

# THE EPOCHS

# BEACON

*The weekly round up of school life*



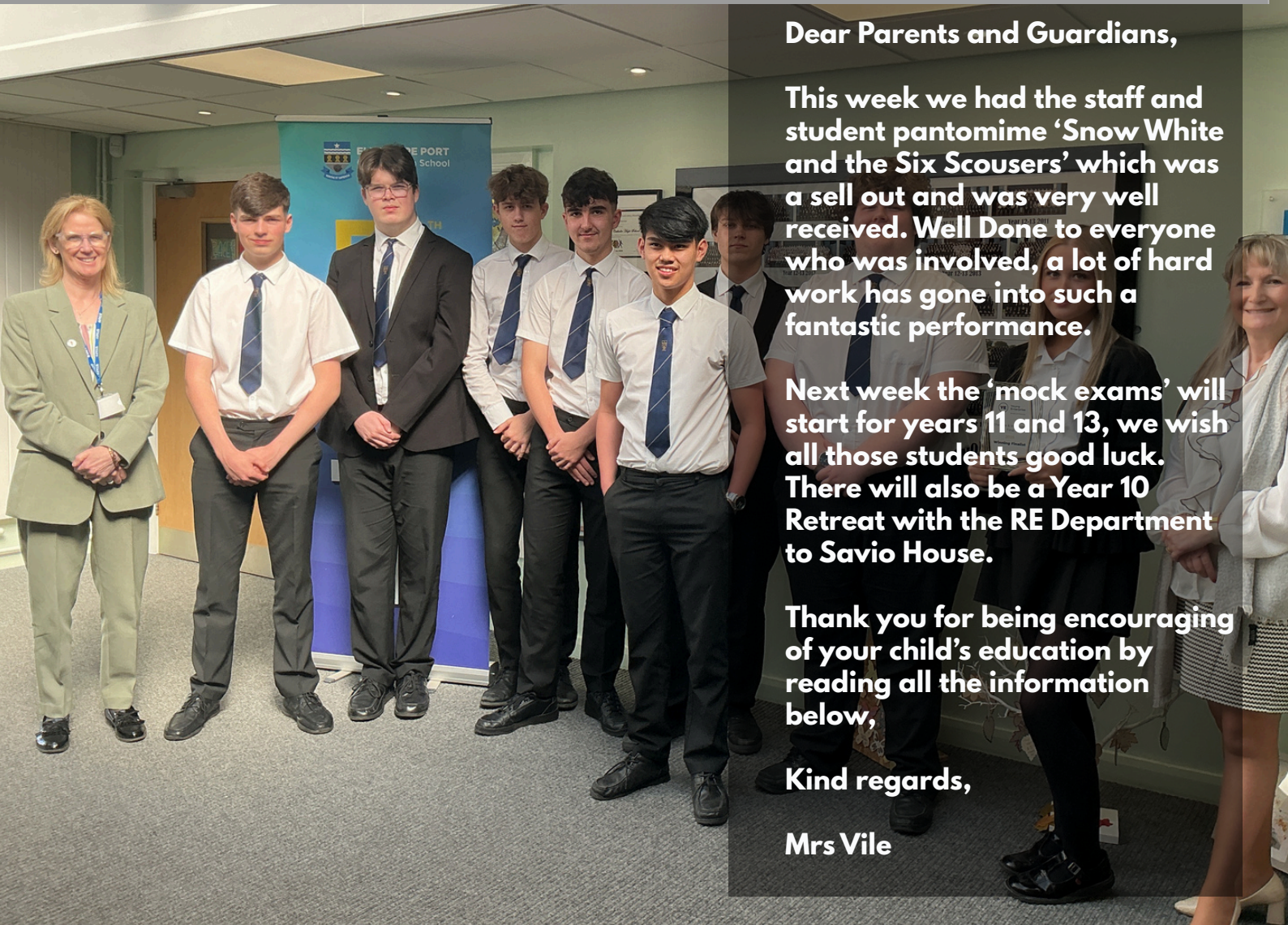
**READY - RESPECTFUL - SAFE - KIND**



"I Have Come So That They May Have Life And Have It To The Full" – John 10:10



# HEADTEACHER MESSAGE



Dear Parents and Guardians,

This week we had the staff and student pantomime 'Snow White and the Six Scousers' which was a sell out and was very well received. Well Done to everyone who was involved, a lot of hard work has gone into such a fantastic performance.

Next week the 'mock exams' will start for years 11 and 13, we wish all those students good luck. There will also be a Year 10 Retreat with the RE Department to Savio House.

Thank you for being encouraging of your child's education by reading all the information below,

Kind regards,

Mrs Vile



**Secondary School of the Year  
WINNER**

**Ellesmere Port Catholic High School**

# *Dignity of the human person*

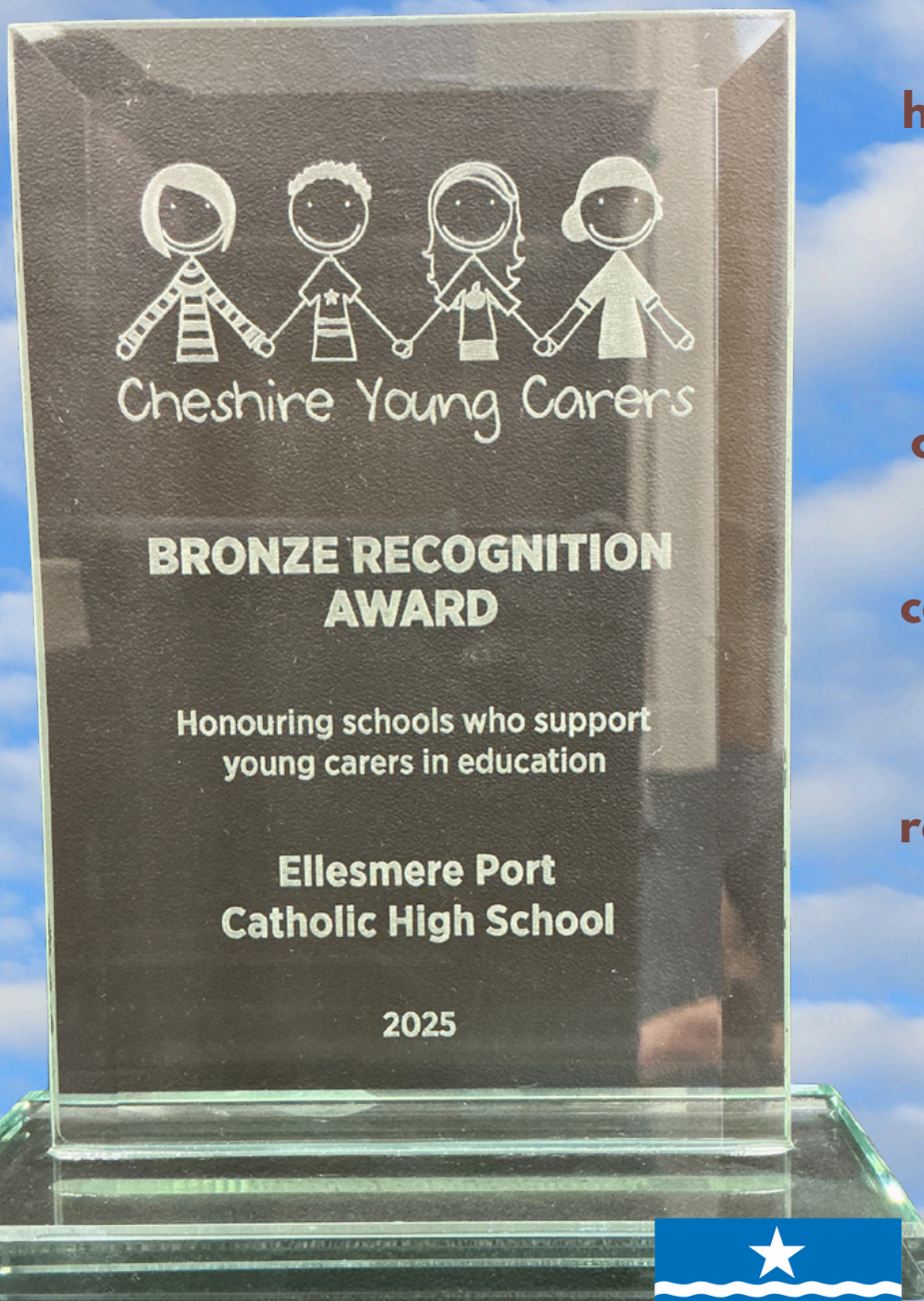
**We believe that every person has inherent dignity, and every life is sacred. The innate dignity of each person is the foundation and inspiration of our vision for a just and compassionate world. We see the image of God in every person, no matter their circumstance.**



**Dignity of  
the  
Human Person**



# Cheshire Young Carers award



✨ We are so proud to have been awarded the Recognition Award from Cheshire Young Carers! ✨

This special award celebrates our ongoing commitment to supporting young carers within our school community — recognising the care, compassion and resilience these students show every day.



A huge thank you to everyone involved in making this achievement possible!





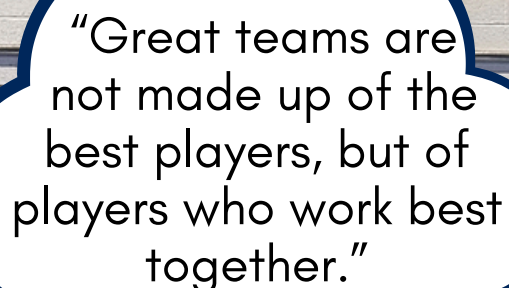
# U13 Netball Bulletin Match Report

On Tuesday evening, the U13s took part in their Wirral League fixture against Wirral Grammar School for Girls — and what a performance it was! The team played brilliantly from start to finish, showing real determination and fantastic teamwork to secure a well-deserved 20–13 win.

Our defence was strong and composed throughout, applying pressure and turning over the ball when it mattered most. In attack, the girls made every opportunity count, converting key shots and keeping the momentum firmly in our favour. Their effort, communication, and resilience were clear to see, and they should be incredibly proud of the way they represented the school.



Well done, girls — you  
really made it count  
tonight!  
– Miss Lodge



“Great teams are  
not made up of the  
best players, but of  
players who work best  
together.”







**Wow! What a bunch of talented, funny people that were involved in the the staff and student pantomime 'Snow White and the Six Scousers'**



**Thank you**



# Maths

**UPDATE**

**178 students**

have already improved at their times tables this year. Great job!

Highest completion:

**7y/Ma1** (86.4%)

Biggest completion improvement vs previous week:

**8x/Ma1** 60.0% **(+23.3%)**

Reached a new XP Level:

**253 students**

[view](#)

Highest average XP per student:

**7y/Ma2** (845 XP)

**357,488**

questions answered correctly in Sparx Maths so far this year

Students in your school have completed

**2,530 hours**

of personalised learning on Sparx Maths this year!

**Well done to all pupils who have levelled up on their timetables and XP through all your hard work. Keep it up!**



# BUDGET 2025

**On Wednesday the Year 13 Politics students were live researching the UK 2025 Budget, working together to do some rapid analysis before presenting their opinions on it.**

# BUDGET 2025



# CHAPLAINCY *news*

Last Monday, a group attended **lunchtime Mass at Our Lady Star of Sea parish**. We are going again on the 8th December to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception. See Angela if you would like to sign up. A consent form will need to be filled in.

The Season of Advent begins on Sunday. Each form has been asked to raise funds to buy a Braille machine for a school in Malawi. The form that raises the most will come to B11 for festive treats. Ms Lamb has made a beautiful display of artefacts from Malawi in the Chapel. Please pop up and have a look.



# WARM CLOTHES DONATIONS

Please remember that we are collecting for people in our community who need clothes. We especially need coats, shoes, blankets and toiletries. Try to have a sort out at the weekend and bring any donations to Angela in B11. They make an enormous difference to people. They are currently in need of woolly hats and gloves so if you have any, please pass to Angela in B11.



# COMMUNITY

There are lots of exciting events taking place in our local parishes. Please check out the website. Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church | Roman Catholic Churches of Ellesmere Port and Hootton ([rcchep.co.uk](http://rcchep.co.uk)) Please contact your Parish Priest if you would like more information on the Parish Sacramental programme.

**ROSARY IS SAID  
EACH BREAKTIME  
IN B11. PLEASE  
JOIN US.**



# ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Well Done to everyone who has been awarded Achievement certificates and badges this week.





# GOLDEN KEY NEWS



A handful of our talented Golden Key students did us proud last week as they battled it out in the first heat of the ESU Public Speaking Competition via Zoom. Students took on the role of chairperson, speaker, or questioner with confidence and maturity. Guided and supported by Mr Wilkinson and Ms Clarke, the team delivered thoughtful, articulate contributions and represented the school brilliantly. We are incredibly proud of their hard work and enthusiasm throughout.



# GOLDEN KEY SOCIETY LEADS BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

Students from The Golden Key Society have led this year's celebration of Black History Month through assemblies, literacy activities, and lessons exploring the diverse voices that have shaped Britain's history and culture. Black History Month, first recognised in the UK in 1987, provides an opportunity to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of Black individuals and communities whose creativity, resilience, and leadership have enriched society.

Guided by members of The Golden Key Society — a student enrichment and leadership group — the school's programme included assemblies, short classroom activities across different subjects, and literacy projects highlighting the work of Black writers and poets. These student-led initiatives aimed to encourage curiosity, reflection, and appreciation of Britain's shared history.

The celebration forms part of the school's wider commitment to developing understanding and respect across its community, promoting learning that recognises the strength found in diversity and shared experience.





# CHRISTMAS DINNER DAY

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WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup>  
DECEMBER 2025

## ROAST TURKEY

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Served with pigs in blankets,  
sage and onion stuffing,  
seasonal sprouts, honey roasted  
carrots and parsnips, Yorkshire  
pudding, roast potatoes & gravy

## QUORN ROAST

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Served with sage & onion  
stuffing, seasonal sprouts, honey  
roasted carrots and parsnips,  
Yorkshire pudding, roast  
potatoes & vegetarian gravy

## DESERT

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Chocolate yule log

OR

Shortbread biscuit (VE)

## DRINKS

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Small juice carton, milkshake or  
water

It's the final week to  
order your Christmas  
dinner for the 10th!

Please remember that  
all meals must be pre-  
ordered, and there won't  
be any extras available  
on the day.

If you have ordered a  
Christmas dinner, you'll  
be able to collect it  
from the main kitchen  
pod.

For all other students  
eating with us on  
Wednesday 10th, food  
will be available from  
the other pods, including  
sausage rolls, jacket  
potatoes, or you can still  
pre-order a sandwich  
grab bag.

Thank you, and we hope  
you enjoy the festive  
options! 🧑🏻🍽️

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## National Online Safety

Now the world's go-to short video platform, TikTok captivates young audiences with its endless stream of engaging clips, but not without potential pitfalls. From unsettling or age-inappropriate content to harmful viral challenges, misinformation and even radicalisation, this ever-popular app can expose children to content that may not always be suitable for them.

Our #WakeUpWednesday guide explores TikTok's hidden hazards, including in-app spending, compulsive screen time and privacy concerns, offering clear advice for parents and educators. With expert insight and practical safety tips, it aims to help families ensure that TikTok use remains fun, positive and, most importantly, safe.

At The National College, our #WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TIKTOK

Online videos are often associated with apps such as YouTube, but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a potentially addictive, never-ending stream of short clips tailored to users' interests based on their viewing habits. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while most content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where young people are "most likely to encounter a potential harm".

**AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**

TikTok's following feed shows videos from known creators, while the default For You Feed serves endless clips based on viewing history. Most are harmless, but unsuitable content can still appear, and watching for long enough signals interest to the algorithm. Although TikTok bans illegal or inappropriate uploads, the volume of posts means some slip through, increasing the chance that children encounter age-inappropriate material before it is detected or removed.

**CONTACT WITH STRANGERS**

Between 1.6 and 1.9 billion people use TikTok, meaning there's a high risk of unwanted attention from strangers. Accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a false date of birth) are set to public view by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and allows anyone to download or comment on them.

**BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES**

Ofcom reports that most online harms for girls involve body image, while boys more often see dangerous stunts. Both types appear frequently on TikTok and spread quickly through its engagement-driven algorithm. Harmful challenges have included the "blackout" trend, where users held their breath until passing out. Families filed lawsuits after children died linked to the trend, showing how extreme or risky content can rapidly reach young people and negatively influence them.

**MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION**

TikTok's short videos may appear light-hearted, but they can expose young people to harmful ideas. Misinformation is common, and Ofcom reports that nearly one third of 12-15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source, increasing the chance of seeing racist, misogynistic, extremist or conspiracy material. Even brief clips can influence impressionable users and shape their worldview, making discussions about critical thinking, propaganda and online influence especially important for parents and educators.

**IN-APP SPENDING**

TikTok is free, but children can still spend money. TikTok coins, costing £9.99 to £224.95, let users buy gifts for creators. TikTok Shop adds risk by allowing purchases from influencers or companies, sometimes leading to poor-quality items driven by persuasive marketing. A Canadian investigation found TikTok collected personal data from many children for targeting and advertising despite age limits, meaning young users may lose control over their personal information.

**ADDICTIVE DESIGN**

TikTok's fast-paced stream of eye-catching videos can be potentially addictive for young users. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the platform, double the time recorded in 2020. Excessive use can disrupt sleep, increase irritability, and distract from healthier activities. Constantly skipping between short clips may also affect attention spans, making it harder to focus on longer tasks such as homework or reading.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

**ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING**

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's in order to manage settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children cannot alter these settings without parental approval.

**BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING**

Parents can restrict in-app purchases on iPhone and Android devices to prevent accidental or impulsive TikTok spending. Young people can easily spend large amounts on TikTok coins or low-quality products promoted through TikTok Shop. If a disappointing purchase occurs, turn it into a discussion about influencer marketing and how online promotions can be misleading.

**DISCUSS THE DANGERS**

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure they don't share any identifying personal information or respond to dangerous trends, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's important to talk about misinformation and propaganda.

**READ THE SIGNS**

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

**Meet Our Expert**

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

**#WakeUpWednesday**

**The National College**

See full reference list on our website

[@wake\\_up\\_weds](https://www.wake_up_weds.com) [/www.thenationalcollege.com](https://www.thenationalcollege.com) [@wake.up.wednesday](https://www.wake.up.wednesday) [@wake.up.weds](https://www.wake.up.weds)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Release date: 26.11.2025



# TERM DATES 2025-26

Autumn 2025	Spring 2026	Summer 2026
<b>INSET: Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September</b> Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September - Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January - Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April <b>BANK HOLIDAY: Mon 4<sup>th</sup> May</b> Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May
<b>HALF-TERM</b> Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> October - Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	<b>HALF-TERM</b> Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February - Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>HALF-TERM</b> Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May - Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December <b>INSET: Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February - Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June - Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July <b>INSET: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July</b> - <b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>
<b>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY</b> Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December - Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2026	<b>EASTER HOLIDAY</b> Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April - Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> April (includes Easter Bank Holidays)	<b>SUMMER HOLIDAY</b> Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July - Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> August
<b>Return to School : Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026</b>		

**Inset Day - Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026**

# CONTACT US

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**Whitby, Ellesmere Port CH65 7AQ**

**0151 355 2373**

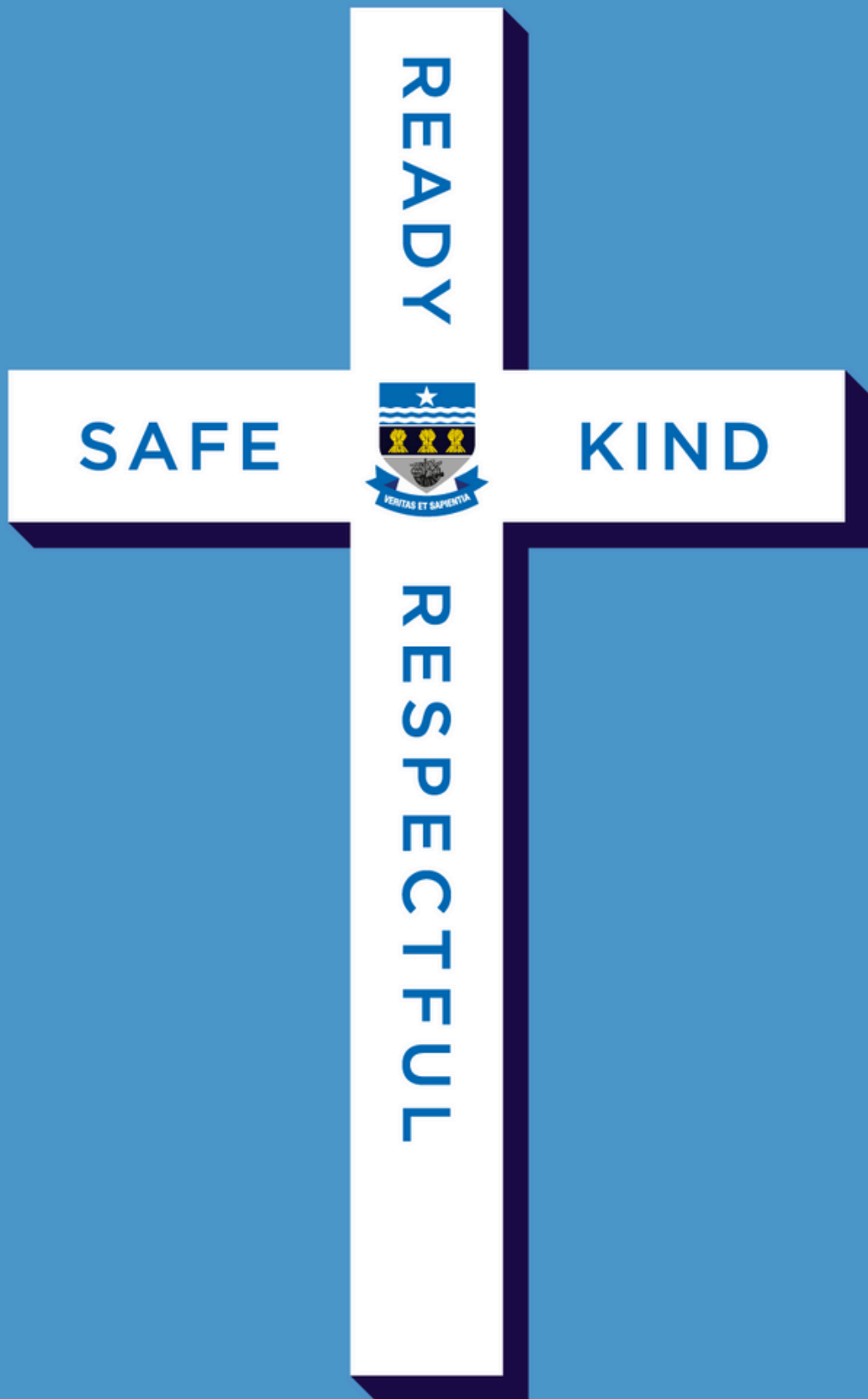
**admin@epchs.co.uk**

**Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 3.45PM**



**Our Lady Help of Christians  
Catholic Academy Trust**





*"I Have Come So That They May Have  
Life And Have It To The Full" – John 10:10*