

HOLYHEAD SAFEGUARDING *NEWSLETTER*

July 2026



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

In this month's issue we look at:

- Keeping Safe in Our Community This Summer
- Free Local Activities & Keeping a Holiday Routine
- Safe Surfing – Digital Boundaries & Online Threats
- Who to Contact – Summer Help & Support Directory

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

Mrs D Denny Lead DSL ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mr D Beale Senior DDSL dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mr F Khan Head of 6th form fkhan@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mrs K Robinson SENCO/Mental Health Lead
krobinson@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mrs S Parker Head of Year 7
sparker@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mrs T Edwards Head of Year 8
tedwards@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mrs N Malcolm Head of Year 9
nmalcolm@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Mr L Cain Head of Year 11 lcain@holyhead.crst.org.uk
 Miss M Jeffers Head of Year 10
mjeffers@holyhead.crst.org.uk

Telephone the school on 0121 523 1960 to speak to any of the safeguarding team.

Keeping Safe in Our Community This Summer

As we approach the summer holidays, our students will enjoy more independence and free time away from the structured school day. While this is an exciting time, it is also a period where young people can become more vulnerable to risks in the local community.

We ask all parents and carers to remain vigilant regarding personal safety, exploitation, and the choices our young people make when out with peers around Handsworth, Lozells, and the

wider Birmingham area. - Mr D Beale Senior DDSL dbeale@holyhead.crst.org.uk

Staying Safe in Public Spaces

Many of our students spend their summer days socialising in local green spaces like **Handsworth Park**, or traveling down busy corridors such as **Soho Road** and into the **City Centre** (via the 16/74 bus routes or the Metro).

- **Know the Plan:** Ensure your child tells you exactly who they are meeting, where they are going, and when they will be home.
- **Keep Connected:** Ensure their mobile phone is fully charged before they leave the house. Encourage them to use location-sharing apps (like Find My or Life360) with you for peace of mind.
- **Travel in Groups:** Remind your child that there is safety in numbers, especially when heading home as evenings draw in.

Having the Hard Conversations: Knife Crime

Knife crime remains a serious concern across the West Midlands. Many young people who carry a weapon falsely believe they are doing it "for protection," but statistics show that carrying a weapon drastically increases their chances of being injured themselves.

We strongly urge parents to have an open, supportive, and non-accusatory conversation with their children before school finishes.

- **Listen first:** Ask them how safe they feel when they are out in the local area.
- **Dispel the myth:** Reassure them that the vast majority of teenagers in Handsworth **do not** carry weapons.
- **The Law:** Remind them that just being with someone who carries a knife can lead to a criminal conviction under "Joint

Where to Get Help Unconditionally

If you are worried that your child is involved with a dangerous peer group or is being exploited, you are not alone, and you will not be judged. Help is available:

- **Fearless (Crimestoppers):** Young people can report crime or concerns about weapons 100% anonymously online at **Fearless.org**.
- **The Ben Kinsella Trust:** Excellent free resources and advice guides for parents on how to talk about knife crime (benkinsella.org.uk).
- **Birmingham Children's Trust (CASS):** If you feel a child is in immediate danger of exploitation, contact the local advice team on **0121 303 1888**.

Enterprise."

Free Local Activities & Keeping a Holiday Routine



One of the biggest safeguarding risks over the six-week holiday is the sudden lack of routine. When young people have long days with no structured activities, boredom can lead to hanging around unsafe areas or spending excessive, unsupervised time online.

Keeping active and involved in positive community spaces is one of the best ways to ensure a safe, happy summer. Fortunately, there are fantastic free and low-cost opportunities available right on our doorstep in Handsworth this year: - Mrs T Edwards Head of year 8 tedwards@holyhead.crst.org.uk

"Bring It On Brum!" Holiday Clubs

Birmingham's premier Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is back for the summer! It provides **free activity camps and a healthy lunch** daily for children aged 4–16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals.

- **What's on offer:** Everything from sports tournaments and multi-games to music production, street dance, and creative arts.
- **Dates:** Clubs will run throughout the city from **Monday 20th July to Friday 28th August 2026**.
- **How to book:** Booking portals officially open on **Monday 29th June 2026**

Handsworth Association of Schools (HAoS) Playschemes

We are proud to highlight the work of the **Handsworth Association of Schools**, which coordinates hyper-local holiday camps specifically for families in our direct neighbourhood (including schemes traditionally hosted at sites like St. Clare's on Robert Road or nearby partner academies).

- These safe, fully monitored spaces offer weekly activity blocks, sports coaching, and dedicated places for students with moderate SEND needs.
- Check full scheduling availability and secure local booking spaces directly via the [Handsworth Association of Schools](#)

"Summer in the City" & Local Hangouts

Birmingham City Council's *Summer in the City* campaign features 12 weeks of low-cost or completely free community events.

Look out for free or subsidized holiday swimming and gym sessions aimed at keeping teenagers active in a secure environment. [Handsworth Wellbeing Centre | Birmingham City Council](#)

Keep an eye out for free community workshops, local cultural events, and identity projects operating across local history spots. [Blakesley Hall | Birmingham Museums](#)

Easily accessible via the 16 or 74 bus routes, the library offers free indoor drop-in sessions, creative arts, and teen workshops—perfect for rainy days. [Home |](#)

[Community Hub.](#)

[Birmingham Libraries](#)

Safe Surfing – Digital Boundaries & Online Threats



With six weeks of holiday ahead, our students will naturally spend more time on their phones, tablets, and gaming consoles. While the internet is a great tool for staying in touch with school friends, the summer break brings a sharp rise in online safeguarding risks.

Without the daily routine of school, teenagers are more vulnerable to online grooming, radicalisation, and financial scams. We urge all parents to stay proactive about what happens behind closed screens. - Mr F Khan Head of 6th form fkhan@holyhead.crst.org.uk

The Rise of "Financial Sextortion"

Across the West Midlands, police have highlighted a severe rise in organized criminals targeting teenagers—particularly boys aged 14 to 18—through an online scam known as **Financial Sextortion**.

- **How it happens:** Scammers create fake, attractive profiles on platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, or TikTok. They strike up a conversation, quickly move the chat to a private messaging app, and trick the teenager into sending an intimate photo or video.
- **The trap:** As soon as the image is sent, the criminal demands money (often via digital gift cards or online transfers), threatening to send the image to the child's family, friends, and school if they don't pay.
- **The advice:** Talk to your child openly. Remind them never to send intimate photos to *anyone*, even people they think they know online. Reassure them that if they ever find themselves in this situation, they must **tell you immediately**. Block the user, do not pay any money, and report it to the police.

Trending Apps & Gaming Risks

Over the summer, teenagers often download new apps or join new online communities out of boredom.

- **Anonymous Chat Apps:** Be vigilant about anonymous messaging apps and video platforms that allow strangers to chat with minors unchecked.
- **Gaming Communities:** In-game chat features on platforms like Roblox, Discord, and Call of Duty are heavily used over the holidays. Ensure your child's privacy settings are set to "Friends Only" to stop strangers from directly messaging them or asking to move to unmonitored apps.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Many social media apps now feature "AI buddies" or deepfake tools. Remind your children that these bots are designed to gather data, and they should never share personal details, their school name, or their location with an AI entity.

Practical Steps to Manage Screen Time

We don't expect parents to ban devices entirely, but setting healthy boundaries will protect your child's physical and mental health:

- **The Central Charging Station:** Do not allow phones, tablets, or consoles in bedrooms overnight. Set up a charging station in the kitchen or living room where all devices must be left before bedtime to protect their sleep.
- **Review Privacy Settings:** Take 10 minutes this week to sit with your teenager and check their app settings. Ensure their location is hidden (e.g., turning on "Ghost Mode" on Snapchat) so their live location is not broadcasted while they walk around Handsworth.
- **Use Parental Controls:** Broadband providers (like Virgin Media, BT, or Sky) allow you to turn on free, household-level web filters to block adult or inappropriate content on all devices connected to your home Wi-Fi.

Trusted Digital Support for Parents

- **Internet Matters (internetmatters.org):** Offers brilliant, step-by-step visual guides on how to set up parental controls on every major phone, console, and social media app.
- **CEOP (thinkuknow.co.uk):** The National Crime Agency's dedicated online safety site, featuring explicit advice on how to handle online bullying, scams, or inappropriate contact.

Who to Contact – Summer Help & Support Directory



While the school gates are closed for the summer, support for our families and young people does not stop. If you or your child experience a crisis, feel unsafe, or need a helping hand over the holidays, please save these trusted local and national **RESOURCES**. - Mrs D Denny Lead DSL ddenny@holyhead.crst.org.uk

Out-of-Hours Local Safeguarding Services

During the school holidays, the school's internal safeguarding team is **not available**. If you are seriously worried about the safety, emotional well-being, or protection of a child living in Birmingham, you must contact the local children's services directly:

Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS)

- 📞 **Daytime Phone (Mon–Thu 8:45am–5:15pm, Fri 8:45am–4:15pm):** [0121 303 1888](tel:01213031888)
- 🚨 **Emergency Out-of-Hours / Weekends:** [0121 675 4806](tel:01216754806)
- 🌐 **Online Support Portal:** Search for *Birmingham Children's Trust Support Portal* to raise a non-emergency concern online.

Immediate Danger: If a young person is in immediate physical danger, experiencing a medical emergency, or if a crime is taking place, please call **999** straight away.

Free Mental Health & Well-being Support

The disruption of the school routine can sometimes trigger anxiety, isolation, or low mood. These free, confidential services are available 24/7 throughout the summer break:

- **Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB):** The dedicated mental health service for young people aged 0–25 in Birmingham.
 - 📞 **24/7 Crisis Support Hotline:** Call [0300 300 0099](tel:03003000099)
- **Shout Crisis Text Line:** A free, confidential text support service that won't show up on your phone bill.
 - 💬 **How to use:** Text the word **SHOUT** to **85258** at any time of day or night.
- **Childline:** A safe space for young people to talk about anything that is worrying them, completely anonymously.
 - 📞 **Phone:** [0800 1111](tel:08001111) | 🌐 **Web:** childline.org.uk for 1-to-1 counsellor text chats.
- **Kooth:** A free, safe, and anonymous online mental well-being community monitored by professional counsellors.
 - 🌐 **Web:** kooth.com (available to all young people in Birmingham)

Local Cost-of-Living & Crisis Support

If your family is experiencing financial hardship, food insecurity, or utilities crisis over the six-week holiday, please reach out to local community networks:

- **Handsworth Association of Schools (HAoS) Food Hub:** Providing emergency food parcels and support links for families within our school cluster.
 -  Visit haos.org.uk to check weekly distribution times and location details.
- **The Trussell Trust (B6 / B21 Area):** To find your nearest emergency food bank distribution centre or get help with a referral voucher.
 -  Visit trusselltrust.org or call the free national helpline on [0808 208 2138](tel:08082082138).