

# HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

May 2026

## OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM



At Holyhead School we endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We believe that all children should feel safe and be able to approach someone if they have a concern. The safety and wellbeing of our students is the most important aspect of our work as a school. If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing or safety, or want to report a concern about another child, please ask to speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Team. –Mrs D Denny Lead DSL. [ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk](mailto:ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk)

*In this month's issue we look at:*

- Mental Health Awareness week
- What is the manosphere?
- Supporting your child with exam stress
- COM Group/Networks
- Real or Fake?
- Why the U code matters

### Who to contact if you are concerned about a student at Holyhead school:

Mrs D Denny Lead DSL [ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk](mailto:ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk)  
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Telephone the school on 0121 523 1960 to speak to any of the safeguarding team.

# Mental Health Awareness Week 11th - 17th May 2026

**Mental Health Awareness Week 2026** is scheduled for **11–17 May 2026** in the UK, with the theme "**Action**".

There are a number of ways parents can support their children in managing their mental health.

## Active Communication & Emotional Safety

- **Listen Without Judgment:** Regularly ask how they are doing to normalise talking about feelings. Listen patiently without rushing to "fix" things immediately.
- **Create an "Open Environment":** Establish a home culture where it is safe for children to share thoughts and worries without fear of being judged.
- **Use Creative Play:** For younger children, activities like drawing, building, or colouring can help them express thoughts they may not have words for yet.

## Stability & Connection

- **Maintain Consistent Routines:** Regular times for meals, exercise, and sleep help children feel secure and reduce overall stress.
- **Be Present and Available:** Dedicate daily screen-free time for shared activities, such as a walk or reading together, to strengthen your bond.
- **Celebrate Identity:** Help your child connect with their talents, heritage, and personality to build their confidence and sense of belonging.

## Teaching Resilience

- **Be a Role Model:** Show your child how you handle your own difficult emotions and the importance of self-care.
- **Encourage Interests:** Support their hobbies and extracurricular activities; being part of a team or learning new skills can significantly boost wellbeing.
- **Practice Kindness:** Talk about empathy and encourage small kind acts, which can help them feel more connected to their community.

## When to Seek Professional Help

## Exam stress

This time of year can be very stressful for children about to sit their GCSE's. Here are a few ways parents can support this process:

- **Create an "Oasis of Calm":** During exam seasons, reduce their household responsibilities and let the "small stuff"—like messy rooms—go. Provide a dedicated, tidy study space and plenty of healthy snacks.
- **Help Them Plan:** Assist them in creating a **realistic revision timetable** that includes regular breaks and "down-time". Encourage them to start early to avoid "cramming," which can increase anxiety and impair memory.
- **Maintain Perspective:** Remind them regularly that **exams do not define their worth**. Have a "Plan B" ready for results day so they know there are always alternative paths.

For further guidance, resources like [Anna Freud's secondary school leaflet](#) and the [Exam Stress | How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#) offer detailed tips for parents.

Consider contacting a **GP** or **school nurse** if your child:

- Appears sad or withdrawn most days.
- Shows significant changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Experiences intense anxiety that interferes with daily life.



Charities like [Place2Be](#) and the [YoungMinds Parents Helpline](#) provide expert advice for parents. For urgent support, the [NHS Every Mind Matters](#) page offers guidance on finding crisis services.

Mrs Williams Deputy Mental Health Lead - [williams@holyhead.crst.org.uk](mailto:williams@holyhead.crst.org.uk)

## What is the Manosphere?

There is currently a documentary on Netflix called “Louis Theroux: Inside the Manosphere” in which investigative reporter Louis Theroux interviews a number of “influencers” that promote extreme and disturbing ideologies to young males online.

In simple terms the manosphere promotes views against the empowerment of women and these influencers detail views and information that can cause harm to viewers. It is important that we educate our young people within school and ensure they are protected against this content.

Below are three links to articles that explain ways in which parents can support their children in critical thinking and encouraging age-appropriate conversations.

- [Talking about gender equality, sexism and misogyny with your child](#)
- [4 ways to tackle misogyny among young people - Brook](#)
- [What is the manosphere and why should we care? | UN Women – Headquarters](#)



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## COM Groups/Networks

COM Groups are online communities or group chats where harmful and deeply disturbing behaviour can take place.

This could be via mainstream messaging apps, gaming platforms or through social media. It is important to be aware that such networks exist and understand the risks they may pose to our children.

The Molly Rose Foundation has issued an alert highlighting the scale and nature of COM Networks, including how they target vulnerable young people:

[Molly Rose Foundation issues public warning into prevalence of online groups targeting children for self-harm, suicide and abuse | Molly Rose Foundation](#)

## Real or Fake?

"Fake AI" is a term often used to describe **synthetic media**—content like images, videos, and audio that has been created or manipulated by artificial intelligence to look or sound real when it isn't. Schools are beginning to see a concerning increase in the use of fake AI to target and bully other children.

The primary issue with "fake AI" (synthetic media like deepfakes and AI-generated misinformation) is its ability to **erode trust in reality** and cause severe **emotional, social, and democratic harm**. Because these tools are now cheap and easily accessible, they can be used to manipulate even the most digitally savvy individuals

The use of fake AI can cause severe emotional and social harm to its victims, including:

- **Non-Consensual Imagery:** One of the most damaging uses is the creation of explicit deepfakes, often targeting women and children. This can lead to intense emotional trauma, social isolation, and "sextortion" scams.
- **Targeted Bullying:** AI tools allow for more sophisticated forms of harassment, such as mimicking a child's voice or creating humiliating fake videos, which can lead to anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
- **Identity Theft and Impersonation:** Criminals use "vishing" (voice phishing) to clone the voices of family members, such as a child in distress, to trick parents into transferring money.

Teenagers can navigate the "real vs. fake" dilemma by using **critical thinking** and specific digital literacy tools. Since 57% of 12–15-year-olds get their news from social media, learning to spot misinformation is essential for their mental well-being and online safety.

## Why the "U" code matters

In school attendance, the **"U" code** is a specific marker used when a student arrives at school **after the registration period has officially closed**.

While the student is physically present for the rest of the session, the "U" code is legally classified as an **unauthorised absence** for that entire session.

The use of this code is significant for several legal and administrative reasons:

- **Impact on Attendance Percentage:** Unlike the "L" code (Late), which still counts as being present, the "U" code counts as a full absence. Frequent use of this code can quickly pull a student's attendance below the expected **95-96% threshold**.
- **Legal Consequences:** Because it is an unauthorised absence, a pattern of "U" codes can trigger formal interventions, such as **attendance meetings, fines, or legal action** from the local authority.
- **Safeguarding and Welfare:** Consistent late arrival after the register has closed can signal underlying issues at home or with a student's

### A simple way to verify information is the PAUSE check:

- **Post:** Read beyond the headline. Sensationalist headlines are often misleading.
- **Author:** Who created this? Check if the account has a "blue tick" or is a known credible source.
- **Update:** Check the date. Old news is often reshared as if it's happening now.
- **Source:** Can you find this same story on trusted sites like the [BBC](#) or [Reuters](#)?
- **Evidence:** Look closely at images and videos for signs of AI manipulation or "deepfakes"

### What to do if you are the victim of fake AI:

- **Non-Consensual "Nude" or Intimate Images:** Report this directly to the [Police](#) or use the [Revenge Porn Helpline](#). For those under 18, [Childline](#) and the [Take It Down](#) service can help remove explicit content from the internet.
- **Blackmail or "Sextortion":** If someone is using an AI image to threaten you or demand money, report it to your local police or anonymously via [Crimestoppers](#) at 0800 555 111.
- **Harassment or Stalking:** If AI is being used to repeatedly target, bully, or distress someone, this can be reported as a crime to the police.



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mental health. Schools use this data to identify pupils who may need **early intervention** or additional support.

- **Statutory Data & Compliance:** Schools are required by the [Department for Education \(DfE\)](#) to use these codes consistently to provide accurate national statistics on why and how often children miss school.

Holyhead school recently sent out an email to all parents to remind you that school gates open at 8:30am and students are expected to be in school by 8:40 am for a 8:45 am prompt start. Students who arrive after this time will be marked as late and will receive a same-day lunchtime detention. Registration closes at 9:15 am, students arriving after this time will be given a same-day 45 minute after-school detention.

Please support us in ensuring your child is in school on time each day.