

Meet the Form Tutors Year 8 Parents/Carers September 2024



Parkside Middle School

Embrace Opportunity. Nurture Success. Inspire Futures.

High-School ready

Responsibility

- ✓ For their own learning
- ✓ For their own actions and behaviours
- ✓ For their progress
- ✓ Additional roles and responsibilities

Independence

- ✓ Encouraging organisation
- ✓ Allowing some increasing freedoms
- ✓ Ensuring that there are still clear boundaries

Adolescence – the teenage brain

- Adolescence is a time of significant growth and development inside the teenage brain.
- The brain becomes more efficient, pruning unused parts and strengthening others.
- The decision-making part of the brain, responsible for your ability to plan and think about the consequences of actions, solve problems and control impulses begins to change and continues into early adulthood.
- Because the prefrontal cortex is still developing, teenagers rely on the amygdala to make decisions and solve problems more than adults do. The amygdala is associated with emotions, impulses, aggression and instinctive behaviour- the meerkat.
- The emotional part of the brain is more active in adolescence.



Chemical changes in the brain

Dopamine

- Increases more sharply than in adulthood.
- Seek out intense / thrilling stimulation – failure to consider risks.
- Resting baseline is lower – this is why they often feel 'bored'.
- Need for higher levels of stimulation to feel engaged.

Melatonin

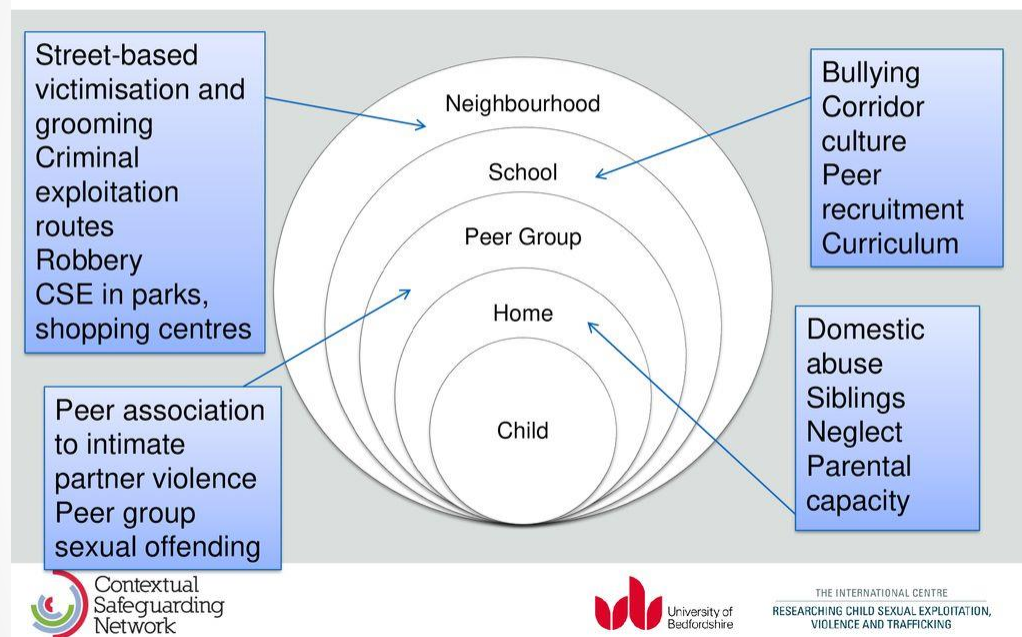
- Occurs naturally in the body – controls how and when you sleep.
- Significant changes in levels which will affect sleeping patterns.
- Sleeping patterns also influenced by social factors.

Supporting our teenagers

- We need to be a "rock and resource".
- Friendship issues.
- Firm and consistent boundaries.
- Monitor and manage social / peer pressures – give them a break from their phones by enforcing a clear 'down' time.
- Support them to have regular sleep pattern – gaming until late at night or having access to phones in bedroom will not be helpful to this.

Contextual Safeguarding

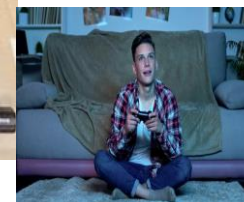
Contextual dynamics of abuse, vulnerability and risk (Firmin, 2015)



- As young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family. For example, in school, in the local community, in their peer groups or online. Children and young people may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks.
- Contextual safeguarding looks at how we can best understand these risks, engage with children and help to keep them safe.
- Anti-social behaviour and violence and sexual offences are the highest reported crimes in Bromsgrove.



Young people who vape are 3 times as likely to take up smoking.



82% rise in online grooming crimes against children in the last 5 years

[Contextual safeguarding | NSPCC Learning](#)



There are an estimated 500,000 online predators active each day. Children between the ages of 12 and 15 are especially susceptible to be groomed or manipulated by adults they meet online

Almost 34,000 online grooming crimes against children were recorded by UK police in 2023

Parents and carers should be vigilant to any signs that a pupil might be exposed to safeguarding concerns.

Some common signs that a pupil has been exposed to safeguarding issues include:

- displaying disruptive or anti-social behaviour
- being bullied or bullying others
- having low attendance at school
- being involved in, or at risk of, offending
- having poor general health
- having anxiety, depression or other mental health issues
- misusing drugs or alcohol
- having a particularly challenging relationship with parents/carers
- appearing to be unusually independent of their parents/carers
- experiencing difficulties at home
- periods where the child goes 'missing'

For more information, visit the [NSPCC website](#).

There are a variety of issues that pupils could be exposed to...

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Child Criminal exploitation
[Child Sexual Exploitation & How to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC](#)
- Child Criminal Exploitation
[Criminal exploitation and gangs | NSPCC](#)
- County Lines
[Protecting children from county lines | NSPCC Learning](#)
- Child-on-child abuse
[Child on child abuse – Safeguarding Network](#)

Video link [Parents Protect - Harmful behaviour in young people and children](#)

- Mental health
[How to Help Children Suffering From Depression & Anxiety | NSPCC](#)
- FGM (Female genital mutilation 'FGM' involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or another injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons)
[Female Genital Mutilation - Prevent & Protect | NSPCC](#)
- Grooming
[Grooming: recognising the signs | NSPCC Learning](#)
- Sharing of inappropriate images (As pupils start to explore the Internet, they may come across content that isn't suitable for their age group or that may upset them or worry them)
[Inappropriate or explicit content | NSPCC](#)
- Sexual harassment (Sexual harassment is unwanted attention of a sexual nature).
[Understanding Sexual Behaviour in Children | NSPCC](#)
- Domestic Abuse
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

Safeguarding Team

- Mrs. Jenkin – Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Mr. Swaffield and Mrs. Varley – Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)
- Mrs. Mirowska – Thrive Practitioner/Senior Mental Health Lead
- Mrs. Jenkin and Mrs. Ellis – Trauma Informed Practitioners
- Mrs. Varley – Welfare Manager
- Mrs. Moffatt – SENDCO
- Mrs. Jenkin, Mrs. Varley and Mrs. Fletcher – Mental Health First Aiders
- Mrs. Fletcher – Lead First Aider supported by other trained staff (RJe/KV)
- Mrs. Harper – Attendance Officer
- Mrs. Ellis – Wellbeing Support Officer
- Mr. Grimshaw – Family Support Worker (Thursday/Friday)

- Outside Agency Support – School Nursing Team and other Health Professionals, Bromsgrove Policing Team, Family Front Door, Early Help, Redditch and Bromsgrove District Council, Local Authority.

Support for Families (Formerly called our Early Help Offer):

NEW

Mobile Phones

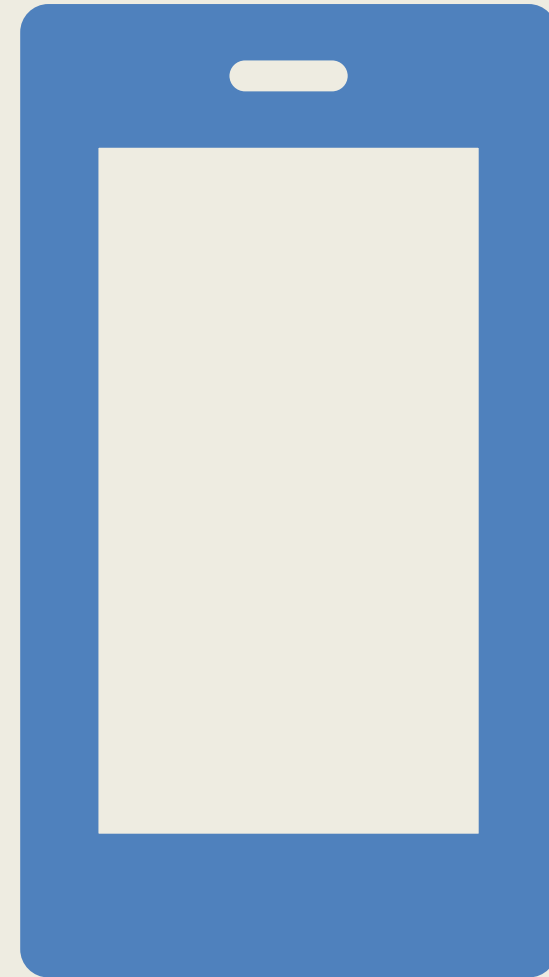
Phones will now be handed in by every pupil, every single day.

In the morning, pupils will put their phone into a named envelope and into their class phone box.

A monitor will then take the box to the office where it will be locked away in the new phone cupboard.

At the end of last lesson, that same monitor will go and collect the box, bring it to the classroom and the teacher will hand the phones back out.

This is in-line with the other Bromsgrove middle schools.



Why? From the Department for Education

Every school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone.

Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion. One in three secondary school pupils report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission.

This not only distracts the single pupil using the phone, but disrupts the lesson for a whole class, and diverts teachers' efforts away from learning. We owe it to our children to do what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom. We also owe it to our pupils to keep them safe at school. One in five pupils have experienced bullying online.

By removing mobile phones from the school day, we can create a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying.

Resources:

- [Mobile phones in schools - February 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Delay Smartphones](#)
- [EE tells parents not to give smartphones to primary-age children - BBC News](#)

Every lesson counts:

Promoting good attendance at Parkside

All schools are expected to...

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils, parents/carers understand
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Share information and work collaboratively with local schools, the Local Authority and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. All Local Authorities are expected to have a School Attendance Support Team to work with ALL schools in its area.

The Department for Education expects a minimum attendance rate of 96%

Poor attendance is defined as anything below 90%.

Key facts		
90% attendance translates into missing 15 or more days per year or 3 days per month.	Pupils who miss 10% of school are 4 x more likely to struggle with reading	Did you know a two-week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 94.7%
Young people who are persistently absent are much less likely to achieve good grades at GCSE and around one third achieve no GCSEs at all.	90 % = persistent absence At this rate you would miss half a year of school by Year 11.	Good attendance shows that you are reliable .

Curriculum

- Independent Learners – managing time, homework, equipment
- Equipment – encourage pupils to come to school every day with the equipment they need to learn.
- Handbooks – source of information to support independent learning.
- Responsibility for learning – responding to targets, working on areas of focus
- Reading – regular 30 minutes daily. Suitable books for age, challenge and interest.
- Careers – providing aspiration and showing our pupils the possibilities for their futures.

Home - Parkside Middle School

Homework

All homework set at Parkside should meet our four pillars:

1. Purposeful and well-chosen tasks
2. Support with knowledge retention and automaticity
3. Enhanced learning opportunities
4. Preparing pupils for future and independent learning/application of knowledge

Homework: how are we helping pupils take responsibility for their own learning?

- Handbooks
- Bromcom
- Homework Club
- Private Study

Private Study – Year 8 Only

Objective:

- Foster independent learning skills.
- Allowing some increasing freedoms
- Encourage homework completion independently.
- Develop skills: time management, self-discipline, responsibility.

Session Details:

- Location: ICT suite.
- Time: 3:15 PM to 4:00 PM (Tuesdays).
- Supervised by staff member.
- Students responsible for making their own way home after sessions.

Consent Required:

- Parental consent needed.
- Use the provided link for consent contained in the letter.
- Pupils required to sign in and out for attendance.

Personal Development

- Role models
- Leadership roles and responsibilities
- Embracing opportunity – enrichment, talents and skills

THE PARKSIDE STANDARD

Embrace Opportunity. Nurture Success. Inspire Futures.



1. WE WILL KEEP OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER SAFE.
2. WE WILL WORK AS A TEAM ALWAYS SHOWING POLITENESS, KINDNESS AND RESPECT.
3. WE WILL ALWAYS TRY OUR BEST AND TAKE PRIDE IN EVERYTHING WE DO.
4. WE WILL BE ORGANISED AND FULLY PREPARED FOR THE SCHOOL DAY.
5. WE WILL WEAR THE CORRECT UNIFORM WITH PRIDE.

PARKSIDE VALUES

WE DEMONSTRATE:

**KINDNESS
RESILIENCE
RESPECT
HONESTY
TEAMWORK**



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Trips and Rewards

Bushcraft

This three-day residential course involves students in a range of hands-on activities, giving them the chance to really get to grips with life in the outdoors and providing them with a unique environment in which to learn and interact.

Our time spent living in the woods offers a fantastic opportunity for students to interact away from the distractions of everyday school life, taking them out of their comfort zones and encouraging both independence and teamwork.

This course is a fantastic first step towards the development of leadership skills, as it demands resourcefulness, creativity, and teamwork.

Termly rewards: Disco, Ice Skating and Inflatables Day. This gives children a goal to work towards and is acknowledgement for their hard work.

Transition to High School

- We work closely with the two town High Schools throughout year 8
- Open Evenings for Bromsgrove High Schools: North (19th September) and South (3rd October).
- High School application deadline 31st October 2024.
- School places released on 1st March 2025
- Transition increases from Easter. This includes: Pupil visits to their high school, emotional support within school, information exchange between schools and an induction day.
- The whole of year 8 supports the pupils to be High School Ready, this is part of transition.
- Your children will have mixed emotions about moving schools, as they did in year 4, but with a 'teenage brain' may not be open about it. Be aware of this.
- Any concerns over transition later in the year, please let the form tutor know.
- Overview of transition: Mrs Cox

Further Support

- Contact your child's class-teacher or their subject teacher
- Head of Year
- Look at the support pages in your child's planner
- Check out the curriculum area of the school website
- All information from this evening's information evening will be out onto the school website

www.parkside.worcs.sch.uk