

# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



## HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

*Dear Parents and Carers,*

### Happy New Year

May we begin the first newsletter of 2024 by wishing everyone a Happy New Year! We hope all Notre Dame families had a restful, peaceful and enjoyable Christmas with friends and family. We would like to take this opportunity to thank families for their many Christmas wishes and gifts; they were all very much appreciated.

### Oxford Success!

We began this academic year with the wonderful news that two of our students have received offers from the prestigious Oxford University! We know first hand how hard all the students who submitted applications for Oxford have worked during the rigorous interview process and would like to commend each of them for how well they conducted themselves throughout.

A huge congratulations to those who received an offer!

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Focus on **YOUR FUTURE**



### CONGRATULATIONS!

2 of our students have received a conditional offer to the University of Oxford! Well done on this amazing achievement.

*"We are what we want to be by the efforts we are willing to make."*

*St Julie Billiart*



MRS COSTELLO  
ACTING  
HEADTEACHER

FRI 12TH JAN  
2024



NOTRE DAME  
CATHOLIC  
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## Stars of the screen

Many of you may have seen a few familiar faces on your screens over the festive period, as our very own Notre Dame students took centre stage alongside peers from over 15 different local schools and a Ukrainian children's choir, come together to perform on ITV as part of the 100 Voices Choir. The 100 Voices Choir was formed by our own music Education Hub, Resonate, as part of the Eurovision celebrations in the city of Liverpool last summer and were delighted to reunite for this one-off special performance.



The student's were performing on The National Lottery's Big Bash to bring in the New Year alongside the likes of Take That, Becky Hill and Paloma Faith and had a fantastic experience of visiting London, taking part in a recorded performance for a major T.V station and seeing themselves on the screen!

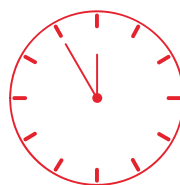
We'd like to say a huge well done to all involved in the project and the children for a spectacular performance!

## Year 11 Parents Evening, Thursday 18th January 2024

We look forward to welcoming Parents and Carers of our Year 11 students to their Parents' Evening next week. Subject teachers will be available between 3.30pm and 6pm. This Parents Evening will be particularly useful to discuss your child's progress ahead of their summer examinations.

This is also a week prior to our Sixth Form Open Evening which will take place on Thursday 25th January 2024, where Year 11 students can find out more about continuing their education with us into Years 12 and 13. (See more details on page 3).

Therefore we strongly encourage attendance at this event from both parents and students. We look forward to seeing you there!



**WISHING EVERY NOTRE DAME FAMILY A PEACEFUL WEEKEND.**

Yours faithfully

**MRS COSTELLO**

FRI 12TH JAN  
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## Save the Date: Sixth Form Open Evening, Thursday 25th January 2024



We invite all Year 11 students to attend our Sixth Form Open Evening, taking place on **Thursday 25th January 2024, 3.15pm - 5.45pm.**

Focus on your future and join us to discover more about stepping up to Sixth Form at Notre Dame Catholic College.

Our Sixth Form Open Evening will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Hear from our Sixth Form Team and current students
- Attend Taster Sessions in subjects they're interested in (Please note, Taster Sessions must be booked in advance. A link to the available sessions will go live week commencing Monday 15th January and will be sent via Class Charts).
- Speak to our Careers Advisor, Mrs Hall, about progression beyond Sixth Form and post-16 study
- Find out how to complete your application (applications will open week commencing Monday 22nd January 2024)

Parents are more than welcome to attend alongside their child, or students are welcome to attend independently if they wish. Please note, Parents **do not** need to book a place on to Taster Sessions.

**We look forward to you joining us on the evening!**

### Be Positive and gain Values Stars!

Values Stars will return next week! Once again, we'd like to congratulate the 5 students who won the Values Stars Prize draw last term. Keep up the good work and earn your positive points for your chance to win this term!





## Behaviour Reminders

As we begin a new term, we'd like to remind students and parents of our behaviour expectations. We thank you for your continued support in upholding our high standards.

### Back to School Reminder EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

#### ARE THEY READY TO LEARN?

2 Black or Blue pens  
Colouring pencils  
Pencils  
Eraser  
Sharpener  
Ruler  
School bag big enough to hold A4 size documents / files  
School planner (Y7) or Timetable (provided by school)



### Back to School Reminder MOBILE PHONES

#### Mobile phones are not to be seen or heard in the college grounds during the college day

If a member of staff sees or hears a mobile phone it will be confiscated and kept until the end of the school day. Students will not be able to collect their mobile phone until 3.15pm from the Spanish Steps. Students should not wear Bluetooth earphones in school these may be confiscated by staff.

Keep your phone switched off and out of sight  
(in a bag or blazer!)

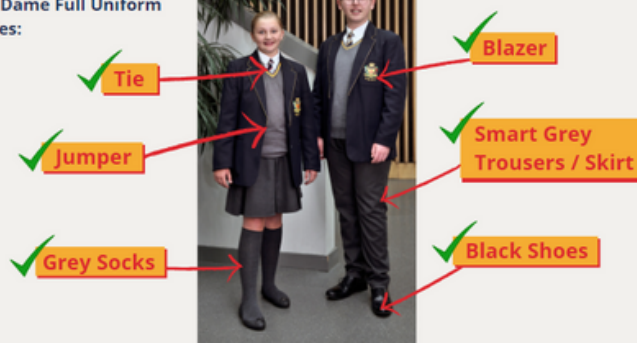


#### WHY?

- Mobile phones have been proven to have a negative impact on student progress and attainment
- Mobile phones are associated with poor mental health
- Mobile phones can be used for anti social purposes Online bullying, harassment, etc.

### Back to School Reminder UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

Notre Dame Full Uniform includes:



### Back to School Reminder ENERGY / SOFT DRINKS / CHEWING GUM

If a member of staff sees a **fizzy**, or **soft drink** such as **Lucozade** or **Prime**, it will be **confiscated** and placed in the bin.

Fizzy drinks have a negative impact on health and are detrimental to your ability to learn. They directly effect concentration and motivation levels and make it difficult for you to manage your behaviour.

Students are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles to school and to refill these at the water stations during break/lunchtimes.



If a member of staff sees you **chewing** you will be asked to **remove the gum** and place it in the bin  
Chewing gum creates a health risk as some students do not dispose of it correctly. It also has a negative effect on the school environment.

Food should only be consumed in designated areas (e.g. the upper/lower canteens) and not in the classroom or around the school building.

## Attendance and Punctuality Matters

Good attendance and punctuality not only supports academic performance, it is also a good skill to develop for life beyond school.



Getting to school is really important because...

If your attendance during the school year:	You will approximately lose...	Or you approximately miss...
was 97%	5 DAYS of school	25 lessons
was 95%	9 DAYS of school	45 lessons
was 90%	19 DAYS of school	95 lessons
was 85%	29 DAYS of school	145 lessons
was 80%	38 DAYS of school	190 lessons
was 75%	48 DAYS of school	240 lessons

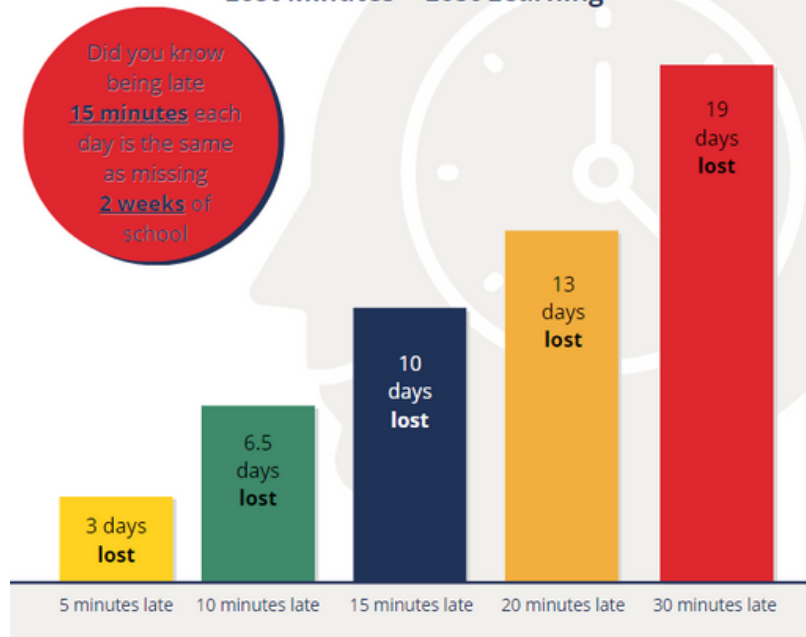
If your attendance during the school year is  
100% you will lose 0 days and miss 0 lessons!

You should not take holidays during term time.  
Please be punctual to maintain good attendance.

Good Attendance = Open Doors & Opportunities



Lost Minutes = Lost Learning



Please encourage good attendance and punctuality habits each week.

Students should arrive to school at 8.45am. If they arrive after this time they are late. It is also important for students to ensure they arrive to lessons on time, fully equipped and ready to learn.

Failure to do so, may incur a detention.

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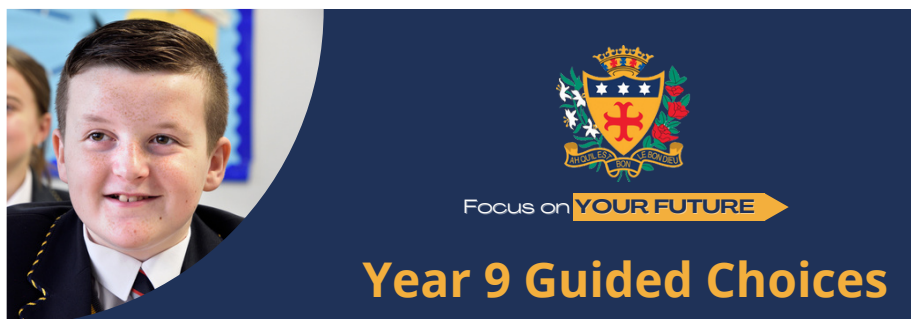
## Admissions Consultation

As you are aware the school will be joining St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust (SJC MAT) early in 2024. As part of that transition SJC MAT will assume the responsibility for admissions. The Trust have reviewed our current policy and propose minor amendments from 2025-2026. Further information on the proposed changes can be found on our [website Admissions page](#).

As per the [DfE School Admissions Code \(September 2021\)](#) the Trust are required to consult for a period of no less than six weeks and our consultation will be open from **14th December 2023 until 31st January 2024**.



## Year 9 - Options Deadline Passed



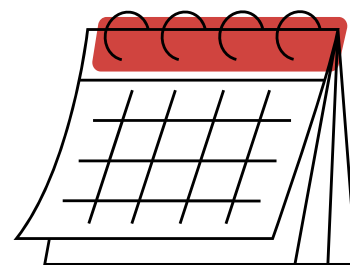
We'd like to remind all Year 9 students, parents and carers that the deadline for students to hand in their Options Form was Friday 12th January 2024. If your child has not yet completed this form, please ensure they review the information online and submit their options **as soon as possible**.

Subject Information is available to view here on the [Year 9 Guided Choices page of our college website](#).

We strongly encourage parents/carers to take the time over the next 2-3 weeks to view this content, read the Guided Choices booklet we provided and have conversations with your child about their plans for the future and what subjects might be best to support them in achieving their goal.

## Dates for your diary - Parents Evenings

- **Year 7** Parents Evening will be on **Thursday 7th March 2024**
- **Year 8** Parents Evening will be on **Thursday 9th May 2024**
- **Year 9** Parents Evening **took place** on **Thursday 7th December 2023**
- **Year 10** Parents Evening will be on **Thursday 21st March 2024**
- **Year 11** Parents Evening will be on **Thursday 18th January 2024**
- **Sixth Form** Parents Evening **took place** on **Thursday 14th December 2023**



Further information including times will be shared nearer to the date.

Please be advised any changes to the above dates scheduled will be shared via ParentApp, Class Charts, our Newsletter and the school website.



## Liverpool City Council Parent Newsletter



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)

The Newsletter includes information on services that can support parents this New Year.

- Family Hub and Children Centres
- December Events Across The City for Families
- Winter health support
- Childcare
- Debt Advice
- Domestic Abuse
- Education Wonderhub Activities
- Employment Support and Adult Learning opportunities
- Foodbanks
- Mental Health
- Money Management and Financial help
- Parenting Programmes
- Parental Mental Health
- Support for Fathers

### Medical Procedure Reminder - Inhalers

A reminder to all Parents and Carers - If you have a child who suffers from asthma, please ensure that they **carry an inhaler on their person** when in school **at all times**.

**They are also required to keep a second, spare inhaler at the school.**

If you have not completed an asthma card form for your child, please contact the school main office to arrange this or if you have any other queries. Thank you.



Additional online safety, webinars to empower parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to be an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which are before trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com/for-parents-guidance](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/for-parents-guidance) for further guidance, tips and links for more.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about YUBO

**AGE LIMIT 13+**  
This app contains content that may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Yubo is a social networking platform where users can chat and livestream with up to 10 friends at once. People can connect with others based on location, with a Tinder-style 'swiping' mechanism to accept or reject someone based on profile pictures. The app has more than 20 million users worldwide – but despite its popularity, Yubo has not been free from controversy. While the app claims to monitor inappropriate content, a newspaper investigation in early 2022 found young users being exposed to sexual harassment, racism, bullying and conversations with adult themes.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### FLimsy AGE GATES

Yubo states it is only for over 13s, but there is no credible attempt to prevent a younger child joining the platform. An undercover journalist investigating dangerous content reported spending 10 days posing as a 10-year-old on the app without any age verification. This flaw, and the fact that it's not essential for users to verify their identity during the sign up process, raises concerns over potential grooming.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Yubo has experienced problems with inappropriate content being displayed to children and teens. Although the app's developers claim to monitor profiles and messages for adult-themed or inappropriate material, a Sunday Times and an independent investigation found young users being exposed to sexual harassment, racism and bullying, with some chats referencing self-harm, suicide and drug use.

### LIVESTREAM RISKS

Users are able to launch live video streams which strangers can then view and interact with via real-time text chat. Not only is the thought of strangers watching children's livestreams extremely worrying (they could also use these as a means to establish the child's location by recognising their surroundings) but text chats might result in a young person disclosing personal information.

### BULLYING POTENTIAL

Yubo uses 'swipe' to accept or decline the chance to talk with each other. These decisions are entirely based on someone's profile picture, raising the potential for children to be left with low self-esteem if declined repeatedly. Negative feedback about their appearance can seriously damage a child's emotional wellbeing, causing a loss of confidence in how they look or how interesting they are.

### EXTENSIVE ACCESS

Users of Yubo, no matter what their age, are given the option to grant access to their device's microphone if live streaming, and GPS during sign up. This means they are potentially revealing sensitive information, including their exact location. In addition, new users of the app are asked to provide personal details such as their name, date of birth and phone number, which – in the case of young people – represents a risk in the event of a hack or data breach.

### 'GATEWAY' EFFECT

Yubo's swiping system (right for 'yes', left for 'no') works much like Tinder and various other dating apps. This could lead to children exploring similarly designed apps that aren't intended for a young audience. Users can also link their Yubo account to social media such as Snapchat and Instagram, making it easier for a stranger – or a predator – to track them down on various platforms.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### EXPLORE THE APP

We encourage parents and carers to explore any app before allowing their children to download and use it in order to fully understand how the app is used, and what types of content and communication your child will be exposed to. We advise that you do the same with Yubo, allowing you to make a fully informed decision on whether you allow your child to use the app.

### DISCUSS IN ADVANCE

If your child is absolutely determined to join Yubo (perhaps their friends all use the platform, for instance), then it's essential to talk to them about the dangers of this type of app before they install it. It's vital they understand not to disclose personal information to people they don't know, for example, and that they're warned about the type of mature content they may be exposed to.

### STAY AWARE

It's important to stay attuned to how your child is using social media. If they only discuss Yubo in private, for example, you might question what they're potentially using it for. It's also important to watch for warning signs that they may be overusing the app: prioritising it over everyday routines like meals and homework, for instance, or showing signs of irritability and a lack of concentration.

### ALTER THE SETTINGS

After the recent controversies surrounding the app, Yubo's developers have increased its security controls. Users can now choose to block profiles, screen out nudity in live streams and keep their location private. There's also an option to report inappropriate content, so make sure your child knows that they can now flag up anything they find disturbing via the app's safety centre.

### Meet Our Expert

Gail Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Gail is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.

**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

[Click here to access further guidance on YUBO.](#)



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## 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

### 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.](#)

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



<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

Acting Headteacher - Mrs AM Costello

Acting Deputy Headteacher / Designated  
Safeguarding Lead - Mrs E Brennan

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads  
Mrs J Littleboy - Director of Safeguarding Services  
Mr A McVerry - Leadership - SENCO

PC P Wood - School Safer Police Officer  
Miss H McCullen - Leadership/Alternative Provision  
Mrs P Shrimpton - Attendance Officer  
Mrs K Sweeney - Special Educational Needs  
Mrs E Garvey Y7, Miss C Lee Y8, Ms R Glorman Y9, Mrs S Doran  
Y10, Mrs S Styles Y11, - Pastoral Assistant Heads of Year

[www.notredameliverpool.com/safeguarding/](http://www.notredameliverpool.com/safeguarding/)