



26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

## Water Safety

Finally, we are seeing better weather! Of course, we do not know how long such a spell of glorious sunshine and warmer weather will last, but it certainly encourages our children to leave their mobile phones and computer screens to get outside, socialize and exercise.

While there are many positives to the better weather, over the course of the last few days we have had reports of teenagers and older young people in the area congregating in and around local waterways such as Mapleton Bridge and other open water locations.

In form time this week, we have reminded students about safety around our rivers, canals, lakes and other open water sites. However, if you have not already done so, please do take some time to talk to your children about water safety so that they are best equipped and reminded at this time of year to keep themselves safe when out with friends in the evenings and weekends.



Derbyshire Fire and Rescue have identified that more young people place themselves at risk at open water sites in the periods of better weather and sadly, they attend an increased number of incidents where teenagers have been put at risk of serious injury or drowning. Their website provides excellent information around how to keep safe and

raises the key risk of cold-water shock which is often a central factor in accidents even when those involved have previously described themselves as strong and competent swimmers.

Please use this link to read some of the information and advice they have released over the course of the last 18 months: <https://www.derbys-fire.gov.uk/safety/water-safety/open-water>

Our advice as a school, matching that of our local water safety agency is:

Where possible you should swim at a swimming pool or areas where a lifeguard is present. When this is not possible, look out for special flags and notices on inland waterways which will tell you what to do. You can find a guide to Water Safety Flags and Water Safety Signs via the link above.

# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Green Road, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 1EP

Tel: 01335 343 685 Email: enquiries@qegs.email Twitter: @qegs\_ashbourne

Web: www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr S Garrity

Temporary Chair of Governors: Mr N Moore



Derbyshire Fire and Rescue echo the National RoSPA advice which is to:

- Go together.
- Never go swimming, fishing or boating alone.
- Children should always go with an adult, not by themselves. An adult can point out dangers or help if somebody gets into trouble.
- All those engaging in public water ways swimming and other activities should learn how to help ahead of engaging in these activities through recognised training bodies.
- If you see someone in difficulty, tell somebody: a lifeguard if there is one nearby or call 999 immediately.
- Never jump into the water yourself – often the rescuer becomes the casualty.
- If you are in a remote area, using an app such as What3words will give emergency services an exact location.
- Tell the casualty to remain calm and FLOAT on their back.
- Without putting yourself in danger, lay down at the water's edge and reach with an object, such as a stick, coat or jumper.
- If there is a lockable throwline box, call 999 and the fire service will give the code to access the throwline.

I hope you find the information here and the link above a useful and timely reminder to keep our young people safe. The video at the link is also something we would encourage you to share with your child from the Royal Life Saving Society UK: <https://youtu.be/CdFIDaEeOP4>. While you may find this somewhat hard hitting, these are designed to start the conversation that allow us all to keep safe around open water sites.

Let us hope we can hold on to the nice weather for as long as possible after all the months of rain we seem to have had and thank you for taking the time to read and talk about water safety at home.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Amps

**Deputy Head Teacher**