



# Riverside Primary School

Ferry Road, Hullbridge, Hockley, Essex, SS5 6ND

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Dear Parents and Carers,

## Community Safety and Out-of-School Peer Relationships

As we move into the warmer months, we often see a natural shift in the children's social dynamics. With the longer evenings, many of our **Upper Key Stage 2** pupils are enjoying increased independence and spending more time playing outside with their peers.

While we fully encourage children to develop their independence, this time of year often brings challenges where conflicts from outside the school gates begin to impact their well-being and behaviour within the classroom.

### The 'Tree House' and Peer Conflict

Recently, the school has been made aware of a local '**tree house**' where groups of children have been gathering. We have become aware of several significant incidents occurring at this location outside of school hours. These events have been of a high enough level to cause distress and affect the children's ability to focus and maintain positive relationships during the school day.

We want to support our pupils in navigating their friendships as they grow, but we ask for your support in monitoring these out-of-school interactions to ensure they remain safe and positive.

### Guidance on Independence

As your child gets older, it is natural for them to want to explore without adult supervision. To help you make informed decisions about their safety, the **NSPCC** provides helpful guidance. Before allowing your child to go out alone or with friends, we recommend discussing the following:

- **Where** exactly they want to go.
- **What** they plan to do while they are there.
- **Who** they will be with.
- **How far** they intend to travel.
- **What time** they are expected to be home.

## Essential Safety Information

Before children begin to navigate the community independently, please ensure they can confidently recall:

- Their **full name** and **home address**.
- **Phone numbers** for at least two trusted adults.
- How to **cross the road safely** and maintain awareness of their surroundings.

I would add to consider with your child about appropriate behaviour when out and about in the local community. Whilst conflict and resolution remains a part of social development, we ask that you remind your children to behave responsibly and appropriately when playing out. Children over the age of ten years old are considered to be emotionally mature enough to understand the impact of their actions and your guidance with this is appreciated.

We kindly ask that you **exercise appropriate caution** regarding your child's arrangements for playing out of hours. By remaining vigilant and maintaining an open dialogue with your child about their whereabouts and social circles, we can work together to ensure their well-being both in and out of school.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Claire Smith  
Headteacher

