

# The Convent Chronicle



Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Inspiring Ambition,  
Achieving Excellence

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy Advent!! We begin our new calendar in the Christian church this Sunday with the first Sunday of Advent; the time of waiting for Jesus' birth. Each Christmas comes around very quickly. It is always a very special time at home, in the Church, but also in school. The Christmas tree has gone up and the Jesse tree too, Ms Carson will fill its branches with stories from the bible, outlining Jesus' ancestors; the wreath will be lit at staff briefing with its' first purple candle on Monday, and will burn at each assembly until Christmas, reminding us of the light of Christ that will enter the world. Many activities take place in the next few weeks: Christmas lunch, the Year 7 Dickensian Christmas fair, Christmas jumper day (a day for me of being excessively hot and itchy!) and of course the Christmas Carol and reflection service.



So many pupils and staff put time and effort into our Christmas reflection service, especially the Year 7 choir, and we ask you to come. It is such a beautiful event, and put early on in December so that you can all enjoy the joy of this period of time without it getting in the way of other celebrations. It is soul destroying for those involved if you don't turn up: Christians, Catholics, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and anyone else from whatever faith, colour or creed are welcome, including all family members: nannies and grandads are specifically encouraged! Although it is a Christian celebration, it is a celebration of and with our community. We include everyone in our

community in our school, and we'd like you to join us at this time, for a celebration of peace in the world and peace in our community. Please come; one hour of your time to support us, and of course your reward, apart from a peaceful and reflective hour in a hectic season, will be a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie (first of the season I hope?)



Today we also held the inaugural House Music event led by Mr White - a good time was had by all and Year 8 and 9 sang like angels. Well done all!



This Christmas the Franciscan Fraternity have asked us to read a chapter of St Luke's gospel each day, so that by Christmas morning, we will have read an entire account of Jesus' life and know why and who we are celebrating on Christmas morning. Staff are taking part and reading a chapter a day, sent by me with some of my favourite Christmas hymns. Would you like to join us? You can read each day on this link:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/read/eng/GNB/Luke/1/>

Enjoy the frosty weather, winter is really here. Keep warm and ensure your daughter has a coat please.



**Penny Johnson**  
Headteacher



## Get the Studybugs App the quick and easy way to report your daughter's absence



Please get the **free Studybugs app** for reporting your child's absence due to illness.

<https://studybugs.com>



Report sickness, receive guidance, help improve children's health  
See what illnesses are going around  
Secure system, all communications encrypted



Working in partnership with:



**Studybugs**

Mrs Burrow

## Christmas Hampers for Thurrock Food Bank



We are collecting items for the Thurrock Foodbank to support local people in need. The Foodbank has spent thousands of pounds on food to keep up with demand. We are always very grateful for your generosity. The items they are currently short of are:

**Deserts:** sponge pudding, custard, rice pudding, Angel Delight, jelly.

**Tinned meat:** such as: sausages and beans, spaghetti with sausages, ravioli with sausages

Rice, Tinned potato, packet mash

**Christmas treats:** Selection boxes, non-alcoholic Christmas cakes and Christmas puddings, biscuits and other Christmas treats. For further items to choose from please see [www.thurrock.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.thurrock.foodbank.org.uk).

We would be very grateful if you could please donate any of the above items and ask your daughter to bring them into school please by 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 when they will be collected by the Foodbank. Thanking you in anticipation for your generosity. God bless you,



Miss Carson

## ParentPay Accounts



**ParentPay** It is important that our Parents have a ParentPay Account, and that this account is activated. This enables parents to purchase equipment and not to miss out on school trips. If you require another copy of your ParentPay Activation Letter then please email Mrs Wood on:  
[woodj@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk](mailto:woodj@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk).

Finance Office

## Severe Weather Arrangements



We are not anticipating weather, severe enough to close schools, but as it is that time of year we feel it best to keep you informed of the procedure.

In the **very unlikely** event that the school is closed due to snow, Mrs Johnson will make the decision as soon as possible and inform BBC Essex and Essex FM of any school closure. Should we experience severe weather, you are advised to listen to these stations, which list schools that are closed. If we are **not** mentioned – **we are open!**

We will also post a message on the front page of our website, so keep an eye on that too.

**BBC Essex**

**103.5 FM or 95.3 FM**

**Essex FM**

**102.6 FM or 96.3 FM**

***If Grays Convent are NOT mentioned on these radio stations, and there is NOT a message on the front page of the website GRAYS CONVENT SCHOOL IS OPEN!***



## Roula's success at the IDTA South East Theatre Jazz Performance Awards

This week we heard from the very proud mother of Roula Kanarachos-Freese (Year 8), about Roula's participation in the IDTA South East Theatre Jazz Performance Awards last weekend.



She told us: "On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November, Roula competed in the IDTA South East Theatre Jazz Performance Awards. To be able to go to these awards is a huge achievement in itself. The competition was tough, with over 60 girls performing in the modern jazz category. Roula did amazingly well and won the Endeavour Award. We are all extremely proud of her and her achievement."

We too are extremely proud of Roula – well done, and just look at that smile!



Mrs Albrow

We love hearing about our students and their extra-curricular activities. If you would like to tell us about things you take part in outside of school, please send us your pictures and a few words of explanation, and we'll put it in our weekly Convent Chronicle. Send your editorial to: [admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk](mailto:admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk)

Mrs Albrow

### Assistant Headteacher's Bronze Award

Many congratulations to the following students who have now reached in excess of 200 achievement points:



*Megan Ashdown 7.9*

*Malvina Ozog 7.9*

*Sumaiya Chowdhury 8E*

*Mishri Patel 10.23*

*Sophie Pasztor 10.27*



The students were presented with their award in the Head of Year assembly and received their bronze certificate and badge. Well done!

Mrs Bishop

### Lunch Money

If your daughter has loaned lunch money from the Finance Office could you please ensure it is paid back the following day.

We have a large amount of outstanding money owing and emails have been sent home. If you have received an email could you please ensure the money is returned as soon as possible.

This service is only available for emergencies and if the money is not returned on time it could lead to us being unable to loan money to another student.

Finance Office

## Year 8 & 9 Lee Valley Finals Indoor Athletics Cup

After qualifying from the semi-finals of the Lee Valley Indoor Athletics competition last week the Year 8 & 9 A team was back at Lee Valley on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November to compete in the B finals. This competition consisted of the top 12 teams of the 44 that were entered in the first rounds, from across the whole of Essex and North London. Athletes compete in a variety of events, each scoring points for their team based on their position in the competition, which are collated to decide the top team at the end of the day. As always, the standard of competition was very high but our girls put their experience to good use and produced some excellent improvements from the previous rounds.

On the track Maya Baluka started the competition in the 60m hurdles and got our team off to a flying start with a time of 11.14s, which was very close to her personal best. Eve Boateng was next up with the 60m sprint, running an impressive 8.87s, setting a new personal best and gaining 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall and securing the team a further 3 points for their team total.

In the 800m, Ava Boucard showed excellent pacing and tactical awareness as she navigated her way around the track. She was competing against the top middle-distance runners in the county and managed to shave over 4 seconds off her previous time, gaining a new personal best of 2m48.0s. Millie Mansfield was next up on the track for the 200m race, blasting the competition away with a personal best time of 27.8s and beating the Grays Convent Year 8 200m record that she set two weeks ago!

Over at shot put Chidera Idika was back, dominating the competition and produced another new personal best of 10.05m, this is only 27cm off the Grays Convent School record for Year 9 so hopefully she can set a new record for this when the summer season starts in the spring. At High jump Winna Koho got back into the flow and produced a final jump that equalled her personal best of 1.35m. I am sure she has lots more to offer as well as she moves into the outdoor season after Easter. Millie Mansfield worked hard in the long jump competition, improving on her jump from last week, with a final jump of 4.12m, which although didn't beat her personal best, helped to secure vital points for the team. The final event of the evening was the 4 x 200m relays. It was an extremely thrilling race, the girls worked together to implement their tactics and knowledge, which paid off, improving upon their previous relay time and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in their competition.

At the end of the competition Grays Convent scored 39 points as a team, leaving them in 2<sup>nd</sup> place behind St Martins, who were crowned champions. This was one of the best performances that our Year 8 & 9 teams have achieved over the years at this competition and definitely makes me look forward to seeing them in action again when the outdoor season begins.

Thank you to Miss Sasse who was the team manager for the evening and to Ms Boller for supporting the team and helping with the officiating, as well as driving everyone home after an exhausting but exciting evening of Athletics.



***The Year 8 & 9 Athletics team 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Year 8 & 9 Lee Valley indoor B finals***

**Mrs Bailey**



## District Cross Country – Champions 2023

Grays Convent High School Cross Country team competed in the District Cross Country competition at Blackshots on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November and produced some good performances.

Myleene Pham, in Year 7 got off to a fantastic start in her 1,950m race and looked strong throughout. She kept up with the front of the pack from the whistle and maintained a comfortable running style. It was a battle to the finish line, where she fought hard to keep her position and finally finished in 4<sup>th</sup> position. Close behind her were Eberechuku Nwachokor in 16<sup>th</sup>, Kaylah Onukwube in 18<sup>th</sup>, Ariyelle Bourne in 19<sup>th</sup> and Adeola Thompson in 20<sup>th</sup>. Along with Joanne, Ula, Nadia, Malvina and Dollie who made up the rest of the team, the Grays Convent Year 7 team finished with a team total of 100 points, meaning they were crowned this year's Thurrock School Champions, with Gable Hall finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> place on 154 points and Harris Ockendon in 3<sup>rd</sup> place with 178 points.

In the year 8 and 9 competition Mollie Garner led the way for the Grays Convent team, working hard throughout the race to finish in 12<sup>th</sup> place. Our next runner in was Millie Mansfield who finished in 14<sup>th</sup>, closely followed by Marissa Mudzuri in 18<sup>th</sup> position. Unfortunately, the team did not secure a place in the top three for their age category this year, finishing in 5<sup>th</sup> position.

The inter girls' competition was dominated by the Grays Convent team from start to finish. Sophie Pasztor ran an outstanding race, leading from the start but closely followed by Isobel Pitney. Tactical pacing from Isobel saw her time a perfect kick to overtake Sophie on the final stretch and win the competition. The next runner home was Erin Pitney in 3<sup>rd</sup> position and Maeve Pitney in 7<sup>th</sup>. All four of these girls made the selection for the Thurrock team who will be competing in the Essex Schools Cross Country championships in January. There was also excellent running from the rest of the team who all completed the race in the top 32 positions. This outstanding performance saw the Inter girls crowned District Champions at the end of the competition, finishing ahead of William Edwards who finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and St Cleres who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.

Overall in the combined girl's competition Grays Convent finished 1<sup>st</sup> in the District, with William Edwards in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and St Cleres who were 3<sup>rd</sup> Place.

Well done to all the girls who competed today, an outstanding achievement once again.

An extra special mention to all our lovely Year 10 marshals who came out in the frost to support Grays Convent running this competition this year, you all did an amazing job and we were complimented by many staff on how professional you were.



Sophie Pasztor  
collecting the Inter  
Schools trophy

Mrs Bailey

# Spelling Bee

Prepare for "*Excellent spelling!*" at **Spelling Tests, ASSESSMENTS and Spelling Bee!**

**3 Spelling Bee Competitions:**

**Year 7- Autumn Term**

**For Year 8 - Spring Term**

**For Year 9 – Summer Term**

**Get ready! – week 11**



## For Year 7:

**aisle:** a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane)

**isle:** an island

**aloud:** out loud

**allowed:** permitted

**affect:** usually a verb (e.g. The weather may affect our plans)

**effect:** usually a noun (e.g. It may have an effect on our plans).

If a verb, it means 'bring about' (e.g. He will effect changes in the running of the business)

**altar:** a table-like piece of furniture in a church

**alter:** to change

**ascent:** the act of ascending (going up)

**assent:** to agree/agreement (verb and noun)

FOR YEAR 7	FOR YEAR 8	FOR YEAR 9
aisle	bitter	resolute
isle	contemptuous	vanquish
aloud	mournful	pernicious
allowed	stutter	desolate
affect	monstrous	redress
effect	demented	avaricious
altar	shrill	perseverance
alter	fatuous	transposed
ascent	futility	agitation
assent	negate	oblivious

## For Year 8: Learn the words- they are all from War Poetry:

**bitter** - causing a sharp and acrid taste experience

**contemptuous** - expressing extreme scorn

**mournful** - expressing sorrow

**stutter** - speak haltingly

**monstrous** - distorted and unnatural in shape or size

**demented** - affected with madness or insanity

**shrill** - having or emitting a high-pitched and sharp tone/s

**fatuous** - devoid of intelligence

**futility** - uselessness as a consequence of having no practical result

**negate** - make ineffective by counterbalancing the effect of



## For Year 9 – in detail. Learn these words - from Macbeth:

**resolute:** determined, unwavering; adjective

**vanquish:** defeat thoroughly; verb

**pernicious:** having a harmful effect; adjective

**desolate:** deserted of people and in a state of bleak and dismal emptiness; adjective

**redress:** set right; verb

**avaricious:** having or showing an extreme greed for wealth;

**perseverance:** steadfastness in doing something despite difficulty;

**transposed:** cause two or more things to change place with each other;

**agitation:** a state of anxiety or nervous excitement; noun

**oblivious:** not aware of what is happening around one; adjective



*Learn them to improve your spelling!!!*

**Miss Petrova**



## Subject News...



### Computing

#### Binary and Denary numbers

How many bits are in a byte?

8

16

2

4

Answer: 8

Mr Burr

### Maths



#### Maths Question of the Week

1. Aiden wants to buy a chocolate bar for every student in year 7.  
There are 110 students in year 7.  
A pack of 6 chocolate bars costs £1.20  
Work out how much Aiden will have to pay for the chocolate bars.
2. A shop sells washing powder in 650g packs.  
Jacob has no washing powder.  
He estimates that he does 2 washes a week, using 40g each wash.  
Jacob wants to buy enough washing powder for 13 weeks.  
How many packs of washing powder does Jacob need to buy?

Submit your answers to Mr Amenze in Room21 by Monday at break time and you will receive 3 Achievement points

Mr Amenze

## YOUR NEWSLETTER...



## AND YOUR SUBJECT NEWS!

Send your subject news to [admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk](mailto:admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk)

# Advent

**Advent** begins this Sunday and is the beginning of the new Church Year!

We are encouraged to make quiet time to pray; to read our Bibles to know Jesus personally for ourselves and to grow more like Jesus in our thoughts, attitudes and responses to others.

## Advent means Coming.

It is the season of waiting in joyful **hope** for the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ; not just remembering his birth at Christmas, but preparing our hearts for his second coming; when he will come again in glory. **It is a season of repentance; of turning back to God in the joyful hope of our salvation.**



Jesus is knocking on the door of our hearts and we are the innkeepers who can open the door and let him in.

In our busy lives, let us make space and time for Jesus.



We have our **Advent Wreath** in school and this is what it symbolises:  
Circle – God is without end.

- **Evergreen foliage** – His love is everlasting
- **Purple - for Repentance.** It's the Liturgical colour for Advent.
- **Holly – sharp prickles** - Jesus nailed to the cross,
- **Red berries** - The blood of Jesus, for the forgiveness of sins
- Candles – the Light of Christ. We light more candles each week because the Light of Christ grows nearer and nearer to Christmas. There are 3 purple candles, one pink and one white.
- **Pink** is for Rejoicing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent
- **White** is for Christmas Day – for Jesus, Light of the World



The girls are encouraged to have a cosy prayer corner at home and to spend a few minutes quietly in God's presence each day. They may choose to read the Jesse Tree bible stories, some of which we will be following in school from Genesis, and the stories of Jesus' birth in St Luke's Gospel.

Please encourage your daughters in Years 7, 8, 9 to take part in the Jesse Tree Advent Challenge.

## Jesse Tree: Advent Challenge for KS3 Years 7-9 with rewards.

We have a Jesse Tree on display in the foyer and students in K.S. 3 are encouraged to make their own Jesse Tree at home and follow the daily bible readings in the Family Devotions by scrolling down on the link <https://www.faithward.org/jesse-tree/printable-jesse-tree-ornaments/> all the family can be involved in making the baubles/ornaments.

Full details are on their Form Google Classrooms. They are asked to take a photo and send it to their Form Google Classroom by 6<sup>th</sup> January.





## ADVENT CHALLENGE K.S 3 with rewards.

See <https://www.faithward.org/jesse-tree/printable-jesse-tree-ornaments/>

Make your own Jesse Tree adding a bauble each day 'til Christmas Day.

- Use a branch or twigs in a pot, or draw a Jesse Tree and put it on the wall, or use an ordinary Christmas Tree.
- Read one Jesse Tree Bible story each day by scrolling down to **Family Devotions** or using the list on the slides below to look up the references in your Bible or on Google. Make a symbol for each one and hang it as a bauble on your Jesse Tree and add lights if you wish.
- The baubles could be made by drawing a symbol on a gift tag and hanging it on the Jesse tree or sticking it on the drawn tree on the wall. The pictures could be made very simply by using free printable ones on link and printing them out in colour, or black & white and colouring them in, or drawing your own. They could be in silhouette, or as stained glass or collage or mosaic, or they could be made in 3D. **The whole family can be involved.**
- Take a photo and send it to your Google Form Classroom by 6<sup>th</sup> January to gain achievement points. The best 3 will receive extra achievement points.

**Awards:** 5 Achievement points for all who participate.

Plus, in each Class: 3<sup>rd</sup> Place 10 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> place 15 points, 1<sup>st</sup> place 20 points

Plus in each Year Gp. There will be a prize for the overall winner.

Resources to help you:

See list below on next 2 slides for Bible Stories and Symbols 1<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> Dec.

See printable ornaments and the daily Family Devotions (Bible readings) on

<https://www.faithward.org/jesse-tree/printable-jesse-tree-ornaments/>



**Below are a few websites you might like to use to support your daily prayer through this holy season.**

For daily readings from St Luke's Gospel:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/read/eng/GNB/Luke/1/>

<https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources/advent-family-prayer>

<https://www.sacredspace.ie/daily-prayer>

<https://www.onlineprayer.net/advent-retreat/>

You are warmly invited to our GCHS Carol Service on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm



We wish you a very blessed, holy season of Advent.

**Miss Carson**

## Safeguarding our Children at Grays Convent

At Grays Convent our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Collis, and our Safeguarding Officers are Mrs Wells and Mrs Bishop. Students can contact any of our Safeguarding Team during the school day.

### Worried about a child?

You can phone or write to The MASH about your concerns. Phone immediately if you believe it is urgent.

- Thurrock MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding hub), Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL, Tel: **01375 652802**.
- Emergency Duty Team (for out of hours) **01375 372468**.
- Police Child Abuse Investigation Team **01277 266822** or call **999** if you are concerned a child needs immediate protection.
- Childline **0800 11 11** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- NSPCC **0808 800 5000** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk); [www.facebook.com/nspcc](https://www.facebook.com/nspcc)

Mrs Collis

## Pope Francis - Tweet of the Week



**Pope Francis** @Pontifex · 1h

Let us continue to pray for the serious situation in Israel and Palestine. It is the ordinary people who suffer. Those who wage war do not suffer. Let us ask for peace. And may we not forget the dear Ukrainian people, who are suffering so much and are still at war.

122

318

1.6K

80K



## Key Dates and Events

Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Rise Above Day (students finish at 2:30pm)	Years 7-11
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day Parents Carol Service 6-7:30pm	Whole School
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	PE CNAT Trip to Hadleigh	Year 10
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Dinner – Canteen	Whole School
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Cracker Event	Years 7-11
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December	School Carol Service	Years 7-11
<b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Early closing for Christmas break Students dismissed at 11:45am</b>	<b>Whole School</b>
<b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024</b>	 <b>Christmas Break</b> 	<b>Whole School</b>
<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>	<b>Spring Term commences Students to arrive for 8:25am start</b>	<b>Whole School</b>



## Macbeth Performance for Year 9

Grays Convent have arranged for a performance of Macbeth for all Year 9 on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 costing £5.50. If you wish your daughter to watch the performance, this must be paid via ParentPay by latest Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023.



Mrs Nyland

## Internet Safety Tip - Instagram



Privacy and Safety Checklist

Do you know who your followers are?

If you have a public account, anyone can follow you and see your posts. If you have a private account, you have to approve every request to follow you and people will only be able to see your photos or videos if you approve them as a follower. Every so often, it's helpful to take a look at your followers and do a spring cleaning of sorts. If you'd like to remove someone that is following you, you can block them



Mr Burr



# What Schools Need to Know about THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT

The Online Safety Act was passed into UK law in October 2023, with the aim of establishing major new layers of protection for children when they're online. The government has pledged "a zero-tolerance approach to protecting children from online harm" – and the act certainly includes more powerful legislation which should help to safeguard young people in the digital world. Our guide summarises the key points for schools ...

## WHAT THE ACT WILL DO

### HARMFUL CONTENT

Social media sites must rapidly remove illegal and/or harmful content such as bullying or harassing comments; pornography; and content that supports extremist activity or encourages or depicts violence, suicide, self harm or eating disorders. If they fail to do so, they can be fined up to 10% of their global revenue while their executives may even face jail time.

### ANIMAL CRUELTY

Content featuring cruelty to animals is now prohibited, even if it originates from abroad (where the law may be different). Again, it is the platform's responsibility to remove this.

### MORE TRANSPARENCY

Sites must be transparent about the hazards that any children using them could encounter – by publishing risk assessments for their platforms, for instance.

### HOSTING MISLEADING ADVERTS

Scams and fraudulent adverts must be blocked or removed, or the hosting companies are liable to be fined.

### NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING

It's now easier to convict online abusers or people who share intimate images without consent, while legislation on the criminality of deepfakes has been clarified. The new laws also relate to any individuals who even threaten to share such images. This should help to protect women and girls in particular online.

### REPORTING AND FILTERING

Sites should have easy reporting mechanisms for children (or their parents and carers) to flag up problems quickly. They must also provide options to filter out unwanted content.

### AGE-RESTRICTED MATERIAL

Sites must prevent children from accessing age-inappropriate material. This includes enforcing age limits and implementing robust age verification.

## What this means for you

The act has some specific implications for schools: it's essential that leaders understand the new legislation's scope and limitations. The act is certainly a positive step, but as artificial intelligence and other advances in tech continue to produce new challenges, schools will still need to remain extremely vigilant.

### KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

Look out for the Code of Conduct that Ofcom is creating in response to the Online Safety Act. Note that the new legislation doesn't mean an instant change: many of its elements will only come into force at the end of 2023. An Ofcom consultation on 'protecting people from illegal harms online' will be running until February 2024.

### REMEMBER THE ESSENTIALS

Remain mindful of your organisation's own online activities: the legal duty for schools to maintain appropriate software monitoring and filtering, for example, will not change.

### WATCH FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There are some issues on which the legislation remains less clear for now: whether it's possible for Ofcom to scan encrypted private messages (such as on WhatsApp) has yet to be resolved, for instance – making this an area where, for the moment, young people have less legal protection.

### UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN

Staff should learn how to raise concerns with tech companies whose platforms contain anything upsetting or unpleasant. Students also need to be made aware of the newly strengthened laws relating to cyber-bullying, sexting or posting inappropriate content. Young people do make mistakes online – so the clearer their understanding of the possible consequences, the better.

### ENGAGE WITH PARENTS

Schools should also explain to parents and carers the new possibilities that the Online Safety Act affords them in terms of protecting their children. Many parents may have previously felt that there was little they could do about changing online platforms' content; they now have a far greater level of support when complaining about a company or the behaviour of an individual.

## Meet Our Expert

Luke Ramsden is Senior Deputy Headmaster and Director of Safeguarding for the St Bernard's family of schools. He is a regular speaker at conferences and writes in the TES (among other journals) on school leadership, pastoral care and safeguarding. In 2022, he was named Pastoral Leader of the Year at the National Awards for Pastoral Care in Education.



**NOS** National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

[@natonlinesafety](https://twitter.com/natonlinesafety)

[/NationalOnlineSafety](https://facebook.com/NationalOnlineSafety)

[@nationalonlinesafety](https://instagram.com/nationalonlinesafety)

[@national\\_online\\_safety](https://tiktok.com/@national_online_safety)

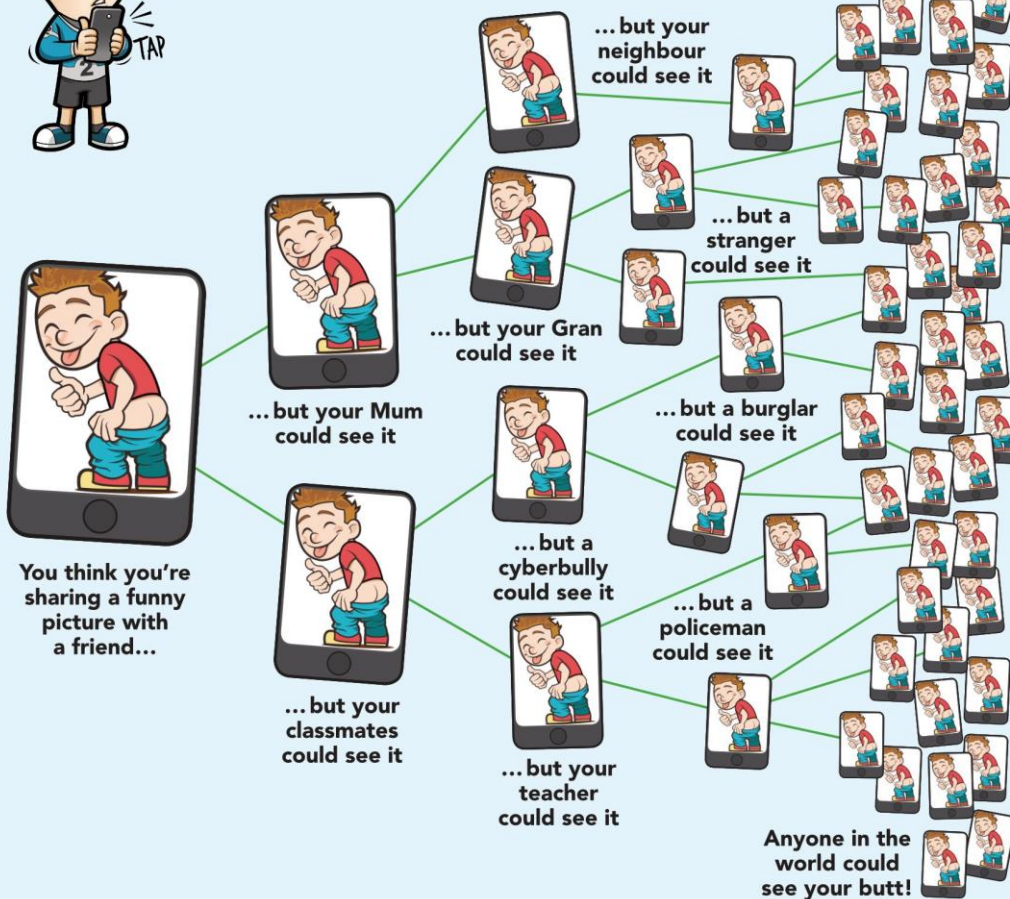
Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 29.12.2023



### Parent Guides to Online Safety



**THINK before you send!**



scan the QR code with your phone's camera for Parent Guides on how to help keep your children safe online



### If you share it, you are involved

**If you have, or forward an indecent image of someone under 18, it is a criminal offence. It can affect your future.**

**Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.**

**Parents** please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

**Skips Educational** Email: [info@skipsed.com](mailto:info@skipsed.com) Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with







# An Awareness Raising Session for Parents and Carers to Increase Knowledge of Gangs and Child Criminal Exploitation

Thursday 7th December 2023

18.00 till 19.00

Via MS Teams

This session will identify the harms associated with gangs and county lines and will look on practical advice on how to support a young person who you may be concerned about in relation to Exploitation

To book your place visit [www.thurrocklscp.org.uk](http://www.thurrocklscp.org.uk)

**The Den! An online engagement opportunity for 11-16 year olds with SEND**

## CALLING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11-16 WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Den is an informal virtual hangout for young people aged 11-16 providing an opportunity for young people to share their experiences and work together to improve services for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, living or attending education in Thurrock.

Meeting via MS Teams from 5.30pm on the following date:

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

You can join 'The Den' and participate in regular online meetings and share thoughts and feelings on our online pinboard. Parents and/or guardians must complete this online registration form: <https://forms.office.com/e/xECdu8uE5A>

**Thurrock Children's Services**





## Christmas Closure

Make sure to place your order by **Monday 4th December** to ensure you receive it before our Christmas closure.

Our shop will be closed from **Sunday 17th December to Monday 1st January**. If you have selected Click & Collect from our shop, please ensure your parcel is collected before then.

While our physical store will be closed, you will still be able to place an order through our website. All online orders will be processed on **Tuesday 2nd January when the shop will re-open (10am-2pm)**.

[Shop Now!](#)



## Late Night Shopping Evening & Walton Hall Farm Christmas Market!

**On Friday 1st December from 6pm-8pm**

**(The shop will be open as usual during the day between 10am-4pm)**

### Late Night Shopping Evening Special Offer

**5% OFF ALL OFFICIAL SCHOOL WEAR COLLECTIONS**

**Applicable on orders over £50 (in-store & online) between 6pm-8pm on Friday 1st December only.**

**Enter Code: Late Night Shopping**



## Gift Card

A Gift Card makes a great gift as the recipient can select what they want to purchase from our website and we can ship it directly to them.

We don't just do school uniforms - we also offer a huge range of every day clothing, jackets, hats, personalised merchandise and much, much more!

You can purchase our Gift Cards in a range of different values, and these will be sent to you in an email (digital format) so you can share it by email and SMS.

**\*\* If you require a physical card, we can issue one upon request.**

## Mid-Season Sale!

**3 for £30 on selected primary school Sweatshirts & Cardigans\***

**3 for £18 on selected primary school Polo Shirts\***

**\*Offer valid on selected styles & sizes only, until stocks last. Discounts automatically applied at checkout.**

# MAKE YOUR MARK TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Make  
Your Mark



Youth Parliament  
MAKING OUR MARK

## 2024

### Involving Thurrock schools, colleges and youth groups

Running since 2011, Make Your Mark has reached millions of young people. It gives young people aged 11-18 the opportunity to vote on topics they feel are the most important issues facing young people locally and across the UK.

Make Your Mark voting period will run from Monday 29 January – Friday 1 March 2024. During this time we want Thurrock schools, colleges and youth groups to encourage as many young people to vote. Every vote matters!

Get involved! Here's what you need to do.

**Now - 22 Dec 2023**



#### REGISTER

For Thurrock schools, colleges or youth groups to take part in the 2024 Make your Mark consultation you need to register with Thurrock Youth Cabinet.

Register your school, college or youth group now by dropping us an email at

[youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk)

Registration closes on Fri 22 Dec.

**From 15 Jan 2024**



#### PRE-VOTING

From 15 Jan 2024 we will send you the resources you need to support the vote in your school, college or youth group. This will include printable tally sheets and explainer videos.

**29 Jan - 1 Mar 2024**



#### VOTING PERIOD

Voting is live across the UK! During this time use the tally sheet to capture students / young peoples vote.

**By 1 March 2024**



#### SUBMIT RESULTS

The deadline to return completed tally sheets is Friday 1 March by 5pm.

Please scan in and send all completed tally sheets to

[youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk)

**22 March 2024**



#### MAKE YOUR MARK RESULTS ANNOUNCED

We'll let you know the outcome so you can announce the results in your school, college or youth group.





**Become an EPEC Group Leader**  
Join us for a 10 week training programme  
Starting 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 9.30am-2.30pm  
(Term time only)

Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) is a successful, popular, unique parenting approach. EPEC is for local parents, led by local parents and those with parenting experience. As an EPEC parent group leader you will:

- \* Receive amazing free training and support from local EPEC team.
- \* Learn to lead practical, caring groups for local parents and those with parenting experience.
- \* Share tried and tested methods that give children the best start in life.
- \* Join a group of like-minded parents to make a difference to your local community.
- \* Develop your skills and confidence.
- \* Gain experience that will help you to fulfil your ambitions.
- \* Please contact Angie Holland at Chadwell Family Hub on 01375 840433 for further information



Become an EPEC Parent Group Leader

**Empowering Parents  
Empowering Communities**

The Centre for  
Parent and Child  
Support

ARE YOU A PARENT LIVING IN THURROCK?

ARE YOU THINKING OF GOING BACK TO WORK?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUILD YOUR SKILLS AND  
KNOWLEDGE?

HAVE YOU GOT TIME TO SPARE TO BECOME A  
VOLUNTEER?

We would like to invite you to our coffee morning on  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 10-12pm at

Chadwell Family Hub, Claudian Way, RM16 4QE

To share information on Being A Parent Group (BAP)  
running at Family Hubs across Thurrock and how to  
become a parent group leader (PGL) and support the  
delivery of these groups in your community.

Can you please contact Chadwell Family Hub on  
01375 840433 to book a place



Thurrock Adult  
Community College

Join us for FREE

**Fun filled sessions**

At Stifford Family Hub

A fun after school activity for children and their parents/carers.  
Use and develop your number skills to create a fun exciting gift  
for a loved one this Christmas.

\*Suitable for 2 - 11 year olds\*

Enrol now - Call 01375 372476 | visit [www.tacc.ac.uk](http://www.tacc.ac.uk)

**READY STEADY  
Christmas!**



Date: 14/12/23

Time: 3:30pm - 5:00pm

Code: MULTI9ENY2

If you are not a member of the Family Hubs,  
please contact them directly before  
enrolling on these workshops to obtain the  
PIN code to enrol.

Thurrock Adult Community College

Inspiring futures through lifelong learning | Book online [www.tacc.ac.uk](http://www.tacc.ac.uk)

**GRANGEWATERS  
OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE  
FESTIVE FUN DAY**

Saturday 2 December 2023 10am to 3pm

Kick off the festive season  
with outdoor fun for all ages.

Activities include:  
Archery, Campfire, Sailing, Crafts,  
High Ropes and lots more!



Early bird offer,  
book by Friday 24 November

Under 6 ..... free  
Age 6 to 17 years ..... £11  
Age 18+ ..... £15  
Family ticket ..... £45  
(2 adults and 2 under 18s)

From Saturday 25 November  
prices will be

Under 6 ..... free  
Age 6 to 17 years ..... £14  
Age 18+ ..... £18  
Family ticket ..... £55  
(2 adults and 2 under 18s)

Cost of entry includes unlimited  
access to all available activities.

Web: [thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters](http://thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters)  
Email: [grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk)  
@Grangewaters

To book your tickets call:  
**01708 855 228**

INSPIRE  
YOUTH HUB

thurrock.gov.uk



## Thameside Family Hub

Manor Road, Grays, RM17 6EF  
Email: [thamesidecc@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:thamesidecc@thurrock.gov.uk) Phone: 01375 387 894



[thurrock.gov.uk](http://thurrock.gov.uk)

## What's on in December 2023

## Mondays

Start	End	Activity	Age groups	How to join in
8.30am	12.00pm	Housing Advice for Council Tenants		<b>Book in advance</b> 01375 413820
9.00am	11.00am	Local Area Co-Ordinator – Helen Catterick		<b>Book in advance</b> 07710950318
9.30am	10.30am	Baby Rhyme Time <b>4<sup>th</sup> December</b>	0 to 12 Months	All welcome
9.30am	10.30am	Bring a Story to Life <b>4<sup>th</sup> - Stick Man</b> <b>11<sup>th</sup> - The Gingerbread Man</b> <b>18<sup>th</sup> - Dear Santa</b>	24 to 60 Months	All welcome
11.00am	12.00pm	Baby Massage	0 to 12 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
11.00am	12.00pm	Bookstart Toddler	12 to 24 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
1.30pm	2.30pm	Lets Talk to Your Baby	0 to 12 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
2.00pm	3.00pm	Stay and Play <b>4<sup>th</sup> December</b>	24 to 60 Months	All Welcome

## Tuesdays

9.30am	10.30am	Stay and Play <b>5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December</b>	12 to 24 Months	All Welcome
10.00am	1.00pm	Reducing Parental Conflict Surgery John Singh		<b>Book in advance</b> 07566774325
11.00am	12.00pm	Fun with Mark Making – <b>5<sup>th</sup> December</b> Fun with Painting – <b>12<sup>th</sup> December</b>	12 to 60 Months	All Welcome
1.00pm	4.30pm	Domestic abuse and violence support Call 07494167408		<b>Book in advance</b>
2.00pm	3.00pm	Sensory Play <b>5<sup>th</sup> – 12 to 60 months</b> <b>12<sup>th</sup> – 0 to 12 months</b>		All Welcome

## Wednesdays

9.00am	4.00pm	Midwife	Ante Natal	<b>Book in advance</b>
10.30am	11.30am	SEND - Just For You <b>6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December</b>	0 to 60 Months	All welcome
11.00am	12.00pm	Stay and Play <b>6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December</b>	0 to 12 Months	All welcome
1.30pm	2.30pm	Let's Talk to your Toddler	12 to 24 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
4.00pm	5.30pm	Young Carers		Referral only

## Thursdays

9.00am	4.00pm	Midwife	Ante Natal	<b>Book in advance</b>
9.30am	10.30am	NICU Parent & Carer Meet Up <b>28<sup>th</sup> December</b>		<b>Book in advance</b>
9.30am	11.00am	Chatterbox	24 to 60 Months	Referral only
9.30am	11.00am	Parental Outreach advice session <b>28<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Parents/Carers	<b>Book in advance</b> 01375 387894
1.30pm	2.45pm	Baby Weighing Clinic- Drop In	0 to 60 Months	All Welcome
1.30pm	2.30pm	Play and Learn	24 to 60 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
2.45pm	3.45pm	Baby Massage Acorns Community Centre, Headon Hall, Crawford Avenue, Stifford Clays, RM16 2AS	0 to 12 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>

## Fridays

9.00am	1.00pm	Speech and Language Drop-In <b>1<sup>st</sup> December</b>		Referral Only
9.00am	1.00pm	Early Interaction Advice Sessions	24 to 60 Months	Referral Only
9.30am	11.00am	Festive Fun Day <b>22<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	0 to 11 years	Book in advance
10.00am	12.30pm	Job Club – Supported Families Employment Adviser		<b>Book in advance</b> 07776245301
1.30pm	2.30pm	Parent/Carer Panel <b>8<sup>th</sup> December</b>		Referral only
1.30pm	3.00pm	Festive Fun Day <b>22<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	0 to 11 years	<b>Book in advance</b>

## Stifford Family Hub

(In the grounds of) Belmont Castle Academy, Parker Road, Grays RM17 5YN  
Email: [stiffordcc@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:stiffordcc@thurrock.gov.uk) Phone: 01375 652653



[thurrock.gov.uk](http://thurrock.gov.uk)

## What's on in December 2023

## Mondays

Start	End	Activity	Age groups	How to join in
8.30am	12.00pm	Housing Advice for council Tenants		<b>Book in advance</b> 01375 413 820
9.30am	10.30am	Stay and Play <b>4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December</b>	12 to 24 Months	All welcome

## Tuesdays

9.30am	11.30am	Triple P Baby Parenting Programme	Ante-natal or parents with a child aged 0-12 months	
11.00am	12.00pm	WellComm – Lets talk together	24 to 48 Months	Referral only
1.00pm	4.30pm	Domestic abuse and violence support Call 07494167408		<b>Book in advance</b>
1.30pm	2.30pm	Stay and Play <b>5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December</b>	0 to 12 Months	All welcome

## Wednesdays

9.00am	12.00am	Local Area Co-Ordinator Donna Burnett <b>29<sup>th</sup></b>		<b>Book in advance</b> 07584 345 551
10.00am	4.30pm	Substance misuse support – Drop in	18 + Years	
10.00am	12.00pm	EPEC - Living With a Teenager Parenting Group	Parents/Carers	<b>Book in advance</b> 01375 652 653
10.00am	12.30pm	Job club – Supported Families Employment Advisor	Parents/Carers	<b>Book in advance</b> 07776 245 301
1.30pm	2.30pm	Stay and Play <b>6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	24 to 60 Months	All welcome

## Thursdays

10.00am	11.00am	Childminder Support Group -		Referral only
3.30pm	5.00pm	Ready Steady Christmas Multiply – Maths Skills Course code - <b>MULTI9ENY2</b> <b>14<sup>th</sup> December</b>	2 to 11 Years	<b>Book in advance</b> 01375 372476 and press option 1

## Fridays

10.00am	11.30am	Baby Weighing Clinic	0 to 60 Months	All Welcome
11.00am	12.00pm	Let's Talk to your Toddler	12 to 24 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>
1.30pm	2.30pm	Lets Talk to Your Toddler	12 to 24 Months	<b>Book in advance</b>

## Saturdays

10.00am	1.30pm	Dads and Partners Antenatal Group	<a href="mailto:info@parents1st.org.uk">info@parents1st.org.uk</a>	<b>Book in advance</b> 01268 525 758 <a href="mailto:info@parents1st.org.uk">info@parents1st.org.uk</a>
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## Brighter Futures – Family Hub Offer

Please use this link to see the Family Hub's offer and activity details –

[www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hub-activities](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hub-activities)

Please see the Thurrock website for details of each Family Hub and what is on offer each month and Face Book for information:

[www.facebook.com/groups/thurrockchildrenscentres](https://www.facebook.com/groups/thurrockchildrenscentres)

Are your registered with the Family Hub? If not, you can do this online.

Visit: [www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hubs](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hubs)