Notre Dame Catholic Academy

Newsletter

Headteacher's message:

This week, we were delighted to announce our newly appointed Head Students, Evie and Lee, alongside our Deputy Head Students, Aurelia and Lorcan. Each candidate delivered a thoughtful and inspiring speech before students cast their votes in a ballot. The quality of the speeches was exceptional, with every candidate making a genuine impact through their ideas, confidence and passion for our school community. I would like to congratulate Evie, Lee, Aurelia and Lorcan on their appointments and thank all candidates who took part.

Our Geography students have also been busy undertaking important GCSE fieldwork at Alyn Waters Country Park. During the visit, students developed their geographical enquiry skills by measuring river width, depth and velocity, whilst recording observations and collecting data. Over the coming weeks, they will analyse their findings and consider how their results support the what they have been studying in lessons. Thank you to the staff for helping to bring our students' learning to life and provide invaluable opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in a real-world setting.

We welcomed the Sisters of Notre Dame to school on Friday. Their visit was a wonderful opportunity for students and staff to reflect on the values and traditions that continue to shape our school community and it some of our students will remember Sister Margaret who only recently retired from the school last year. We are always grateful for their time, guidance and the inspiration they provide through their ongoing connection to our school.

As always, thank you for your continued support. I would like to wish all of our families, students and staff a restful weekend.

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MRS TAYLOR

HEADTEACHER

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

October 2026 | Secondary | What parents and carers need to know about: Artificial Intelligence

Supporting our children to use AI safely, respectfully and responsibly

Artificial intelligence is becoming part of everyday life. Young people may use it to answer questions, generate images, plan ideas or support their schoolwork. AI can be a useful tool, but children need guidance to understand its limitations and use it in ways that protect themselves and others.

What is generative AI?

Generative AI creates new content in response to a request, known as a prompt. It can produce text, images, videos, music and computer code. Popular tools include ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot and image generators. AI can sound confident and convincing, but this does not mean that everything it creates is accurate, appropriate or fair.

How might AI be used in the wrong way?

Young people may rely on AI to complete schoolwork, trust inaccurate information or share personal details without understanding the risks. AI can also be misused to create fake or sexualised images, impersonate others, spread harmful content or bully and humiliate someone. What begins as a joke can have a serious impact on another person's wellbeing, reputation and safety.

Using AI safely

Children should never enter personal information, photographs, passwords or private details into an AI tool. They should check age requirements and tell an adult if AI produces anything upsetting, sexual or unsafe.

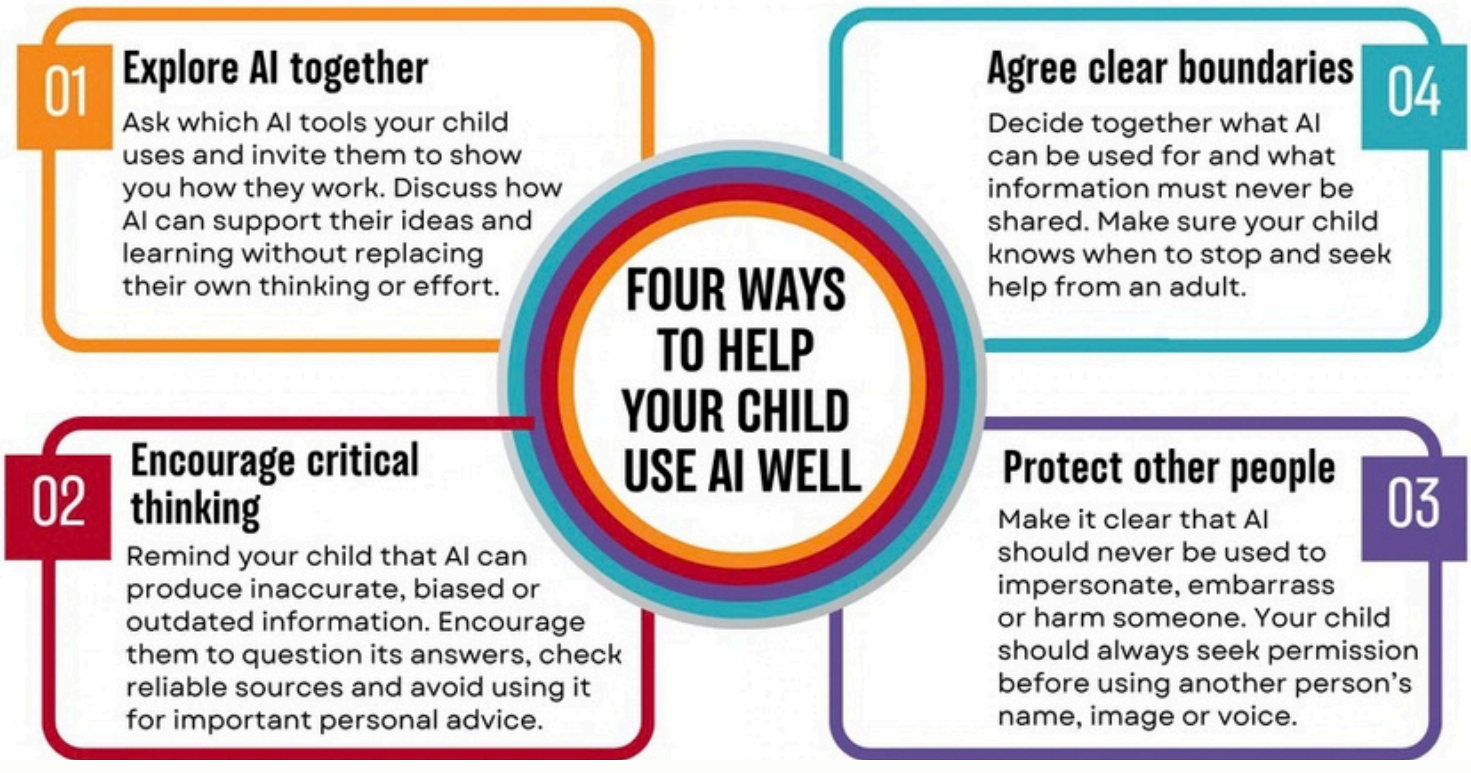
Using AI respectfully

AI should never be used to embarrass, bully or impersonate someone. Children must ask permission before using another person's image, voice or information and consider how their creation could impact them and others.

Using AI responsibly

AI should support children's thinking, not replace it. They should check information carefully, follow school rules and be honest when AI has helped with their work.

Children should check information against reliable sources, rewrite ideas in their own words and be honest when AI has contributed to their work.



SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

What is Character.AI?

Character.AI is an entertainment platform where users interact with AI-generated characters. These may be fictional characters, celebrities, historical figures or completely invented personalities.

The conversations can feel personal and realistic, but the characters are not real people. They do not have feelings or genuine understanding, and their responses may be inaccurate.

Important age information

Character.AI states that users in Europe must be at least 16. Users identified as under 18 are placed in Reading Mode, where they can view content and use some creative features, but cannot have open-ended chats. Age checks are not foolproof, so parents and carers should check that their child has entered their correct age and is using the appropriate version.

Why might young people be attracted to it?

Character.AI can feel entertaining, creative and free from judgement. Some young people may also use it for companionship, reassurance or a space to discuss feelings they find difficult to share with others.

What are the risks?

- Inappropriate content

AI safeguards are not perfect. Characters may produce sexual, violent, discriminatory or otherwise unsuitable responses.

- Emotional attachment

Characters can appear caring and understanding. Some young people may become emotionally dependent on them or prefer AI conversations to real relationships.

- Unreliable advice

AI can give inaccurate or unsafe information. It should not be trusted for advice about health, relationships, sex, self-harm or personal safety.

- Unhealthy relationship messages

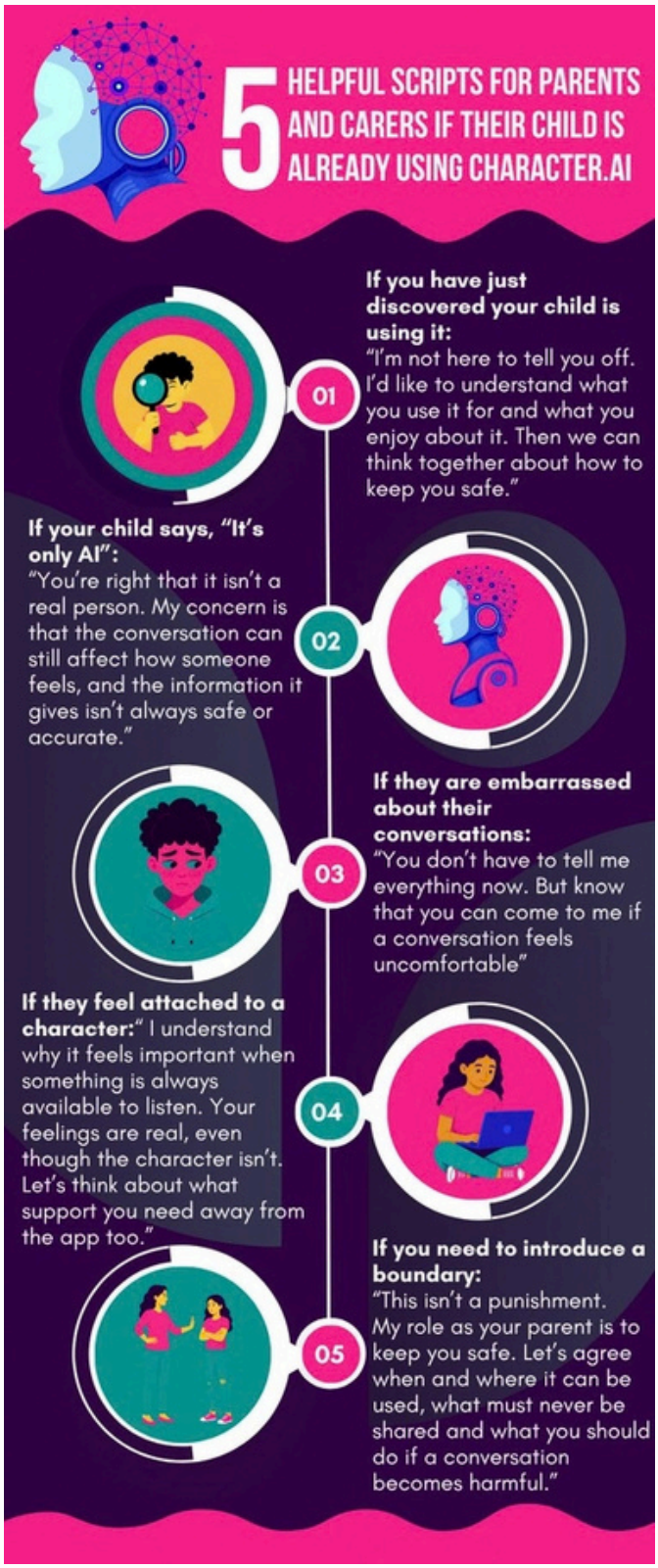
Some characters may present jealousy, control, coercion or sexual pressure as normal or romantic behaviour.

- Privacy

Young people may share personal information because the conversation feels private. They should never disclose identifying details, photographs, passwords or their location.

- Excessive use

Frequent use may affect sleep, schoolwork, hobbies and relationships. Secrecy, withdrawal or distress when access is interrupted may indicate a problem.



If you are concerned about your child's use of AI, please contact the school. A member of the safeguarding or pastoral team can offer advice, discuss any concerns and help you identify the right support for your child.

Business and Health

Both departments celebrated excellent results for all Year 13 students, with many students achieving above their target grades and securing places at universities or starting employment.

Year 13 Business Student; Warren M completed his year 12 course by achieving maximum marks of 300/300 in the 3 units he studied in year 12, two of these units were marked externally! Massive congraulations to Warren!

Well done to all year 13 Business and Health students!

A new cohort of Year 10 students has commenced their option courses in Business and Health & Social Care. We look forward to seeing them develop their skills and knowledge and trust they have made a great start to the year.

Sixth form

I am very proud to announce our newly appointed Head Students Evie C and Lee H and Deputy Head Students, Aurelia Ka and Lorcan M.

Each student had prepared a speech, which they delivered beautifully to their peers and Sixth Form Team. All Sixth Form students voted in a ballot and the winners were announced.

Each student had a real impact with their speech, and I look forward to seeing how they lead the 1804 Society this year.

Mrs K Nicol

Notices

Food Technology

We are running low on plastic containers with lids for students to use to take their food home. If you have any spare containers suitable for storing food, please pass them into the food room. For example, containers from the chippy, butter tubs, celebrations tubs etc.

We are trying to promote taking care of the environment and encourage 'reduce, reuse and recycle.'

Notices

Our Notre Dame community will take part in 'Wear Red Day ' on Friday 16th October 2026

This is a national event where people wear red to demonstrate their support for anti-racism, challenge discrimination, and raise funds for educational work tackling racism.

By wearing something red, we can demonstrate our support for creating a community where everyone feels valued, welcomed, and able to thrive.

We encourage all pupils and staff to wear one 'red' item and take the opportunity to reflect on how we can challenge discrimination and celebrate the diversity that makes our school stronger. Together, we can make a positive difference.

Students/staff wearing a 'red item' will be asked to make a donation to charity.

We will also have a red tuck shop to raise further funds.

What is Child on Child Abuse?

Child on child abuse refers to any form of abuse, exploitation or harmful behaviour between children and young people under the age of 18.

It can take many forms, including (but not limited to):

Bullying and harassment

Including name-calling, spreading rumours, exclusion and intimidation (in person or online).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Including inappropriate comments, sharing sexual images, unwanted touching, sexualised behaviour and online abuse.

Physical abuse

Including hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting, or inappropriate use of physical force.

Online abuse

Including harmful messages, sharing of images/videos, cyberbullying, online grooming and exploitation.

Coercive and controlling behaviour

Including manipulation, pressure, threats, or forcing someone to do something they do not want to do.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Including inappropriate sexual comments, behaviour or the creation or sharing of nude or semi-nude images.

What can you do if something happens to you or are you see it happening to someone?

1. Speak to a trusted adult at home or in school.
2. Use the anonymous reporting 'Whisper'.
3. Use an online help e.g. Childline.

Opening hearts, minds and doors

Absence Reporting Procedures

If a pupil is unwell or requires a day off school, their Parent/Carer must contact the school before 8.30am.

lease call **0151 330 5122 and select OPTION 1**. This will direct you to our Attendance Team OR to leave a voicemail message. When leaving a voicemail message, please ensure you nclude your child's full name, the reason for their absence and how long you expect them o be absent. Our Attendance Team will access this message directly. If a student is off for 3 consecutive days a home visit will be conducted.

A medical note will be required if your child is absent for an appointment or illness.

Vhere possible appointments must be made outside of school hours. If an appointment is o be made during school hours, a copy of the appointment card must be given to student services to ensure your child receives the correct register mark. We expect your child to attend school in the hours around the appointment.

Students are responsible for remembering to leave class, break or lunch for their appointment. They must tell their head of year if they are intending to leave school that day for an appointment and show proof where possible. Students must report to student services and wait to be called once their parent arrives. Tannoys will NOT happen during teaching hours, as this disturbs the learning across the whole school.

For ease, parents can give their child a note to show their class teacher which will grant them permission to leave the lesson.

Enrichment

Notre Dame Catholic Academy
Established 1869

Enrichment Weekly Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch	• Chess Club | Rm 90 | Upper canteen • Basketball | Yr 7	• Chess Club | Rm 90 | Upper canteen • Basketball | 1.30pm - 2.05pm | Basketball courts | Yr 8 • Arts | 1.30pm - 2.05pm | Art | All years	• Chess Club | Rm 90 | Upper canteen • Faith in action | 1.30pm | Chaplaincy room | Years 7 & 8 • Games club | Lunch | Rm 53 | Yr 7 - 11 • Basketball | 1.30pm - 2.05pm | Basketball courts | Yr 9	• Chess Club | Rm 90 | Upper canteen • Year 11 English Literature revision | 3.20pm - 4pm | Rm 66 | Yr 11 • Basketball | Yr 10 & Yr 11 | 1.30pm - 2.05pm | Basketball courts	• Chess Club | Rm 90 | Upper canteen
After School	• Darts | 3.25pm - 4.15pm • KS3 Football (Yr 7) | 3.20pm - 4pm | meet at lower canteen • Spanish GCSE Revision | 3.20pm - 4.20pm | Rm 79	• KS3 Football (Yr 8) | 3.20pm - 4pm | meet at lower canteen • Careers club | 3.20pm | Rm 33 • Badminton | 3.20pm - 4.15pm | Sports hall | All years • Netball | 3.20pm - 4.15pm | Sports hall | All years		• Art | 3.15pm - 4.15pm | Art | All years	

Admissions Consultation

We invite Parents and Carers to review proposed updates to our Admissions Policy for 2026-2027. You can view this on our website with full details of how you can provide feedback.

https://notredameliverpool.com/admissions/year-7-admissions/

Notre Dame Alumni Assemble!

We are reaching out to former Notre Dame students to get in touch! We want to hear from you, where you are now, what you're up to to inspire our current student body and show them where their education can lead! We are asking parents and carers to reach out - you may be a former Notre Dame student yourself, have older children who studied with us or know friends or family members who once studied with us.

Sixth Form Student Bursary

The Sixth Form Bursary is available to all students who are entitled to Free School Meals, who live independently from their family or whose household income is under £30,000. Proof of income needs to provided to Miss Nicol or Mrs Garvey.

The bursary can provide materials and equipment to help students in their studies.

Requests for Sixth Form Bursary can begin on Monday 28th September.

Full list of INSET Days:

- INSET 1: Tuesday 1st September
- INSET 2: Wednesday 2nd September
- INSET 3: Friday 25th September (Trust)
- INSET 4: Friday 27th November
- INSET 5: Monday 4th January
- INSET 6: Monday 22nd February (Trust)
- INSET 7: Friday 2nd July (Trust)

NSET 8: Monday 19th July

NSET 9: Tuesday 20th July

- INSET: Friday 25th September
- **Half term: Monday 26th – Friday 30th October**
- Students return on Monday 2nd November
- INSET: Friday 27th November
- **End of Term: Friday 18th December**
- Christmas break: Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January

OUR FULL LIST OF TERM DATES, INCLUDING INSET DAYS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE HERE.

Parent Code of Conduct

Please take time to familiarise yourselves with our parental code of conduct which can be found here

SAFEGUARDING UPDATES

If you feel a child is at risk (suffering harm, neglect or abuse) Any member of the public can contact Careline on 0151 233 3700 or Merseyside Police on 0151 709 6010

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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

If you currently need support for your mental health or well being these are some of the organisations who are happy to listen and help:

Anxiety UK
03444775774 (Helpline)
075374160905 (Text)

Childline
0800 1111 (Free 24 hr helpline)

Papyrus Hotline (Under 35s at risk of suicide or concerned for another)
0800 068 4141 07786209697 (text)

The Mix (Support & Advice for under 25s)
0808 068 4994 85258 (Text THEMIX)

Young Minds
0808 803 5544 (Parent helpline)
85258 (Free 24hr crisis messenger, text YM)

Young Stonewall Information & support for young people who identify as LGBTQ
0800 050 2020

Samaritans Support for anyone who needs to talk
116 123 (Call)

Bullybusters
0800 169 6928
Please refer to the school website for further contact

REPORTING AN ISSUE ON SOCIAL MEDIA – A GUIDE

Visit this guide here.

https://ypas.org.uk/services/whats-on-calendar/

DOMESTIC ABUSE/VIOLENCE

Please remember, in an emergency dial 999 for immediate assistance. You can call 999 without speaking then pressing 55, or tapping or coughing into the phone. This will enable police to respond Women's Aid 0808 2000 247 (24 hr helpline) Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327 Worst Kept Secret Helpline Merseyside

The Safeguarding Team

Headteacher: Mrs V Taylor

Deputy Headteacher
Mrs E Brennan & Mrs K Thomas

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs E Brennan

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
Miss S Styles
Mrs K Hawke

PC H Davies – School Safer Police Officer
Mrs J Willliams – Special Educational Needs
Mrs S McKay – Assistant Office Manager
Head and Assistant Heads of Year

www.notredameliverpool.com/safeguarding/

Notre Dame Catholic Academy
Established 1869

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Charity, Courtesy, Confidence, Courage