

# Family Update

15th October 2021



## Updates

Hi everyone, I hope you and yours are well. We've had a fun-filled week, starting with a Football Tournament at Aston Villa football ground, having wonderful music sessions with the magical Music Matthew, a visit from our good old furry friend Tarka the therapy dog, and rides on the beautiful trike that has been donated by the charity Dee and Me. Yesterday we also arranged a Wheelchair Services clinic within school which enabled the team to troubleshoot through several low level wheelchair glitches and resolve many issues in house. If you are having trouble getting hold of wheelchair services for appointments for ongoing issues, please contact Faye in the school office, who is able to compile a list for our next wheelchair clinic.

You will have noticed in the news this past week that the new Education Minister Nadhim Zahawi is promoting Covid vaccines for 12-15 yr olds and greater school attendance. I have sent out the information I received about the vaccines and am assured that the consent forms will soon follow directly to your homes. We have not been asked to set a vaccine day as yet but when we do, I shall let you know so you don't miss out. There have also been reports of legal discussions around schools being allowed to authorise school absences in specific circumstances where there are vulnerabilities in families: <https://goodlawproject.org/update/schools-must-support-cev-families/>

I have attached some information to this newsletter about County Lines. This has been sent to us by Staffordshire Safeguarding Board and created by the Police. You may feel that it is not relevant to your child but it is worth reading as all of us know various young people and it will help us to keep them all safe.

As we go into the weekend, I hope you can have a relaxing, happy, healthy couple of days and we look forward to seeing your children on Monday.

Best regards, Your Leadership Team

## Photos from the Week



## Contact us

 [www.saxonhillacademy.org.uk](http://www.saxonhillacademy.org.uk)  
 [www.twitter.com/saxonacademy](https://twitter.com/saxonacademy)  
 [www.facebook.com/saxonhillacademy](https://www.facebook.com/saxonhillacademy)  
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 Kings Hill Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS14 9DE



**Executive Principal:**  
Melsa Buxton

**Head of School:**  
Mel Newbury

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:**  
Kim Thomas

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:**  
Mel Newbury & Helen Bowers

## A BIG Thank You!

We would like to say a huge thank you to the Me and Dee Charity for kindly donating a lovely trike to our pupils at Saxon Hill Academy.

Me and Dee work with people and businesses to raise funds to support families and young people going through life-changing, difficult times.

Our pupils have absolutely loved having a go on the new trike and can't wait to be able to share it across the school!



## AAC Awareness Month



Every month is AAC Awareness Month at Saxon Hill but international AAC Awareness Month is celebrated around the world each October. The goal is to raise awareness of augmentative and

alternative communication (AAC) and to inform the public about the many ways in which people communicate.

Our pupils use of range of communication tools from tactile objects to Makaton to PODD books to communication devices as well as many more! We love any opportunity to share these with people outside the school so they can see how we communicate.

## Some Key Dates

Wednesday 20th October—Harvest Festival, Explorers Department

Friday 22nd October—Halloween Spooktacular  
(feel free to send your child in fancy dress or school uniform)

Monday 25th October—Friday 29th October—Half Term Holiday

Friday 19th November—Children in Need

Monday 15th—Friday 19th November—Anti-Bullying Week

Saturday 4th December—Christmas Fayre

Friday 10th December—Christmas Jumper Day

Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th December—Christmas Performances

Thursday 16th December—Christmas Dinner and Parties

Friday 17th December—Christmas Carols





# Virtual Sun Session

Please see the below information about sharing and network opportunities for parents, carers and young people with SEND.



**Come and join us at a FREE virtual SUN session.**

## **AUTUMN DATES 2021**

***Please note, you will need to be able to access Microsoft teams in order to join the meeting.***

SUN sessions are networking and information sharing sessions between parents, carers, young people, schools and services, for anyone living with or working with a child or young person with SEND. It is an opportunity to find out/share what is happening locally, and what support and services might be available

Ideally you would sign up for the meeting in the district you live, however, if you are unable to take part in your district group, it may be possible to join one of the others, but please bear in mind not all services cover all areas.

**The Autumn Sessions Will Include A Short Presentation by SENDIASS  
On  
'The Graduated Response'**

Followed by local service updates

### **Dates and Times of SUN Sessions**

|                                    |                 |                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> November   | 1.00pm – 2.15pm | North Staffs      |
| Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> November | 1.00pm – 2.15pm | South Staffs      |
| Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> November  | 1.00pm – 2.15pm | East Staffs       |
| Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> November | 1.00pm – 2.15pm | Cannock/Lichfield |
| Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November  | 1.00pm – 2.15pm | Stafford          |

**Numbers will be limited therefore booking is essential.**

If you are a **parent, carer, young person or a service provider** and would like to attend please email; [sun@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sun@staffordshire.gov.uk) or telephone 01785 356921

on receipt of your completed booking form, you will be emailed with a link to access the meeting once your place is confirmed.

~~MONEY~~  
~~BELONGING~~  
~~STATUS~~

~~DRUGS~~  
~~EXPLOITATION~~  
~~GANGS~~

# COUNTY LINES THE REALITY

IT'S HAPPENING.

YOUR AREA? YOUR STREET? YOUR HOME?



catch  
22

## IT'S HAPPENING. YOUR AREA? YOUR STREET? YOUR HOME?

The term County Lines describes gangs and organised criminal networks involved in moving illegal drugs into other areas of the country, often smaller areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines known as 'deal lines.'

Dealers will take orders from drug users through mobile phones and take advantage of children and vulnerable people to move and store drugs and money. Often they do this through blackmail, intimidation and violence.

### HOW ARE CHILDREN BEING EXPLOITED?

Children and vulnerable people can be groomed online or face-to-face by a stranger or someone they know. They can receive money, mobiles, credit, expensive clothing, jewellery, or other items/ gifts in exchange for a specified task.

### WHAT IS CUCKOOING?

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crimes in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to take advantage of them and use it as a base for drug dealing.

### COMMON SIGNS

Common signs to look out for which could indicate that a person is involved in County Lines and possible drug dealing:

- Change in emotional wellbeing (e.g. secretive, withdrawn, aggressive, emotional)
- An increase in anti-social behaviour
- Missing episodes from home or school
- Receiving more texts or calls than usual
- Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia
- Unexplained, sometimes unaffordable new things (e.g. clothes, jewellery, cash)

- Isolation from friends
- May be carrying a weapon
- Unexplained injuries

The following signs suggest that someone could be a victim of cuckooing:

- An increase in anti-social behaviour
- Other people seen inside the house or flat who don't normally live there
- People coming and going from the property at all hours
- More taxis and cars than usual appearing at the property
- Not seeing the person who lives there as frequently
- When you do see the occupant, they may appear anxious or distracted
- Seeing drugs paraphernalia near to the property

## CONCERNED?

If you are worried that someone is at immediate risk of harm contact 999.

**Staffordshire Police**  
Private message us on Facebook and Twitter  
**Phone: 101**

**Crimestoppers**  
Report anonymously:  
Phone **0800 555 111**  
or fill in their online form.

**Stoke-on-Trent City Council**  
If you are worried about a child or young person in Stoke-on-Trent, contact the **Safeguarding Referral Team** on **01782 235100** or out of hours **01782 234234**

**Staffordshire County Council**  
If you are worried about a child or young person in Staffordshire contact **First Response** on **0800 1313 126** or out of hours **0345 6042 886**

**Catch22**  
This organisation offer support when any child is reported missing. You can also contact them if you are worried someone may be grooming a child you know:  
Email **catch22cse@catch-22.org.uk** (for criminal exploitation) or **catch22cse@catch-22.org.uk** (for sexual exploitation)  
Call **01782 237106**

[WWW.STAFFORDSHIRE.POLICE.UK/COUNTYLINES](http://WWW.STAFFORDSHIRE.POLICE.UK/COUNTYLINES)

#COUNTYLINESHEREALITY



**STAFFORDSHIRE  
POLICE**

Dear Parents/Carers

Following our last letter regarding County Lines which we sent in May we wanted to get back in touch to remind you that you can still help.

County Lines is the term used to describe the networks of gangs and organised criminals who export illegal drugs into other areas of the country, often smaller areas, using dedicated mobile phone lines known as 'deal lines.'

They exploit children and vulnerable people to move and store drugs and money. Often, they do this using blackmail, intimidation and violence.

Staffordshire Police are working alongside our partners as part of a County Lines operation which has two aims – to arrest members of organised crime gangs who target young and vulnerable people, but also to identify young people who are at risk of criminality and to help divert them away from criminal exploitation.

We are asking education establishments and parents to help identify young people who are at risk of criminality, so they can be given help.

There are several signs to look out for that may indicate someone is involved in county lines:

- repeatedly going missing from school or home and being found in other areas
- having money, new clothes or electronic devices and they can't explain how they paid for them
- getting high numbers of texts or phone calls, being secretive about who they're speaking to
- decline in school or work performance
- significant changes in emotional or physical well-being

We have produced a podcast which discusses the issue of County Lines and how support networks including parents and carers can help to protect children from exploitation. To listen to the podcast (episode 6) visit: <https://thebeatpodcast.buzzsprout.com/>

No one school in Staffordshire is more or less affected by these problems. We know that the overwhelming majority of young people will never be affected by this issue but a conversation with your child will help us collectively make a difference. It is critical that young people know that there is help available if they are involved in County Lines activity and that they can get support from home, school and agencies who work with young people



You can find more information in the enclosed leaflet and on our website here: <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/countylines>

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Best wishes,



Detective Superintendent Tom Chisholm  
Head of Major & Organised Crime, Staffordshire Police



Victoria Wilson  
Cabinet Member for Communities & Culture



Mark Sutton  
Cabinet Member for Children & Young People