

SAFETY MATTERS

BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S PASTORAL AND SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER



KEEPING YOUR CHILDREN SAFE OVER THE LONG SUMMER BREAK

The long summer holiday is in many ways a great blessing. It is a time to rest and recoup, a time to gain new experiences and importantly, a time for families to come together and spend some much needed time in each other's company in a way that simply is not possible during the busy terms. As your children mature, their opinions on what they would like to do and whose company they prefer to keep may change significantly. This is natural for young people testing their independence and beginning to take some control over their choices. Whilst you may happily watch your child go out with their friends at weekends or leave them online for a period in the evenings, you may start to feel out of touch when this extends over the several weeks of summer holidays. This newsletter therefore contains some advice that parents may find useful, and direction to further resources should you wish to delve a bit deeper.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SEPTEMBER 2023

There are a number of new initiatives to look forward to in September that are designed to support the well-being and pastoral care at Bishops. **The Respect Strategy** will see a push on good manners and high levels of respect for self, others and the community. Students will be reminded of what respectful behaviour looks like in all areas of life and will be rewarded for particularly respectful acts. In the final week of term our **Anti-Bullying Ambassadors** received their training from the Diana Award and are already planning some initiatives to help tackle bullying and encourage those affected to speak out. They will work alongside our **Student Voice Representatives** (aka school council reps) to ensure that school remains a happy place for all students. September will also see the launch of a **bespoke student voice software, My Student Voice** which will enable students to report online anything that has made them feel uncomfortable or unhappy in and around school. Pastoral staff will then be able to offer help and identify patterns which can be addressed. We continue to search for **student leadership opportunities** throughout the school to empower and address any issues affecting the student body, and hope to encourage plenty of students to come forward and share their voice.



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Water Safety

Whether you are heading abroad or having a UK staycation, there's no doubt that having a dip in a sea, lake or river is a lovely way to cool off and have some fun in the sun. But we have had some stark reminders in recent years of the dangers of swimming in these bodies of water which are often unregulated by lifeguards. This is what the Royal Life Saving Society UK have to say. For more information visit <https://www.rlss.org.uk/summer-water-safety>

Accidents are mostly preventable with the correct knowledge and judgment and here are our tips to staying safe in the water during the summer:

Stop and Think

Is the area safe? Think about potential hazards - too deep, too shallow, currents, tides, underwater objects?

Enter slowly and carefully and never jump from heights.

Think carefully about your ability to splash or swim in cold outdoor water. 49% of those who lost their life were classified as swimmers. Are you really a good swimmer?

Research local information, conditions - read local signs and speak to locals, including the lifeguards.

Stay Together

Supervision – over 70% of fatal accidents occur in the absence of professional supervision. Seek lifeguarded areas and always make sure someone is available to raise the alarm.

Don't go too far – enter the water slowly and stay within a standing depth.

Call 999

Ask for the Fire and Rescue Service when inland and the Coastguard if at the coast. Don't enter the water to rescue.

Be sure everyone in your group knows who to call in the event of an emergency. If you are abroad, be sure you know the correct number to call.

Float

Fall in or become tired – stay calm, float on your back and call for help. Throw something that floats to somebody that has fallen in.

Make sure the whole family knows basic water safety and what to do if they find themselves in the water unexpectedly.

Summer is an amazing time to enjoy our beautiful waterways but warmer weather is directly linked to an increase in fatal drowning incidents.

46% of drownings occur in the summer months and this rises to **75% amongst 13 – 17-year olds.**

Summer WATER SAFETY

When Summer hits it can be tempting to look for the nearest place to cool off.
Here are our top tips if you plan on going for a paddle:



**LOOK OUT
FOR LIFEGUARDS**



**IT'S COLDER
THAN IT LOOKS**



**DON'T GO
TOO FAR**



**IT'S STRONGER
THAN IT LOOKS**



BRING A FRIEND

Staying safe online



"Online bullying is rife across society and in my personal and professional opinion, due to its prevalence, constitutes a much greater risk to a young person's mental health and well-being".

The topic of online safety is a monster which seems to grow more arms and legs by the day. It begins with 'stranger danger' - do you really know who your child is communicating with online? Do they even 'know' that person. Our children have grown up in an era where you 'meet' people online and become 'friends', but they may never have actually met these people and they may well not be who they say they are.

Then we have to think about what sites the children are accessing and whether they are suitable and appropriate for their age. I immediately think here of inappropriate sexual imagery, but it also includes extreme views and extreme violence, some of which is pushed towards young people in the online games they play.

Then, even if we are satisfied that they are only chatting with people they really know **and** we have set up restrictions to block access to inappropriate content, sadly we still need to worry about what they are saying, sharing and receiving online.

Online bullying is rife across society and in my personal and professional opinion, due to its prevalence, constitutes a much greater risk to a young person's mental health and well-being than the risks above.

It can be directed straight at the target and no matter how pronounced the message they must not say something online that they would not say to someone's face, it continues. Worryingly, they seem more prepared to use harmful language than ever before. Online bullying also includes indirect targeting, where individuals are humiliated behind their virtual backs or excluded from groups that they had once been in.

The impact on a young person of suddenly being expelled from a chat group without explanation or right of reply can be devastating and brings such insecurity and distrust of relationships.

As you will see, this topic is too big to address in detail in this newsletter and individual families will have their own views on which areas they should address at home, so you will find links to more information in the right hand column.

NSPCC Keeping Children Safe Online

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

UK Safer Internet Centre

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

Childnet: Online Bullying

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-bullying/>

Family online safety institute: 3 reasons social media age restrictions matter

<https://www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting/three-reasons-social-media-age-restrictions-matter#>

Internet matters: Parental controls

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/#>

KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE



This may seem flippant, but it is important. I am not talking about spying on your children nor tracking their every move or restricting their independence, but I am talking about being confident of where they are, who they are with and what they are doing at all times.

This is not about being overpowering or overprotective, it is about being respectfully and responsibly curious. Your children are sensible, yes, but they are not immune from making poor decisions on occasion, and your enquiry about where they are going, with whom and to do what might just give you an opportunity to protect your child.

If you do it, even if it annoys them, what's the worst that can happen?
But if you **don't** do it, then what's the worst that can happen?

***FROM EVERYONE AT
BISHOPS, HAVE A
WONDERFUL
SUMMER HOLIDAY***