



# Whitefriars School

# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2022



## Latest Advice for Parents and Carers

Welcome to our first edition of the Whitefriars Safeguarding Newsletter. We aim to provide you with the latest, relevant help and advice on safeguarding issues we feel will be of importance to you. This edition will visit concerns with the dangers of synthetic cannabis sweets plus the connection that they have in County Lines recruitment. We will also cover concerns with the computer game Poppy Playtime that you may have heard of.

## Whitefriars Safeguarding Team

The Whitefriars Safeguarding Team have been trained to an advanced level on all aspects of safeguarding. The team is available to any pupil, parent or school staff member to discuss and report any safeguarding concerns. The team members are as follows:



Mrs Lawes  
Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead



Mrs Payne  
Deputy DSL and  
SENCO



Mr Watson  
Deputy DSL  
and Headteacher

## NSPCC

If you're worried about drugs or your child's behaviour, you could speak to your GP. They will be able to refer your child for local support and treatment services refer them for counselling talk to you about how you or other family members are coping.  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/talking-drugs-alcohol/children-and-drugs/>



Article 19: You should not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe.

## Value of the month



## Respect

- **Being polite**
- **Considering the feelings of others**
- **Understanding that there is value in unexpected places**



Article 13 : Your right to have information.

## Contact Details

Are all your contact details up to date? If you change your home phone/ email/ mobile number, please let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details. You can email the school office at: [office@whitefriars.harrow.sch.uk](mailto:office@whitefriars.harrow.sch.uk) or telephone the school office on 0208 427 2080.

## FRANK

0800 77 66 00 [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)  
Friendly, confidential drugs advice

Chat Text 82111

Text a question and FRANK will text you back.

telephone: 03001236600

<https://www.talktofrank.com/get-help/concerned-about-a-child#should-i-be-worried-about-my-child-doing-drugs>



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## Synthetic Cannabis Sweets (THC) – ‘Gummies’



There has been a case recently in East London of a 23 year-old woman who died after eating a synthetic cannabis (THC) sweet. The sweets were bought online and they were delivered to her door. She experienced loss of consciousness (resulting in death) and the second individual experienced pain and violent vomiting.

They each ate one sweet and immediately felt unwell. Edibles, also known as ‘gummies’, are infused with THC, the primary psychoactive component of cannabis. Edibles take between 1-3 hours to have an effect because food is absorbed into the bloodstream through the liver. Because it takes longer, the user may end up consuming larger amounts of the edibles to experience a response. The manufacturers of the edibles are unregulated, and the content of synthetic cannabis in each sweet may not always be accurate. They are illegal and, because of the child-friendly packaging, they can pose a risk of accidental consumption. Parents should monitor food packaging/wrappers at home looking for wording such as THC as this may suggest the items may contain these ingredients. Be mindful of the medical needs of your child. Call 101 for non-emergencies and attend A&E or call 999 for emergencies.

## County Lines Recruitment



A warning to parents from the police is that new findings show county lines gangs are targeting children with cannabis sweets to lure them into the illegal activity of drug dealing. Forces in the east of England say over a six-month period in 2021 there were almost 150 reports of the sweets being found. Police are now concerned that the tactic is on the rise as county lines gangs use them to tempt young people into working for them. The cannabis sweets are laced with mood-altering ingredients which can cause side effects such as the loss of consciousness or coordination, hallucinations, nausea/vomiting, lethargy, and heart problems.

They are also illegal and anyone in possession of a product containing Class B drugs risks arrest and prosecution. Parents need to be aware of these products and look twice at any sweets or chocolates their children may have, as well as being alert to the signs that children may be involved in county drugs line activity. The sweets often contain high levels of drugs, and it can be easy to overdose on them, making them particularly dangerous.

The full list of side-effects include:

- Loss of consciousness
- Disorientation and confusion
- Hallucinations
- Nausea/vomiting
- Lethargy
- Heart problems
- Anxiety and paranoia
- Changes in perception



Article 33: You should be protected from dangerous drugs



## Poppy Playtime and Huggy Wuggy



Last year, INEQ carried out an Online safety Review on the game Poppy Playtime. Huggy Wuggy, one of the game's most popular characters has brought new safeguarding concerns due to online challenges and disturbing content involving the character.

### Huggy Wuggy Warnings

Although the game was released last year, there has been an increase in the creation of Huggy Wuggy related content, and also reports of playground-style challenges based on the character. Parents are being warned that children may be viewing graphic fan-made videos that are popping up on platforms such as YouTube and TikTok. Some of the videos feature songs together with animation, designed to be upsetting and 'creepy', or jump-scare animations.



### New Game Release

One suspected reason for the recent increase in content and popularity could be that a second game is rumoured to be getting released very soon. A new trailer has been released showing the addition of new characters, including Mommy Long Legs and Kissy Missy. Like Huggy Wuggy, these new characters have fairly innocent-sounding names but could be visually disturbing and upsetting for children.

### What are the Risks?

There are numerous risks that can arise from children and young people being exposed to frightening images.

- Added anxiety and stress – Children and young people are still growing and learning. Horror games could damage that growth by creating unnecessary anxiety and stress.
- Intrusive thoughts – if children play this game or watch the characters, it could cause them to lose focus, sleep or become suddenly terrified of something that they weren't before.

## Online Safety Websites

Please see the links below for useful websites to help you to keep your children safe online:



[Parents: Supporting Young People Online \(Leaflets\) | Childnet](#)

Information and advice for parents and carers supporting young people online. Leaflets are also available in other languages.



[internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org)

Expert support and practical tips to help children benefit from connected technology and the internet safely and smartly.