

08-05-26

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 Parent / Carer,

It has been another busy week at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, as you are aware we have recently put out a request for past pupils as well as parents and carers to support our careers, advice and guidance programme by coming into school to speak to our pupils. This week Jamie Hodgkinson, Youth Engagement Officer from Cheshire Police came into school to speak to Year 12 pupils about his career journey and all the different career paths that are available in the police force. A reminder that if you would like to support this programme to contact our 6th form administrator, Laura Howells on laura.howell@epchs.co.uk. Our 6th form enrichment sessions also continued and our pupils benefit from a range of sessions on subjects such as car maintenance, mental health and wellbeing and revision and study skills.

On Wednesday our Golden Key Society welcomed the band Blue Nation who spoke to them about the music industry and song writing. Pupils really benefitted from meeting members of the band and being able to ask questions about the song writing process as well as gaining tips on playing a variety of different instruments.

Recently we entered 10 of our Year 9 Art Scholars into the Sovereign Arts Foundation Student Entry Prize 2026. Students produced original art pieces in their own time and during Tuesdays Art club. 8/10 of those entries were selected as finalists and their pieces are currently exhibited at the Chester Cathedral. This is an exceptional achievement for our Year 9 scholars, as they are the youngest group of students to be selected as finalists. Well done to all involved.

Please be aware that next week the external examinations for our Year 11/13 pupils continue with earnest. GCSEs in English Literature, Science, Maths, Geography, Computer Studies, RE and History as well as A-Levels in Health and Social Care, Geography, English Literature and Language, Business Studies, Criminology and Psychology will take place. A reminder of the importance of our whole school priorities of Presence, Participation and Progress. It is essential that our Year 11/13 pupils continue to attend school and participate in all their lessons and intervention sessions to support with their revision as this will ultimately lead to their overall progress and support with their next steps.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me via my PA at joanne.wright@epchs.co.uk

Kind regards,

Lorraine Henderson - Acting Headteacher

Tim Beesley - Executive Headteacher

Family and Community



Family and Community

Catholic social teaching emphasizes that the family is the foundational social unit, and individuals have both a right and a duty to participate in community life for the common good.



Important Dates

- 14th May - Year 10 Geography Fieldwork (rivers)
- 15th/16th May - Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Practice Expedition
- 22nd May - Year 13 Leavers Assembly (Parents have been invited by email)
- 25th to 29th May - Half Term
- 14th/15th June - Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Final Expedition
- 22nd - 26th June - Year 10 Work Experience
- 29th June - 3rd July - Year 12 Work Experience

Head of Year HEROES



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

We're celebrating for reasons such as:

- ✓ 100% attendance since September, 0 behaviour points and consistently high achievement points, well done!
- ✓ Contribution to Fundraiser
- ✓ Positive attitude to learning





Department
for Education

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School Planning Application

Planning Application Coming Soon

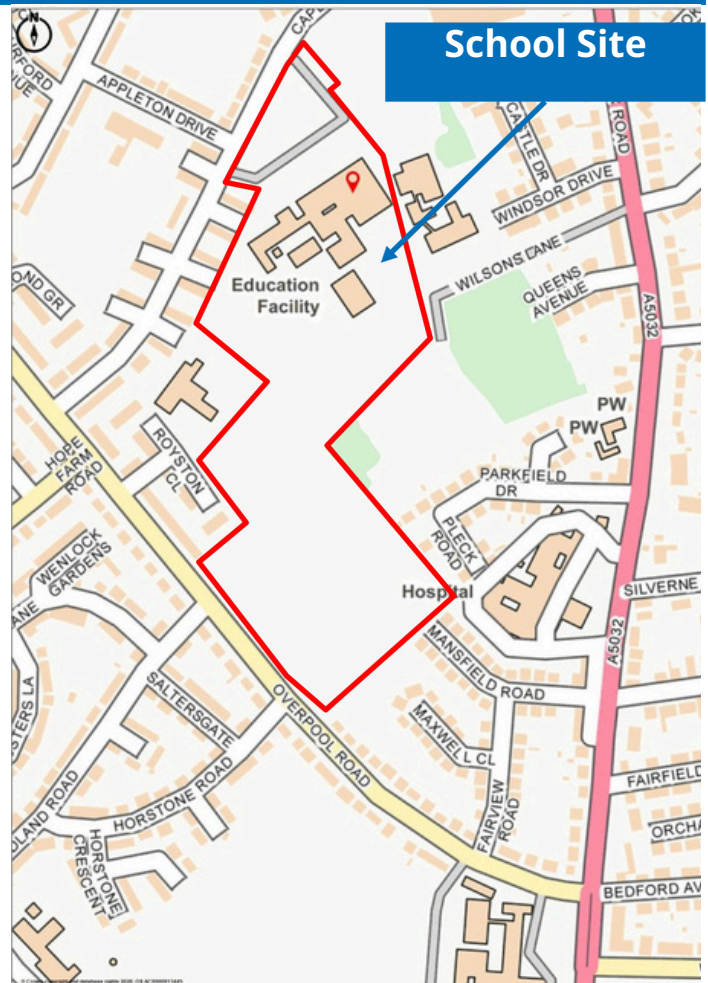
We are excited to let you know that a planning application will soon be submitted for the redevelopment of Ellesmere Port Catholic High School. This welcome redevelopment will deliver significantly improved educational facilities for both the school and the local community.

The redevelopment of Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is being delivered by the Department for Education as part of their School Rebuilding Programme. Kier Construction has been selected by the Department for Education to design and build the new school.

Proposals

The existing school buildings are in a poor condition and several are no longer in use. All existing buildings are earmarked for demolition. Two new school buildings (a 2 storey teaching block and a sports block) are proposed to be built on the existing sports field towards the south of the site. An area of new sports field to replace the lost area will be created in the north of the site following the demolition of the existing school buildings.

The existing vehicular entrance from Capenhurst Lane will be retained for access to Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School. New vehicular and pedestrian / cycle access is proposed from Overpool Road to the new school buildings. A new staff and visitor car park, and a parent drop-off facility are also proposed. The car park will include electric vehicle charging points, and new cycle shelters will also be installed.



There will be no change to staff and pupil numbers as a result of the redevelopment.

The new building will minimise energy demand and use low carbon / renewable energy solutions. This will include solar panels on the roof and ground source heat pumps.

View our proposals online at:
<https://www.olhoc.org.uk/epchs-newbuild>

Email the design team at: epchs.uk@avisonyoung.com

Please send questions or comments no later than 1st April 2026



Department
for Education

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School Planning Application



Have Your Say / Drop-in Event At this pre-application stage, the development proposals can be viewed on the School Trust's website and you can also contact the Kier project team if you have any queries or comments. Details are at the bottom of this page. We are holding a **drop-in event at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School** for anyone who wants to find out more or who would like to ask any questions about the proposals. The session will run from **4pm to 7pm on Wednesday 25th March 2026**.

Timescales / Next Steps We will be submitting the planning application in Spring 2026. Once the application has been submitted, it will be available to view and comment on online via Cheshire West and Chester Council's online planning portal: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/see-or-comment-on-planning-applications/how-to-view-an-application> Subject to receiving planning permission the school redevelopment is planned to commence on site in Autumn 2026.

View our proposals online at: <https://www.olhoc.org.uk/epchs-newbuild>

Email the design team at: epchs.uk@avisonyoung.com

Please send questions or comments no later than 1st April 2026



PARENT

INFORMATION

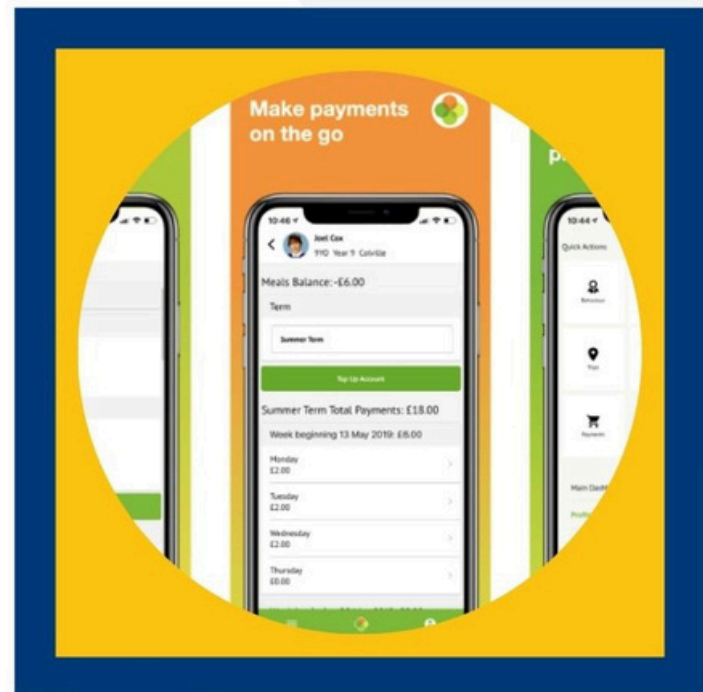


Arbor

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.

ATTENDANCE ACHIEVEMENT

We are delighted to celebrate the fantastic achievement of our **Year 10 Teresa** Form, who reached an incredible **100% attendance** last week. This is a brilliant accomplishment and reflects the commitment, resilience and positive attitude of every student in the form.

Consistent attendance plays a vital role in academic success, personal development and making the most of every opportunity school has to offer. The dedication shown by 10T sets a wonderful example for others across the school community.

**Well done to all students
in 10T—keep up the
excellent work!**

Blue Nation

On Wednesday we were very fortunate to have the award-winning Birmingham based band Blue Nation come in and speak to the pupils about their journey in the music industry and helped the pupils with songwriting.

Neil Murdoch (Singer/Guitar), Luke Weston (BV / Bass), and Nick Sharman (Drums) did a Q&A sections, answering questions pupils asked, about learning bar chords, music influences, and their song writing process. They spoke with passion, enthusiasm, and engaged with the pupils inspiring them.

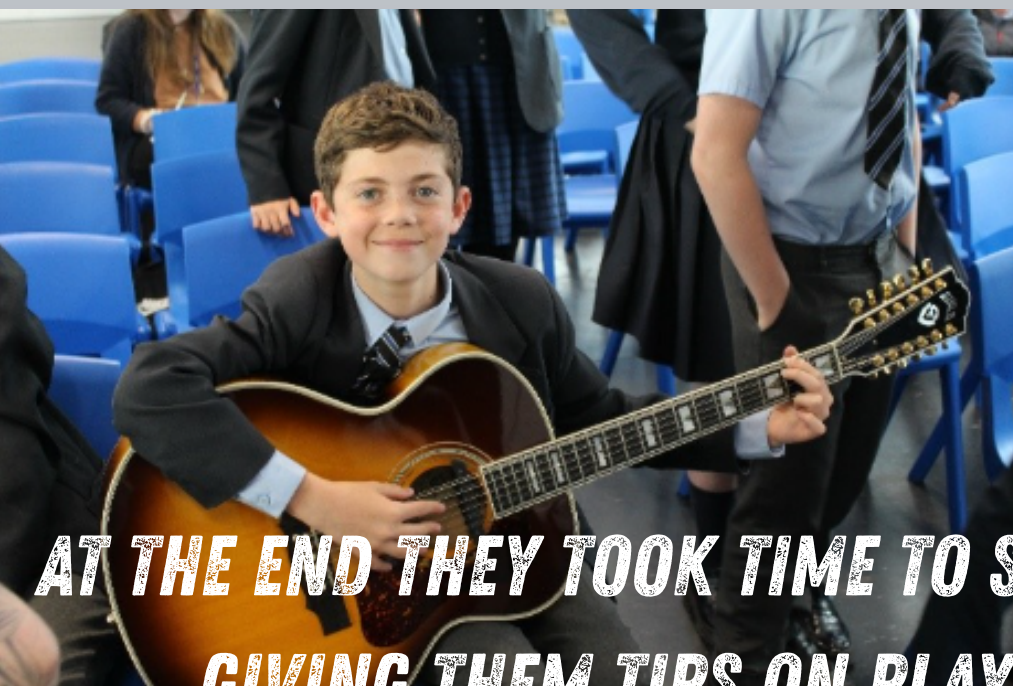
At the start and between the Q&A sessions they played *Once in my Life* and *Ordinary People*



Blue Nation



Neil took 4 random words from the pupils and started composing songs on the spot while also strumming out tuned to support them on his guitar supported by Luke on the bass, showing that songwriting can be spontaneous and a song can come from a very simple beginning.



**AT THE END THEY TOOK TIME TO SPEAK THE PUPILS,
GIVING THEM TIPS ON PLAYING AND THE
INSTRUMENTS THEY USE.**

Introducing the YEAR 8 LEADERSHIP TEAM



We are proud to introduce our Year 8 Leadership Team.

The team will act as a supportive point of contact for new students joining EPCHS through our Buddy System, helping them to settle in and feel part of the school community. They will also take a leading role in charity and fundraising initiatives, both within the school and across the wider community, and are currently working on a community charity event which will take place in the coming weeks. They are supported by the Headteacher Mrs Henderson and Pastoral Support Manager Mrs Fearon.

Each member of the Leadership Team consistently demonstrates our core priorities of Presence, Participation and Progress through excellent attendance, positive behaviour and a strong commitment to achieving their goals.

CAR MAINTENANCE



This year, a brave and curious group of Sixth Form students decided to swap the comfort of the classroom for the (occasionally windy) reality of the school car park, by choosing Car Maintenance as their enrichment lesson.

Students showed great resilience and enthusiasm, especially when checking tyres on staff cars (a big thank you to all the volunteers!).

Along the way, they learned essential safety checks, how to spot warning signals, and how to assess the condition and value of used cars –including identifying issues like mileage discrepancies, hidden damage, and MOT or tax concerns.

We also explored UK number plates, with students learning how to identify a car's age and even the appeal of cherished plates. Each student received their own personalised number plate, along with a printed image of their dream car, ranging from classic Jaguars to sporty hatchbacks.

CAR MAINTENANCE

Towards the end of the course, we got hands-on with the inner workings of cars. Students learned about essential fluids and how to identify major mechanical faults.

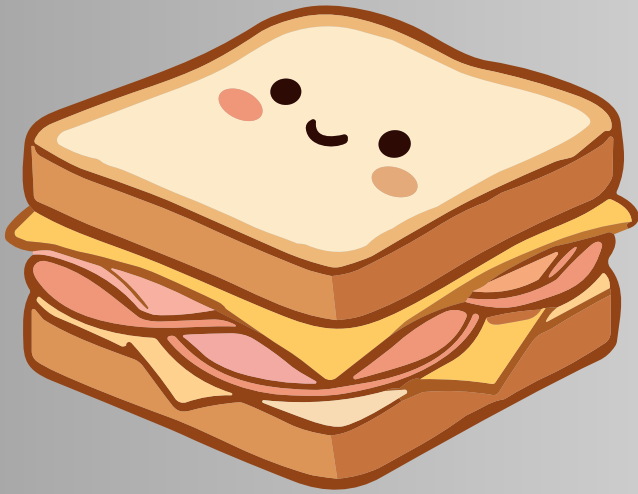
The grand finale? Building a model petrol engine. While it may have taken a few attempts (and a fair bit of patience), the sense of achievement when those engines finally came together was well worth it.

It has been a real joy teaching such a dedicated and good-humoured group. Hopefully, they leave this course not only with new knowledge and skills but also with the confidence to lift the bonnet and take a closer look, rather than immediately calling for help!

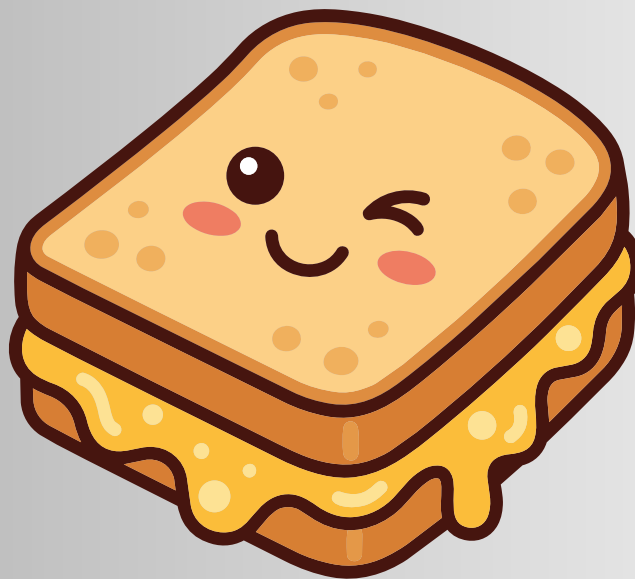
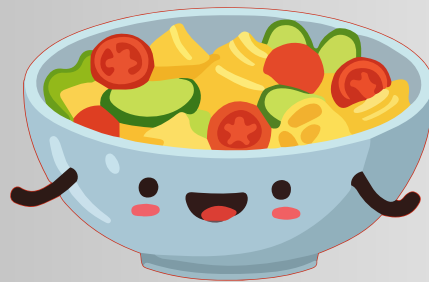


SIXTH FORM ENRICHMENT

GRAB BAGS



As a reminder, students can pre-order a grab bag lunch during morning searching and wandering. Simply complete the quick form to reserve your lunch, then collect it from the pod without needing to queue. Grab bag lunches are priced at £3.30, or are available free for students eligible for FSM.



With the weather improving and the field reopening, this is a great way to save time and enjoy your break outside.



WE NEED YOU!

TALK ABOUT YOUR CAREER!

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!



We are looking for inspiring individuals to speak to our students about their career journey.

By sharing your experiences, challenges and successes, you can help broaden our students' understanding of the wide range of career pathways available and give them valuable insight into the world of work.

We would love to hear from anyone; past pupils, current parents or former parents who would be willing to give a little time to make a big difference.

We can accommodate any dates of your choice, and will always take place at 8.45am for 30 minutes. Please email us if you think you can help. We will be very grateful!

**Please email us on
Laura.Howell@epchs.co.uk**



ELLESMERE PORT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' John 10.10



CHAPLAINCY *news*

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO WIN THE PANDA AND SUPPORT THE LOURDES FUND, THEN YOU CAN COME TO B11 AND GUESS ITS NAME FOR 50P. GOOD LUCK



OUR 10:10/ SVP GROUP MEET EVERY WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON IN B11 AT 3.15PM. PLEASE COME ALONG AND SEE WHAT WE DO. THIS WEEK OUR 10:10 GROUP MADE A FLOWER DISPLAY TO PRAISE OUR LADY.



MAY IS THE MONTH OF MARY. ROSARY IS SAID EACH BREAKTIME IN B11. PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO COME IN MAY. PLEASE JOIN US.

INVITATION TO MASS

If you would like to attend Mass at church on a Monday lunchtime then please see Angela for a letter and put your name down. Fr Godlove will be delighted to see you.

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.



OUR SINGING GROUP TAKES PLACE IN B11 ON A TUESDAY LUNCH TIME. PLEASE COME ALONG. SEE ANGELA IF YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OR IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS OF NEW SONGS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

HELPING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN NAVIGATE THE ONLINE WORLD

Neurodivergent people tend to be early adopters of technology, and many influential innovators in this space are neurodivergent themselves. It's therefore likely that a neurodivergent child or young person may be drawn to the online world from an early age. This isn't a concern in itself, but understanding both the benefits and potential risks is essential. Here are ten key considerations to support safe and positive online experiences for neurodivergent children.

1 TREAT ONLINE LIKE THE REAL WORLD

You wouldn't allow a child to cross a road without guidance – you'd hold their hand, use a pedestrian crossing, and model safe behaviour. In the same way, a neurodivergent child's first experiences online should be supported by an adult who can guide and explain safe and responsible digital behaviour to them from the outset.

2 MODEL RESPONSIBLE USE

Children learn from what they see. Show all children, regardless of neurotype, what responsible internet use looks like. Reflect on your own use of social media and AI. Consider how often you use them and your own understanding of these platforms. Talk openly about when and why you use these tools, helping all children develop a balanced and informed approach.

3 KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Current government guidance suggests no solo screen use below the age of two, with a maximum of one hour per day for two- to five-year-olds. Screen time can support communication and connection when shared with an adult. However, passive watching can affect neurodivergent children's attention and language skills. Focus on the type of content they watch, encouraging slower-paced and meaningful material rather than fast-paced, overstimulating content.

4 CONSIDER AGES AND STAGES

For older children and teenagers, agreed limits are important. Screen time can be beneficial, but it should form part of a balanced lifestyle. Neurodivergent children may find online communication easier than real-world conversation, supporting their social interaction. However, it shouldn't be their only option. Encourage a range of activities, including creative play, physical exercise, and opportunities for real-world connections.

5 KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Discussions about online safety should begin early and continue as children grow. However, neurodivergent children may worry about getting things wrong or being misunderstood, meaning these kinds of conversations should feel open and fair, rather than like a lecture. If a child encounters a problem – such as a scam or inappropriate content – they need to feel able to speak to a trusted adult without fear of judgement or embarrassment.

6 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You aren't expected to be an expert, but it's important to stay informed about the platforms, games, or apps neurodivergent children use in order to provide practical support. Social media platforms have age limits, and many apps and games offer parental settings that can control access. Schools and families should work together to understand these tools, helping neurodivergent children use them safely while keeping up to date with new features and changes.

7 SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Children and young people often know more about current technology than adults, meaning it's important to recognise that controls may be bypassed. Clear, predictable boundaries should be used, based on trust and consistency. Involving children in discussions that affect them helps them feel heard. This is particularly important for neurodivergent children, who may respond strongly to perceived unfairness.

8 UNDERSTAND AI CONTENT

The internet now includes large amounts of AI-generated content, including images, videos, and stories. These can be difficult to identify. Children should be encouraged to question what they see and check the information using trusted sources. Neurodivergent children may interpret content literally, meaning adult guidance is important in helping them recognise what's real and reliable – and what isn't.

9 EXPLAIN AI LIMITATIONS

AI isn't the same as a search engine. It generates responses based on prompts and patterns, and its accuracy depends on how it's used. Sometimes, it produces incorrect or unrealistic information, known as 'hallucinations'. Both adults and children need to understand this and learn how to check information carefully using reliable and trusted sources.

10 CLARIFY AI RELATIONSHIPS

AI can feel conversational and personal, but it's not capable of real relationships. It learns from patterns in user input rather than human understanding. Some neurodivergent children may experience a sense of connection with AI chatbots, particularly if they find social situations challenging. It's therefore important to explain that these are simulated conversations and aren't a substitute for real, human relationships.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a neurodivergent former SENCO and Advisory Teacher who works with nurseries, schools, colleges, and businesses to improve inclusion for neurodivergent people. She is the Founder and Director of Neuroteachers and the author of "The Other 29 – How Supporting Your Neurodivergent Learner Can Improve Teaching and Learning for the Whole Class".



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

See full reference list on our website

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RECRUITING



Senior Colts 2026/27

Contact

Dan Jenner: 07481 618384

Chris Ford: 07736 065289

Anselmians Senior Colts are currently recruiting new players ahead of the upcoming season. We aim to provide a clear pathway into senior rugby, supporting players as they develop and transition into the adult game. We currently have a committed squad of around 14-17 players, and last season we had a successful year with 4 wins, 3 draws and 3 losses. We're now looking to build on that and strengthen the squad further.

We are particularly looking for players in Year 11 and Year 12, whether they are new to rugby, not currently at a club, or looking for a new challenge.

Pre-season training begins on:

23rd June at 6:15pm

Anselmians RUFC, Eastham (CH62 0AH)

If your child is interested, please contact Dan or Chris via WhatsApp.

COMMUNITY NEWS



Community Facilities for Hire at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

Hire Our School TODAY

 **Contact Us**
0330 808 1965

 **Our Website**
www.actihire.org.uk

- Available evenings, weekends and school holidays
- Free parking and dedicated member of staff on-site
- Great facilities at affordable rates

BOOK NOW AT WWW.ACTIHIRE.ORG.UK

TERM DATES 2025-26

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

Inset Day - Tuesday 1st September 2026

TERM DATES 2026-27

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

Term Dates 2026-27

Autumn Term 2026

Inset Day	Tuesday 1st 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	Monday 4th 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	
School Closes	Monday 7th June 2027
	Friday 16th July 2027
Summer Holiday Monday 19th July – Tuesday 31st August	

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

CONTACT US

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, Capenhurst Lane,

Whitby, Ellesmere Port CH65 7AQ

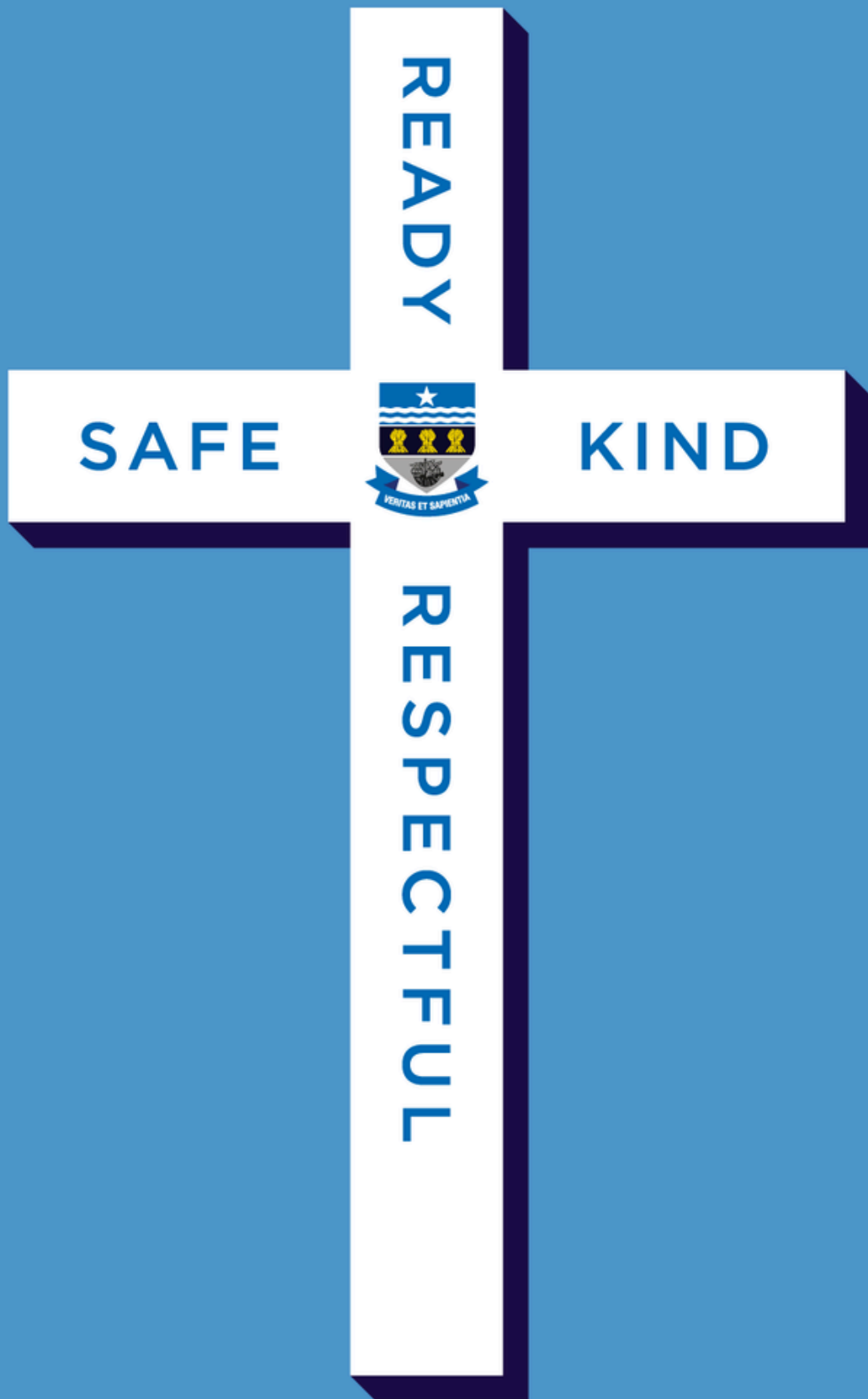
0151 355 2373

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