



SAFER

SCHOOLS

July 2023

Welcome to July's newsletter. As usual this newsletter has been designed to support and advise Parents and Carers of **both** Primary and Secondary school children, and therefore trust your personal judgement to share what you feel will be **relevant** information with your child/s.

Hoax Calling

During the school summer holidays, it is common for the Constabulary to see an increase in hoax calls where children and young people are identified as being responsible.

Hoax calls are treated very seriously and those responsible are warned that misuse of the emergency line can cost lives. If our 999 operators are busy dealing with a hoax caller, they could be prevented from answering a genuine call, which in some instances could be a life-or-death situation. Hoax calls cost lives and are a waste of valuable resources.

In order to prevent misuse of our emergency phone lines this summer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary are urging parents and carers to work with us to keep children and young people out of trouble during the school holidays.

The force ask that you:

- Educate children about the consequences of their actions, making sure they understand that making hoax calls to the police is dangerous, unacceptable and could lead to hefty fines.
- Explain to them that if they make hoax calls they are endangering other people's lives
- Explain and show them how to call the police if they do genuinely need assistance. Knowing when and how to contact the police in appropriate situations can also save lives. Remind them about the difference between using 999 for emergencies, and 101 for non-emergencies, and ensure they understand what is classified as an 'emergency'.
- Further explain what you should do if you do genuinely call 999 by mistake (speak to an operator if they call you back and explain that the call was an accident – if they do not do this, it will be assumed that there is an emergency and the operator will spend time trying to ensure your safety).
- Encourage and help children to plan fun and productive activities on set days during the school holidays to avoid boredom which in some cases can lead to antisocial behaviour / hoax calls.
- Ensure you know where your children are going to be, what they are doing, and make sure they understand what you expect of them during the school holidays.

Hoax calling the police is a criminal offence

Inappropriate calls to 999 can cost lives and could result in a maximum penalty of up to six months in **prison** or a fine of **£5,000**

Make the right choice

Call: 101

Telephone: 18001 101

Visit: cambs.police.uk

Follow: CambsCops

Subscribe: eCops.org.uk

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Road Safety

Near Misses:

Unfortunately near misses happen too often due to momentarily losing concentration. Please remind your family of some simple rules when crossing roads.

- Remove earphones so you can listen for traffic
- Place mobile phone in your pocket before you cross
- Stop, look both ways & listen **EVERYTIME**
- Never cross between parked cars
- **Be bright, be seen!**



Helmets save lives:

Our message is simple – do not ride your bike without a helmet it could save your life!

Seatbelts are there for a reason:

There are still a lot of people, including children who do not wear their seatbelts! Make it second nature, just like putting on your socks - there are no excuses. Children - tell your parents off if you see them with no seatbelt.

Home Alone!

When can I leave my child home alone? We thought it would be helpful to cover and clarify the legislation surrounding leaving children and young people, home alone.



The law on leaving your child on their own:

The law does not state an age when you can leave a child on their own, but it's an **offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk.**

The NSPCC state:

- Children **under 12** are rarely mature enough to be left alone for a long periods of time
- Children **under 16** should not be left alone overnight
- Babies, toddlers and very young children should **never** be left alone

Visit the NSPCC's website below. There you will find many helpful tools, tips and advice to help you decide if your child is ready to be left alone, how to prepare them & keep them safe while home alone.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/in-the-home/home-alone/>

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Summer Water safety

**STOP & THINK
BEFORE YOU JUMP**



Having fun in the sun during the summer holidays often includes water, be it in a paddling pool, Lido, villa pool, lake, river or the sea. However, whilst it is refreshing to take a dip, staying safe is vital. Sadly, many children and young people get into difficulties. You only have to look at the news during the last month!!

It is great that people, especially young people are rediscovering the countryside around them and reaping the mental and physical benefits of reconnecting with nature. This also means a lot of people are taking to our waterways both inland and coastal for the first time.

Unfortunately we are experiencing reports of children and young people cooling off in lakes, rivers and reservoirs throughout our county. We can't stop people from going near, on, or into water but we can educate and ensure, especially our children and young people about the dangers, and how best to protect themselves before they venture out.

Safety tips:

- ☐ Do your homework on the area you are visiting before you set off, be aware of wind direction and tides. Water craft can be taken quickly by wind and tide leaving you in deep water and a long way from land.
- ☐ Always read and comply with warning signs/notices
- ☐ Wear the correct personal floatation device: a life jacket or a buoyancy aid depending on your chosen activity
- ☐ Make sure your personal floatation device is fitted correctly and suitable for your body weight
- ☐ Tell people where you are going and go with a friend if you can
- ☐ Take a mobile phone or means of contacting others in a waterproof bag if possible
- ☐ **Do not enter the water if you can't swim!!!**
- ☐ **Stop and think before you jump!**
- ☐ Know how to best combat cold water shock: follow the **#floattolive** or visit <https://rnli.org/safety/know-the-risks/cold-water-shock>



Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue also offer a range of water safety messaging for children and young adults. Their aim is for water safety messaging to become embedded as children continue through their schooling. Please follow this link for more information:

<https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/community-safety/outdoor-safety/water-safety/>

For the younger children, please follow this link to hear the story of how Jet –The Firefighting Dragon learned some valuable water safety advice: **#BeWaterAware #RespectTheWater" / Twitter**

If you have any enquiries about water safety messages for children and young adults, please contact Cambridgeshire fire and rescue business engagement department bsgservicedesk@cambsfire.gov.uk and they will help you with age appropriate water safety messaging you need.

Enjoy the warm weather but please take a second to think about staying safe near water

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We would love to hear your feedback & comments.

You can contact the team via our email

SchoolsandCYP@cambs.police.uk

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