

Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School



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Mobile Phones and Social Media

In the Autumn 2024 newsletter we shared guidance on setting up safe boundaries and practices to ensure our students are safe when accessing the internet. With over 90% of 12 year olds owning a mobile phone, it is an important topic to delve deeper into. [A recent survey](#) by Barnardo's shows:

- Over half (54%) have felt bullied or harassed online at some point, with 8% often or always feel bullied or harassed.
- Two thirds (67%) had seen things online that made them feel worried or scared, with one in 10 seeing them often or all the time.
- Over a third (36%) had been contacted online by someone they didn't know who made them feel worried or scared, including 9% who said this had happened many times.

It's clear that alongside all its benefits and opportunities, the online world has the potential to put children's mental health and wellbeing at risk.

Fortunately, there are lots of resources and support available to help our children and students navigate the online world. The NSPCC website is excellent pages, particularly about supporting students online wellbeing: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-wellbeing/>

Other useful pages are shared in this newsletter.

Prayer

Gracious God,

In this world of constant connection, guide our young people's hands and hearts.

Grant them wisdom in their digital journeys, strength to resist online temptations, and courage to seek help when challenged.

Bless them with discernment: to pause before they post, to think before they share, to value their dignity and others'.

Remind them that their worth is not measured in likes or shares, but in the depth of their character and the kindness of their hearts.

Amen

Bishop Ullathorne,
Pray for Us

The Spring Term

Safer Internet Day 2025

Safer Internet Day 2025 will take place on the 11 February 2025, with celebrations and learning based around the theme 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'

During CPSHE and form times students will assess the real scale of this issue and allow young people to share their experiences and ideas on how to tackle the problem. We'll build on the important work being done to raise awareness of issues such as online financial scams and we'll also consider the future of scams, answering questions such as:

- How is changing technology like generative AI going to impact the approach of scammers?
- What role can the government and internet industry take to tackle this threat?
- And what changes would young people like to see to help protect themselves moving forward?

Hot Spots Around School

Form Reps worked with their form group and a copy of our school map to discuss which areas are 'hot spots' during social times.

Form Reps feedback to our Student Leadership Council and decided on the three main areas around school where we can make a difference and discussed exactly how we could do it. Students decided that the narrow doors around school could be made safer with a 'stop and go' system and clear waiting areas to help manage crowds. These instructions have been shared with staff at CPD sessions and students through assemblies and we look forward to sharing the difference it has made.

All students wanting to go in the white door should stop and wait patiently on this tarmac section until the door is clear to walk through in single file.



Safeguarding in the Curriculum

From January to Easter our students will be studying:

- Current Affairs – in the News and Misogyny
- Hate crimes
- Health and Wellbeing – addiction, self-insight and self-care, coercive control, tough relationships
- Financial wellbeing and scams
- First Aid, Drugs, Alcohol, Gambling
- "Think Before You Share"

Years 8, 9 and 10 have had an assembly from our West Midlands Police Schools Intervention and Prevention Officer about County Lines. Students saw a video about Justin who has been targeted by Ess to show how easily young people can be groomed and manipulated into criminal activity.

Campaign Against Knife Crime

As part of an on-going partnership campaign against knife crime, police and secondary schools in Coventry are committed to working together to protect our young people from knives and other weapons. A range of tactics are being used including educational inputs and in-school knife arches, which we had visit on 26 March, to ensure that students are well-informed about the consequences of carrying weapons and identify those that may do so.

It is important that the police, schools and families work together to protect children and communities. To do this, parents must be aware and talk to children about carrying weapons. The consequences of being found in possession of a knife are serious and long lasting affecting education, employment and travel opportunities, but most crucially, life.

Unfortunately, some young people carry weapons because they feel it will provide protection or increase the respect they are given by their friends, but the sad fact is that they are more likely to become victims of serious violence. Parents should also be aware that girls sometimes carry or store weapons for their boyfriends or other male friends because they believe they are less likely to be stopped by the police. Their reasons are often misguided loyalty or love, but it is still a crime if they are caught carrying a knife or other weapon.

Carrying an offensive weapon in a public place without good reason is a criminal offence. This can include knives, knuckle-dusters, broken bottles or tools such as spanners and hammers if they are intended by the person carrying them to cause injury to a person. Where young people are involved in crime involving a bladed article on school premises, the police are without discretion and will make an arrest in these matters. This will result in attendance at Youth Court for a decision on how the matter is finalised. Ours, like most other schools, will permanently exclude any student found to be carrying a knife, both on and off the school premises.

If you have any concerns about your child or their friends carrying a weapon, speak to them calmly and explain the risks and consequences. You may find these links useful:

- [Home - NKBL No Knives, Better Lives](#)
- [Why carry a weapon? - The Mix](#)
- [Gun and knife crime | Childline](#)
- [Give information about crime 100% anonymously | Fearless | Crimestoppers](#)

If you feel they aren't listening, please contact us at school to talk through your concerns and plan a way forward together. Please be assured that this is not about criminalising your child, but securing the right support to keep them and others safe from harm.

If your child makes you aware of concerns they might have about other young people in school or the community, you can make a report to the police directly by calling 101. Alternatively you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via If a crime is taking place or a life is in danger, call 999 immediately.

The Spring Term continued

Change Makers

At Bishop Ullathorne we have been working with the Change Makers resources, part of the My Tomorrow programme with West Midlands Police Violence Reduction Partnership. Our Year 12 students have been trained and then delivered weekly sessions to Year 7 form groups with the message about being an upstander but selecting the most appropriate response to different scenarios. We have looked at how when communities work together positive change can be created. Students have also discussed identity, safety, relationships, using their voice and influences.

We believe that everyone has the opportunity to “do the right things” and influence change for the better. We are proud of our sixth formers being Change Makers and encouraging our younger students to make change too. We have had Hits Radio and BBC Coventry and Warwickshire in finding out more about the impact of this programme. Here are some of the news articles:

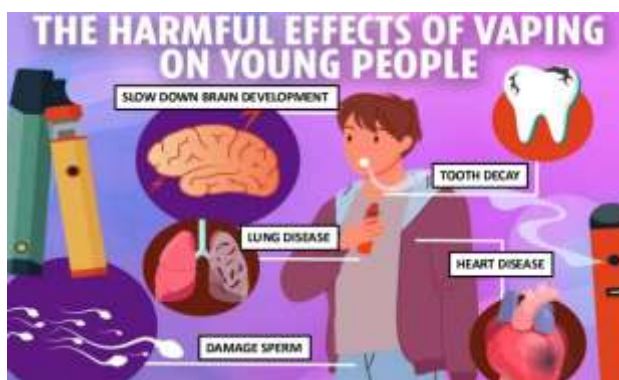
- [Coventry students are taking control of the school curriculum | News - Hits Radio \(Coventry & Warwickshire\)](#)
- <https://x.com/WestMidsVRP/status/1891792449997095209>
- [Coventry sixth-formers deliver lessons on difficult topics - BBC News](#)

Vape Talks

All students from Year 7 to Year 13 found out more about the dangers of vaping from West Midlands Police this term, as four children from schools across the city had been hospitalised from using illegal vapes containing 'spice'.

As well as hearing about how the harmful effects of vapes, often wrongly assumed to be a 'healthy' alternative to

smoking, students were able to find out more about the laws around vaping. It is illegal for them to be sold to under-18s and for adults to buy them on their behalf. We heard about over 4.5 million illegal vapes being seized over the last 12 months, and that illegal disposable vapes, such as those bought from QR codes on lampposts in the city centre, contain above the legal volume limit of nicotine and can contain 'spice' and other drugs.



School Health Questionnaire

This term all Year 9 students were asked to complete survey by the Schools Nursing Team where they were presented with a range of topics and asked to select the ones they would most like more information on.

The totals are in and our top four topics were:

- Sleep
- Healthy eating
- Healthy relationships
- Keeping safe in the community

We will work with a range of external partners to help support students with these important topics.

Spotlight on Adolescence

Available on Netflix now

The four part Netflix series, Adolescence, has recently been the most streamed programme in the UK and has been described as a 'must watch' for all parents of both boys and girls. It has demonstrated to many the 'manosphere', incel culture and misogynistic content prevalent on social media, and the threat to young boys and men online such as hate speech and harmful narratives from toxic online influencers such as Andrew Tate and Tommy Robinson.

Adolescence has sparked national debate about important issues around social media, mobile phone use and how it links to the safety and mental health of our children. We will continue to update you with helpful resources and hope that this discussion leads to much needed action and meaningful change.

Without ruining the plot, one key takeaway from Adolescence is that parents and carers must be aware of what is going on in their child's digital lives. It highlights the fact that any child could be vulnerable to radicalisation from online content, available to them 24/7 and that our job as parents, carers and educators is to help them navigate this world. The rest of this newsletter collates information from a range of valuable sources designed to help open those conversations.

In school, all students have learnt about what misogyny is and the impact of it through CPSHE. Our Change Makers programme with Year 7 and 12 has been tackling some of these difficult topics further including gender stereotyping and healthy relationships.

Year 9 students have been working through the Men at Work '12 Dialogues' programme by Michael Conroy which supporting the healthy personal development of boys and young men, challenging sexism and fostering violence-free relationships and communities. These sessions cover a range of topics including respect, control, people not objects and taking 'no' for an answer and we will continue this important work.

Useful link about Adolescence

- [Advice for parents worried about issues raised in Netflix's show Adolescence | Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [Downing Street opens doors to Adolescence creators for vital discussion on protecting our children - GOV.UK](#)

Emoji Guides

One important point raised in Adolescence is the meanings behind emojis. This comprehensive emoji guide from filtering and monitoring company Senso outlines many of the popular emojis and their meanings amongst teens and young people, whilst reminding us that context plays a key role and that use of emojis in certain situations doesn't always point to a larger issue.

[2025-03-26-senso-protect-ed-emoji-slang-guide-pdf-03-ses](#)

Top Tips for...

MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

BUY MILK

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do: the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead designs and delivers the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

Advice from the Experts:



Being open and talking to children about what they do online, as well as encouraging them to use devices in communal areas such as the lounge or kitchen, can help you have more awareness of what they're watching, who they are talking to, and what games they're playing online."

Jess Edwards

Senior Policy Adviser, Barnardo's



Whilst parental controls will reduce the chances of your child seeing something they're not ready for, inappropriate content can still get through. Supervise younger children and keep talking about their online lives."

Will Gardener

CEO of Childnet



Exploiters use apps, online games and websites in a variety of ways to identify, approach or engage children without detection, that is why it is important to empower your child to stay safe by keeping communication open. Encourage them to talk to you if anyone online reaches out who they don't know or is making them feel uncomfortable."

Bethan Kelly

National Programme Development Manager for Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, Barnardo's

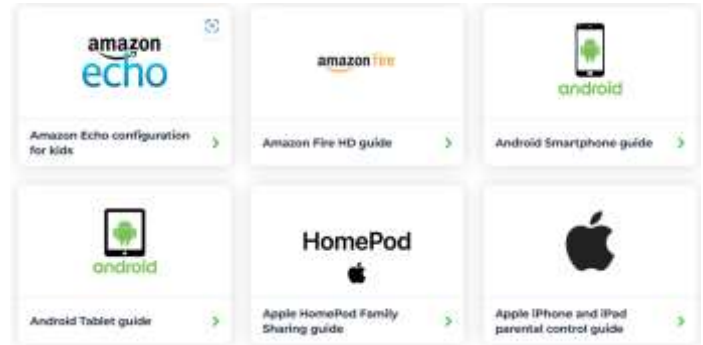
Parental Controls

Different devices have different parental controls and settings available from location tracking, to managing screen time, to limiting what students can access.

[Internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org) have collated advice from across websites into one place to give specific advice for different devices:

- Amazon Echo
- Android
- iPhone
- And many more.

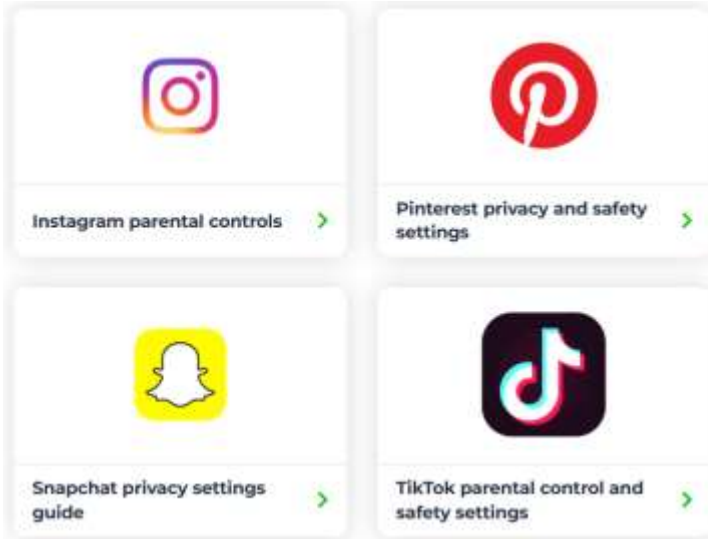
[Guides for Apple and Android devices parental controls | Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/guides-for-apple-and-android-devices-parental-controls/)



Social Media

Many children use social networking sites to chat to friends and family or share their latest selfie, and these are often different apps to what parents are using. [Internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org) also have social media guides to get you up to speed on the most popular platforms and set the right privacy settings.

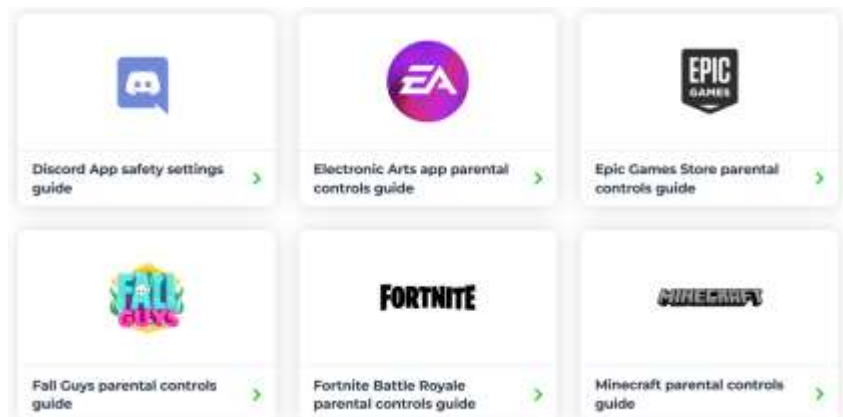
[Social Media Parental Controls and Privacy Settings | Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/social-media-parental-controls-and-privacy-settings/)



Gaming

[Internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org) also have advice and support for parents whose children are keen gamers and own different consoles or devices to play the latest games. These guides share how to set the right level of protection to give children a fun and safe experience while playing video games.

[Video gaming, consoles and platforms parental controls | Internet Matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/video-gaming-consoles-and-platforms-parental-controls/)



Talking to Children about Online Safety

All of the advice suggests that open conversations between parents and children is the best forward to help keep them safe online. Making it part of daily conversation, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed and it also means when they do have any worries, they're more likely to come and speak to you.

This NSPCC website that includes good advice about how to tackle difficult conversations [Teaching Your Child about Internet & Online Safety | NSPCC](#)

My Family's Digital Toolkit

Get personalised online safety advice, giving you everything you need to keep your child safe. It will ask you 7 questions and take approximately 8 minutes before suggesting a plan which includes:

- age-specific advice and tips to support your children online
- information about popular apps and platforms your children use
- information about how to deal with any online safety concerns
- recommendations for digital tools to support their interests and wellbeing

[My Family's Digital Toolkit - tailored online safety advice | Internet Matters](#)

Childnet Family Agreement

Childnet have put this helpful Family Agreement guide together with tips about how to create your own that works for your family. More information can be found here: [Family Agreement | Childnet](#)

[Putting the Family Agreement into practice | Childnet](#)

Childnet Family Agreement
A great way to start positive family conversations around online safety, and to agree clear expectations and boundaries.

Start by discussing the questions that are most relevant to your family.

- Getting started**
 - What do we enjoy doing online?
 - What apps, games and websites do we use the most?
 - Do we already have any rules about use of tech we want to include in our family agreement?
- Managing time online**
 - How does it feel when we use tech for too long?
 - How do we know when our screen use is interfering with family life?
 - What can we do to help avoid overusing tech?
- Sharing**
 - What should we check before posting images and videos online?
 - Do we know how to use privacy settings and what makes a strong password?
 - How can we use features like livestreaming and disappearing content safely?
- Online content**
 - How do we decide which websites, apps, games and devices are okay for us to use?
 - What can we do if we see something online which seems unreliable or untrustworthy?
 - How can we stop ourselves accidentally spending money in a game or app?
- Communicating online**
 - Who can we talk, chat or play games with online? Just family? Friends? Anyone?
 - How can we keep ourselves safe if we are communicating with people who we only know online?
 - How can we look after our friends when we are online?
- If things go wrong**
 - What can we do if we feel uncomfortable or upset by anything we see or hear online?
 - What should we do if someone we only know online asks us for photos, a video call, to meet up or to share personal information?
 - Do we know how to find the report and block buttons on the websites, apps and games we use?
- To finish...**
 - How would parental controls help our family?
 - What should happen if one of us breaks the family agreement?
 - When should we review our family agreement?

Want expert advice?
www.childnet.com/parents-carers-advice

Examples for different ages:

- 10-11 years old:** I will use my tablet for _____ a day.
- 12-13 years old:** I will make sure that children's passwords are bookmarked for later to get to easily.
- 14-15 years old:** I will not post anything on social media that makes me feel uncomfortable or that makes other children feel uncomfortable.
- 16-17 years old:** I will make sure that my social networking sites are private.

Now it is time to write your agreement.

Our agreement: _____

Who is responsible for this? _____

What happens if someone doesn't follow the agreement? _____

Date: _____ Review date: _____

Signatures: _____

Childnet For further advice and resources visit www.childnet.com/parents-carers-advice
Facebook: @childnet Twitter: @childnet Instagram: @childnet

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A Closer Look at Instagram Teen

“Built-In Protections for Teens, Peace of Mind for Parents”

Instagram has introduced Teen Accounts which will limit who can contact teens and the content they see, and help ensure teens' time is well spent. Teens under 16 will need a parent's permission to change any of the built-in protections to be less strict within Teen Accounts.



- Private accounts: With default private accounts, teens need to accept new followers and people who don't follow them can't see their content or interact with them. This applies to all teens under 16 (including those already on Instagram and those signing up) and teens under 18 when they sign up for the app.
- Messaging restrictions: Teens will be placed in the strictest messaging settings, so they can only be messaged by people they follow or are already connected to.
- Sensitive content restrictions: Teens will automatically be placed into the most restrictive setting of our [sensitive content control](#), which limits the type of sensitive content (such as content that shows people fighting or promotes cosmetic procedures) teens see in places like Explore and Reels.
- Limited interactions: Teens can only be tagged or mentioned by people they follow. We'll also automatically turn on the most restrictive version of our anti-bullying feature, [Hidden Words](#), so that offensive words and phrases will be filtered out of teens' comments and DM requests.
- Time limit reminders: Teens will get notifications telling them to leave the app after 60 minutes each day.
- Sleep mode enabled: Sleep mode will be turned on between 10 PM and 7 AM, which will mute notifications overnight and send auto-replies to DMs.

Worried?

If you're worried about something a child or young person may have experienced online, you can contact the [NSPCC Helpline](#) for free support and advice and look at [Reporting online safety concerns | NSPCC](#). If your child needs more support, they can contact [Childline](#).

#WakeUp
Wednesday

The
National
College

STOP HATE UK
STOP HATE. START HERE



Let's Tackle Online Hate Together



Make sure you know how to report content on any sites or apps that you use. Don't be afraid to report any hateful posts that you see.



Don't respond to the people positing hate: sometimes an ongoing conflict is exactly what they want. Instead, report, block and unfollow them.



Set a positive example through your own online behaviour. Before you post or share anything, ask yourself if you would say it to someone offline.



Show support for online campaigns against hate and 'like' posts that you see promoting positive messages. You could leave an encouraging comment, too!



If you see upsetting messages online, talk to your friends and family about them. Maybe take a break from the app or site you saw them on.



Remember that you have the power to shape your online world. Engage with posts or accounts that inspire kindness and connection, and block or unfollow the ones that don't.

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