

# Meet the Form Tutors

## Year 8 Parents/Carers

### September 2025



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.

# Safeguarding Team

- Mrs. Jenkin – Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Mrs. Miarowska and Mrs. Varley – Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)
- Mrs Miarowska – Thrive Practitioner and Senior Mental Health Lead
- 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. Ellis – Wellbeing Support Officer
  
- 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.

Early Help Offer:

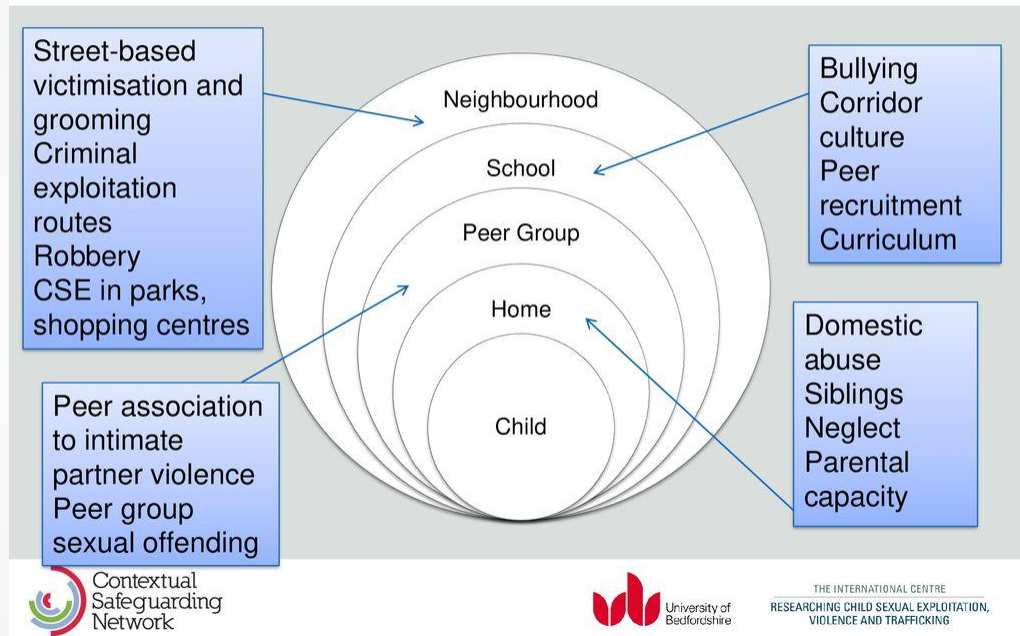
<https://www.parkside.worcs.sch.uk/our-school/safeguarding-inclusion-welfare/early-help-offer>

# Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

- Parents and carers work in partnership with the school, and we recognise that from time to time you may need support.
- If as a parent/carer you are concerned about your own child or another young person you should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

# 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**

[Short video: NCA](#)  
[CEPOffenderAnimation #WholsSam](#)



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

Some common signs a student 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

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

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

- Child's sexual exploitation (Child sexual exploitation is a type of child sexual abuse).
- Child Criminal exploitation <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/>
- County lines (County lines is the organised criminal distribution of drugs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children and vulnerable people).
- Peer on peer abuse (Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms and include bullying, relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence).
- Video link [Parents Protect - Harmful behaviour in young people and children](#)
- Mental health (Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being).
- 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).
- Grooming (Grooming techniques can lead to other types of abuse).
- Sharing of inappropriate images (As students 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).
- Sexual harassment (Sexual harassment is unwanted attention of a sexual nature).
- Domestic Abuse <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

**Short video:** [What are the risks that children and young people face online? | NSPCC Learning - YouTube](#)

The internet plays a vital role in all aspects of children's and young people's lives. But young people can sometimes participate in inappropriate, risk-taking or illegal behaviour online. It can be difficult for parents and carers to know how to respond and support a child.

The internet, mobile phones, portable tablets and internet enabled gaming devices have become an integral part of everyday social and working lives. Our children are experiencing the World Wide Web from a young age and although these advances in technology offer a wealth of opportunity, they can also pose risks to our children.

This could be that they have been viewing adult pornography or have an unhealthy interest in accessing adult material. It could be that your child has sent a naked picture of themselves to someone else or posted it online and is struggling with the consequences, or it could be that your child has been arrested by the police for viewing sexual images of people under 18.

**Stop it Now! Helpline for confidential advice on 0808 1000 900**

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

[LFF ELEC Resource Pack for Parents\\_MAY21.pdf \(parentsprotect.co.uk\)](#)

[Video link:](#)

[Parents Protect - Internet Safety](#)

# 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 <b>reliable</b> .

# Curriculum

- Independent Learners – managing time, homework, equipment
- Responsibility for learning – responding to targets, working on areas of focus
- Equipment – encourage pupils to come to school every day with the equipment they need to learn.
- Handbooks – source of information to support independent learning.
- 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

# 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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# 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

# Transition to High School

- We work closely with the two town High Schools throughout Year 8
- Open Evenings for Bromsgrove High Schools: North (Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September) and South (Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October).
- High School application deadline 31st October 2025.
- School places released on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026
- 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 (Mrs Miarowska)
- 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
- If you have any questions, please let us know.
- If you have to rush off, feel free to complete a form.

[www.parkside.worcs.sch.uk](http://www.parkside.worcs.sch.uk)