

WELCOME

A message from the Head of School

Mrs G McLaughlin

It has been an exceptionally noteworthy term at our Academy, marked by several outstanding achievements. Among the highlights is our High School Musical Production, acclaimed as the best show in our history! Witnessing our students take the lead across the Academy, organising events such as Mental Health Day, Black History Month and providing tutoring in Maths and English for younger students, including those in the GLC, has been a source of immense joy.

As we embark on the Spring Term, our primary focus will be on nurturing academic excellence among our students. We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated team of staff collaborating to ensure a wonderful educational experience for our students.

However, a persistent concern remains regarding the impact of social media on our young people. I kindly request parents and carers to actively monitor their child's phone usage. It has come to our attention that students are increasingly experiencing anxiety due to comments on social media, leading to feelings of sadness as they compare themselves to others and feel judged. While social media can have positive effects, fostering connection and a sense of belonging, we are apprehensive that, for some of our young people, it is veering into a realm of 'toxicity.'

A massive thank you to parents, carers, staff, students and our community for continuing to work together to make The Gateway Academy an exceptional place to be part of. Please be aware of the following events coming up this term:

JANUARY 2024

Mon 08-Jan **** TRAINING DAY 3 ****
Tues 09-Jan **0815** All Years Start (Years 7-11)
Fri 12-Jan Panoramic photographs (Years 7 and 11)
Thur 18-Jan **1600-1900** Year 10 Parents' Evening
Mon 29-Jan Year 11 PPE 2 Exams (29 Jan - 09 Feb 2024)

FEBRUARY 2024

Tues 06-Feb **1600** GLC Recruitment Fair
Thur 08-Feb **1600-1900** Year 8 Parents' Evening
Mon 19 February - Fri 23 February - Half Term Holidays
Mon 26-Feb **0815**—All Years Start (Years 7-11)
Mon 26-Feb Years 7 - 9 Assessments (26 Feb - 08 March 2024)
Year 10 PPEs (26 Feb - 08 March 2024)

Wishing you and your families a wonderful break and a heartfelt thanks for your support.

Kind regards,

CHRISTMAS ASSEMBLY

See more images throughout this issue

At the year-end Christmas assembly, both students and staff enjoyed a light-hearted atmosphere filled with laughter and merriment. The event featured amusing competitions, with one lucky year group earning the reward of a non-school uniform day and a complimentary lunch in the Academy.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

| ** FRIDAY 22 DECEMBER - FRIDAY 05 JANUARY - CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS ** | | | |
|---|------|--------|---|
| SPRING TERM 2024 | | | |
| JAN | Mon | 08-Jan | ** TRAINING DAY 3 ** |
| | Tues | 09-Jan | 0815 All Years Start (Yrs 7-11) |
| | Fri | 12-Jan | 0800-1200 Panoramic photographs for Years 7 and 11 |
| | Thur | 18-Jan | 1600-1900 Year 10 Parents' Evening |
| | Sat | 27-Jan | Holocaust Memorial Day |
| | Mon | 29-Jan | Year 11 PPE 2 Exams (for 2 weeks 29 January - 09 February 2024) |



HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

The Autumn term concluded with a spectacular performance featuring a large cast of Gateway Academy students in the production of High School Musical. Presented over two nights, the show provided a glimpse into the incredible talent within the Gateway community. Congratulations to everyone who played a part in making it a success!





MORE NEWS



MASTERCLASSES

As part of the strategy to broaden the educational landscape of our more able students at the Gateway Academy, we have held four Masterclasses so far on super-curricular themes to support students' wider understanding of their subjects. This term there have been over 250 engagements to the classes with more planned for the remainder of this academic year. Students have fed back that they enjoyed learning about themes they wouldn't ordinarily have covered in lessons, and that the classes made them think about the connections to their curriculum.

Masterclasses so far have been: "History or His Story? Gender bias in history" (Mrs Shaw), "How are new medicines developed?" (Mr Prince), "How did the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I influence Shakespeare?" (Mr Mitchell), and "Why don't we all speak the same language?" (Mr Zeffie).



Year 7 visit to Hertford College, University of Oxford

Two weeks ago, 27 year 7 students visited the University of Oxford as part of the More Able programme at the Gateway Academy. The purpose of the visit was to find out more about University life, experience the feel of the buildings and enjoy lunch in one of the refectories. Students met and spoke to a number of undergraduates, including former Gateway student Andrea Neville, currently in her final year studying history. Feedback from the visit was overwhelmingly positive with 100% of students saying they would be working hard towards securing a place at University in the future. Further visits are planned throughout the coming year.



WELL DONE ALBERT

At the Gateway, we take joy in learning about the exciting endeavours of our outstanding students beyond the school day. Albert B, a proud member of the Sea Cadets, stands out as an exceptional young man who consistently pushes himself. Well done, Albert!



CHRISTMAS DINNER

This year's Christmas Dinner was a resounding success as students savoured a complete festive meal with all the trimmings, indulged in karaoke and music, and had a jolly time in their festive Christmas jumpers.





YEAR GROUP NEWS...

YEAR 11

Mrs A Dixon



Year 11 has had a fantastic half term, and the students have been working well. The two 10-hour art and photography exams went well, with all students working hard to secure the best grade possible. Our termly awards ceremony was a huge success, with many students winning awards for their progress and attainment. We are so proud of all the Year 11 students and cannot wait to see what they can achieve next term. Their next round of PPEs begins on January 29th and runs for two weeks, so please encourage all students to keep revising and attending ALPs when we return.

We had our first Year 11 event where students got to take part in a revision session, a goal-setting session, and heard from some of our past students regarding life at sixth form/college. They also gave the Year 11 pupils some advice and tips in the lead-up to their exams, which was great to hear.

We look forward to welcoming all the students back in January, where we have more exciting events and assemblies planned to inspire, encourage, and motivate them for their final few months here at the academy.

We would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Year 11 Team



YEAR 7

Mrs L Bruce

What a way to end the calendar year and your first term as an Academy student! We had the pleasure of inviting 50 students to the Rollacity rewards trip last week. Additionally, we were fortunate to take 45 students to see 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at Thameside Theatre in Grays. The performance left us all in stitches, especially when the students were playfully sprayed with water pistols!

Our students have completed their first round of termly assessments, and the results were shared and discussed during the parent's evening. We appreciate the excellent turnout and continue to thank you for your support.

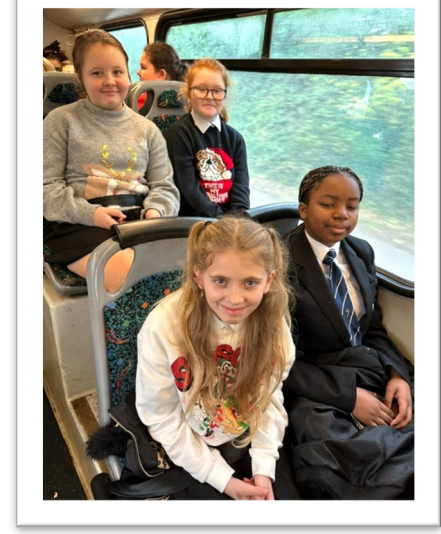
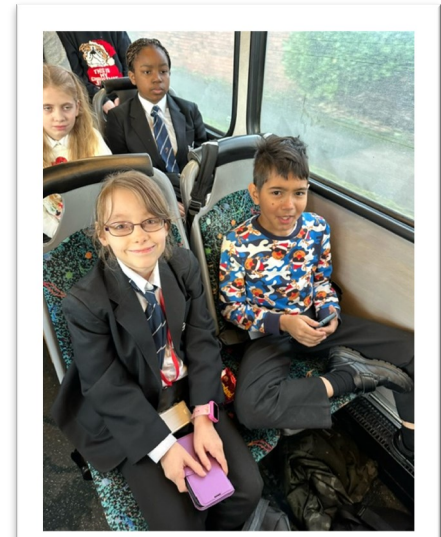
Several of our students were actively involved in the school production of 'High School Musical.' A huge congratulations to them all.

Finally, over the last couple of weeks, we've had the pleasure of rewarding numerous students: 20 were recognized as Tutee of the Term, Annabelle T received the Lead Coach Student of the Term award, our winning tutor group was 7J; over 30 academic awards were presented to students for their progress and attainment in the most recent assessments; a good number of year 7s took home prizes from the prize draw on the last day, and our Student of the Term was awarded to Emily S. Wow!

I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas, and I look forward to seeing you again in 2024.

Best wishes,

Mrs. Bruce





MORE NEWS....

YEAR 8

Mr M Scott



Year 8 has demonstrated a genuine drive and belief in their abilities, evident in their approach to the last round of assessments with determination. We've observed a significant improvement in scores across the board. The demand for after-school support from some students is a true testament to the aspirations and resilience of the year group in their learning journey. In each subject area, rewards were given to acknowledge the top performers for both attainment and progress. We are proud of each and every one of them.

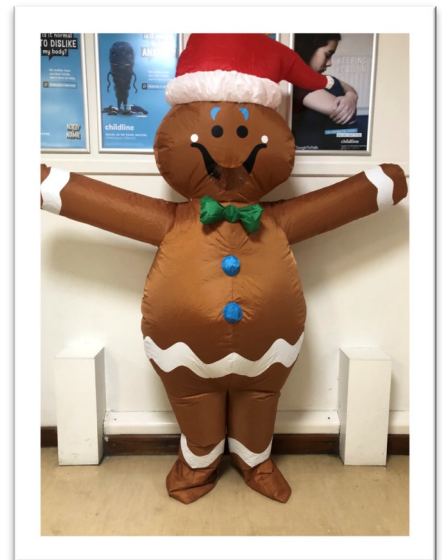
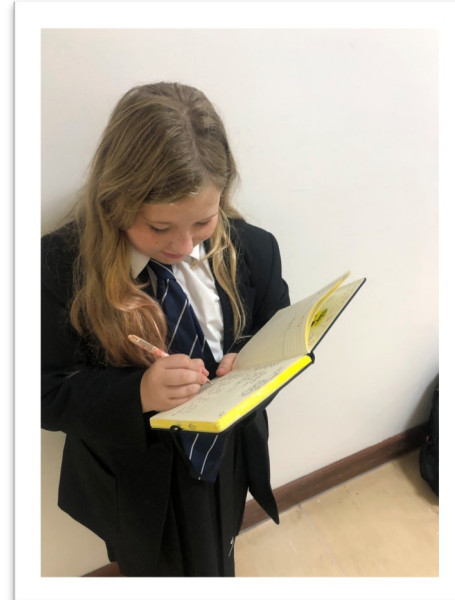
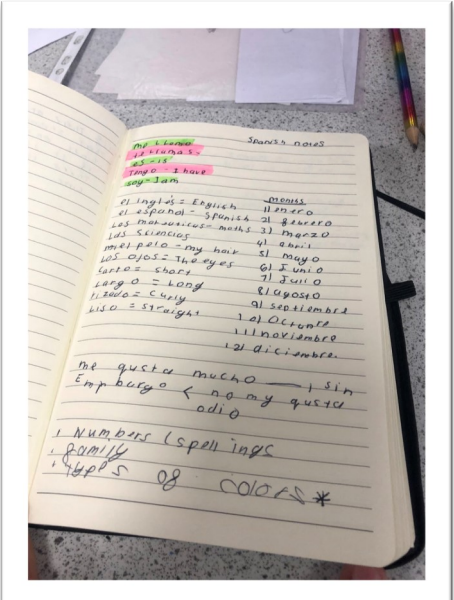


Attendance has remained consistently strong, with Year 8 students at the Gateway Academy surpassing the national average and outperforming other schools in our county. This highlights the students' passion for learning and the joy they experience at the Gateway Academy.

Reward points have continued to rise, resulting in the following totals for Year 8 tutor groups in a closely contested competition. In third place were 8B, in second place 8F, and taking the top spot were the mercurial 8A. Congratulations to all, as this was the closest round we have witnessed since joining the Gateway Academy.

While it has been a challenging term for Year 8, they have navigated it expertly and are growing into wonderful individuals who challenge themselves, care for those around them, and aspire to achieve great things in their futures.

We concluded the term with our amazing whole-school assembly, a unique experience that acknowledges achievements made across the entire school in attendance, attainment, and progress. Year 8 was unlucky to be narrowly edged out by Year 11, who ended the term as champions, but we are determined to compete again in the new year and claim the trophy as ours!



ANTI BULLYING

In response to student feedback we have created a team of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who are working on several different projects. They have created a new way to report bullying and from this any student who reports a problem are mentored and supported. They have taken part in assemblies and raised awareness during Anti-Bullying Week. There other project is to make sure that all students have a place to be during break and lunch, ensuring that no one sits alone. They have been trained by the Diana Award and are now hoping to branch out into our GLC schools to work with a wider group of students.



Cheap eats during the Christmas holidays

Asda Kids eat for **£1** all day at Asda Cafés, with no adult spend required.

Ikea Kids eat from **95p** in Ikea restaurants. Available every day from 11am.

Morrisons Kids eat free when an adult spends **£4.49** or more on a meal.

Sainsbury's Kids eat for **£1** with the purchase of an adult hot meal from the café, from **11.30am** every day.

For more interesting articles go to <http://www.theglc-gatewayacademy.org.uk/>

Issue #5 with 6 pages

Page 4



YEAR GROUP NEWS CONTD...

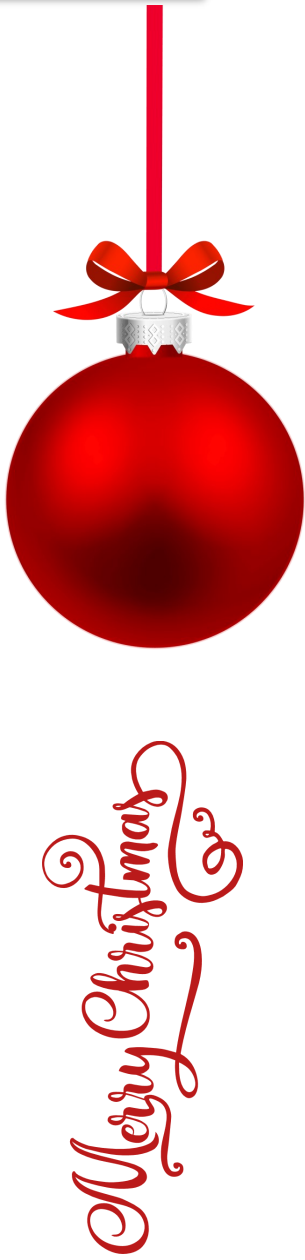
COFFEE MORNING

Megan B in Year 10 organised a wonderful coffee morning for members of the community, GLC staff to raise awareness of Alzheimer’s. She did a fantastic job raising over £136 for Alzheimer’s UK .



CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS

Students and staff have been making Christmas stockings that can be delivered to homeless people. Items such as socks, hats, food and toiletries have been donated across the whole Academy. Each tutor group was given a small stocking to fill and student leadership have been encouraging tutor groups to support this cause. Some tutor groups committed so much that they needed a whole sack instead of a stocking. All donations will be delivered to shelters in Thurrock and Basildon ready for Christmas.



CANDY CANES AND CRACKER BOXES

The Compassion team wanted to share the joy that is felt from The Gateway Academy Giving tree and so have organised to raise money by selling candy canes to the students to gift to someone else. The money from the candy canes has been used to buy gifts for students at The Gateway Primary Free School.



CHRISTMAS IS FOR GIVING

The dedicated staff at the Gateway and throughout the GLC provided support to families and students by distributing hampers and presents this year, ensuring that all students had a delightful Christmas. Thank you to Ms Newton and Ms Jeffrey for organising.



EVEN MORE NEWS....

USEFUL INFORMATION

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold children accountable for online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of every topic which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, tips and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe – with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends – but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score), Spotlight Challenges (tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes) and online filters, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for users to share (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse – so setting boundaries is a risk associated with Snapchat.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely – but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

#NOFILTER

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app, but it's important to turn this function off in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this isn't real. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.

CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have), but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that anything sent online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.

KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, this location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to post anything your child sees in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.

BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images themselves, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Twitter: @nationalonlinesafety
Facebook: /NationalOnlinesafety
Instagram: @nationalonlinesafety
LinkedIn: 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: 17.05.2023

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 13th 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>

NHS
Essex Partnership University
NHS Foundation Trust

FLU VACCINE CATCH-UP CLINICS

Time is running out to vaccinate your child with this season's flu nasal spray*.

The flu vaccine reduces the risk of serious illness and will top up their protection even if they've been vaccinated before.


Drop into one of our Essex catch-up clinics for primary and secondary aged children:

16 December, 10am – 2pm
Thurrock Hospital (Thameside House), Thurrock.

21 December, 10am – 2pm
The Hermit Youth Centre, Shenfield Rd, Brentwood CM15 8AG.
(Please note no parking available on site Please park at Brentwood Sainsbury's and walk to the Youth Centre).

No booking required.
Just walk in.

*Flu injection is offered as an alternative to the nasal spray

#DOYOURBITESSEX



Empowering Parents Empowering Communities



The Centre for
Parent and Child
Support



Become an EPEC Group Leader

Join us for a 10 week training programme
Starting 16th 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 teams.
- * 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 Chesham Family Hub on 01376 940433 for further information



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

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





Instagram


Privacy and Safety Checklist

Do you know how to report content?

If you see something that's not following Instagram's Community Guidelines (ex nudity or self-harm), you can report a photo or video right from the Instagram app or when you see it on [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com):

- 1 Tap  (iPhone & Windows Phone) or  (Android) below the post
- 2 Tap Report Inappropriate
- 3 Select why you're reporting the post

If you want to report someone that is impersonating you or someone you know, you can do that right from the Instagram app.

- 1 Go to their profile by finding them in your followers list or by searching for their name or username.
- 2 Tap their username to open their profile and then tap  (iOS) and  (Android).
- 3 Tap Report Inappropriate.
- 4 Select "I believe this account violates Instagram's community guidelines" to report an account.

Merry Christmas