



# Alverstoke Infant School

## Safeguarding and SEND Newsletter

Term 1 – Autumn 2024

### A message from Vanessa Ridler – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Welcome to our first Safeguarding and SEND newsletter! This newsletter is designed to support parents/carers with understanding a range of Safeguarding and SEN issues and topics. Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes in to contact with children and their families has a role to play.

In school we have three **Designated Safeguarding Leads** (DSLs): myself as Lead DSL, Stacey Hodson as Deputy DSL and Diane McEwan as our third DSL and Family Support worker. We are always available to advise or discuss your concerns although everyone in school is trained in safeguarding if you would like to speak to them.

In school, children have weekly SCARF (PSHE) lessons. These lessons are essential in teaching children important life skills to keep them safe and healthy, both physically and mentally. We will continue to share key learning from our SCARF lessons both via these newsletters and on Tapestry.

If you would like to discuss or share any Safeguarding concerns, please arrange this via the school office or email  
[V.Ridler@alverstoke-inf.hants.sch.uk](mailto:V.Ridler@alverstoke-inf.hants.sch.uk)

**Your child's safety is our priority.** Keeping your child safe means:

- Prioritising the health and safety of all children
- Ensuring that all adults who work at our school have undergone safety and security checks and hold a DBS
- Protecting children from deliberate harm
- Being an anti-bullying school and protecting children from harassment and discrimination
- Being pro-active against racist behaviour
- Having a positive approach to behaviour management including the use of physical intervention safely, when necessary.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Caring for children's personal needs
- Keeping children safe when using the internet
- Ensuring our school site is secure and safe
- Being a "listening school" to worries and concerns



### Safeguarding Governor Role

Our Safeguarding Governor is Martin Westwood. His responsibilities include;

- Ensuring the school is following safer recruitment procedures when recruiting new staff
- Reviewing all activity and policies relating to the physical and emotional wellbeing of children
- Seeking improvement to ensure the school follows best practice in creating a productive and safe environment for all

**'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'** is a statutory Department for Education document that all schools are required to follow when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It covers many aspects of safeguarding, including different forms of abuse, early help processes, safer-recruitment, how concerns must be reported and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024)

## **A message from Stacey Hodson**

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, my role in school is Deputy Head and SENCo. I have worked in this role for many years and am proud to support children who have additional needs and further support staff and children's understanding of neurodiversity.

The word neurodiversity refers to the idea that there are natural variations in the way that human brains process information. It is estimated that 15-20% of the UK population are neurodivergent - meaning that their brain processes and learns information differently from the neurotypical majority. Diagnoses such as Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Tourette's all come under the umbrella of neurodivergence. People who are neurodivergent are sometimes described as having learning differences, because these conditions do not impact on IQ, but can mean that they need to access learning in different ways from the more typical learning strategies traditionally used in educational settings.

Our SEND Information report, available on our website, details how we make adaptions and support children both with special educational needs and also disabilities. There is also a flowchart which explains the routes that are taken when staff or parents identify needs in children. (Attached to email) As always, staff and I are available to talk concerns through and discuss these before or after school. Please, in the first instance talk to your child's class teacher, but if you do want to discuss directly with me, please arrange this via the school office or through email [s.hodson@alverstoke-inf.hants.sch.uk](mailto:s.hodson@alverstoke-inf.hants.sch.uk)



## **Spotlight on.... Speech and language development**

Children develop their speech, language and communication skills at different rates. Language development is a fundamental aspect of a child's early years, shaping their ability to communicate, learn, and interact with the world. However, some children may experience speech and language delays, which can impede their progress and hinder social and academic success. This is why early identification of speech and language delays is vital. Early identification means early intervention: by detecting delays early on in young children, caregivers, educators, and healthcare professionals can provide the necessary interventions and support needed, and ensure that all children reach their full potential as they grow and develop.

Children and young people who have challenges with talking and understanding words may experience difficulties in any of the areas described below.

- Understanding
- Talking
- Speech
- Stammering
- Social communication

Often when children start school staff will detect delays, this may also be detected from healthcare professionals. However, parents and carers also play a crucial role in recognising potential delays, and often provide the first step towards early identification. Because of this, parents and guardians are actively encouraged to pay attention to their child's communication skills and be aware of any red flags, such as limited vocabulary or trouble following directions. If you have concerns regarding speech and language development, you can access this website which provides an excellent section on ages and stages as well as a progress checker. You can choose the age of the child and then answer the questions. At the end, you will be directed to some helpful advice and resources.

[Child's Progress checker – Speech & Language UK \(speechandlanguage.org.uk\)](http://speechandlanguage.org.uk)

## **Supporting at home**

Sharing books with your child is an excellent way to develop speech and language skills. Of course, there are exceptions but generally, having strong speech, language and communication skills supports with learning to read and write.

- Share stories with your child. Make a book part of your bedtime routine – share a story, snuggle up and get chatting.
- Help your child to learn new words. Talk about what different words mean and tell your child the name for anything they don't know. Try and find at least 2-3 words a week to introduce into their vocabulary
- Why not make your own books? Take pictures when you're out or doing something at home and make it into a story together. You can talk about what you did and what happened. Children start to tell stories about what they've done and what they know about and you can help them with this.
- Tell stories together. Talk about your day and what you did, or use your imagination. Telling stories, both real and made up can help your child become a reader and a writer of stories.