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20<sup>th</sup> October 2022



Dear Parent/Carer

We have been made aware of two incidents yesterday, involving 'strangers' in the area outside of school. One incident involved an adult in a car approaching a secondary school pupil. This happened on Kemp Road, near to school at 8.08 am, if you were in this area at this time and saw anything suspicious or have dash cam footage, please could you pass this on to the police (Log no: 534 19/10/22). Another incident involved an adult male, hiding in a hedge. Both incidents have been reported to the police. We have spoken to the children in assembly today about stranger danger (but not specifically about either of these incidents). We felt it is important we make you aware so you can be mindful of this.

Below is some useful information for parents/carers should you wish to use it.

### Stanger Danger

Whilst the risk posed by strangers is rare, it is really important to make children aware of simple tips they can follow to keep themselves a little safer.

We would advise you to talk to your child about who their safe adults are and where there are safe places near you if help is needed. It is also important to think about safety on the internet and use of mobile phone apps and games that have 'chat' functions, as this can be just as dangerous as a stranger in the street.

Please make your child aware of the Top Tips in keeping safe around strangers.

#### 1) WHO'S WHO?

A stranger is anyone that your child does not know or know very well. It is both common and dangerous for your child to think that 'strangers' look scary or sinister, like villains in films or cartoons; in a recent survey, the majority of children aged between 5-8 thought this. Play a game with your child and ask them to draw a stranger, it will help you reinforce that a stranger can look like anyone. Tell your child that they will not be able to tell if a stranger is nice or not, so all strangers should be treated in the same way.

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## 2) DON'T GO – SAY NO!

If your child is approached by a stranger, encourage them to raise the alarm by saying 'NO' to draw attention. They should not be scared to do this and be told that it is the right thing to do. For children aged between 3–4, be careful not to scare them too much but start with “there are bad people so it's very important you never...”. All children should ask for help from other adults. Teach them to look out for people in uniforms such as police officers and traffic wardens, or teachers if they are at the school gates. Teach your child this basic slogan, 'DON'T GO, SAY NO'.

## 3) PLAN AHEAD

As obvious as it seems, please stress to your child that they should **NEVER** talk to a stranger, **NEVER** accept gifts or sweets, and **NEVER** walk off or get into a car with a stranger. This is important if your child is between 5–8 as they are at their most vulnerable at this age. This situation might arise if you are late collecting them from school, for example, so agree a plan with your child that they know you will stick to if you are late. Perhaps teach them that you would only ever send a teacher from their school or a friend's parent, that they recognise, to collect them if you are not able to. Give your child your home, work and mobile numbers, so they can reach you at all times, especially if they are aged around 9–11, as they will be spending more time on their own.

## 4) TIME TO TEACH

Tell your child that even if they are not sure if someone is a stranger, they should always behave in the same way and not take risks. Teach them stock phrases to help give them confidence. For example: a child offered money or sweets should respond, 'No thank you. Please leave me alone'. It is important children do not think that talking to a stranger is OK if they are with a friend. Teach them they should only talk to someone they do not know if you are there by their side.

## 5) PRACTICE MAKES...

One way you can prepare your child is by practising scenarios. Try playing a game called 'What if?'. Discussing and thinking about what to do is often more helpful than having the 'right' answers. Ask them what to do if a stranger approaches them, to help reinforce the advice 'DON'T GO, SAY NO'.

By practising these strategies in a fun way, your child will be as equipped as possible should difficult situations arise. It is important to have this conversation regularly, especially with young children so make time every 3–4 months. Remember 'DON'T GO, SAY NO'.

- Do not trust strangers.
- Do not talk to strangers.
- Do not walk with strangers.
- Do not go anywhere with strangers.
- Do not accept gifts, food, drinks, sweets or money from strangers.
- Do not talk to strangers even if they ask for directions, ask you to pet their dog or tell you a parent has been injured or in an accident.
- If a stranger approaches you, tell a trusted adult. There are other things you can do like blocking them and consulting an adult.
- Do not get into a car with strangers or enter a stranger's home.

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- If a stranger approaches you near your school, return to your school immediately and tell a staff member.
- Do not communicate with strangers through text messages on mobile phones or on the computer. If strangers attempt to contact you through messages on mobile phones or by e-mail on the computer, tell the police, a parent, or any other trusted adult.
- Your body is your private property – no one else has the right to touch it. (When you were really young, maybe members of your family, like your mum, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt or uncle, needed to touch your body when they helped you in the bathtub or changed your nappy as you were too young to do it by yourself. Also, doctors need to touch your body to keep you healthy, because they are in the body business!)

We do hope you find this information helpful and thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Hannah Stephenson  
Head Teacher