

ST PHILIP HOWARD

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

ST PHILIP HOWARD
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



SPH - Heads, Hearts, Hands

Advent Term

September 2025

At St Philip Howard, safeguarding and the wellbeing of every child is at the heart of all we do. This half-term we are launching a regular safeguarding newsletter to strengthen the partnership between home and school. Each edition will share key safeguarding themes, practical advice, and useful resources to help you support your child in an ever-changing world. By keeping you updated on emerging issues and highlighting the work of our safeguarding team, we aim to ensure that together we create a safe environment where every young person can flourish.

Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing on Returning to School

Returning to school after a break can be exciting but also challenging for some young people. New routines, academic pressures, social dynamics and the pace of school life may cause anxiety, low mood or stress. It is important to recognise these feelings as normal and to support your child in managing them.

Tips for parents:

- **Talk openly** – encourage your child to share how they are feeling about school.
- **Re-establish routines** – regular sleep, meals and study habits help reduce stress.
- **Stay connected** – make time for family activities, relaxation and fun alongside school work.
- **Balance** – remind them that mistakes are part of learning, and encourage rest as well as effort.
- **Seek support early** – if worries or changes in mood persist, contact school staff or your GP.



Useful resources:

- Compass Changing lives- compass-uk.org/services/compass-changing-lives/
- NHS Mental Health Support: nhs.uk/mental-health
- Anna Freud Centre (resources for families): annafreud.org/parents



Online Safety and Your Child's Wellbeing



In today's digital world, young people spend a large part of their lives online.

While technology brings many benefits, it also comes with risks that can affect both safety and mental health. As parents and carers, your involvement is crucial in guiding, monitoring, and supporting your child's online use.

Why online safety matters

- **Exposure to inappropriate content** – including violence, pornography, gambling and harmful challenges.
- **Online predators and grooming** – children can be approached by strangers through apps, games, or social media.
- **Cyberbullying** – unkind or abusive messages can severely affect self-esteem and wellbeing.
- **Screen time and mental health** – excessive use can contribute to anxiety, poor sleep, and difficulties with concentration.
- **Pressure to 'fit in'** – apps and social media can fuel comparisons, low confidence, and body image concerns.

Tips for parents: monitoring and supporting your child online

- **Talk openly** – keep conversations about apps, games, and online experiences regular and non-judgemental.
- **Set boundaries** – agree clear limits on screen time, particularly before bed.
- **Know the apps** – download and explore the apps your child uses so you understand how they work.
- **Check privacy settings** – ensure accounts are set to private, location sharing is off, and personal information is not shared publicly.
- **Use parental controls** – most devices, broadband providers, and apps allow you to filter or restrict access.
- **Be present** – encourage devices to be used in shared family spaces rather than bedrooms.
- **Model balance** – show healthy use of technology by demonstrating your own screen boundaries.

Useful resources for parents

- NSPCC Online Safety Hub: www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/
- ThinkUKnow (CEOP): www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents
- Internet Matters (step-by-step parental controls): www.internetmatters.org

British Values



At St Philip Howard, part of our safeguarding responsibility is to help students develop the knowledge and skills they need to be respectful, responsible members of society. A key part of this is promoting the fundamental British Values, which are:

- **Democracy** - encouraging students voice, listening to different opinions, and helping young people understand how decisions are made.
- **Rule of Law** - learning why rules and laws are important for keeping everyone safe and treating others fairly.
- **Individual Liberty** - supporting students to make safe, informed choices while respecting the rights of others.
- **Mutual Respect** - teaching the importance of teaching others with kindness and valuing different perspectives, both inside and outside of school.
- **Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs** - encouraging understanding and acceptance of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and challenging discrimination where it occurs.

Protected Characteristics Equality Act (2010)

Why do we need to know them?

- **They stop unfair treatment** - the law protects people from being discriminated against because of who they are and what they believe.
- **They make life fairer for everyone** - whether it's at school, work, or in the community, protected characteristics ensures everyone has the same changes and opportunities.
- **They help us respect differences** - by recognising protected characteristics, we celebrate diversity and make sure everyone feels safe, valued, and welcome.

What are they?

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sex orientation



We are pleased to be starting our half-termly parental workshops this term, held in school at 6pm.

Thursday 25th September – Teen Mental Health and Wellbeing delivered by **Compass**

Thursday 27th November – Vaping: All You Need to Know delivered by **The Talk About Trust**
We look forward to welcoming as many parents as possible.

App Focus: WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a free messaging app widely used for chats, calls, and sharing media. Legally, users must be 16+ in the UK (13+ in some countries) to have an account.

Dangers:

Messages may feel “private” but can be **screenshot or shared**.

Group chats can expose young people to **bullying or inappropriate content**. Sharing personal information can risk **privacy and safety**.



If You Are Worried About Your Child

If you ever have concerns about your child's safety, wellbeing, or mental health, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Our safeguarding team is here to listen, support, and work with you to ensure your child is safe and thriving. No worry is too small – it is always better to share a concern early.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Ms C. Neves Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mrs S. Bailey

Family Support Managers: Mrs C. Brown and Mrs J. Fishwick
You can contact the Safeguarding Team at St Philip Howard via: safeguarding@sph.srscmat.co.uk

Team SPH: heads, hearts, hands-together on the success journey