THE EPCHS BEACON

16-10-26

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 Parent / Carer,

It has been another busy and productive week at school, with many opportunities for our students to learn, achieve and represent the school with pride.

Last night, it was wonderful to welcome so many pupils and parents/carers to our Sixth Form Open Evening. Visitors had the opportunity to hear from our Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Head of Sixth Form, who provided an informative overview of life in our Sixth Form, including our broad range of subjects, academic support, enrichment opportunities, and careers education, advice and guidance provision. Families were also able to meet staff and current students from across all of our Key Stage 5 subjects, allowing them to gain a real insight into the opportunities available. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the evening such a success.

Learning beyond the classroom has continued this week through a number of educational visits. Our Year 12 and 13 Government and Politics students enjoyed a valuable trip to London, where they visited Parliament and the Supreme Court, bringing their studies to life through first-hand experience. Meanwhile, Year 11 Art students visited Ness Gardens to gather inspiration and materials to support their coursework projects.

There has also been plenty of sporting success to celebrate. Congratulations to our Under 16 Girls' Football Team, who secured an excellent victory over Woodside High School to progress to the next round of the English Schools' National Cup. This is a fantastic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of the commitment, teamwork and determination shown by all involved.

As a school community, we are continuing to support our Harvest Collection and would be extremely grateful for any donations. All food collected will be distributed to local families across our area, helping those who may need additional support at this time. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far.

Looking ahead to next week, we wish our Year 11 students the very best as they take part in a football tournament, and we are excited for our Year 12 and 13 students who will be visiting Innospec as part of our STEM programme. These opportunities help to broaden horizons and inspire future aspirations.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I hope you all have a restful weekend.

Warmest wishes,

Lorraine Henderson - Headteacher

Tim Beesley - Executive Headteacher

Care for creation





Important Dates

- 22nd October - Year 11 - Football Tournament
- 23rd October - Year 12/13 STEM - Innospec Trip
- 2nd November - First day back after half term
- 12th November - Year 11 and 13 - Tempest School Photos
- 16th/17th/18th November - Year 8 and 9 - Paris Maths Trip
- 17th November - Year 7 to 11 - Flu vaccinations
- 19th November - Year 11 - Parents Evening
- 27th November - INSET day
- 30th November - 11th December - Year 11 and 13 PPEs ('Mock' exams)
- 2nd - 4th December - Year 10 - Savio House Retreat
- 10th December - Year 9 Parents Evening

English Schools National Cup



The U16 Girls continued their impressive run in the English Schools National Cup with a thrilling 4-3 victory over Woodchurch High School.

Trailing 3-1 at half-time, the girls showed tremendous character and determination to battle back and level the score at 3-3 during an exciting second half.

With the clock ticking down and extra time looming, our captain stepped up in the final minute to score the winning goal, completing a sensational four-goal performance and securing a memorable 4-3 win.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

School and future success starts with good attendance

Going to school helps children to -

- [x] Learn
- [x] Have fun
- [x] Make friends
- [x] Get new experiences
- [x] Increase their confidence
- [x] Have the best start in life

VERITAS ET SAPIENTIA

CHAPLAINCY

Saturday 10th October – Eucharistic Adoration – Thankyou to those families that joined us in church last Saturday.



Feast Day of the Week

St John Paul 2nd- 22nd October

St. Pope John Paul II was Pope from 1978 until his death in 2005. He is the patron saint of World Youth Day, young Catholics, families, Poland, the city of Kraków, the Archdiocese of Kraków, and the World Meeting of Families.

Singing group will be in B11 on a Tuesday lunchtime. We have been invited back to Hollymere so we are now starting on our Christmas songs.

ROSARY IS SAID EACH BREAKTIME IN B11. PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO COME ALONG.

PLEASE JOIN US.

INVITATION TO MASS

We will be going to Mass at church every Monday lunchtime, so please see Angela for a letter.

Gospel of the Week

This week's Gospel is Matthew 22:15-21

In this week's Gospel, the Pharisees try to trap Jesus by asking him whether or not they should pay taxes. If Jesus says yes then he will anger the Jews but if he says No, then he will be accused of treason by the Romans. Jesus answers the trap by famously stating: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what belongs to God."

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) Please contact your Parish Priest if you would like more information on the Parish Sacramental programme.

Youth SVP will be on during lunchtimes on Thursday in B11.



SVP Harvest Collection

PLEASE DONATE ANY NON PERISHABLE ITEMS



We will also be collecting warm clothes/coats for Refugee Assist





TINS, PACKETS, CEREALS, HOT DRINKS, TREATS, LONG LIFE MILK ETC

Politics Trip

London





Our Law and Politics students had the fantastic opportunity to visit Parliament and the Supreme Court, gaining a first-hand insight into the UK's political and legal systems. They also observed a Supreme Court case centred on the 9/11 attacks, bringing their classroom learning to life and seeing the law in action.

A brilliant opportunity to deepen their understanding of Law and Politics beyond the classroom!

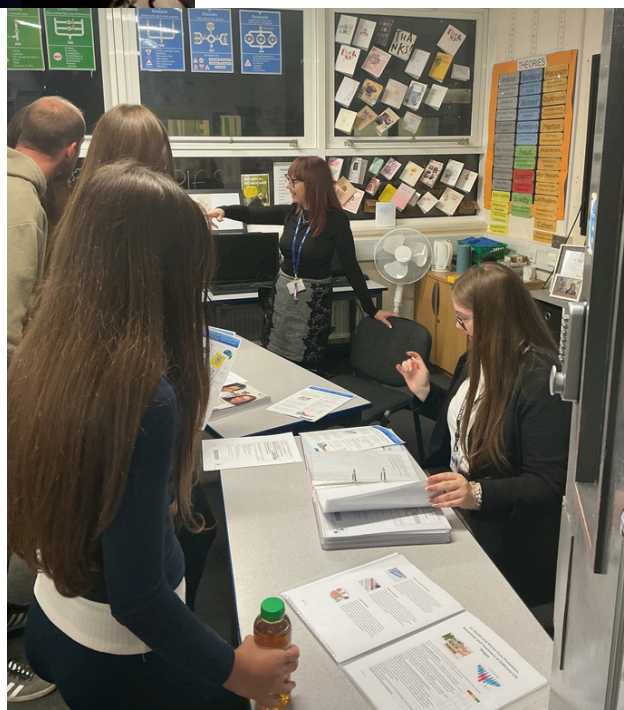
EPCHS 6th open evening



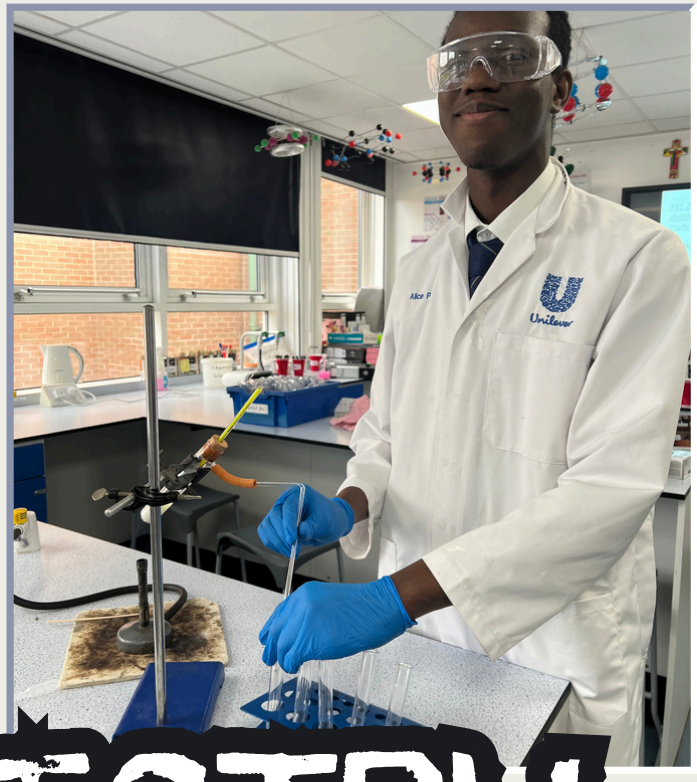
A huge thank you to everyone who attended our Sixth Form Open Evening last night! It was great to meet so many prospective students and families.



We hope you enjoyed the evening and left feeling inspired about your next steps.







CHEMISTRY





Year 12 Chemists carried out a fractional distillation experiment to separate the different components of a crude oil substitute. All students demonstrated excellent practical techniques and a strong understanding of this key industrial process. Well done, everyone!

HEAD OF YEAR HEROES





Congratulations to all of our Head of Year Heroes this week!

We are celebrating for reasons such as:
✅ Top achievement points this week and 2 Star of the Lesson in Maths and Science
✅ Making excellent progress and having a positive attitude to learning
✅ Excellent effort in History, science and Spanish

We are incredibly proud of your hard work, dedication and achievements. Keep up the fantastic work!

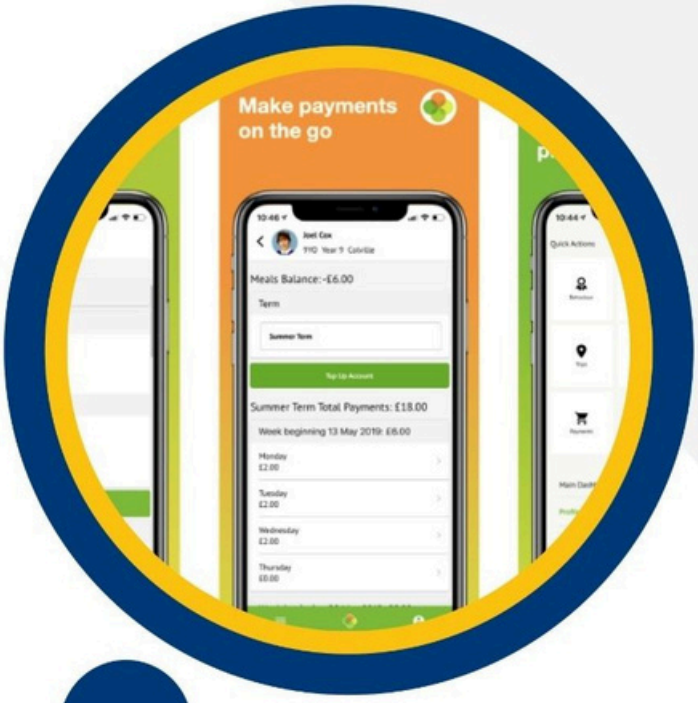




PARENT INFORMATION

Arbor

Arbor Parent App



Please ensure that your contact details and all consents are up to date on Arbor.

This will help us to contact parents and carers when necessary and to know which consents you have approved. If you need any help with this please call Reception or email admin@epchs.co.uk.

We need at least 2 contacts aged over 18 for each child and an email address and a telephone number per person.

Thank you for your cooperation.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD 2026/27

Are you ready?

DofE
THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

VERITAS ET SAPIENTIA

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than they seek." – John Muir

ADVENTURE. CHALLENGE. FRIENDSHIP. ACHIEVEMENT. NAVIGATION.

Your DofE journey starts now – take the challenge!



WHO CAN TAKE PART?

- **BRONZE** – Year 9
  30 places available
- **SILVER** – Year 10 & 11
  30 places available
- **GOLD** – **Year 12 & 13**
  Places available

WHAT THE AWARD INVOLVES

- **Volunteering** – giving time to help others or support a community organisation.
- **Physical** – improving fitness or taking part in a physical activity.
- **Skills** – developing a new skill or improving an existing one.
- **Expedition** – training and two successful expeditions.
- **Residential (Gold only)** – a shared activity away from home for 5 days and 4 nights.

WHAT YOU'LL EXPERIENCE:

- Adventure, teamwork and friendships outdoors
- Build confidence, resilience and leadership
- Learn new skills, take part in physical activity and give back to your community
- Make memories that last a lifetime

TRAINING SESSIONS

- Every other Wednesday (Week A).
- Starting after the October half-term and continuing into March.
- **You must attend ALL training sessions.**

EXPEDITION DATES (PROVISIONAL)

Expedition dates are not confirmed but will be in the following months:

- **Bronze** – Practice: **May 2027** / Final: **June 2027**
- Silver – Practice: **March/April** 2027 / Final: **July 2027**
- **Gold** – Practice: **March/April 2027** / Final: **July 2027**

PLACES ARE LIMITED!

- Only 30 places available for **BRONZE**.
- Only 30 places available for SILVER.
- Places available for **GOLD**.
- Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

This is a commitment to the whole award – not just the expeditions.

HOW TO GET A LETTER & SECURE YOUR PLACE:

1. Letters available from **Miss Lodge** from **Friday 9th October.**
2. I will be based in M9 every lunch time (12:30 – 12:45pm) to receive a letter. **First come, first served.**
3. Completed letters must be returned to Miss Lodge by **Monday 19th October.**
4. Payment will then be available on Arbor from return of your letter until **Saturday 31st October 2026.**

Failure to pay by this date will result in the place being offered to the reserve student.

Take the challenge. It's worth it!

#DofE #AdventureAwaits #GetOutdoors #ChallengeYourself #Leadership

JOB VACANCY



CLICK HERE

FOR NEW

VACANCIES

VERITAS ET SAPIENTIA

COMMUNITY



NEWS

for your information

University of Chester Free Saturday Clubs for local 13-16 year olds

The University is continuing its partnership with the National Saturday Club to offer free Saturday Clubs for 13-16 year olds, across the following subject areas

- Art & Design - University of Chester
- Performance & Theatre - University of Chester
- Writing & Performing - University of Chester

As part of the National Saturday Club network, local young people can now apply to join these Saturday Clubs at the University of Chester. Led by expert tutors from the University of Chester, they will run for 15 weeks between 7th November 2026 until 24th April 2027, 10am to 1pm, and offer a unique opportunity to explore creativity, build skills and discover potential career paths across these industries.

The National Saturday Club programme is open to 13-16-year-olds of all abilities (Years 8, 9, 10 & 11) and in particular works to engage those who may face additional barriers to success. It's a unique model and taking part can be a transformational opportunity for young people - you can hear from past members in this short film.

In addition, Club members will also participate in National Saturday Club events including Masterclasses with leading industry professionals, cultural visits and trips, as well as end-of-year events for Club members to celebrate their achievements - all for free.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch,

Best wishes,
The Outreach Team

wysa
Use Wysa, Feel Better

NHS
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Exams test your knowledge. Stress tests your mind.

Big exams? Big pressure? You don't have to deal with it alone.

Exams can feel like everything. Constant revision, pressure to get good grades, teachers checking in, parents asking how it's going... all while you're trying to have a life outside school. If you're stressed, losing sleep, struggling to focus, or just feeling low about it all, that doesn't mean you're failing. It just means you're human.

Wysa is a free, confidential app for young people aged 16-17 to chat anytime (yes, even late at night), get tools for exam stress, and much more. No sign-ups, no awkward conversations, just a safe space to sort out what's going on in your head.

Looking after your mental health won't replace revision. But it will make it easier to get through it.

Here's how Wysa can help

- 24/7 support from an empathetic AI chatbot trained in evidence-based techniques
- A library of science-backed self help tools for stress, sleep, motivation, and more
- AI-detected crisis escalation pathways gently guide users toward immediate support options
- Daily check-ins to help build mental fitness, and a personal roadmap tailored to your wellbeing goals



Heating Bank

We can help low-income households with their energy costs

Funds are limited for each application window and applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis

To apply scan the QR code or visit www.citizensadvicecw.org.uk/heatingbank



citizens advice Cheshire West

Registered charity number: 1128367

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Next *Gen* Travel

Exclusively for 16 - 19 year olds

Bus travel for just **£1**



Free to join

Apply today and start saving on every journey.

What is NextGenTravel?

NextGenTravel is a discount scheme for young people aged 16 to 19 who travel on bus.

Users must apply for the pass to be eligible for discount. The NextGenTravel pass is presented to the driver to enable 16 to 19 year olds to travel for just £1 per single journey across all local participating bus services.

NextGenTravel is part of a 2-year trial led by Cheshire West and Chester's Enhanced Partnership and funded by the Department for Transport.

Where can I use the pass?

On all participating local bus services including itravel (excluding park and ride) as long as the journey is within, starts or ends in Cheshire West and Chester.

When can I use the pass?

At any time, including evenings and weekends.

Eligibility for the scheme

Anyone aged 16 to 19 who lives in Cheshire West and Chester can apply for their free NextGenTravel pass.

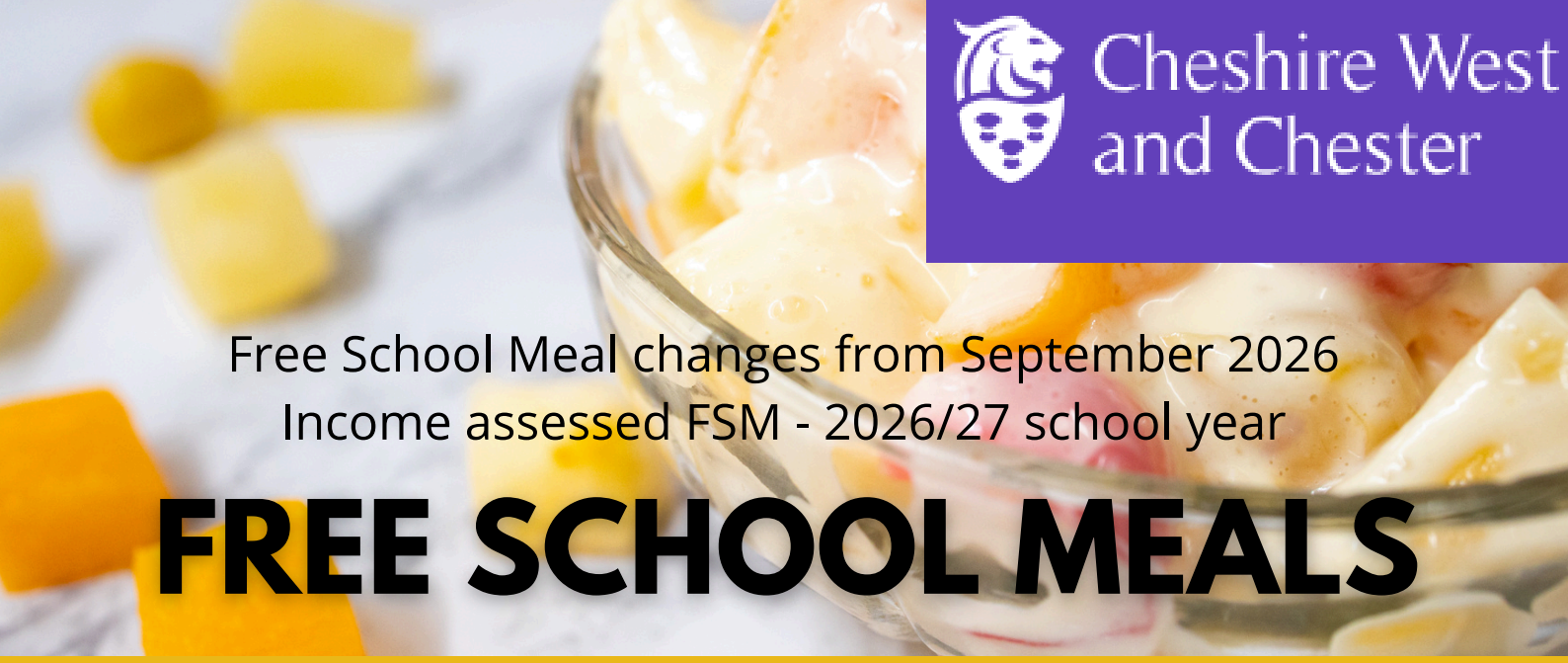
How to apply

Apply at: **www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/NextGenTravel** or scan the QR code.

Scan me to apply

Funded by UK Government

Cheshire West and Chester



Cheshire West and Chester

Free School Meal changes from September 2026
Income assessed FSM - 2026/27 school year

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

As you will be aware, Central Government has changed rules regarding Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility effective from September 2026.

Since 1 April 2018, all existing FSM claimants have continued to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit is rolled out, regardless of any change in household circumstances that would have normally ended eligibility. However, this protection will end at the close of the 2025/26 school year, and households must meet the new eligibility criteria for FSM to continue receiving this support.

From the start of the 2026/27 school year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit will be entitled to receive FSM. However, there will be 2 categories of Universal Credit based FSM :
Targeted FSM: which continues to be based on the existing threshold, covering pupils who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less
Expanded FSM: a new category covering pupils who do not qualify for targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit with annual household earnings above £7,400.

Cheshire West and Chester Council have completed checks over most existing FSM households to determine their eligibility and which category they may fall into. Each of these households will receive a letter informing them of the outcome of this check (or inviting them to reapply if their details could not be checked).

If you receive Universal Credit and do not currently qualify for FSM due to earning over the threshold of £7,400, but would now qualify from September 2026, you can now apply in advance

To apply for free school meals please follow the link

https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/free-school-meals

Immediate help and support for young people

If young people are in need of immediate support please sign post, or help to access the following:

List of services: Home Page - Directory of What Works

Further services:

Koala North-West – Provides early-help family support, similar to a family intervention worker. Families can access this service without a referral to Children's Social Care. Support is offered to families with young children.

School Nurse – Attends once a month and can support pupils with self-harm, exam stress, emotional health, low mood, healthy relationships, anxiety, body image, and issues relating to social media.

Cheshire Young Carers – A referral can be made if a child has additional responsibilities at home that are impacting their wellbeing or attendance at school.

Headspace is an easy-to-use app that helps make meditation and mindfulness simple. By spending just a few minutes a day on the app, users can learn practical skills to support their wellbeing. Headspace offers hundreds of guided meditations covering topics such as stress, anxiety, sleep, and focus.

Calm is an app that supports people experiencing stress and anxiety through guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing programmes, and relaxing music.

MindShift is designed specifically for teenagers and young people, offering tools and strategies to help manage anxiety.

Bereavement-specific bank of resources:

Traumatic Bereavement - UK Trauma Council

Home SUPPORTING BEREAVED CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE - Grief Encounter

Hope Again

About us - Amparo (suicide specific support)

Family members in prison:

Banardo's offer support for children and young people regarding family imprisonment: Barnardo's | Children's charity | Barnardo's

PSS offer support for anyone who has a relative in prison or in the past: While their parent is in prison in Merseyside (Prisoners' Families) | PSS

Post-16 help and support:

https://www.talkingtherapies.cwp.nhs.uk/self-refer

They offer self-referral to people aged 16 and over, registered with a GP in Central, South and West Cheshire.

The service exclusively offers evidence-based, short-term talking therapies designed to help with common mental health concerns, such as:

Low Mood
Anxiety or worry
Stress
Depression

TERM DATES

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

Term Dates 2026-27

Autumn Term 2026	
Inset Day	Tuesday1st September 2026
School Opens	Wednesday 2nd September 2026
School Closes	Friday 23rd October 2026
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday 2nd November 2026
Inset Day	Friday 27th November 2026
School Closes	Friday 18th December 2026
Christmas Holiday	
Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January 2027	

Spring Term 2027	
School Opens	Monday4th January 2027
School Closes	Friday 12th February 2027
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday 22nd February 2027
School Closes	Thursday 25th March 2027
Easter Holiday	
Friday 26th March (Bank Holiday) – Friday 9th April	

Summer Term 2027	
School Opens	Monday 12th April 2027
Bank Holiday	Monday 3rd May 2027
School Closes	Friday 28th May 2027
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday7th June 2027
School Closes	Friday16th July 2027
Summer Holiday	
Monday 19th July – Tuesday 31st August	

Inset Days: Monday 19th July - Wednesday 21st July

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

Term Dates 2027-28

Autumn Term 2027	
Inset Day	Wednesday 1st September 2027
School Opens	Thursday 2nd September 2027
School Closes	Friday 22nd October 2027
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday 1st November 2027
Inset Day	Friday 26th November 2027
School Closes	Friday 17th December 2027
Christmas Holiday **Monday 20th December – Monday 3rd January (Bank Holiday)**	

Spring Term 2028	
School Opens	Tuesday 4th January 2028
School Closes	Friday 11th February 2028
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday 21st February 2028
School Closes	Friday 31st March 2028
Easter Holiday **Monday 3rd April – Monday 17th April (Bank Holiday)**	

Summer Term 2028	
School Opens	Tuesday 18th April 2028
Bank Holiday	Monday 1st May 2028
School Closes	Friday 26th May 2028
Half Term	
School Opens	Monday 5th June 2028
School Closes	Tuesday 18th July 2028
Summer Holiday: Wednesday 19th July – Monday 4th September **Staff Inset: Wednesday 19th July – Friday 21st July**	

CONTACT US

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, Capenhurst Lane, Whitby, Ellesmere Port CH65 7AQ

0151 355 2373

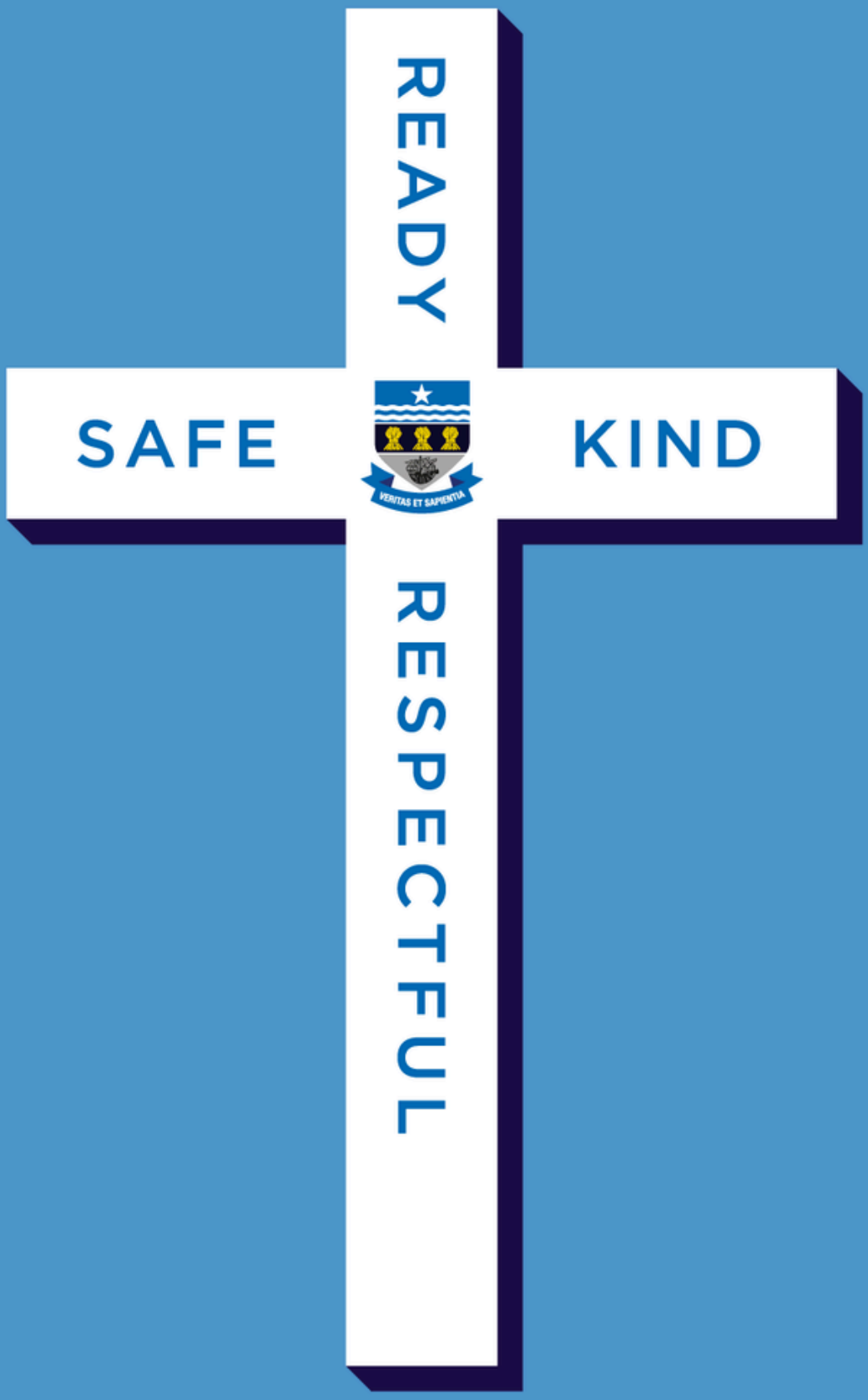
admin@epchs.co.uk

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 AM – 3.30PM

Friday: 8:00 AM – 3.15PM



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