

26<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Dear Parents / Carers,

With the warmer weather and the holidays coming up, children will be wanting to play outside a lot more.



The NSPCC has a checklist for parents who are wondering when the right time is to allow their child to play outside by themselves.

The NSPCC says that whilst there is no legal age limit for a child to stay home or go out alone. It is against the law to leave a child alone if it puts them at risk. This means that essentially parents can prosecute if they leave a child unsupervised 'in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health' and this applies to children playing outside.

The children's charity states that "Every child is different, so it's up to you to decide whether they're ready. But there are a few key things to know, that should help you make your decision."

#### **Things to know before your child goes out alone.**

- Do you think they're old enough?
- How long could they cope on their own? Remember, for a younger child half an hour can feel like a long time.
- Can they deal with risks?
- Will they behave responsibly?
- Will they be safe?
- How does your child feel about this idea? The NSPCC says some children like to take every opportunity to show they can be grown up; they might be really keen to be left 'in charge'. Others will feel nervous about the responsibility.
- Where do they want to go?
- What do they want to do?
- Who will they be with?
- How far will they travel? There's a big difference between walking to the corner shop and going into town, for example.
- What time will they be out? Consider if it's safe for them to be out late, or after dark.

#### **What your child needs to know**

There are a few things your child should know before they can go out alone, the charity says.

- Their full name
- Their address
- Two trusted adults' phone numbers (include the home number, if you have one)
- How to cross roads safely

## What to do in difficult situations

Will the child know what to do if they find themselves in a difficult situation, for example, what if a stranger tries to talk to them, someone bullies them, or they get hurt?

### Do a trial run.

If you think your child might be ready to head out alone but you are still not sure, you can always do a trial run. The NSPCC guide says: "Let them take the lead when you're out together. Only correct them if they do something that puts them at risk."

You can find further guidance and support if you require it here:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2614/home-or-out-alone-guide.pdf>

**Safeguarding If you have any concerns about your child or someone you know being a victim of cyber bullying, the following organisations can offer support:**

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)
- [CEOP](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [Childnet](#)
- [Internetmatters](#)
- [Kidscape](#)
- [Get connected](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [The Parent Zone](#)
- [Thinkuknow](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

**Safeguarding remains at the centre of everything that we do at Tibshelf. It is also the responsibility of our whole community and if you have any concerns around the well-being of a child, then you can contact Derbyshire County Council's Child Protection department on 01629 533190 or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000. When we work together, we safeguard everyone!**