

# WELCOME TO OUR PARENT SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

## MEET THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

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## CONTACTS

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### Safeguarding links

- Catmose College Child Protection Policy - <https://www.catmosecollege.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Catmose-College-Child-Protection-September-2025-2.pdf>
- Rutland and District Schools' Federation Safeguarding Policy - <https://www.catmosecollege.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Federation-Student-Safeguarding-Policy-September-2025-2-.pdf>

## EXAM AND REVISION ANXIETY

Many students take revision and exams very seriously and dedicate their time to revising information, learning to structure their work and remembering quotes, equations and formulas. In the midst of revision, sometimes relaxation and rest can feel like a secondary priority so finding the balance becomes challenging.

### Here are our top tips for managing exam and revision anxieties:

- **Take natural breaks:** pause, take a break, move and then re-focus. If possible, entirely move away from the revision for a short time, go outside, have a snack or seek out a change of scene for a short period.
- **Schedule social media time:** this is one of the most significant distractions for young people and it can also be an avenue of further stress. It is important to help children have periods of less stimulation so they can relax with more ease.
- **Choose study friends wisely:** the ideal revision buddy should be motivated and supportive, it can also help to identify the way that you like to revise and see if your friends have compatible approaches.
- **Make time for hobbies and interests:** it is important to get a good dose of the things that help us to feel relaxed, excited or engaged. Having periods of time out with our hobbies can make it feel easier when we then need to focus on revision as we do not feel deprived of the things that help us feel good.
- **Regular sleep patterns:** when we are anxious or stressed, we can find that the quality, type and length of our sleep alters. Maintaining a good sleep routine is an essential way of coping with stress and anxiety and for allowing our body sufficient recovery time each day.
- **Eat to feel good:** staying hydrated, eating slow-release carbohydrate foods (grains, bread, pasta) and limiting sugar can all have positive effects on concentration, focus and mood.
- **Talk about worries:** all worries are valid and by sharing them it often presents us with opportunities to overcome them by asking for help or making arrangements to make the exam period feel less stressful.
- **When exams start:** try to organise yourself the night before so that you do not feel rushed on the day of the exam. It is important to be on time as exams are given very specific start times which must be followed.
- **Try not to compare answers after exams:** this can cause undue stress and worry if we have answered questions differently or we have taken a different approach. Try to let go of exam talk once it is done.



## GROUP CHAT CONCERNS

One of the most frequent concerns we face at Catmose College involve issues with group chats via Snapchat and WhatsApp.

While we know that group chats present opportunities to chat, keep in touch with friends and to make plans, we also know that for many students group chats are also avenues for bullying, image sharing, isolating people and starting upsetting rumours.

**We often have multiple conversations with students about staying safe online and what to do if they are worried. Here is what we say:**

- Only accept friends you know in real life, that you have met and you can explain how/where you met.
- Be prepared for chats to go public rather than remain private. Chats can be captured in the form of screenshots and quickly sent to others.
- Leave a chat that has become unhelpful, upsetting or worrying.
- Block and delete contacts. This function is available for a reason and is helpful for keeping people safe.
- Do not share personal information, telephone numbers, email address or screennames with people you do not know. You wouldn't give your personal information to a stranger on the street, group chats are no different if you do not know who people are.
- You are responsible for your own behaviour in group chats. You can be influenced or encouraged by others to behave a certain way but what you do is a choice made by you.

Think about the reasons that you want to be in the group chat. Is the chat fun, enjoyable and safe or are you in the group because you are worried about being left out, losing friends or becoming isolated?



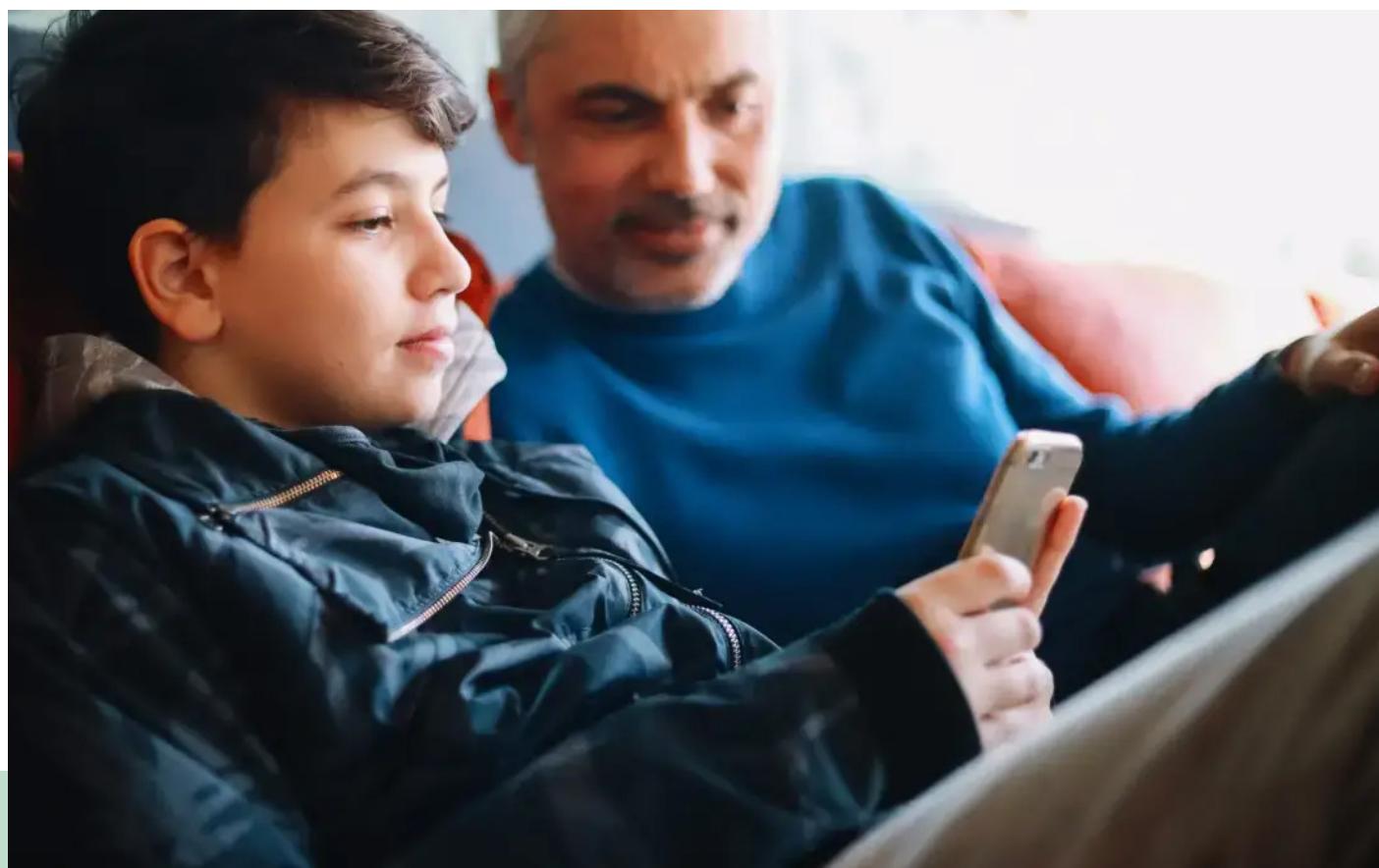
## For parents:

- Please regularly check phones including apps such as WhatsApp, Tik Tok and Snapchat.
- Images sent in chats may also be found in the camera roll of individual devices – just because something is deleted from a chat does not mean it is removed from the device altogether.
- Disable apps that you do not understand, which are difficult to navigate or that have options to connect to strangers.
- Place time restrictions on devices to encourage responsible use. For example, specific time allowances for social media platforms or websites. Encourage alternative ways of managing day to day tasks without the use of phones. For example, an alarm clock rather than a phone alarm.
- Utilise parental controls and remote access. For more information, please visit: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>
- Encourage real world social time and experiences.

Social media and group chats are just one aspect of the online world that we access via our phones and devices. It can be helpful to think honestly about the amount of time children are on devices and how this influences their experiences of the world around them.

Online dangers continue to be prevalent and are not just presented by unknown adults who befriend, groom and exploit children and young people. Young adults and even children themselves can inadvertently facilitate risks online.

The most beneficial steps we can take are working together to have conversations about online lives, parents regularly and carefully check their child's devices and apply parental controls.



## PROHIBITED ITEMS AT CATMOSE COLLEGE

Catmose College does not tolerate prohibited items on the College site and act promptly when such concerns arise. If a member of staff has concerns relating to prohibited items it may be necessary for an appropriate search to be undertaken.

### The following are prohibited items:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used to commit an offence, or cause personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person (including the student);
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images

### In addition, the College also identifies that the following items may also be searched for:

- e-cigarettes;
- vapes;
- any other item that a student or students may have in their possession that is in contravention of the College's Behaviour Management Policy, Exclusion Policy or stipulated in a safety plan, Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or parenting contract.

You can find further information about our approach to behaviour management via our Behaviour Management Policy.



## VAPING

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Nationally, there is significant concern about the number of children and young people who are regularly using vapes.

Vapes are especially challenging in educational settings as children are very sensitive to nicotine and are more likely to be more distracted and irritable as well as undertake behaviours such as truancy as their vaping habits become more evident.

The British Medical Journal highlights that vaping "may have long-term effects on attention, cognition, memory and mood." Vaping is particularly risky for children and young people as the brain continues to develop into the mid-20s and nicotine can interfere with that growth.

It is important to remember that while we do not yet fully understand the impact of vaping, they were initially designed and marketed to support adults to quit smoking. We should not think of vapes as therefore less harmful; they contain harmful ingredients and vapes often contain harmful levels of Copper, Nickel and Lead.

In many respects vapes have led to increased risks to health and have become a harmful problem especially for children and young people who may routinely pick up vapes and develop a dependency on them.

It is illegal for anyone aged 18 or older to buy vapes, e-liquids or any vaping products on behalf of anyone under the age of 18, this includes parents, family, carers or friends.

If you think a business has broken the law by supplying vapes, you can report them to Trading Standards. Trading Standards use the information given them to investigate illegal business activity and can take businesses to court or stop them operating.

**If you are worried about vaping or would like to secure support for your child to stop vaping, please follow these links:**

[www.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping-resources](http://www.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping-resources)

[www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ready-to-quit-smoking/vaping-to-quit-smoking/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/ready-to-quit-smoking/vaping-to-quit-smoking/)

[www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)