September 2025

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Routines & Boundaries at Home

Welcome to this term's safeguarding newsletter.

This term, we're focusing on the importance of **routines** and **boundaries** at home, particularly during two key times of the day: **the mornings before school** and **the evenings between home time and bedtime**. Establishing clear routines and consistent expectations can have a powerful impact on children's well-being, confidence, and learning.

Why Routines and Boundaries Matter

Research consistently shows that predictable routines and gentle boundaries help children thrive:

- **Creates a Sense of Security** When children know what to expect, they feel safe and calm. Routines provide stability, which supports emotional well-being. *(Seattle Children's Hospital, 2023)*

- **Supports Mental Health** A structured day reduces stress and helps children manage their emotions better. *(Effective School Solutions, 2024)*

- **Boosts Brain Development** A recent study by Colorado State University found that children with regular family routines — such as set mealtimes and bedtime stories — had stronger brain development and better emotional regulation. *(The Times, 2025)*

- **Encourages Independence** Consistent routines help children develop self-control and learn how to manage their time effectively. *(Pathways.org, 2024)*

- **Reduces Family Conflict** When expectations are clear, there are fewer arguments and power struggles — mornings and evenings become calmer for everyone. *(Triple P Parenting, 2024)*

Morning Routines: Setting Up for Success

The start of the day sets the tone for everything that follows. A calm, structured morning can make a huge difference to your child's focus and mood at school.

Top Tips for Smoother Mornings:

- **Plan Ahead** Lay out clothes, pack bags, and prepare lunches the night before. *(Child Focus, 2024)*

- **Use Visual Checklists** Children, younger children especially, benefit from visual aids showing what needs to be done, e.g., pictures of brushing teeth, getting dressed, and packing a bag. *(Soaring High ABA, 2024)*

- **Build in Extra Time** Allow a 10–15 minute buffer to avoid stress if things take longer than expected. *(Parents.com, 2025)*

- **Involve Your Child** Giving children some control — such as choosing their clothes or breakfast — builds cooperation and ownership. *(East Bay Montessori, 2024)*

- **Create a Connection Moment** A quick cuddle, a shared joke, or talking about something to look forward to can make mornings feel more positive. *(Parents.com, 2025)*

Example Morning Checklist:

Wake up

Use the bathroom

Eat breakfast

Brush teeth and wash face

Get dressed

Pack school bag and water bottle

Quick goodbye cuddle and positive start to the day



Evening and Bedtime Routines: Calming Down After School

Afternoons and evenings can be tricky. Children are often tired after school, and parents are juggling dinner, homework, and bedtime. Routines can bring structure and calm.

Top Tips for Evenings:

- **Create a Homework Rhythm** Agree on a set time for homework that works for your family — ideally after a short unwind period and snack. *(Child Mind Institute, 2025)*

- **Limit Screen Time Before Bed** Screens can disrupt sleep and make it harder for children to relax. Aim to switch off devices at least an hour before bedtime. *(Times of India, 2025)*

- **Include Calming Activities** Bedtime stories, quiet reading, or a chat about the day can help children wind down. *(Pathways.org, 2024)*

- **Stick to Consistent Bedtimes** Children benefit from a regular bedtime that allows enough sleep for their age. Sleep is directly linked to learning, behaviour, and mental health. *(The Times, 2025)*

Example Evening Checklist:

Unpack school bag and put items away

Have a healthy snack and short unwind time

Homework or reading time

Dinner

Bath or shower

Brush teeth

Quiet family time, bedtime story, or chat

Lights out — same time each night where possible



Boundaries: Consistency is Key

Boundaries are about setting **clear, fair, and consistent expectations**. They give children a sense of safety and help them understand limits.

- **Explain the Why** Children are more likely to follow rules if they understand the reason behind them. *(Triple P Parenting, 2024)*
- **Be Consistent** Stick to your routines and expectations wherever possible — predictability builds trust. *(Verywell Family, 2024)*
- **Stay Positive** Frame boundaries in a positive way — for example, "We read a story after we brush our teeth" instead of "No story until you brush your teeth."
- **Be Flexible When Needed** It's fine to make exceptions for special occasions, as long as children understand it's not the new normal.

Further Reading and Resources

Effective School Solutions – Why Routines Matter

Seattle Children's – Kids Thrive with Routines

Triple P Parenting – Reframing Routines

Pathways.org – Evening Routines

Child Mind Institute – Bedtime and Homework Tips



For any of your safeguarding concerns:

If you ever have a concern about a child or adult please speak to any member of staff who will support you, alternatively you can speak with our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr Amies.

We have updated the safeguarding page on our website. There are some helpful links to organisations that might be able to provide support for you, should you require, with such things as bereavement, benefits, debt, legal issues and more.

For more information, visit the safeguarding section of our website:

https://www.sheringhamprimary.norfolk.sch.uk/our-school/safeguarding/

We are able to offer support with many family issues, so please do contact Mr Amies, at the school, if you would like to discuss anything that we might be able to help with.

We also have trained Domestic Violence Champions for Change in school.

If anyone would like advice or information on this very sensitive area please contact Mrs Carter or Mr Amies.

Useful Links:

Our Safeguarding Policy

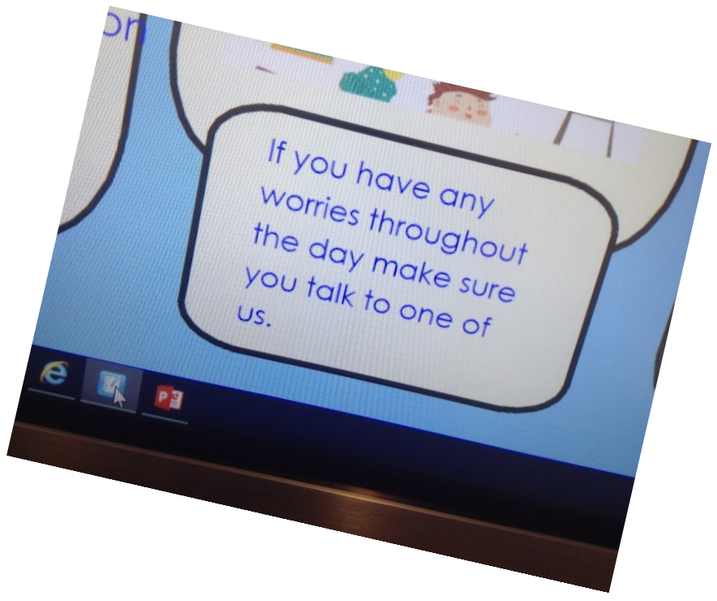
Our Anti-Bullying Policy

Our Behaviour Policy

Our Attendance Policy

Our Curriculum Policy

Our e-Safety Policy



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