

24.11.23

Dear Parents & Carers,

I don't know about you, but ever since the days starting getting shorter and the daily drizzly weather, it has been harder for a lot of pupils to come into school. It is important to remember how important our **mental health** is and that we need to put some things in place to balance this out at this time of year.

Please see us, as well as the following links with help & advice if you feel your child is struggling at any point:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/a-z-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

Both have handy tips & advice and also parent support & help lines.

Some of the things we are doing at school this year to help with this include:

- Two counsellors working each week with pupils & staff in school
- Mental Health First Aiders and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) trained staff in school to support pupils
- 'Soft Start' from 8:30am (PLEASE use this time...it is such a calmer start for the pupils that come in at 8:30am) to start the day calmly
- Worry Boxes in every classroom
- Designated "Trusted Adults" that the pupils can speak to at any time
- Forest School & cooking sessions for all pupils across the year
- Dedicated quiet spaces around school such as Ben's Garden & Library Bus amphitheatre

One thing that has brought so much joy over the last two weeks are the learning visits by Ms Crouch & myself in every classroom across the school. The learning that the children are doing daily is nothing short of exceptional and we have been totally blown away by the hard work and innovative teaching strategies that staff are using so that learning at Aldersbrook is challenging, fun and building curiosity! It has made us very proud to be part of this wonderful learning environment and to be part of such a hard-working staff.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Mr Hughes & Ms Crouch

27 Nov Online Safety Day in school

27 Nov 8pm Virtual E-Safety Training for parents—by zoom

30 Nov 6M Sharing Assembly

1 Dec Non uniform day in school—bring in a donation for a family who might be struggling this Christmas

5 Dec Trip to the Wallace Collection for selected children

5 Dec Year 2 VR Aboriginal Workshop (in school)

6 Dec Year 1 Christingles (in school)

7 Dec flu vaccination catch up session

8 Dec Pupil Consultation for NURSERY (Nursery closed, all other year groups in school)

9 Dec Winter Trail PTA

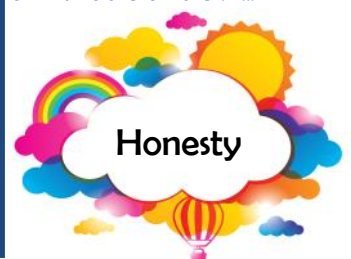
11-15 Dec Christmas Concerts in St Gabriel's (full details on website calendar)

13 Dec Christmas lunch in school

13 Dec Christmas Jumper Day

20th Dec Last day of school for the Autumn Term

Our Value of the month: is...





Non-Uniform Day

Friday 1st December will be our usual 'non-uniform day' to gather things for winter PTA events. Again this year the PTA have decided to use this day as a way of helping families that are struggling at the moment.

If your child comes in non-uniform we ask that they bring a food/drink item that could be added to make a **Christmas hamper** for a family that needs it. If you can stretch to it, a donation could alternatively be a small wrapped present with a label (eg Boy: Aged 8-10 Plastic truck) that we could give to a family. We are also happy to wrap it for you if you just want to drop the present.

Non-uniform theme is Christmas!



Your child could receive **extra funding** to support their learning.

Want to know more?



SCAN ME

Thoughtful Thursdays

Christmas can be a difficult time for some of us and this year will be particularly hard as the costs continue to rise.

We have a storage space full of delicious food that is available for any families to come and select from. It will cover quite a few meals which might help save a little over the coming weeks.

Please also let us know if you would like to receive one of the hampers that families will donate things towards on the non-uniform day. This is of course anonymous so please just see Mr Hughes or Ms Crouch on the gate any day or email in and we will help where we can.



Nick Carter is back!

Nick Carter, the explorer and adventurer, is coming into school on **Wednesday the 29th of November** to talk about his amazing adventures, like climbing Mount Everest, living with remote tribes, and swimming the English Channel (even though he wasn't very good at swimming).



Nick uses his amazing adventures to teach children how to **take more courageous decisions in life; and how kindness, bravery and resilience can be used to make every day more meaningful**. It fits perfectly with our C.I.C.I. areas.

Nick has published his first children's book (£12) that tells the stories behind his biggest adventures to date (the Amazon, exploring the world's deepest caves, etc) and explains how to develop important adventure values yourself. The book also nudges children to go out and experience these values through age-appropriate missions. If you'd like to order a copy for your own young adventurer, please bring in cash (in a labelled envelope) or order a copy online at www.amazingadventures.org.



The children are always fascinated and inspired by what Nick has to say and we are excited to welcome him into school on Wednesday 29th Nov.

Get Involved: The Big Ambition Campaign

We want all pupils at Aldersbrook to be **involved** in helping make decisions that will impact on their lives.

You may have seen the national campaign **The Big Ambition**, by Dame Rachel De Souza (Children's Commissioner for England). Dame De Souza is asking that all children complete a child-friendly survey to tell political leaders what decisions are important for them!

Children or parents can complete the survey here: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition .

A message from Dame Rachel De Souza:

I want to ensure that the voices of all children in the London area are fairly represented in the findings so that I can share their views with the most senior members of the country.

I must reiterate that it is vital that all children have their voice heard through this survey because, as Children's Commissioner for England, I have a statutory duty to protect and promote the views and interests of children. The Big Ambition provides a much-needed opportunity for the children of England to tell political decision makers what is important to them ahead of the General Election. I will be sharing their responses with Government to ensure that children's voices are heard.



'The 2 Johns' Parent E-Safety Workshop (Virtual)

Do you know that **Minecraft**, **Roblox** and **Fortnite** are not as safe as you might think? Do you know that restricting the 'chat' in games does not stop your child from talking to strangers?

Do you know that having the wrong settings on your social media apps can expose your child to grooming or put them at risk of bullying?

Do you know how **gang culture** and **radicalisation** affects your child online?

Do you know what long term effects lockdown has had on your child?

Do you know that **self-generated images** are now common among children in primary school years across the county?

Do you know what **media sources** your child forms their opinions from?

Do you know how to keep your child safe and show them the wonders of our digital world?



'The 2 Johns' will open your eyes to a world we, as adults, didn't grow up in. Please save the date to attend this crucial parent support event.

8pm to 9:30pm on Monday 27th November 2023

Click on the link or scan the QR code to sign up for the event:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83529852532>

www.esafetytraining.org



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat. Instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

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.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday



School Term & Holiday Dates 2024-2025

AUTUMN TERM 1

School: Monday 2 September – Friday 25 October 2024

Pupils return to school Wednesday 4 September 2024

Pupil Conference Day Friday 25 October – school closed for pupils

Holiday: Monday 28 October – Friday 1 November 2024

AUTUMN TERM 2

School: Monday 4 November – Friday 20 December 2024

Holiday: Monday 23 December – Friday 3 January 2025

SPRING TERM 1

School: Monday 6 January – Friday 14 February 2024

Pupils return to school Tuesday 7 January

Holiday: Monday 17 February – Friday 21 February 2025

SPRING TERM 2

School: Monday 24 February – Friday 4 April 2025

Holiday: Monday 7 April – Monday 21 April 2025

SUMMER TERM 1

School: Tuesday 22 April – Friday 23 May 2025

Holiday: Monday 26 May – Friday 30 May 2025

SUMMER TERM 2

School: Monday 2 June – Tuesday 22 July 2025

Holiday: Wednesday 23 July 2025 - tbc

Pupils finish Monday 21 July 2025

Teacher Training Days (School closed for pupils):		Other information (School closed for pupils):	
Mon 2 September	Teacher Training Day	Fri 25 October	Pupil Conference Day
Tues 3 September	Teacher Training Day		
Mon 6 January	Teacher Training Day		
Tues 22 July	Teacher Training Day		



Visits must be pre-booked via:
museum@essex-fire.gov.uk

Address: Essex Fire Museum, Grays Fire station,
Hogg Lane, Grays, RM17 5QS

MAKE ME AN ART STAR

SURPRISING THREADS

HOLIDAY ART CLUB

www.makemeanartstar.com

21st & 22nd December 2023

BOOK FOR EITHER DAY OR BOTH

New Art Work made each day

09:30am - 3:00pm

£40 per child per day

Wanstead Cricket Club, E11 2LW

School Years 1-6

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE

Any further enquires to - makemeanartstar@gmail.com

DBS Checked, Safe Guarding & First Aid trained

Thank you

Thank you all for
your generous dona-
tions for Children In
Need. We raised
£1000 for this worthwhile charity.



St G St Gabriel's Church
Aldersbrook Invites
You To Celebrate...

The Advent-ure!

Crafts
Stories
Singing
Food



Saturday 25th
November 2023
2-4pm
All Welcome!

Free of charge - Small donations welcomed

Congratulations!

Congratulations to our superb representative
team at this year's **EFL Kids' Cup** on the 17th
November.

You all performed amazingly in the tough
conditions and we are so proud of you for
representing your school and making it to the
quarter finals!

Thank you to Mr Clarke and Victor for stepping
in to get the team ready and helping them on
the day!



London Borough of
Redbridge



Redbridge Winter Holiday Fun

From
DEC to
JAN



Creative Media



Arts & Crafts



Multi-sports

- ✓ Free food
- ✓ Free activities
- ✓ New friends
- ✓ New skills

Is your child in
Reception to Year 11
and in receipt of
Benefit Related
Free School Meals?

Enjoy **FREE** sports, arts & crafts,
drama, cooking and MORE!

scan me



TO BOOK YOUR PLACE -

scan this QR code, visit:

<https://find.redbridge.gov.uk/haf>

or email: haf@redbridge.gov.uk

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