



# ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

## Safeguarding Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Spring term 2 (2023)

### St George's Safeguarding Team

Our Safeguarding Team is available to any student, parent or school staff member to discuss and report any safeguarding concerns.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Jill Farndale**  
**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr Tom Abbott**  
**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Hayley Shears**



### Apple Guided Access

iPhones and iPads don't offer separate user accounts. So, when you hand your Apple device to your child to play a game or watch a video, you're also handing them access to your email, the web, messaging and other apps through which they could accidentally do something regrettable.

**Apple Guided Access** solves this problem by letting you restrict the iPhone or iPad to one particular app whenever your child uses the device. If they try and leave that app, they will be asked for a password or Face ID, meaning they can't access anything they shouldn't. Use the steps below to set up the Guided Access feature, so you can confidently let your child borrow your iPhone or iPad.

**How to set it up...**

**Step 1**  
To switch on Guided Access, open your Apple device's Settings – that's the one with the cog icon, normally found on the first of your home screens.

**Step 2**  
In the Settings menu, scroll down and select Accessibility, then scroll down and select Guided Access.

**Step 3**  
Enable Guided Access by tapping the toggle at the top. It should turn green, and a new series of options will appear.

**Step 4**  
You can now customise Guided Access. Under Passcode Settings, for example, you can set a six-digit passcode that must be entered to turn Guided Access back off. You'll also find an option to quit Guided Access using Face ID if your device has that feature.

**Step 5**  
There are audio options, such as scheduling an alert if you decide to set a time limit on Guided Access – to restrict gaming sessions to an hour, say. You can also set an alarm or spoken warning when the time is almost up, so your child isn't suddenly kicked out of the app. It's a good way to avoid tantrums!

**Step 6**  
Finally, you can alter the length of time before the device auto-locks. If your child is reading on the device's Kindle app, for example, you might want to stop the screen locking after only two minutes of nobody touching it – so they can read happily without interruption. You can select from pre-set time periods or disable the lock function altogether.

**How to switch it on...**

**Step 1**  
When you need to start a Guided Access session, open the app your child wishes to use and then press the home/power button or side button on your device three times in quick succession.

**Step 2**  
You can now select parts of the screen that you'd like to lock. If your child's reading on your Kindle app, for example, you could disable the icon that takes them to the main Kindle library – so they don't stumble across books written for an adult audience.

**Step 3**  
The Options menu in the bottom right allows you to set a time limit for the session. Use the scrollable menu to specify the time limit in minutes or hours.

**Step 4**  
Other options in this menu let you control access to settings such as the volume. So if your child's listening to music, you could lock the volume buttons (once it's set to a suitable level) so they can't damage their hearing by playing it too loud.

**Step 5**  
When everything is set up how you want it, click Start. Your child will now not be able to leave that app. If they press the home button to exit, as usual, it will do nothing.

**Step 6**  
The only way to leave Guided Access is to triple-click the home/power or side button (or double-click, if you set up the option to exit via Face ID). Without Face ID, you'll need the six-digit passcode to return to your home screen. Obviously, don't forget that code or let your child find out what it is!





## **NSPCC**

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) says:

- Babies and toddlers should never be left home alone.
- Children under 12 years old shouldn't be left home alone for long.
- Children under 16 years old shouldn't be left alone overnight.
- Over 16 year olds shouldn't be left alone frequently for long periods of time or for multiple nights.
- Children should never be left in a home that could put them at risk – like with no electricity or heat, or with dangerous objects.

The NSPCC have produced a guide which provides sound advice and useful tips to help parents decide in which situations they may leave their children home alone and what they need to do to ensure their safety and wellbeing. It explains the risks of leaving babies and younger children unattended and provides helpful advice on what qualities and experience to look for when choosing a babysitter or appropriate childcare.

Follow this link to read the guidance: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1110/home-alone-guide-keepingchild-safe.pdf>

### **Contact Details**

Are your contact details up to date? Do we have more than one emergency contact?

If you change your home phone, address, email, or mobile number, please let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details.

Safeguarding concerns can present themselves when we are unable to get hold of a parent or carer, especially



**Parenthood..**  
The most rewarding job in the world  
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Need some advice about your child's behaviour?  
Contact YoungMinds Parents Helpline  
0808 802 5544  
[www.youngminds.org.uk/parents](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/parents)  
**YOUNGMINDS**

## **WHAT IS NEGLECT?**

**If a parent or carer fails to meet a child's basic needs, such as food and warm clothing, or constantly leaves a child alone, this is known as neglect.**

**Neglect is as serious as other forms of child abuse because the effects on children can be just as damaging and long-lasting.**

**Neglected children may appear withdrawn, unhappy or unusually aggressive and their school work or friendships may suffer.**

**To find out more about Neglect, follow this link :**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/neglect/>





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# HiPAL

AGE RESTRICTION  
**12+**

(with reduced functionality for under-12s)

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

HiPal is a trending social media app which turns phones into walkie-talkies, allowing people to have voice conversations with friends or strangers. There are two account options: one for users aged under 12 and one for those aged 12 or above. The former has fewer features and limits interaction with strangers, enabling use of the walkie-talkie feature or photo sharing with friends and family only. The 12+ accounts offer more options, including adding strangers as friends, sharing photos and videos publicly, sending private messages and holding voice chats with strangers as well as friends.

## CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

HiPal's under-12 accounts don't allow direct connections with strangers (although children seeking more friends can share their 'Friend Code' on other platforms), but for older users, chatting with strangers seems to be the app's main appeal. The 'Public Squares' shows nine online users (hitting 'refresh' replaces these with another nine), and clicking on someone's profile starts a conversation.

## SEXTING AND SUGGESTIVE PICS

Almost immediately after our expert downloaded the app, strangers began to message privately – asking for provocative images or sharing explicit photos of themselves. Likewise, in the 'Explore' feed, many of the pictures and videos are innocent – but some are far more salacious. There is always the risk of other users secretly saving a revealing photo and re-sharing it elsewhere.

## NEED FOR VALIDATION

Some users – particularly girls – post photos on apps of this type hoping for positive reactions and comments to boost their self-esteem. Suggestive images tend to attract more flattering feedback, encouraging the user to post more frequently and with more explicit content. Conversely, receiving unkind comments about their picture can impact a young user's confidence and sense of self-worth.

## NO AGE GATES OR MODERATION

Although users are given an initial choice of the under- or over-12 profile, there is no verification method to confirm someone's age; it is quite clear that the 'older' option offers a more complete experience on the app, but there seems to be no content moderation in place. Likewise, there is a reporting button for users to make a complaint but these reports do not appear to be followed up.

## INTRUSIVE FEATURES

HiPal's walkie-talkie gimmick is no different from a normal phone call and seems rarely used; although it allows conversations to still be heard while a phone is locked, which could have awkward results. HiPal also offers 'Boom' messages: unmissable large-text notifications which are highly distracting and briefly take over the phone – users can't access other apps until the message fades.

## LARGE GROUP CHATS

The app offers group chats with up to 100 people – both friends and unknown users. This not only means excessive 'Boom' messages taking over your child's device, but near-constant notification alerts and – most worryingly – the potential for walkie-talkie chatting and sharing photos with strangers outside parental supervision and apparently with no moderation from the platform itself.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### EMPHASISE CAUTION

Remind your child of the dangers of connecting with strangers online. Some may be using the app innocently; others may have more sinister intentions. Encourage your child to consider what information they disclose in private messages and emphasise that they should inform a trusted adult if someone on the internet ever attempts to persuade them to meet in person.



### TALK ABOUT SEXTING

It can be an awkward conversation (which young people are often reluctant to have), but it's vital to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sharing explicit images, as well as the emotional impact. Make it clear your child should never feel pressured into sexting – and that they should tell a trusted adult if they receive any unwanted explicit images.



### BUILD RESILIENCE

With HiPal's lack of moderation, it's imperative that children are prepared for comments they might receive after uploading an image. You can build their resilience and equip them to manage these situations by having them show you any comments they've received. Together, discuss how the nice ones made them feel – and what they could do if someone posted a comment that upset them.



### AVOID OVER-SHARING

Young people should think carefully about what they share in their profile, bio and posts. Talk to your child about not disclosing personal details such as phone numbers, other social media accounts or images which could reveal where they live or go to school. It's essential for children to recognise that strangers can assemble a detailed profile of someone based on things they can find online.



### CONSIDER MENTAL WELLBEING

Many users on HiPal publicly share photos that are intended to be alluring in the hope of gaining more likes, friends and positive feedback – boosting their self-esteem and making them feel more self-assured. When young people regularly engage with social media platforms, it's important that parents and carers keep in mind the potential impact such platforms can have on mental wellbeing.



## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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<https://hipal.app/about/privacy.html>



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