

SAFEGUARDING MATTERS

Safeguarding news and updates for students, parents and staff of St Anselm's College

Volume 4 - Spring Term 2026

Welcome to the fourth edition of '**Safeguarding Matters**' - a regular newsletter that draws together important safeguarding information.

With Christmas now a distant memory, we enter one of the busiest times of the College year as the final push begins for those students sitting **external examinations** this summer - which for some students may mean spending **increased time online** as they access revision websites.

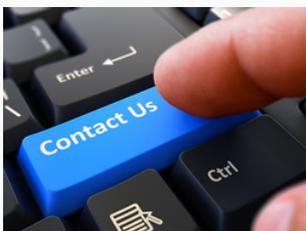
It is also a time of **new beginnings and new opportunities** - the gradually lengthening days will mean students will spend **more time outdoors** and so it is a useful time to be reminded of how to **stay safe in the community**.

We are also very aware of the latest **Department for Education** communications regarding **the use of Smartphones in schools** and are our considering our position on this - more information will follow in due course.

As always, if you have **any feedback** on this newsletter or any ideas for **other issues that you would like us to highlight** then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mr Willis

Deputy Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead



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Bike safety

A new bike remains a popular Christmas present and whilst it can provide a great opportunity for increased freedom, there are **associated risks** of which it is important to be aware:

Theft:

There are instances when new bikes can become targets for theft - this risk can be reduced **by following sensible precautions** such as keeping to **well-lit routes** and ensuring that you have a **robust bike lock**.

Additionally, the College supports the **Merseyside Police Bike Marking scheme** and recently wrote to all parents to advertise an event in College earlier this term. This is a tool that **all Police Forces in the UK** use to **reunite hundreds of stolen bikes with their owners**. There is normally a cost attached for bikes to be marked, but this is a great opportunity to have it done for **FREE** - watch this space for when we next run this initiative in College.

Find out more at www.bikeregister.com

Road safety:

Each year the College runs the **Bikeability Own The Ride** course. On this course children learn how to:

- Plan a journey
- Plan to and ride assertively everywhere cycling is permitted
- Maintain suitable riding positions
- Cooperate with and respect other road users
- Pass queuing traffic and use traffic lights
- Use cycle infrastructure and multi lane roads

This normally takes place in the **Autumn Term** for around 12 Key Stage 3 students but in the meantime, you may wish to explore the **'Lifecycle'** project run from the **Pilgrim Street Arts Centre** - for details see the image next to this text! In addition to gaining bike skills, the project is a fantastic vehicle for providing much needed **social connection and positive relationships** for young people, in support of mental, social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

M Mark your Bike
Attend a free bike marking event advertised by Merseyside Police. These are advertised on the Merseyside Police Website and Social Media channels. Your bike is 83% less likely to be stolen if it is both marked and registered.

A Awareness
When you are out riding your bike be aware of your surroundings and don't let thieves try to steal it. When out on the street leave your bike in a well-lit area, where it can be seen by passers-by.
- Lock both wheels and the frame to a cycle stand, or other immovable object.
- Make sure the lock goes through the frame, the wheel and the post you are securing it to.
- Take any removable items with you.

R Register your Bike
Register your bike for free by visiting The National Cycle Database/ BikeRegister. Merseyside Police are now actively checking bikes on the National Cycle Database. If your bike is stolen, this will significantly increase the chances of you getting your bike back. (Scan QR Code above)

K Keep out of View
When at home store your bike in a locked shed, or garage.
- Keep it out of view
- Don't leave it unattended outside the front of your house.
- Secure it to an immovable object.

I Insure
If you have invested a significant amount of money into your bike, it is worth considering specialist bike insurance or checking that your home insurance covers you for theft away from the home.

T Top Bike Lock
A decent bike lock is worth its weight in gold. A heavy-duty bike lock can make the thieves job more difficult, often meaning they will steal a bike that is less secure. Make sure you buy a Sold Secure Diamond or Gold lock

Bike Register
The National Cycle Database

SOLD SECURE

@merseysidepolice
@MerseyPolice

LIFECYCLE PROJECT

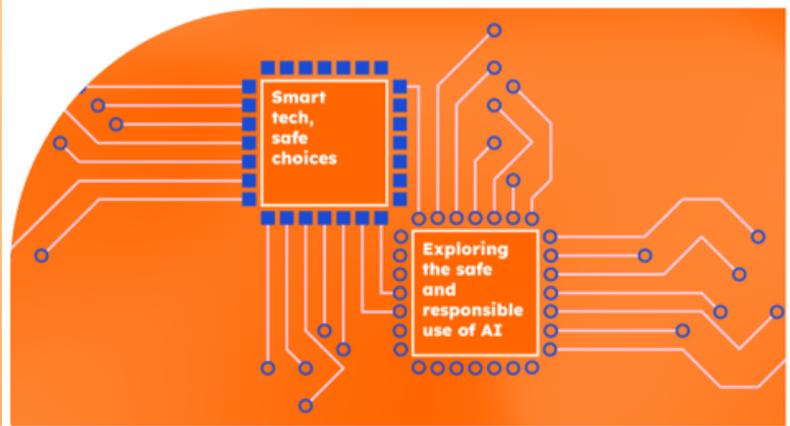
PILGRIM STREET ARTS CENTRE • BIRKENHEAD

THURSDAY EVENINGS • 6PM - 8PM

FEBRUARY 2026

- Make new friends
- Get fit
- Explore your local area
- Learn bike skills
- Develop life skills

Safer Internet Day 2026



This year's **Safer Internet Day** takes place on **10th February** and the theme is: Smart tech, safe choices – **Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI.**

As a College we support this initiative by sharing a range of resources with students through Form Time but the **Safer Internet Foundation** also publish useful tips for parents, a summary of which can be found below

- **Enjoy going online together and talk regularly about your family's online lives**

Spend time online with your child to understand how they are using technology and talk together about the good and the bad parts of being online.

- **Understand where AI technology is being used and the impact it can have**

Look out for information and warnings notifying you where AI technology is in use. AI can make some tasks simpler but may also collect data about you and your family, or share unreliable information.

- **Recognise what safe and responsible use of technology looks like**

How does your use of technology make you feel? How can you use technology with kindness and respect for others? Does your use of technology benefit you or help you build skills? How might it affect you now, and in the future?

- **Stay informed with free resources**

Issues such as the environmental impact of AI and the threat of deepfakes can seem scary but remember, you don't need to have all the answers. Stay informed and talk to your child about their concerns about new technology

- **Know where to go for help if something goes wrong**

Like any technology, using AI comes with risks. Many AI tools and social media platforms have built-in reporting features where you can raise issues such as inappropriate or harmful content.

If you see **illegal images** that show child sexual abuse (including AI generated images), you should **report these to the IWF** and **on the platform where they are being shared**. If someone creates an image of you or your child using AI these can also be reported on the platform where they are being shared, and AI generated nude images can be reported to **Stop NCII (for images of adults)** and **Report Remove or Take It Down (for images of under 18s)**



Nude image of you online?
We can help take it down.

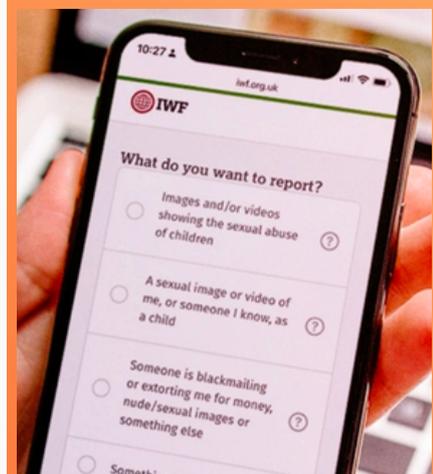
StopNCII.org

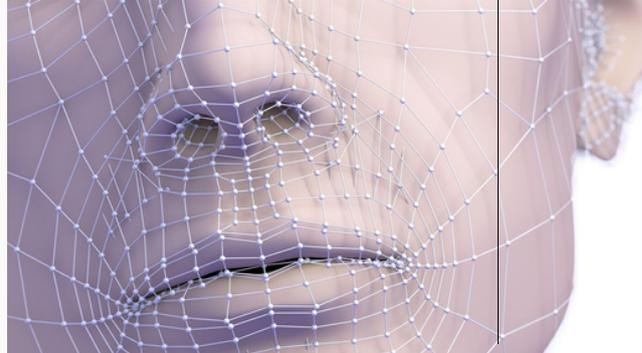
Stop Non-consensual Intimate Image Abuse



IWF

Internet
Watch
Foundation





Understanding the Rise of 'Looksmaxxing'

(Based on article originally published by [SSS Learning](#)).

What is Looksmaxxing?

Looksmaxxing is the belief that **boys and men should constantly try to improve their physical appearance** to be more 'desirable'. This can involve exercise, grooming routines, skincare, hair styling, and fashion, but it can also expand into areas like taking supplements, jawline exercises, or even cosmetic procedures.

It often begins with curiosity. A boy searches for ways to look more confident or attractive. What he finds are **videos, influencers and forums** telling him how to 'fix' himself, his skin, his face shape, his posture. What follows is a steady drip of content comparing 'good looking' and so called 'average' men, offering rankings, harsh labels, and unrealistic standards. Exposed to this content, it doesn't take long for boys to internalise the idea that they aren't 'good' enough.

Why is it a problem?

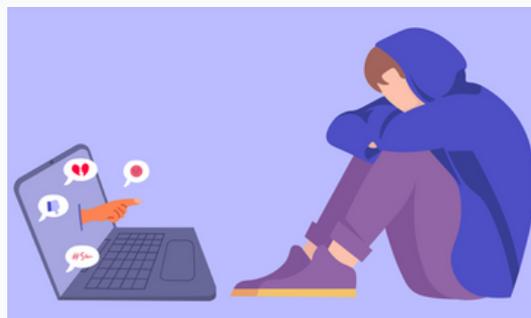
Looksmaxxing, at its heart, **encourages self-criticism** and **feeds insecurity**.

Some boys may start spending **more time alone, avoid photos, or obsess over small flaws**. Others become fixated on lifting weights, following online fitness coaches, or buying products they believe will 'upgrade' them. In more concerning cases, boys might be pulled into toxic, far-right online spaces that lead them to blame others, particularly women, for their perceived rejection.

Indicators of possible concern might include the following:

- Sudden changes in grooming, diet, or exercise;
- Frequent self-deprecating comments about being 'ugly' or not good enough;
- Using terms like 'Chad', 'incel', 'blackpill', or 'looksmaxxing';
- Isolation from peers;
- Increased screen time;
- Negative attitudes about appearance, dating, or gender.

Remember - **healthy habits, confidence and self-care are important**, but when these behaviours are driven by **pressure, fear, or shame, safeguarding support is needed**.



Tips for parents and carers

Open the conversation

Boys need to know it's okay to talk about how they feel, without judgement.

Build media awareness

Help your son understand how online content is made and why some people profit from selling insecurity.

Notice the overlap

Looksmaxxing sometimes appears alongside misogynistic or 'red pill' content. Sharing or repeating these ideas may be a sign someone is being influenced.

Reinforce positive values

Demonstrate healthy masculinity through positive role models.

Work in partnership

By sharing information we can help people to spot signs and feel more confident supporting their child.

Parent webinars on county lines and criminal exploitation (Iverson Trust)

Any child could be exploited by criminals



COULD YOU PUT THE PIECES TOGETHER?



ANY OF THESE CHANGES CAN POINT TO CHILD EXPLOITATION. MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE SIGNS.

As we have highlighted in previous editions of Safeguarding Matters, young people in the North West of England are at a heightened risk of falling victim to **criminal exploitation** in comparison to their peers in other parts of the country.

As a College we always seek to **work proactively** with families to reduce risk to our young people and this approach has proven to be highly successful. All the same, one of the key elements of safeguarding is to have the mindset of **'It could happen here'** – just because issues may not have been known to have directly affected our students in the past does not mean they could not do so in the future or that risk may not be going undetected.

With that in mind, we wanted to share with you the work of the **Iverson Trust (formerly Pace)** – a national charity working to **keep children safe from exploitation** by supporting parents, disrupting exploiters, and working in partnership with police and family services. Their work is grounded in a **trauma-informed, family-centred approach**.

During March 2026, the Iverson Trust is delivering a series of **live webinars for parents and carers** focused on **county lines and criminal exploitation**.

The sessions help parents understand **how exploitation happens, how children are groomed, what warning signs to look out for, and where to access advice and support**.

Each webinar includes local context, time for questions, and input from a parent with lived experience.

More information and booking details are available at:

<https://iversontrust.org.uk/webinars/>



Wirral's **Family Hubs** can be accessed by **the families of children aged 0-19 years (up to 25 years with SEND)**.

They help these families to **build resilience, strengthen connections and relationships, and provide needs-based information and support**

All families are able to access support including:

- support with **lifelong learning and employment**
- support with **parenting**
- access to **health and well-being activities**
- group activities to support **child development**
- access to **health appointments with midwives and health visitors**
- opportunities to **socialise with others**
- **relationship support**
- **library**
- **foodbanks**

In addition to the core offer, each hub offers **specialist services** which are tailored to the communities they serve. Examples of these specialist services include:

- **Brassey Gardens** – Rainbow group for children with ASD and social or communication difficulties
- **Equilibrium** – community breakfasts and Nature Tots
- **St James Centre** – access to IT and Wirral Lifelong Learning Service
- **Seacombe** – health services, birthing pool, and midwifery service
- **Bromborough** – Citizens' Advice Support
- **Grove Street** – parenting support groups led by Early Childhood Services, mental health support groups, and English classes for speakers of other languages
- **Ganneys Meadow** – access to SEND & wellbeing services

If you have any further questions about Family Hubs, please contact the team via email on **familyhubs@wirral.gov.uk**.

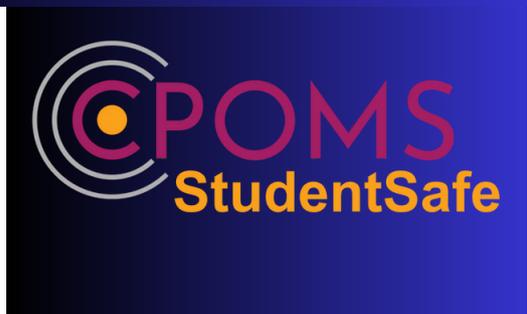
Mental Health	Debt & Welfare Advice	Domestic Abuse Support
Parenting Support	Infant Feeding Support	Housing
Intensive Targeted Family Support	Substance Misuse Support	Activities for children aged 0-5 years
Nutrition & Weight Management	Oral Health Improvement	Youth Justice Service
Reducing Parental Conflict	SEND Support & Services	Stop Smoking Support
Support for Separating & Separated Parent	Early Childhood Education & Care	Youth Services – Universal & Targeted
Early Language & Home Learning Environment	Health Visiting & 0-19 Public Health Services	Midwifery/Maternity Parent-Infant Relationship & Perinatal Mental Health





Staff training

In order to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding, staff at the College complete **regular training in a range of areas** to ensure that we are **fully compliant with statutory requirements** and also that we **maintain and develop our wider understanding and expertise**.



We thought that you might be interested to hear about some of the training that has taken place over the last year including:

- Whole staff update training on the statutory **Department for Education document Keeping Children Safe in Education**. This takes place annually on the first day of the Summer Term and is delivered in-school by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. this training is also made available to College Governors
- **Refresher training for Designated Safeguarding Leads**, completed by all members of the Safeguarding team either via the National College or through Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership
- **Safeguarding Induction** sessions for newly-appointed staff
- Whole staff training in the use of **CPOMS** - the platform used within the College for recording and notifying of any safeguarding concerns and subsequent actions and outcomes
- **Department for Education 'Prevent Duty' training**, to ensure that all staff are aware of the UK government strategy aimed at stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and the role of schools in supporting this work
- Whole-staff online training in **CPR, Fire Safety and the use of Epi-Pens**
- Training on **Emotionally-Based School Avoidance**, completed by the Designated Safeguarding lead and the Attendance and Well-Being Officer, to further develop understanding of the links between attendance and safeguarding
- Whole-staff training in **Cyber Security** and the use of AI in lesson planning
- **Weekly safeguarding updates** in staff briefing

The National College[®]

As a College we recognise that the first step in keeping young people safe is the **early identification of concerns**. Whilst we pride ourselves on the **quality of relationships** that exist within College, giving us confidence that **students will feel comfortable sharing concerns**, we also know that high-quality training that **raises staff's awareness of and ability to recognise indicators of concern** even without disclosure being made is the other central plank in providing **proactive and preemptive care**.





'Dear Merseyside'

We have previously shared with you details of the **Merseyside Police EVOLVE initiative**, designed to build communities into more prosperous and safer areas resilient to gang-related activity.

EVOLVE is Merseyside's response to the **Home Office's Clear, Hold, Build strategy**. This sees police and partners working together long-term to rid neighbourhoods of organised crime groups and build up community resilience to help protect the vulnerable and prevent further serious criminality to make these areas safer for generations to come

Merseyside Police and partners are approaching the fight against serious and organised crime from a new angle with **'Dear Merseyside'**, an inspirational assembly written and performed by **spoken word artists Joseph Roberts** to inspire hope, confidence and positive choices amongst young people in our communities.

The assembly has rolled out to secondary schools in EVOLVE areas and on Friday 30th January we were delighted to welcome Joseph into College to deliver this assembly - **[a video version of which can be viewed on YouTube](#)** - to students in Years 7 and 8.

'Dear Merseyside' is in essence a love letter to the county that features problems touching on gang culture and knife crime before talking about **solutions** and reflecting on the **'love where you live'** ethos behind EVOLVE.

Our students learnt about **Joseph's journey** and **how to spot signs of exploitation** before taking part in a **follow up live Q&A session** with Joseph about his work, his message and the issues young people face in Merseyside today.

We would like to thank Joseph for his time and sharing his experiences with us.





The Hive Start-Up Week

The **busier** that younger people are over the school holidays the **safer they are likely to be**. With that in mind, we wanted to share with you details of an initiative being run by **The Hive Youth Zone** in Birkenhead during the **February half-term**

It is called **The Hive Start-Up Week** and is aimed especially at young people who have an interest in setting up business or community project – or even becoming an online influencer.

The Start-up Week is for **13-18 year olds** and runs in **The Hive Youth Zone** across the half-term break – **Monday 16th – Friday 20th February**. The Start-up Week runs a range of activities to help you learn **entrepreneurial skills** and 5 participants are even going to win a **£100 start-up grant**.

The Start-up Week is a collaboration between the University of Liverpool Management School and The Hive Youth Zone – as is part of the Brett Centre for Entrepreneurship's Enterprise Education in Secondary Schools programme.

FREE refreshments and snacks are provided each day for ALL participants – a **Graduation Party with Certificates** and more refreshments and snacks and pizza is also going to be provided on the Friday.

Non-members also receive a FREE Youth Zone Membership.

There is **no dress code** and organisers recognise that some students are not going to be able to go to all sessions – that need not be a barrier to participation.

More information on the session within The Hive Start-up Week is – [HERE](#)

You can also sign-up for the Start-up Week [HERE](#) or by using the **QR Code to the right**



An **OnSide** Youth Zone





Support with exam stress for 11-18 year olds

The time will soon be upon us when **public examinations and internal assessments begin in earnest**. Whilst we obviously have the highest academic aspirations for all of our students, we are also conscious that preparing for and sitting examination can be an **anxious time** for students and sometimes for their families too. Alongside the **pastoral support already available in College**, we wanted to signpost you to some information compiled by the **mental health charity MIND**, which can be found in full [here](#)

Some possible causes of exam stress

- Not feeling **ready or prepared** for exams
- Worrying about sitting exams in a **new place or timed conditions**
- **Pressuring yourself** (or pressure from others) to get **certain grades**.
- Worrying about the **future**, like getting into university or getting a job.
- **Caring** for a family member or someone you live with.
- Living with **physical or mental health problems**

How might exam stress affect me?

- **Emotional effects** - Anxious, overwhelmed, upset, frustrated or angry
- **Physical effects** - Shaking, nausea, headaches, changes in breathing, sweating a lot, feeling tired
- **Thoughts** - Fear of failure or of disappointing ourselves or others, comparing ourselves to others, feeling like we can't cope
- **Behaviours** - Avoiding things like revision, working too much without taking breaks, Not doing things we usually enjoy
- Not spending enough time with people we care about

How to cope with exam stress

- Make time for **things you enjoy** - release stress and celebrate progress.
- **Talk to others** about how you feel - especially people who are going through the same thing.
- Find **balance** - a revision timetable might help with this.
- Work in a way that's **best for you** - you can find revision ideas on the [BBC Bitesize website](#).
- Revise in the **best place for you** - If you don't have a space to study where you live, you could revise at school, the library or outside.
- Revise in **exam-like conditions** - this might help things feel more familiar on the day e.g. use headphones to block out background noise.
- **Prepare yourself** - the night before an exam, get everything you need ready
- Be **kind to yourself** - practice self-compassion. Our [tips for building confidence and self-esteem](#) have more ideas.
- Take care of your **well-being** - Make sure you get enough food, water and exercise.

TOP TIPS TO REDUCE TEENAGE EXAM STRESS

TOP TIP TO BEAT EXAM ANXIETY AND STRESS

- 1** CREATE A SUITABLE STUDY SPACE FOR YOUR TEENAGER
- 2** ENCOURAGE A BALANCED STUDY ROUTINE
- 3** REDUCE EXTERNAL STRESSORS FOR YOUR TEENAGER
- 4** BOOST YOUR KIDS CONFIDENCE, SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-WORTH
- 5** ENCOURAGE TIME OUT, TIME FOR PLAY
- 6** REDUCE TECHNOLOGY OVERLOAD, SWITCH OFF
- 7** TEACH THEM HOW TO MEDITATE AND RELAX
- 8** HELP THEM GET DEEP QUALITY SLEEP



Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY)



Cardiac Risk in the Young



Cardiac Risk in the Young

Every week in the UK

12 fit and healthy young people die of undiagnosed cardiac conditions

80%

of deaths occur **with no symptoms**

But **SCREENING** has been shown to lead to an

89%

REDUCTION in sudden cardiac deaths



CRY operates a national screening programme visit, testmyheart.org.uk to book an appointment

Recently, we were delighted to welcome back into the College former student **Dylan Rumsby**. Dylan is 19 years old and studied at **St Anselm's College for 7 years**, playing rugby throughout his time at the College, ultimately, representing the first XV on the South Africa Senior tour.

Unfortunately, whilst in Disneyland USA in December 2024, he suffered a **series of sudden cardiac arrests**. Dylan was **brought back to life with a defibrillator** and then spent 10 days in an induced coma in intensive care in Orlando. Subsequent intensive care treatment in **Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital** allowed the diagnosis to be further investigated.

Thankfully, following outstanding care and the fitting of an **internal defibrillator**, Dylan has made a **fantastic recovery** and **once again leads an active life**. He is committed to the promotion of CPR and raising awareness of the CRY Charity, **raising over £7000** at the annual **London Bridge Walk in 2025**.

Dylan has been into College to **speak to students and staff in assemblies** to **promote the importance of CPR training** and to trigger the **fundraising for further defibrillators** on our College site. To date, over **850 members of our College community** have completed the **British Heart Foundation RevivR training course**. Our community has raised enough money to purchase **an additional defibrillator for our Sixth Form Centre** and a **portable version** to be used for **sports fixtures**.

Every year in the UK at least **625 young people under the age of 35 die from an undiagnosed heart condition** – with evidence suggesting that **almost 500 of those lives could have been saved through cardiac screening**.

We are sharing with all parents a link to a campaign asking the Government to **introduce cardiac screening for all over-14s** and would ask that you take the time to support this cause:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/750999>

We are also raising awareness of **free public screening organised by CRY** – individual appointments can be booked at any public screening events.

To be notified about **new screenings in our area**, please sign up to the interest list here – <https://bit.ly/tmh-interest>.



Cardiac Risk in the Young

Screening

Giving young people the choice

1 in 300 people have a potentially **life-threatening** cardiac condition that will require lifestyle modification or treatment



A **simple** non-invasive 10 minute heart test (electrocardiogram ECG) **can detect** the majority of conditions that can cause young sudden cardiac death

CRY believes **all** young people should have the **choice** to have cardiac testing.

#testmyheart

CRY operates a national screening programme available to anyone aged 14-35.

For more information or to book an appointment contact CRY via:

www.testmyheart.org.uk or 0203 691 0000

Scan the QR to book an appointment



Safe and responsible online behaviours



As mentioned at the start of this newsletter, we are currently **reviewing the College's policies around use of Smartphones and other connected devices within College**. Regardless of this, we know that the vast majority of our students will continue to have access to these devices **outside of College**.

Whilst the current debate about the use of phones in schools is a valid one it remains the case that **parents and carers have the biggest role to play** in promoting safe and responsible online behaviours.

The **NSPCC** have produced some really useful guidance for parents about how they can **best support their child** in this:

- **Follow age requirements** – Many popular Apps, sites and games are **13+** so it's important to check and follow these with pre-teens.
- **Speak to phone providers** – If your child owns their own smartphone then contact the service provider to make sure it is **registered as a child's device**. This means **additional safety restrictions** can be put in place.
- **Support your child with their settings** – Support your child to manage their safety and wellbeing settings across devices and accounts.
- **Focus on regular safety conversations** – It's important to **keep conversations regular** at this age. Check out this advice on tackling challenging conversations including tips for how to use technology to support you with this as well as this advice for talking to your child about online safety.
- **Share youth facing help and support** – Make sure your child knows about **services that can help like Childline**. You could start by sharing the online safety advice content and the Report Remove tool created by the IWF and Childline.
- **Revisit parental controls** – you will likely need to revisit regularly your parental controls and adjust them. Keep **checking these regularly** to make sure they are in place.
- **Explore healthy habits together** – Healthy habits work best when **all the family agrees** to following them. This could be agreeing to charge devices away from beds to support sleep and not using devices during mealtimes to help take breaks.
- **If applicable, use resources tailored to children with SEND – Ambitious about Autism** have created tailored advice and resources for parents to use with their children.

If your child is about to **get their first phone or a new device**, then it's a great idea to **plan ahead** for how they will use it safely. The NSPCC have created this toolkit to make it easier for your family to feel confident about starting this journey together.

NSPCC



Is your child ready to have their own phone?

We know there's a lot to consider, which is why we've built a tool with Vodafone that helps you reach a decision that is best for you and your child.

[Try our decision tool now](#)



Online safety quiz

Does your child know how to stay safe online? Here's a family quiz you can take together.

[Take the quiz](#)