

Ref: KHI/JCR/WMP-Child-Exploitation-Awareness

3rd March 2026



Barr Beacon School
www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk

Child Exploitation Awareness – West Midlands Police

Dear Parents/carers,

We have been contacted by West Midlands Police who have asked schools across Walsall to share the following important safeguarding information regarding child exploitation.

West Midlands Police are working in partnership with The Children's Society and British Transport Police to raise awareness of child exploitation and to disrupt and prosecute criminal gangs who target young people.

Child exploitation can happen anywhere and to any young person. It can occur both online and offline. Young people may be targeted outside fast food outlets, at shopping centres, on public transport, through online gaming platforms, and on social media. Exploitation can take many forms, including but not limited to: Money laundering, shoplifting on behalf of others, transporting drugs along train or bus routes, or being coerced into criminal activity.

West Midlands Police are asking adults to consider whether a young person may be:

- Travelling alone frequently, particularly during school hours or late at night
- Looking lost or in unfamiliar surroundings
- Appearing anxious, frightened, angry or unusually withdrawn
- In possession of more than one mobile phone
- Carrying significant amounts of cash
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Being instructed, controlled or monitored by another individual
- Accompanied by significantly older individuals
- Seen begging in public spaces

No single sign confirms exploitation, however, patterns of behaviour or changes in presentation should prompt concern, and therefore, a report.

If something does not feel right, do not ignore it. You can report concerns directly via:

- 101 (or 999 in an emergency) – Police
- Text 61016 – British Transport Police
- 0800 555 111 – Crimestoppers (anonymous)
- 0808 800 5000 – NSPCC



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Matrix
Academy Trust
EDUCATION WITHOUT EXCEPTION

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As a school, safeguarding is our highest priority. We work closely with external agencies, including West Midlands Police and local safeguarding partners, to ensure that pupils are protected and supported.

In school, we proactively educate pupils about exploitation, online safety, criminal risk, and how to seek help. Through our curriculum, assemblies and pastoral work, we ensure pupils understand the warning signs and how to keep themselves safe. However, safeguarding is most effective when school and home work together. We strongly encourage parents and carers to continue these conversations at home by regularly checking in with your child, knowing who they are spending time with, understanding where they are going, and maintaining appropriate oversight of their online activity, social media use and gaming platforms. Open dialogue, clear boundaries and active supervision are key protective factors in keeping young people safe.

If you have any concerns about a young person's safety or wellbeing, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr J Crumpton, via postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk or 0121 366 6600 immediately.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our children safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Hibbs

Headteacher



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