

ST PHILIP HOWARD

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

ST. PHILIP HOWARD
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



SPH - Heads, Hearts, Hands

Advent Term 2

2025

Welcome to this half term's Safeguarding Newsletter. At SPH, the safety, wellbeing and personal development of every student remains our highest priority. This edition includes important information on Anti-Bullying Week, how to support healthy friendships and relationships, the growing concerns around vaping, and a reminder about staying safe online. We encourage all parents and carers to take a few minutes to read through the updates below and to speak with your child about any of the topics raised. Working together, we can help ensure that every young person feels safe and supported.

Anti-Bullying Week November 2025



Anti-Bullying Week takes place this November, and the theme this year is "Power for God", empowering young people to speak up, support others and promote kindness. Bullying of any kind – verbal, physical, online or indirect – is never acceptable and will always be taken seriously.

We encourage students to:

- Speak up if they are being bullied or see it happening.
- Be an upstander, not a bystander.
- Report any concerns to a trusted adult in school or at home.

Parents can support by:

- Talking regularly with your child about friendships and school life.
- Reminding your child to report concerns early – we can only help when we know.
- Using language like "What would you do if you saw someone being picked on?" to open discussion.

Healthy Relationships & Toxic Friendships



As young people grow, friendships and relationships can become more complex. We are teaching students how to recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy (toxic) relationships.

Healthy Friendships look like:

- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Kindness and support
- ✓ Being able to be yourself
- ✓ Disagreements resolved fairly

Toxic Friendships may include:

- ✗ Manipulation or control
- ✗ Name-calling or humiliation "as a joke"
- ✗ Being excluded on purpose
- ✗ Feeling anxious, guilty or "not good enough"

Parents can help by encouraging children to:

- Trust their instincts – if a friendship feels unkind, it probably is.
- Set boundaries and say "no" without guilt.
- Speak to school staff if they are worried about a friendship dynamic.

Vaping – A Growing Concern

We are seeing a national rise in young people experimenting with vaping, and we want to work together with parents to keep students safe.

Key reminders:

- Vapes are illegal to sell to under-18s.
- Many contain high levels of nicotine, which can quickly cause addiction.
- Some illegal vapes have been found to contain harmful chemicals and even lead.
- Vaping can affect concentration, breathing and long-term lung development.

Parents can support by:

- Checking bags/rooms for vape devices if concerned.
- Talking openly – be curious, not accusatory.
- Reminding children that “everyone is doing it” is a myth – most young people do not vape.



Online Safety – Stay Vigilant

As ever, we ask all parents to remain alert to what children are doing online. Young people often underestimate risk, especially when using apps with private messaging, livestreaming or disappearing content.

Please continue to:

- Know what apps and games your child uses.
- Check privacy settings together.
- Encourage your child to tell an adult straight away if something online makes them uncomfortable.
- Remind them never to share personal details or images – once shared, it can't be taken back.

If you are unsure how to check safety settings, www.internetmatters.org has clear parent guides for all major apps and devices.



Parental Workshop Update

Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended our first workshop in September. Please note there has been a slight change to the previously advertised schedule. The November workshop has now been moved to January.

Instead, we will be running a special virtual session on Online Safety on Thursday 27th November. We hope you can join us.

App Focus: TikTok

TikTok is one of the most used apps by young people. While it can be creative and fun, there are important safety risks to be aware of.



Key Things to Know:

- Minimum age is 13+, but many younger children still use it.
- Accounts are public by default unless changed in settings.
- Children can receive comments or contact from strangers.
- Content is not filtered – videos can include swearing, sexualised content, harmful trends or challenges.
- Location and data can be shared unless settings are changed.

How to Help Keep Your Child Safe:

Set the account to Private Use Family Pairing to link your account with theirs
Turn off direct messaging if not needed
Check who they follow and what they see
Watch Talk regularly about what they see online – not just what they post
A step-by-step safety guide is available on Internet Matters – TikTok parents' guide.

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

