

Dear Parents and Carers,

Important Water Safety Message – Please Read

As the summer holidays approach and the weather becomes warmer, we want to share some vital information about water safety. Many young people enjoy spending time near rivers, lakes, and other open water, but these environments can be very dangerous—even for strong swimmers.

This message is supported by the London Fire Brigade and local partners, including the Metropolitan Police, London Ambulance Service, and Local Authorities, who often respond to water-related incidents during the summer.

Open Water areas may look inviting but hide serious hazards such as:

- **Cold Water Shock** – sudden immersion in cold water can cause panic and breathing difficulties
- **Hidden Dangers** – weeds, rubbish, currents, and sudden changes in water depth
- **Risk of Injury** – from jumping or diving into unknown water

World Drowning Prevention Day – 25th July & Find Your Float Campaign.

Led by the World Health Organisation, World Drowning Prevention Day takes place on Saturday 25th July. This global advocacy event highlights the profound impact of drowning and promotes life saving solutions.

Drowning remains a leading cause of accidental death worldwide claiming approximately 236,000 lives annually, we have also seen accidents among 13-17 year olds increasing by 67% in the UK.

The 2026 campaign centres on the message to ‘unite to turn the tide’ and focuses on the Global Strategy for Drowning Prevention. Their goal is to *“unite to reduce drowning by 35% by 2025”*.

Find Your Float, from the 2025 campaign still promotes valuable life saving skills with their studies being published this year.

“If you get into trouble in the water, knowing how to float can save your life. But we all float differently. By practising how to float in a safe and supported environment, you can learn what floating looks and feels like for you, helping you to be better prepared for an emergency situation.”

We encourage families to explore these campaigns with their children, helping them to understand the risks of open water and practise floating techniques in safe places such as swimming pools.

You can find more information about the Global Strategy for drowning prevention on the World Health Organisation website: www.who.int, the Find your Float campaign on the Respect The Water website: www.respectthewater.com and further water safety information on the London Fire Brigade website: www.london-fire.gov.uk.

Emergency Advice

If someone is in trouble in the water:

- Do not enter the water yourself
- Call 999 and ask for: FIRE SERVICE for inland water emergencies
- Call 999 and ask for: COASTGUARD for coastal incidents

- Use available lifesaving equipment such as throwlines, lifebelts, or branches
- Encourage the person to float on their back and stay calm until help arrives

Please talk to your young people about these important safety tips to help ensure a safe and enjoyable summer.