

WELCOME

## A message from the Head of School

Mrs G McLaughlin

Reflecting on the first half of the term, it has been an incredible start to our academic year. Our Year 7 students have settled in exceptionally well, and it is a joy to be part of their educational journey.

We are continuously striving to "improve upon our best" and when we compare student attendance, attitudes towards learning and progress to the same period last year, we see growth in every area.

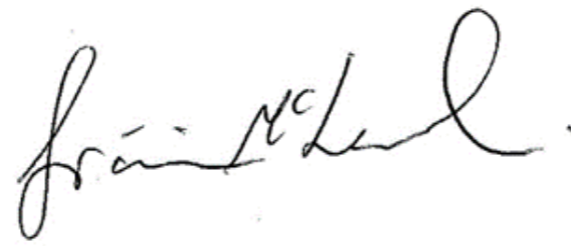
It is truly inspiring to witness the amazing achievements within our Academy. With GCSE results above the national average, our students are excelling, even in the face of challenges. They are outperforming their peers at a national level and we could not be prouder of them.

While negative perceptions of our local area can sometimes dominate the conversation, they do not reflect the incredible young people we have the privilege to work with every day. This year, we have achieved 100% staff retention and despite national teacher shortages, we are fully staffed in every department. Our staff choose to be here because they believe in our students, who are simply amazing.

Let us continue to work together because our young people deserve the best. There is so much positivity in our community that deserves to be celebrated.

Thank you for your continued support of our Academy. I assure you we will keep striving to provide the best educational experience possible.

**"We were not born to be average.  
We were born to be exceptional.  
We are The Gateway Academy."**



Mrs G McLaughlin

HEAD OF SCHOOL



GLC Gateway Academy

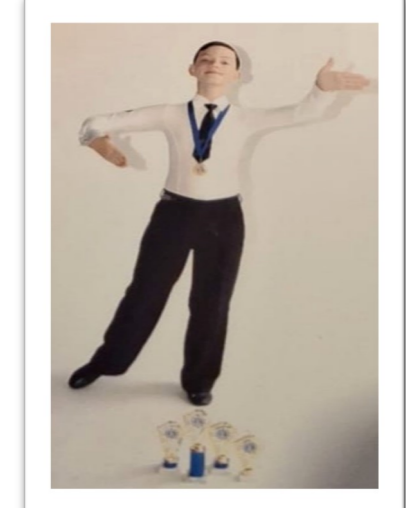
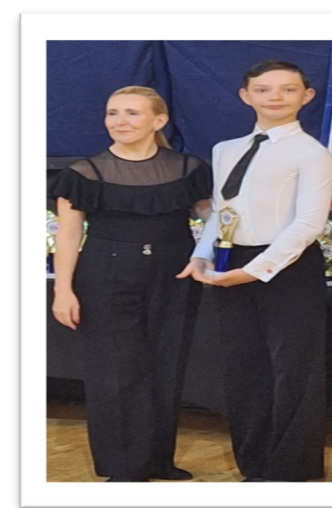
All Different: All Equal: Together, Improving Upon Our Best

JUST EXCEPTIONAL

Year 7 student Sydney F-B kicked off the dance season with impressive results at the Latin and Ballroom competition in Herne Bay on Sunday, 22nd September. Competing in the first event of the season, Sydney is already working towards UKA national qualification, and his performance certainly made an impact.

Sydney took **1st place** in the Solo Jive, a standout achievement in a highly competitive category. He also secured **2nd place** in both the Solo Tango and Couples Jive, showcasing his versatility across different dance styles. In the Couples Quickstep, Sydney rounded out his success with a solid **4th place** finish. Sydney also achieves a Merit on his Grade 1 Baritone exam.

With such a strong start to the season, Sydney is well on his way toward national qualification. We wish him the best of luck in his upcoming competitions! very proud!



CAREERS NEWS

It has been a busy first term for students and careers. There have been assemblies held by the NHS for students in Years 7-9, and Year 11 had assemblies from Gable Hall Sixth Form and the Department of Work and Pensions (Civil Service). Some Year 7 students also had the opportunity to meet the Outreach Team from Cambridge University, while a group of Year 8 students participated in the M&G Enterprise Challenge Day.

Finally, 45 students from Years 9-11 visited Aerozone, the Education Centre at Stansted Airport, where they were fortunate to hear from guest speakers and learn about careers related to airports and aviation.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

DATE	Time	Event
4th Nov	8.15am	All Years start back to the Academy
15 Nov	11.20am	Flu Jabs
21 Nov	16.00	Year 11 Parents/Carers & Next steps evening

[Click Here](#) for the full parental Calendar



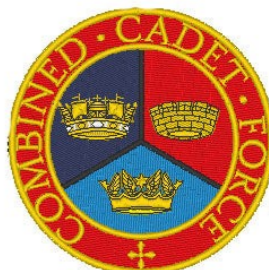
## Combined Cadet Force

This year marks an exciting new chapter for Gateway Academy as we proudly introduce the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) to our school community. The CCF is a youth organisation that offers students a unique opportunity to develop leadership, teamwork, discipline, and resilience through a range of military-themed and adventurous activities.

Our CCF contingent will give students the chance to participate in field-craft, drills, navigation, and physical challenges while building essential life skills. By working closely with trained instructors and mentors, cadets will learn the value of service, responsibility, and personal growth. Whether it's taking on a leadership role, engaging in outdoor expeditions, or mastering a new skill, there's something for everyone in the CCF.

We believe that the CCF will inspire students to step outside their comfort zones and embrace new challenges with confidence, preparing them for future success both in and outside the classroom.

Stay tuned for more information on how to join this exciting new program!



PARENTAL CALENDAR

<https://www.theglc-gatewayacademy.org.uk/calendar/?calid=1&pid=16&viewid=1>

As well as other valuable information, for example, announcements, letters home and uniform can be found on The Gateway Academy website <http://www.theglc-gatewayacademy.org.uk/>. Please check this regularly for any update

PARENTS' EVENING DATES

To accommodate all families, each year group will have a designated Parents' Evening. Please find the dates for your child's year group below in date order:

- Year 11 & Next Steps Evening – Thursday 21 November 2024
- Year 7 – Thursday 12 December 2024
- Year 10 – Thursday 16 January 2025
- Year 11 – Thursday 6 March 2025
- Year 8 – Thursday 27 March 2025
- Year 9 & Options Evening – Thursday 24 April 2025

Each evening will start at 16:00 and no appointments are required.



**MORE NEWS** .....



**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW HEAD STUDENTS**

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP

**HEAD GIRL Marjorie Nyanyi**

**Key facts about myself:**

- I like sports (part of the netball & athletics team)
- I am of Ghanaian heritage
- I love to read and I also used to write books
- Was involved in events such as black history month and culture day

**What/who inspires me**  
My mum inspired me to work in the medical field. I admire her because her work as a mental health nurse saves many lives.

**A message to the academy:**  
"You might not be the smartest, the funniest or the most sporty person. But one thing you can do better than anyone else is being yourself"  
"Working hard now may not seem pretty, but the end result is always glamorous".

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
I aspire to become a paediatrician as I would love to work with children. I find it rewarding to be able to save a parent's child's life or providing support for both the parent and child through terminal illnesses.

**What I would like to accomplish in this role:**

- Push an agenda for the love of learning
- Providing support systems for students who are more vulnerable
- Encourage diversity, culture and creativity
- Inspire future Head Girls

**DEPUTY HEAD GIRL Leah Brown**

**Key facts about myself:**  
I enjoy working out, spending time with friends/family and exploring. I am a well-respected individual, with morals and lead with pride.

**What/who inspires me**  
My parents are my biggest inspiration. The opportunities handed to me drive my motivation to do and be the best version of myself, daily. My ultimate goal in life is to make my parents proud, and strive to do my very best. I admire those around me. The sacrifices made to get me where I am today, will never be forgotten.

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
My aspiration is to be a physiotherapist, after completing my A-Levels and getting my degree in psychology/sport science.

**DEPUTY HEAD GIRL Megan Bramhill**

**Key facts about myself:**  
Some of my hobbies include cross country and figure skating. They're both such fun and enjoyable sports!

**What/who inspires me**  
I find it really easy to be inspired by those around me as well as more famously influential people. A figure who really inspires me is Florence Given, author of 'Women don't owe you pretty' she speaks about women's rights as well as all aspects of wellbeing. A great read for anyone looking to broaden their horizons.

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
In the future I would like to become an architect and change landscapes in cities. Changing not only the view but people's everyday lives for the better.

**A message to the academy:**  
"Never look back. Don't let your past define you and focus on today."  
It is never too late to change. The person you were does not define you. The overwhelming need to fit into society is only holding you back.

**What I would like to accomplish in this role:**

- Improving School Spirit and Participation
- Enhancing Student Wellbeing/Support
- Continue Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP

**HEAD BOY Daniel Cross**

**Key facts about myself:**

- I can play the Ukulele and the guitar.
- I play rugby for Thurrock rugby club.
- I represent the youth of Thurrock with my work at Thurrock council.
- I have a love and passion for learning and for creating change in the community

**What/who inspires me**  
My dad inspires me everyday. He has shown me what hard work and discipline gives you when starting a business. He has been running his own business for 13 years, the sacrifices he has made is something I'm forever grateful for.

**A message to the academy:**  
I want all students in the academy, old or young, to always strive to achieve their greatest. To achieve greatness, you will need hard work, commitment and discipline. Life is not easy and developing these important skills can set you up for success.

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
I aim to work within the finance sector when I'm older. Working with big banks and corporations is where I would like to end up in the future.

**What I would like to accomplish in this role:**

- I aim to make the academy a better place for students by constantly hearing feedback from what can be improved
- Push forwards a belief of Freedom of speech and opinion. Everyone has a voice and their voice matters.
- To be able to make the youth of our school feel heard, no one is alone.

**DEPUTY HEAD BOY Nathaniel Aboagye**

**Key facts about myself:**  
As Deputy Head Boy at Gateway Academy, I am committed to making a positive difference within our school community.

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
I aspire to break into the finance industry, but my ultimate goal is to be someone others look up to, not just for success, but for the way I conduct myself with honesty and dedication.

**What I would like to accomplish in this role:**  
My aim is to uphold the core values of Gateway, while also promoting my personal principles of mentorship, leadership, and integrity. I want to inspire my fellow students by leading through example, offering support and encouragement so everyone can strive to reach their full potential.

**DEPUTY HEAD BOY Massimo Nemeth**

**Key facts about myself:**  
Some key facts about me are that I am a responsible individual who always strives to do the best that I can as well as supporting the peers around me.

**What/who inspires me**  
The students of the Gateway Academy are who inspire me as they always try their hardest to achieve their goals and aspirations.

**What are my aspirations in life:**  
My aspirations in life are to get grades 7s, 8s and 9s in school so that I can study A-level biology and A-level chemistry in Sixth-Form in order to become a biotechnologist and later move into Biochemistry.

**A message to the academy:**  
My message to the academy community is to do what you love and always be resilient and try your best.

**What I would like to accomplish in this role:**  
During this year as Deputy Head Boy, I want to make sure that every student of the Gateway Academy has the resources and help that they need in order to achieve the grades that they deserve.

GLC All Different: All Equal Together, Improving Upon Our Best

**SPORTS NEWS**

It's been an exciting start to the year for Gateway Sport. The recent Elite Athlete Programme (EAP) trials saw over 150 students from Years 7-10 trial for netball, football, and rugby teams. The level of talent on display was outstanding, and we are eagerly looking forward to continuing the EAP after half-term.

Our teams have already participated in over 40 fixtures across basketball, rugby, netball, and football. A special mention goes to our Year 8 boys' basketball team, who kicked off their Essex Cup campaign with a stunning 61-22 victory. Additionally, our U13 boys' rugby team has qualified for the Essex Rugby Festival finals day – a fantastic achievement! The U16 girls performed exceptionally well at the Thurrock netball rally, facing some tough competition. Our girls' football teams have had a great start to the season, securing some impressive wins against strong opponents. The Year 8 netball team has also played outstanding netball in their two rounds of the National Cup, coming very close against extremely challenging opposition.

It's been fantastic to see our new Year 7s learning new sports and excelling at them! We look forward to seeing them participate in what will surely be a successful sporting campaign.

As we look ahead to the next half-term, we're excited for even more fixtures and, no doubt, even more success for our students! Keep up the great work, Gateway athletes!



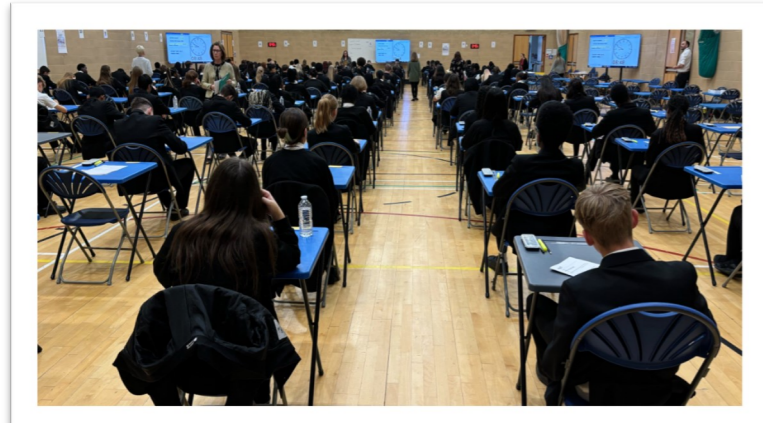
# MORE NEWS .....



## YEAR 11 NEWS

Ms A Shannon

Year 11 were outstanding during the first round of PPEs. Their attitude and professionalism towards these pre-public exams are to be highly commended. With a continued focus on success and the momentum we've all built in their learning, success will be inevitable!



## HARVEST

This term, the Academy chose Thurrock Foodbank as our charity for the harvest festival, and we asked staff and students to contribute items for this important cause. We are incredibly grateful to our community for their generosity and support for a charity that has been there for us in times of need. Our student leaders did a fantastic job organising the collection, encouraging everyone to get involved, and gathering the donations. A special



mention goes to Ms. Dixon and the Year 7 students, whose contributions were truly outstanding.

We are excited to welcome a special visit from the foodbank to Year 7 in November to personally thank them for their incredible efforts.



## YEAR 7 NEWS

Miss A. Dixon

Year 7 have had a fantastic start, and we are so proud of everything they have achieved so far. A number of Year 7 students now attend extra-curricular activities, have joined break and lunch-time clubs, and some are taking part in the school musical rehearsals. Many students have already received our Values Badges for demonstrating them daily, and we have celebrated these achievements weekly in our assemblies, awarding students with their badges.

We have some exciting events coming up after half-term, which will be shared with students and parents/carers very soon.

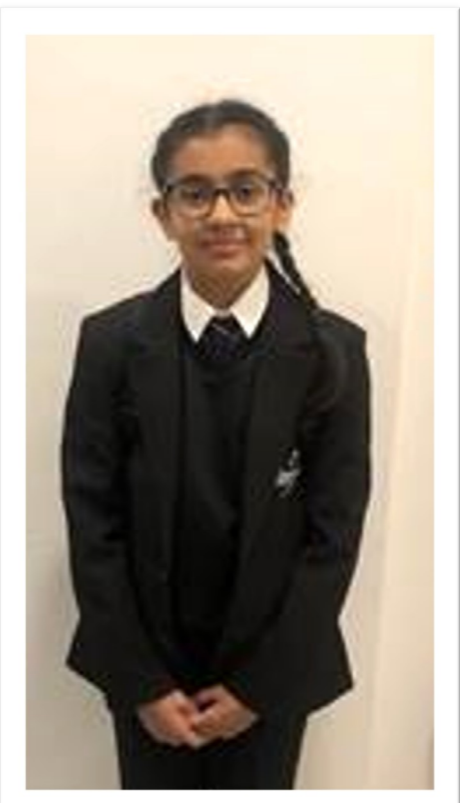
We would like to thank all parents and carers for your support and look forward to seeing you at the Year 7 Parents' Evening on Thursday, 12th December.

Miss A. Dixon & Miss M. Davis



## WELLBEING

To support the wellbeing of our community, we have added new resources and sources of support to the Wellbeing page of our website. This includes a half-term newsletter with helpful information on returning to school after a holiday, support for parents, and details about additional charities where you can find assistance.



## DRAMA NEWS

What an excellent start the students are making in Drama! They are working really hard and focusing on each and every task given to them. They are encouraged to take on responsible roles and make choices that promote creative thinking and action. As a result, they are developing key skills, including communication, co-operation, and confidence, which they will carry with them throughout their lives and in any career they choose.



**Thurrock Libraries**  
11 Sep · G

Many thanks to Paul Wilding of the Young Offenders team for dropping off a supply to our food pantry at Chadwell Library!

Food pantries are available at the following libraries: Aveley, Belhus, Chadwell, East Tilbury, Grays, Purfleet and Tilbury

1 Like 5 shares

Like Comment Send Share

## MORE SPORTS PICTURES



# MORE NEWS .....



## YEAR 8 NEWS

Mrs L Bruce

Year 8 have been working hard in lessons and have settled back into Academy life smoothly after the summer break. Attendance for the year group has been above the national average, and students are showing great responsibility for their academic studies.

There have been many success stories worth mentioning. In Food Technology, students have completed practical lessons, preparing dishes like chicken curry and spaghetti carbonara. In English, students are developing their skills by using quotes from texts to support their work. Art students have been exploring portraits, producing some fantastic pieces.

On the sporting front, Year 8 continues to excel with the boys' and girls' football teams, girls' netball, and boys' basketball all enjoying success. Outside of school, Hiba M deserves special recognition for being named the most improved player at her netball club.

The year group was also fortunate to have a visitor speak during Assembly about future career opportunities within the NHS, as we continue to encourage students to aspire to bright futures.

A couple of upcoming events to share: Year 8 assessment weeks begin on 18th November. Please encourage your children to revise thoroughly for these. Additionally, we will be hosting a Year 7 and 8 disco here at the Academy on Friday 15th November, from 6-8 pm. All students are welcome, and tickets are £3, available via ParentPay.

It's been a fantastic start to Year 8, and we hope this momentum continues. Have a lovely half-term!



## YEAR 9 NEWS

Mr M Scott

As our first half term comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful achievements of our Year 9 students. This term has been filled with growth and development, and we are incredibly proud of how your children have embodied the core values of our school: resilience, compassion, aspiration, and responsibility.

Throughout the term, students have shown resilience by tackling challenges head-on and persevering in their academic work, even when things got tough. They've demonstrated compassion by supporting their peers, fostering a community where kindness and understanding are central to every interaction. Their aspiration to succeed has been evident in the way they set goals, strive for excellence, and consistently push their boundaries. Moreover, our students have taken responsibility for their learning and actions, both in the classroom and in their contributions to the wider school community.

We are delighted to have awarded Value Certificates this term to students who consistently embodied these values in their day-to-day efforts. Whether through acts of kindness, showing leadership, or striving for excellence, these certificates recognise those who have truly embraced the spirit of our school.

This term also saw students generously participate in the Harvest Festival, contributing food donations to support local food banks. Their compassion and willingness to help those in need has been truly inspiring, and these donations will have a real impact on the local community, especially as we approach the winter months.

Additionally, I'd like to highlight our recent 'Dress in Pink' day, where students came together in a fantastic display of unity and compassion to raise money for breast cancer awareness.

We are also deeply grateful for the role you, as parents and guardians, play in nurturing these values at home. Your support, encouragement, and partnership have been essential in helping your children reach their full potential.

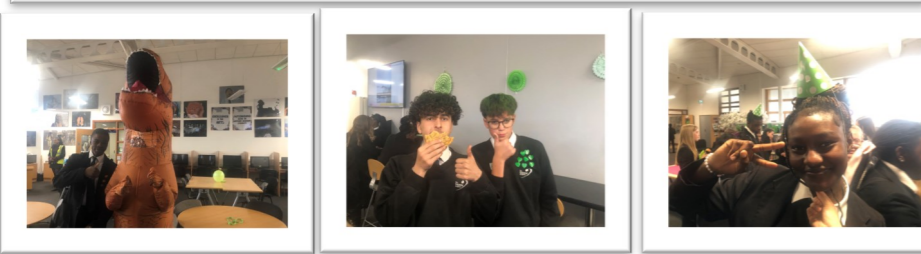
As we look ahead to the next term, we're excited to continue this journey of growth together, building on the strong foundation of resilience, compassion, aspiration, and responsibility.

Wishing you all a restful and well-deserved break.

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP — RESPONSIBILITY

Our student leaders from the Responsibility Group have been working with Years 7 to 9 on a recycling initiative, collecting recyclable materials such as plastic bottles. The students did a fantastic job cleaning up the environment and filling their base rooms with bags of recyclables.

To celebrate their hard work, the winning forms from each year group were awarded prizes for their outstanding efforts.



### STUDENT LEADERSHIP — ASPIRATIONS

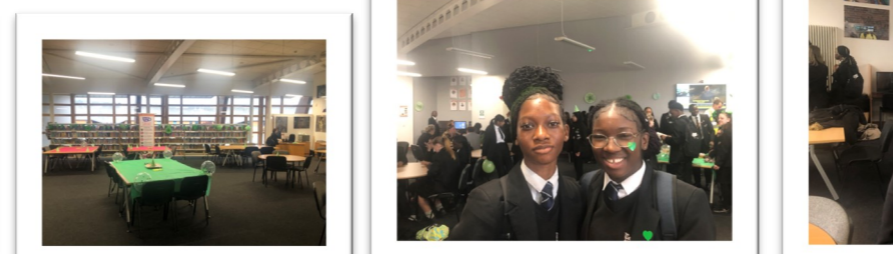
Our Aspiration Group will be hosting a career fair in the spring term, and we are looking to have as many different industries as possible represented. This event will help our students explore various career options and gain a better understanding of the opportunities available to them.

If you would be interested in participating and running a stand, please contact Mrs. Fuller at [anna.fuller@theglc.org.uk](mailto:anna.fuller@theglc.org.uk)

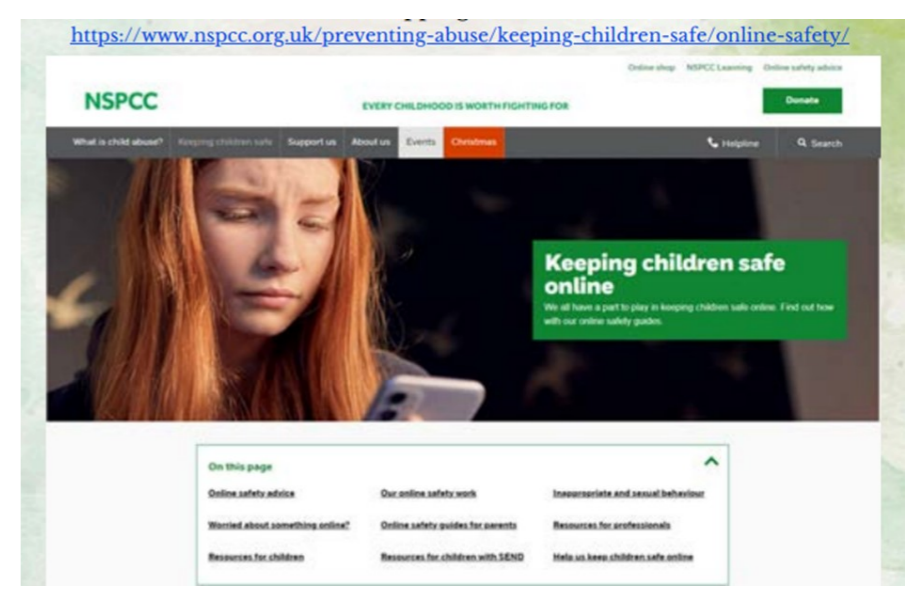
### MIND

Our Well-being Ambassadors hosted a lovely "Tea and Talk" coffee morning for staff and students in the library to raise money for the charity Mind. The well-being dinosaur made a special appearance, adding a fun touch to the event. Attendees had the opportunity to purchase delicious cakes and accessories, and even get their hair sprayed green for the day.

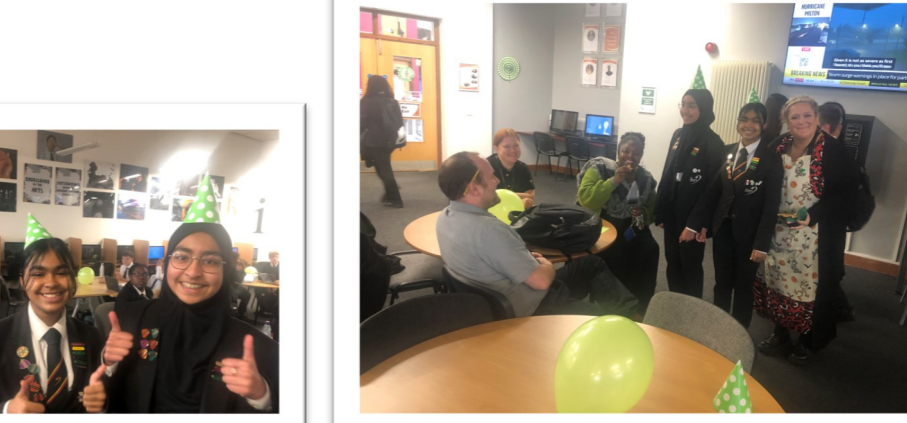
The Well-being Ambassadors were on hand to engage with both staff and students, discussing their role and providing support for anyone who needed it. It was a wonderful event that fostered community spirit and raised awareness for an important cause.



### KEEPING YOURSELVES SAFE ONLINE



This half term, we've dedicated significant time in ICT, PSHE, and assemblies to educating students about the dangers online and, more importantly, how to keep themselves safe. This includes protecting themselves from online threats, financial scams, and ensuring they don't share information that could harm them in the future.



# MORE NEWS



## YEAR 10 NEWS

Miss B Mead

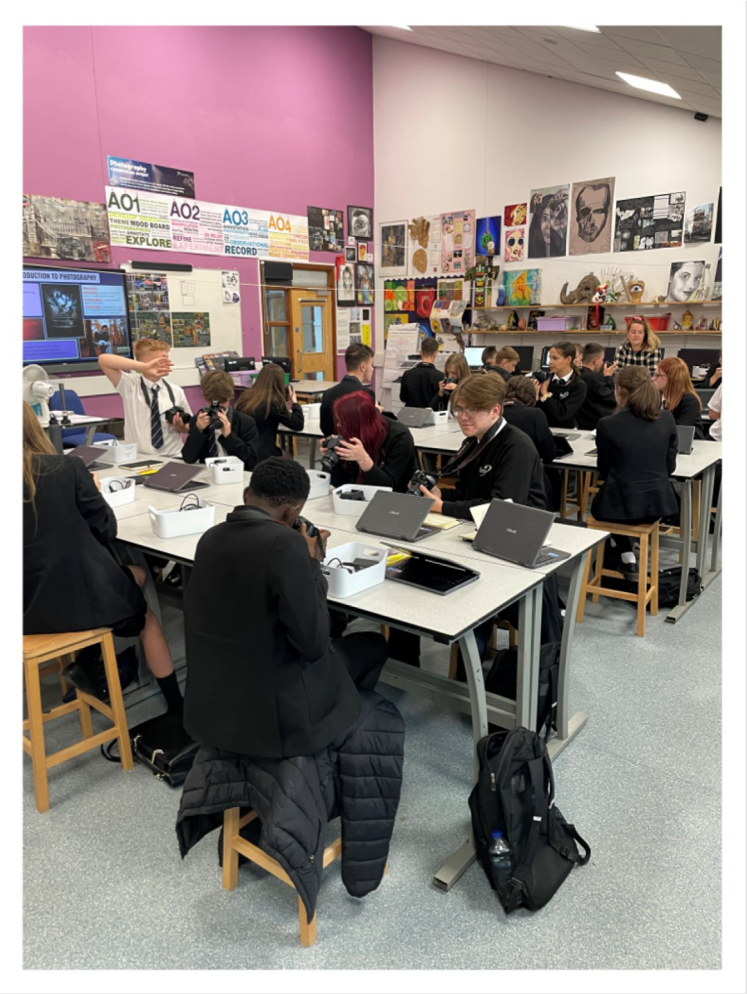
An absolutely fantastic start to Year 10!

September brought some nerves with big changes for our year group: the start of Key Stage 4, brand new academic-focused tutor groups, and the beginning of your option subjects. However, each and every one of you has taken these challenges in stride and been exceptional. I've seen some outstanding work in art and photography, with students creating their boards with the highest level of pride and presentation. Our brilliant Year 10 dance class has already completed part of their practical coursework, performing to the highest standard and demonstrating key performance skills to younger year groups. Hospitality and catering students have also been creating fantastic dishes in their practical lessons, among so many other successes! The positive feedback we've received from staff about their new Year 10 option classes has been wonderful to hear, and I couldn't be prouder of you all. Well done, Year 10—keep up the great work!

This half term, I've seen you push yourselves academically while also stepping up to support younger students. You've shown a huge amount of compassion and responsibility. Our student leaders and anti-bullying ambassadors have been leading the way across the school, organizing a fantastic harvest festival for Thurrock Foodbank. Year 10 tutors alone filled the entire food donation bin! We are so thankful for your willingness to support those in need.

After half term, we jump straight into assessment week (11th–22nd November), during which you'll sit assessments in all your core and option subjects. This is your chance to show us what you've been learning. Just a reminder: we have sets of flashcards and revision timetables available in the Year 10 office to support your revision.

Currently, the Year 10 trophy is still held by Miss Reynolds and 10E—who will be the winner next term?



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Our student leaders in the Compassion Group have been organizing a special celebration day, where food and dance will be shared during break and lunch. This event supports the work being done in PSHE and History, where students have been learning about and celebrating the contributions of people from different heritages to British culture.



The Compassion Group will also be running a competition in which students are invited to share a piece of art that celebrates their culture or create a "culture box" for display. Look out for more details in the new half term!

## MATHEMATICS

On Wednesday, 16th October, a special maths seminar took place, offering students an exciting opportunity to deepen their understanding of key mathematical concepts. The seminar featured engaging activities, interactive problem-solving sessions, and guest speakers who highlighted the real-world applications of mathematics in various careers and industries.



## EXTRA CURRICULAR

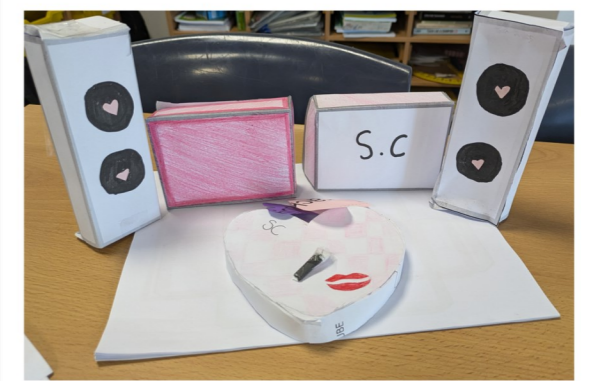
**GLC Gateway Academy**  
All Different: All Equal: Together, Improving Upon Our Best  
**THE GATEWAY ACADEMY AUTUMN 2024 TERM 1**  
**BREAKTIME CLUBS: 10.45 – 11.15**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Movie Club (4-214)	Movie Club (4-214)	Movie Club (4-214)	Movie Club (4-214)	Movie Club (4-214)
Music Practice (2-105)	Music Practice (2-105)	Music Practice (2-105)	Music Practice (2-105)	Music Practice (2-105)
Astro (Football Club)	Astro (Football Club)	Astro (Football Club)	Astro (Football Club)	Astro (Football Club)
Hard Court (Basketball Club)	Hard Court (Basketball Club)	Hard Court (Basketball Club)	Hard Court (Basketball Club)	Hard Court (Basketball Club)
Sports Zone (Blue Floor Gym)	Sports Zone (Blue Floor Gym)	Sports Zone (Blue Floor Gym)	Sports Zone (Blue Floor Gym)	Sports Zone (Blue Floor Gym)
Art Club (2-202)	Art Club (2-202)	Art Club (2-202)	Art Club (2-202)	Art Club (2-202)
Year 11 Study (2-205)	Year 11 Study (2-205)	Year 11 Study (2-205)	Year 11 Study (2-205)	Year 11 Study (2-205)
Computer Zone (2-208)	Computer Zone (2-208)	Computer Zone (2-208)	Computer Zone (2-208)	Computer Zone (2-208)
Chess Club (2-309)	Chess Club (2-309)	Chess Club (2-309)	Chess Club (2-309)	Chess Club (2-309)
Courtyard (Table tennis zone)	Courtyard (Table tennis zone)	Courtyard (Table tennis zone)	Courtyard (Table tennis zone)	Courtyard (Table tennis zone)
Fitness Suite	Fitness Suite	Fitness Suite	Fitness Suite	Fitness Suite
Basketball Zone (Sports Hall)	Basketball Zone (Sports Hall)	Basketball Zone (Sports Hall)	Basketball Zone (Sports Hall)	Basketball Zone (Sports Hall)
Literature Lounge	Literature Lounge	Literature Lounge	Literature Lounge	Literature Lounge
Quiet Zone 1 (4-206)	Quiet Zone 1 (4-206)	Quiet Zone 1 (4-206)	Quiet Zone 1 (4-206)	Quiet Zone 1 (4-206)
Quiet Zone 2 (4-207)	Quiet Zone 2 (4-207)	Quiet Zone 2 (4-207)	Quiet Zone 2 (4-207)	Quiet Zone 2 (4-207)



## FREE BREAKFAST FOR ALL (7.30AM–8.10AM)

Research suggests that breakfast REALLY is the most important meal of the day. "Breakfast kick-starts your metabolism, helping you burn calories throughout the day. It also gives you the energy you need to get things done and helps you focus at work or at school. Those are just a few reasons why it's the most important meal of the day." Medical Doctors Association. At The Gateway Academy, we offer FREE breakfast for all our students. This includes a variety of cereals, bagels and toast. Juice every Tuesday and Thursday and hot chocolate on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the winter months. Feel free to encourage your child to eat breakfast and kick start the day with a nutritious and positive meal.



**MORE NEWS** .....

**SAFEGUARDING**

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

If you need to hide this site quickly, just click here

**Has something happened online that has made you feel worried or unsafe?**

Make a report to one of CEOP's Child Protection Advisors

**Should I make a report to CEOP?**

If you're worried about online abuse or the way someone has been communicating online, let CEOP know.

**What happens when I make a report?**

One of our experienced child protection advisors will be there to make sure you get the help that you need.

**How can CEOP help me?**

Online abuse affects many children and young adults every day, CEOP has helped thousands of people in need of support.

**Make a Report**

If you have been a victim of online abuse or you're worried about somebody else, let us know securely

**We have the button at the web**

**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)

**How to stay safe on TikTok**

Choosing to **make your account private** allows you to approve or deny followers and restrict your uploaded content to followers only. To make your account private:

- Tap on the profile tab
- Go to the **three-dot** menu in the top-right corner
- Tap on **Privacy**
- Then toggle **Private account**

You can keep your identity secure by not including any personal information, such as name, address, phone number or age in your profile.

Users can also manage their experience through the **Digital Wellbeing** tool in their settings, using 'Screen Time Management' and 'Restricted Mode', to limit the type and amount of content viewable.

**Thurrock foodbank**

Since April we have distributed **TOP 5 FOOD ITEMS NEEDED: 1,606 food parcels** to our Thurrock clients, **746 of them being children.**

**Our demand is still very high and we are short of quite a few items.**

1. Custard
2. Noodles
3. Tinned Meat
4. Packet Mash
5. Tinned Fruit

**We are appealing for the following items**

SCAN ME

**FREE School Uniform Events**

free for everyone, no referral needed!

**Fridays**  
3 - 4.30pm

16th August  
30th August  
20th September  
18th October  
15th November  
20th December

**Saturdays**  
10 - 11.30am

17th August  
31st August  
21st September  
19th October  
16th November  
21st December

**Community Church Chadwell St Mary**  
Defoe Parade (enter from Brentwood Road)  
**RM16 4QR**

**Save the planet and your pennies**  
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**Clean, good condition school uniform donations accepted when space allows. Please check our facebook page to see if we are currently collecting. Search facebook for "The 180 Project"**

An event run by The 180 Project, part of Community Church  
Registered charity no. 1062301. Tel: 01375 484 101

**WHAT TRUSTED ADULTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT: SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH**

Social Media is often scrutinised as having a negative impact on children's mental health. Children and young people are now growing up in a technology dominated world, and social media plays a major role in their social lives. This balanced guide focuses on both the positive and negative impacts that social media can bring to young people and their mental health.

**POSITIVE IMPACTS**

**EASY ACCESS TO SUPPORT AND HELP**

There is always someone getting help for their mental health, such as experiencing low mood, or suffering from anxiety. They may sometimes think that to access support from others online, sharing problems or issues with family, peers and trusted adults networks can be best with positive results, with nearly 7 in 10 young people reporting to receive support on social media during tough or challenging times. Where there are restricted opportunities, which offer support and guidance, children can be provided with a great source of support.

**SUSTAINING FRIENDSHIPS AND MAKING CONNECTIONS**

There is evidence to suggest that strong online and offline relationships can provide a sense of belonging, offering children to connect and engage with people they already know. Online relationships can provide a safe space where children can express their thoughts and feelings, and receive support through comments on photos, videos and posts. It can create long-term friendships as they can continue to stay in touch, even with a distance between them.

**A SENSE OF BELONGING**

Support can be found in various places online, including the 'hidden' or 'backstage' world of online platforms and groups can provide a wonderful sense of belonging for children. They can find peers with similar interests and circumstances, which can sometimes be difficult to find in real life. As a result, they can create stronger connections and help to build confidence.

**NEGATIVE IMPACTS**

**SELF-ESTEEM & BODY IMAGE**

There are 10 million new photographs uploaded to Facebook every day, providing an almost endless potential for young people to be drawn into unrealistic beauty comparisons with others. As a result, the way they perceive themselves online is not based on reality, but on the best part of someone. The pressure to fit in and conform to trends, which can become a driving force for children to compare themselves with others, celebrities and influencers. This pressure may contribute to anxiety, low mood and a feeling of helplessness. As a result, it can lead to a feeling of not belonging with their own body.

**FAKE NEWS**

The online world provides the opportunity for identity to be used and often photoshopped pictures, modified videos, false news and more unrealistic content. A teenager may stumble upon this, which could potentially encourage them to make wrong decisions and not get the help that they need. It's important that you teach your child to differentiate between what is true and what's not, and what to do.

**HARMFUL ADVICE**

The online world provides the opportunity for identity to be used and often photoshopped pictures, modified videos, false news and more unrealistic content. A teenager may stumble upon this, which could potentially encourage them to make wrong decisions and not get the help that they need. It's important that you teach your child to differentiate between what is true and what's not, and what to do.

**ADDITION AND COMPULSIVE CHECKING**

Social media addiction is thought to affect around 2% of teenagers. The Office for National Statistics found that children who spend more than 5 hours a day on social media are more than twice as likely to report poor mental health. Furthermore, compulsive checking due to 'Fear Of Missing Out' has been linked to poor and disturbed sleep, as well as difficulty to calm during exams. One in five young people say they wake up during the night to check messages on social media, leading them to be more likely to feel negatively about themselves when their observations who don't use social media during the night.

**CYBERBULLYING**

Increasing large scale UK study showed that cyberbullying is one of the biggest challenges for young people. Online studies suggest that cyberbullying has a bigger effect on wellbeing and mental health than other types of bullying. 7 in 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying, with 17% of young people saying they experience cyberbullying on a high frequency basis. Young people are twice as likely to be bullied on Facebook than on any other social network.

**Meet our expert**

This guide has been written by Anna Balamore, Anna is passionate about giving protection of the heart of every school, bringing mental wellbeing within the curriculum, to their culture and system. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.

**NOS National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

**HELPFUL APPS:**

- Hub of Hope
- Anon: Askforhelp.org.uk
- Moodpath
- Endings: Mind

**SOURCES OF HELP:**

- Childline: 0800 1111 or visit their website
- Bullying UK: 0800 900222
- Young Minds: Parents line: 0800 622 1344

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) Twitter: @natonlinesafety Facebook: /NationalOnlineSafety

Share of this guide is to their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Created as of the date of release: 15-06-2019

MORE NEWS .....

SAFEGUARDING

# TWITTER

Twitter is a social media network which allows users to post short messages (tweets) of up to 280 characters. Tweets can consist of text, photos, videos, audio, links, polls and GIFs – often linked by hashtags if they share a common theme or message. Hashtags receiving high levels of interest are said to be trending. Twitter users can engage with other people's posts by liking, retweeting (sharing) or tweeting back (commenting on). Since the entrepreneur Elon Musk acquired Twitter in October 2022 for \$44 billion, he has implemented several major changes to the platform.

**13+** AGE RESTRICTION

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### INTERACTION WITH STRANGERS

Tweets are public by default, meaning that anyone can view and interact with posts, follow someone and send direct messages. The concern here is that young people may therefore connect and communicate with strangers. Some individuals may follow a young person's Twitter account simply because they have similar interests, however, others may turn out to have more sinister intentions.

### FIXATION ON VIEW COUNT

Twitter has recently introduced a 'view count' feature – allowing users to see how many people have seen their tweet (even if they haven't reacted to it). Previous research has found that communication comparisons with other social media users can cause young people to experience feelings of insecurity, jealousy and low self-esteem – leading to an obsession with increasing their numbers.

### TROLLS AND BULLYING

The anonymity offered by fake profiles encourages some users to send tweets designed to provoke a reaction; to disrupt conversations; to spark an argument; or to harass the recipient. Such trolling and bullying can impact the mental wellbeing of both the target and anyone who witnesses it. Encourage your child to come to you if they experience such behaviour on Twitter, or if they see it taking place.

### PAID-FOR VERIFICATION

Previously, if a Twitter profile displayed a blue tick icon, it meant that the owner – usually a celebrity or a major organisation – had been verified as genuine. Now, however, anyone can pay for a Twitter Blue subscription to receive the tick, with the platform carrying out limited checks on the account's authenticity. This could easily lead to more fake accounts impersonating real people or companies.

### CONTENT MODERATION CHANGES

In late 2022, Twitter stated that their newly enhanced AI will rely more heavily on de-amplification of their systems, instead of speech, but not freedom of speech. No policies have changed yet, but this wording suggests they may limit who can see specific tweets or topics. This could encourage an environment where some toxic content remains online.

### HJACKED HASHTAGS

The hashtag (#) is one of Twitter's most recognisable facets, allowing users to find specific tweets or topics. But the sheer volume of tweets each hour can rapidly distort a hashtag's meaning: an initially innocent search term can quickly end up returning inappropriate results. This is common with 'trending' hashtags, as people know that using them will get their tweet seen by a larger audience.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### SET ACCOUNTS TO PRIVATE

To reduce some of the fear of your child's tweets being seen and shared by anyone, you can always make their account protected. This means that your child has to give approval for another user to view their posts. You can change Twitter's privacy settings so that your child can't be messaged directly by other people on the platform and their geographical location won't be shared.

### FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

It can be difficult for anyone to ascertain if something online is real or false, but particularly for young people. Encourage your child to check several reputable sources to determine if a story they've seen is true, remind them to watch out for scams and think about the message's possible motive. Emphasise that it's not a good idea to retweet something if they aren't sure it's correct.

### ENGAGE SAFETY MODE

When Safety Mode is activated, Twitter checks for abusive or spammy behaviour such as hurtful language or repeated negative replies. The platform then flags these suspect accounts and blocks them from responding to your child's tweets. The autoblock function then prevents these accounts from interacting with your child's again for seven days.

### EXPLORE THE NEW SETTINGS

Previously, any user could reply to anyone's tweets. However, the new conversation settings let your child determine who can reply to their posts – either by selecting everyone (the default option), people they follow or only people they mention (using the @ symbol). This improvement has given users extra control, providing them with more protection from trolls and online abuse.

### PAUSE BEFORE POSTING

It's important that young people think about what they're about to post and whether they might regret it later. Twitter has developed 'nudges': little prompts which appear if someone is about to tweet using harmful or offensive language. These nudges promote more positive online behaviour by giving users an opportunity to pause and consider their words before they post something.

### BLOCK, REPORT OR MUTE

If someone is upsetting your child on Twitter, you can block and report them. Blocking stops them from messaging or following your child, while reporting an account alerts Twitter to investigate possible misuse. The 'report' levels include: report tweets from a specific account (or which include certain words) out of your child's timeline. The other user won't know that they've been muted.

### BE CAREFUL WHO TO FOLLOW

As accounts are no longer being as rigorously verified under the 'blue tick' system, it's essential that young Twitter users understand what this means, in terms of people not necessarily being who they claim. Anyone who your child only knows online is still a stranger, regardless of how long they've been communicating for. Remind your child never to disclose personal information on social media.

**Meet Our Expert**  
Dr Claire Southwood 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 concerning online and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

**www.nationalonlinesafety.com** @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesa

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 18.01.2023

## What's on in October 2024

### Thameside Family Hub

Manor Road, Grays, RM17 6EF  
Email: [thamesidecc@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:thamesidecc@thurrock.gov.uk) Phone: 01375 387 804

Start	End	Activity	Age groups	How to join in
8.30am	12.00pm	Hooping Advice for Council Tenants		Book in advance
8.30am	9.00pm	Miscellaneous	All ages	Book in advance
9.30am	10.30am	Start For Life - Baby Rhyme Time	0 to 12 months	All welcome
9.30am	10.30am	Early Words Together	36 to 60 months	Book in advance
11.00am	12.00pm	Let's Talk with your Baby	0 to 12 months	Book in advance
11.00am	12.00pm	Baby Massage	0 to 12 months	Book in advance
1.30pm	2.30pm	Let's Talk with your Baby	0 to 12 months	Book in advance
1.30pm	2.30pm	Let's Talk with your Baby	0 to 12 months	Book in advance
2.00pm	3.00pm	Story and Play	24 to 60 months	All welcome

### Stifford Family Hub

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

Start	End	Activity	Age groups	How to join in
8.30am	12.00pm	Hooping Advice for Council Tenants		Book in advance
9.30am	10.30am	Start For Life - Story and Play	12 to 24 months	All welcome
11.00am	12.00pm	Story and Play	0 to 12 months	All welcome
1.30pm	2.30pm	Fun with Stickers	12 to 60 months	All welcome
1.30pm	2.30pm	Fun with Stickers	12 to 60 months	All welcome
1.30pm	2.30pm	Fun with Stickers	12 to 60 months	All welcome

**Brighter Futures – Family Hub Offer**  
Please use this link to see the Family Hub offer and activity details – [www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hub-offer](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/family-hub-offer)  
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/thurrockfamilyhubs](http://www.facebook.com/thurrockfamilyhubs)  
Are you 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)

## Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

### Talking mental health with young people at secondary school

Some advice for parents and carers

Young people's need for independence is partly due to changes in brain development. This makes reading and understanding others more difficult than when they were younger. This can leave parents feeling that young people are in a world of their own, when actually they can be struggling to understand themselves and others!

A rollercoaster of changing emotions and feelings that come and go is completely normal at this age. Feelings and moods that become a problem are those which last a long time, become overwhelming, and stop your child from doing what they want to in their lives.

We know that having strong relationships lies at the heart of good mental health. As parents and carers we also have our own stresses such as money, job security and juggling family demands. These can put pressure on our capacity to respond sensitively to our children.

Talking can be a helpful way for young people to manage their wellbeing as it helps them to make sense of and manage difficult experiences and feelings.

### It's good to talk

The teenage years are both exciting and challenging for parents and children. Children start to see a future independent of their parents who parents have to find new ways of providing a young person who will choose to turn to their parents for support.

This period can be exciting and testing time which can be hard for parents. Most young people navigate their way through adolescence. However, for a small number of children problems can become persistent and can threaten the connection between parent and child. Taking early on, before problems become too ingrained, almost always helps.

Sometimes we also talk because we don't know what to say. We hope this leaflet may help. Of course we all know that it's not always possible to help, but it's always good to make the offer. Sometimes support from friends of a trusted adult – perhaps a teacher – can help. Professionals are there. Help is available. It's good to talk.

**Mental health and wellbeing during secondary school**

As parents and carers, it can be hard to know whether your child's feelings and behaviour are normal or becoming a problem. This is especially during adolescence when young people can feel a great deal of pressure and increasingly want to loosen their family ties.

Young people's need for independence is partly due to changes in brain development. This makes reading and understanding others more difficult than when they were younger. This can leave parents feeling that young people are in a world of their own, when actually they can be struggling to understand themselves and others!

A rollercoaster of changing emotions and feelings that come and go is completely normal at this age. Feelings and moods that become a problem are those which last a long time, become overwhelming, and stop your child from doing what they want to in their lives.

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Talking can be a helpful way for young people to manage their wellbeing as it helps them to make sense of and manage difficult experiences and feelings.

## SATURDAY FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Outdoor fun for all ages!

Activities include: Archery, Climbing, Paddleboarding, High Ropes and lots more!

**BOOK A SESSION FOR £12**

Discover all the available activities

**GRANGEWATERS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE**  
Buckles Lane, South Ockendon, RM15 6RS

To book your place contact [grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk) or call 01708 855228

## OCTOBER HALF-TERM ACTIVITIES

Monday 28 October	9.00am - 11.00am	11.00am - 12.00pm	1.00pm - 3.00pm	3.00pm - 4.00pm
Tuesday 29 October	Canoing	Paddleboarding	Canoing	Archery
Wednesday 30 October	Kayaking	Paddleboarding	Kayaking	Archery
Thursday 31 October	Paddleboarding	Sailing	Paddleboarding	Surfboard

Activities cost £12 per person, per session. Why not book more than one session and stay for lunch (bring your own). Snack shop open at reception. Accompanying adults must stay on site. Why not take part too?

Children aged 6 to 16 must try in safety equipment prior to booking. Get in touch to arrange an appropriate time.

There's something for everyone at **GRANGEWATERS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE**  
Buckles Lane, South Ockendon, RM15 6RS

To book call 01708 855 228

For further information visit [www.thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters) or email [grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk)

### Top tips for talking

- Give your full attention, be curious and take it seriously. We all know it's not nice to be half-listened to. Being actively interested in your child can be a powerful way to help them feel listened to and understood. Try to resist the urge to downplay or dismiss what your child is telling you.
- Emphasise that you are always available to talk. It may be that your child doesn't want to talk, can't find the words at the moment or is trying to assert their independence. But don't be misled by your teenager's need for separation. They need you just as much as ever.
- Take time to reflect. Research shows that thinking about what is going on in your child's mind and being aware of your own thoughts and feelings promotes secure attachment, good social skills and the ability to 'read' others.
- Provide empathy. When children feel truly understood they start to be able to manage their emotions and this has a big impact on their wellbeing. Using empathy is also a great way to defuse tension.
- Be aware of your own stress and negative feelings. They can really get in the way of feeling close to your child. Reflecting on the causes of stress can prevent it from spilling into your relationships at home.
- Think about timing. Ask yourself 'Is this the right time to talk?' Choose a time when you can focus on your child and ignore distractions.
- What should I do if I am worried? You can find some advice and guidance listed on the back of this leaflet. In particular, MindEd for Families provides comprehensive information on a range of mental health problems. If problems persist, become overwhelming or you feel your child is displaying particular symptoms, we strongly recommend that you visit your GP.

### Where can I find advice and guidance?

Child in Mind: a series of podcasts we have developed at the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families. They feature BBC Radio 4 presenter Claudia Hammond interviewing our clinical experts, and have been shortlisted for the Mind Media Awards. They are freely available at [www.annafreud.org](http://www.annafreud.org)

- The adolescent mind
- What is therapy and how does it work?
- Why do some people self-harm?
- What is trauma and how does it affect the brain?
- Is medication for mental health problems safe?
- The impact of sexual material online
- What do we know about anxiety and what can parents do about it?
- What is ADHD and what help is available for children with ADHD?
- What do we know about eating disorders and how to cope?

**ChildLine for 18s and under**  
0800 1111

**YoungMinds Parent Helpline**  
0800 802 5544

**Youth Wellbeing Directory**  
[youthwellbeing.co.uk](http://youthwellbeing.co.uk)

**NSPCC** 0800 800 5000

**The Mix** [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

**Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families**  
[www.annafreud.org](http://www.annafreud.org)

**MindEd for Families**  
[www.minded.org.uk/families](http://www.minded.org.uk/families)

About the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families  
The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families has developed and delivered pioneering mental health provision in the UK for over 80 years.

Our aim is to transform current mental health provision in the UK by improving the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of support.

We believe that every child and their family should be at the heart of the care they receive, working in partnership with professionals.