean abuse, but they can show that a child needs help. Some children find it difficult to explain what is happening, and others may not recognise an experience as harmful.

Changes worth exploring

• Becoming unusually withdrawn, anxious, aggressive or fearful of particular people or places.

• Going missing, avoiding friends or showing a marked change in behaviour or personality.

• Unexplained injuries, persistent hunger, poor hygiene, unsuitable clothing or unmet health needs.

Consider the child's circumstances and communication needs. Seek advice rather than dismissing a change or trying to diagnose its cause yourself.

- NSPCC: spotting the signs of abuse
- NSPCC: recognising neglect

If your child tells you something worrying

• Listen calmly and give them time. Reassure them that telling you was the right thing to do and that abuse is never their fault.

• Take them seriously. Avoid suggesting answers or pressing them for details.

• Explain that you may need to tell someone who can help; do not promise secrecy.

• Make a factual note as soon as possible, using their words where you can. Share the concern promptly with the appropriate service.

• Do not confront the person alleged to have caused harm or investigate the concern yourself.

NSPCC: what to do when a child reveals abuse

Domestic abuse and healthy relationships

Abuse is not always physical. Fear, controlling behaviour and isolation can be warning signs. If someone is changing how they behave because they are frightened of a partner's reaction, specialist advice can help.

Getting support safely

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, is free and available 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. It supports women experiencing domestic abuse and people concerned about them, and can discuss options and safety.

If you think your device or browsing is monitored, consider using a safer device to seek advice. Ask a specialist service about safe next steps rather than confronting someone who may put you or a child at risk.

Refuge: National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Teenage relationships

Make space for conversations about respect, boundaries and consent. Young people should feel able to say no, change their mind, maintain friendships and ask for help without pressure or fear.

Take concerns about controlling behaviour, threats, sexual pressure or harm seriously, whether they happen face to face or online. Contact the safeguarding team or children's services for advice; call 999 if there is immediate danger.

NSPCC: advice when a child reveals abuse

Keep the conversation open. A calm response can make it easier for a young person to ask for help again. They do not have to manage a harmful relationship on their own.

Sexual abuse, exploitation and missing children

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. A young person may be manipulated, pressured or threatened, including through someone they believe cares about them. Harm can happen online or in person. Responsibility always lies with the person causing the harm.

NSPCC: child sexual exploitation

Report concerns promptly to children's services or the police. For concerns about online sexual abuse or grooming, parents and carers can use the CEOP Safety Centre. If you have already reported to the police or children's social care, a separate CEOP report is not needed.

CEOP Safety Centre: advice and reporting

Barnardo's: sexual abuse and exploitation advice for parents

Criminal exploitation and county lines

Children may be coerced into carrying drugs, money or weapons, stealing or other criminal activity. Exploitation can involve threats, violence, gifts or apparent friendship. Children need protection and support even when they appear to have agreed to take part.

Possible warning signs include unexplained money or possessions, repeated absences, injuries, secrecy and changes in who a child spends time with. These signs are not proof; seek advice and share concerns.

NSPCC: criminal exploitation and gangs

If your child goes missing

You do not have to wait 24 hours to report someone missing. Contact the police promptly. Call 999 if the child is in immediate danger or vulnerable to harm; otherwise use 101 or the police reporting route. Share information that could help locate them.

Police.uk: what to do when someone goes missing

Missing People: support for children and families

Online safety and radicalisation

Everyday online safety

Talk regularly about the apps, games and websites your child uses. Set up age-appropriate privacy settings and parental controls together, check that they work and review them as your child grows. Controls help reduce risk but do not replace conversations.

Agree how your child can tell you about something upsetting. Help them understand how to report harmful content and unwanted contact.

Government online safety campaign: parental controls

Sexual images, threats and pressure

If a sexual image of a child is shared or used to threaten them, respond calmly and seek help. Do not ask them to send you the image, and do not copy, forward or circulate it. Contact the school safeguarding team or police for advice.

Under-18s can use Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation's Report Remove tool to seek removal of sexual images shared online. Report grooming, coercion or sexual blackmail to the police or CEOP.

NSPCC: Report Remove

CEOP: reporting online sexual abuse

Radicalisation and harmful influences

If you are worried that someone is being drawn towards terrorism or extremist harm, ask for advice from the safeguarding team, local authority or police. Prevent is a safeguarding route for assessing concerns and arranging support.

Keep conversations calm and curious. Concerns should focus on harm and risk, rather than assumptions about a child's religion, identity or interest in current affairs. Use 999 for immediate danger.

GOV.UK: help with radicalisation concerns

Educate Against Hate: parent and carer resources

Mental health and support for families

Seeking help early

If you are worried about your child's emotional wellbeing, speak to their GP or the school pastoral or safeguarding team. YoungMinds provides parent and carer information on a wide range of mental health concerns.

YoungMinds: support for parents and carers

Urgent mental health help in England

For urgent mental health help, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option, or ask for an urgent GP appointment.

Call 999 or go to A&E if someone's life is at risk, they have taken an overdose or seriously injured themselves, or you cannot keep them or someone else safe.

NHS: where to get urgent mental health help

Practical and family support

Let school know if difficulties at home are affecting your child. Our pastoral and wellbeing staff can discuss support and help identify appropriate services. Family Connect can advise Telford & Wrekin families; Shropshire families can ask First Point of Contact about early help. Contact details are on page 2.

School information and sources

NGHS Care & Support pages

NGHS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2026-27

The linked specialist sources throughout this guide were checked on 30 October 2026. Service details can change; use the organisation's website for current availability. Do not delay urgent action to check a link.