FAMILIES BULLETIN
5th December



Online Safety – Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, has been with us for a while – subtly of course. If you search the internet and/or use apps to plan routes, stream music, and even assist children with homework, then you are using AI The positives and possibilities are limitless.

AI is already shaping how children learn, play, and see themselves – often in ways adults don't fully understand. It's changing childhood itself: the games they play, the way they learn, and even how they feel about who they are. That's why understanding it matters for all the adults and the children alike.

But AI is not just clever technology – it is powerful, unpredictable, and still largely unregulated. For children – whose thinking and emotions are still developing – **AI can present serious risks that adults often don't yet see.**

We know it can be difficult keeping chhildren safe online with the development of technology. Yet AI adds a new layer of complexity. It can create life-like 'friends', realistic fake images, personalised recommendations, and endless streams of content that feel tailored to each child. **All of this can shape how children think, feel, and behave**.

Technology can have a singiifcant impact on children and can trigger or worsen development, feelings and emotions. For example:

- **Body image and mental health**: A child might use an AI beauty filter that changes their appearance, then talk about their looks with an AI 'friend' who reinforces unrealistic ideas.
- **Radicalisation and misinformation:** AI-powered recommendation systems can lead children from innocent curiosity to extreme content, while AI deepfakes make false stories appear true.
- **Loss of critical thinking:** When AI always provides quick answers, children can lose confidence in their own judgment – making them easier to influence later.

In this article we are going to focus on AI Chatbots.

AI chatbots are AI programs that talk like people. The most popular chatbots are ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini. Adaptations of these chatbots can be found in platforms like homework helpers and virtual customer service agents.

'AI companions' are a type of AI chatbot, designed to pretend to be an actual person and simulate a real relationship. Children type or speak to them, and the chatbot replies instantly in friendly, natural language. Popular examples include **Character.AI, Replika**, and **Nomi**, all of which are available in app stores to use on mobile devices.

Even chatbots like ChatGPT, which are not specifically designed to be AI companions, can sometimes be used in the same way as an AI companion. For example, if a child types 'Pretend you're my best friend and cheer me up' a chatbot can then sound like a caring friend. In fact, simply talking to it in the style of a 'friend' can make it respond in the same way.

Why are they risky?

Because the conversations feel real, children can form strong emotional bonds. A chatbot might say, 'I miss you,' or 'Don't tell anyone our secret.' It can easily become a source of comfort – and control.



Investigations have shown chatbots giving:

- **Dangerous advice**, such as encouraging self-harm or starvation diets.
- **Sexual messages**, including adult language directed at minors.
- **False claims**, like pretending to be a real person or professional.
- **Pressure for secrecy**, undermining parents or teachers.

Some children have tragically followed advice from chatbots that have simulated friendship, in some tragic cases leading to serious harm or even suicide.

AI can now create realistic pictures, videos, or voices from short text prompts like 'a video of two classmates in the playground.' These systems learn from millions of online examples to produce entirely new material.

Some apps, often called 'nudifiers,' use AI to remove clothing from photos or turn ordinary pictures into fake sexual images.

Others can swap faces onto videos, clone voices, or make people appear to say or do things they never did.

We will continue to signpost important information for families to review regarding technology and AI to empower conversations about the impact on children.

Mr Asafo Adjei Jnr
Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Cycleway 4 Update: Upcoming Works Near Windrush and Royal Greenwich Trust School

Please be aware that essential roadworks will be taking place **directly outside the school in January**. These works may **affect travel times and access to the site**. Further information from Kier, the contractor, is provided below.

The pedestrian crossings outside both RGTS and Windrush schools are due to be decommissioned at the beginning of January 2026. During this period, temporary traffic lights and barriers will be in operation. In addition, the removal of the central island on the road in front of the school is scheduled to take place at the same time.

We ask all families to **allow extra time for journeys to and from school while these works are carried out**.

Mr Heppell
Assistant Headteacher



Attendance Raffle!

At RGTS, we believe it is important to recognise and celebrate positive engagement. In support of this, we will be runing an attendance raffle, offering students who attend regularly and punctually the opportunity to win an Amazon voucher. Further details can be found below.

Attendance raffle!
be in to win..

10 *for* 50
10 days for £50



You are in for the raffle if you are in school everyday from Monday – 8th Dec to Friday 19th Dec.
There are 6 vouchers to give away!

Mr Asafo Adjei Jnr
Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Upcoming Key Dates

Date	Event	Year Group	Timings
Monday 22nd December - Friday 2nd January	Christmas Break	All Year Groups	All Day
Monday 5th January	INSET Day (School Closed)	All Year Groups	All Day
Thursday 9th January	Year 11 Parents' Evening	Year 11	4:00pm - 7:00pm

The Hidden Impact of Sweets and Fizzy Drinks on Learning and Concentration

We all know that sweets and fizzy drinks are popular treats among young people, but have you ever wondered how they affect learning and concentration in school? While an occasional treat is fine, regular consumption can have surprising consequences on a student's ability to focus and perform academically.

The Sugar Rush – and Crash

Sweets and fizzy drinks are packed with refined sugar, which causes a rapid spike in blood sugar levels. This "sugar rush" can make students feel energetic and alert for a short time. However, this is quickly followed by a sharp drop in blood sugar, often called a "crash." During this crash, students may feel tired, irritable, and struggle to concentrate, right when they need to focus in class.

Impact on Memory and Attention

Studies show that diets high in sugar can impair memory and reduce attention span. When the brain is busy processing excess sugar, it's less efficient at handling tasks that require focus and problem-solving. This can make lessons harder to follow and homework more challenging.

Caffeine and Additives

Many fizzy drinks also contain caffeine and artificial additives. Caffeine can cause restlessness and anxiety in young people, while additives like artificial colors have been linked to hyperactivity in some cases. These effects can disrupt classroom behavior and learning.

Health and Long-Term Effects

Beyond concentration, frequent consumption of sugary snacks and drinks increases the risk of obesity, tooth decay, and even mood swings. A balanced diet with plenty of water, fruits, and whole grains supports both physical health and mental performance.

Tips for Parents

- **Encourage water or milk** instead of fizzy drinks; keep a refillable water bottle handy.
- **Offer healthy snacks** like fruit, yogurt, or nuts instead of sweets.
- **Set limits on sugary treats;** make them occasional rather than daily.
- **Check labels** for hidden sugars in drinks and snacks.
- **Model healthy habits;** children are more likely to follow your example.
- **Talk about energy and focus;** help them understand how food choices affect school performance.





Mr Brougham
Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion)

Year 7 "Slice of Success" Celebration – A Wonderful Event!

We are delighted to share that our "Slice of Success" celebration, held on 14th November, was a truly enjoyable and heart-warming occasion. The event recognised our Top 15 Year 7 students who achieved the highest number of positive points last term and consistently demonstrated the qualities we value most: Responsibility, Grit, Teamwork, and Success.

We started with a speech from Ms Khan, our Head of School, who congratulated the children and spoke to them about how they are our future leaders, both at RGTS and beyond.

The students joined the Year 7 Team for an afternoon of cake, drinks, conversation, and well-deserved recognition. It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate their hard work, positive attitudes, and the fantastic example they set for their peers.

The atmosphere was warm and joyful, and it was wonderful to see the students take pride in their achievements. We are incredibly proud of each one of them and look forward to seeing their continued success throughout the year.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the celebration such a positive and memorable moment for our Year 7 community.





Mrs Sirso
Head of Year 7

Year 11 - Laying down foundations for the future

Year 11 have impressed us all over the mock period, with engagement in the exams at an all-time high and students doing everything within their power to be in school every day. Students and staff now hotly anticipate the results assembly that will take place on **Thursday 18th December, Period 6**.

Following these mocks, it is crucial that students carefully consider their futures. This means researching local sixth forms and colleges and the courses they offer. Deadlines come around quickly, so please encourage your child to submit applications today. Below, I have included some links to colleges and sixth forms local to RGTS for you to look at with your child. I will be modelling how students can do this next week in a virtual assembly.

In the last two weeks, we have had insightful presentations from our own Head of Sixth Form, Mr O'Brien, about our offer at RGTS, alongside visitors from Leigh Academy Blackheath, LLS and a virtual assembly from John Roan and we still have a visit from Shooters Hill to look forward to on Friday 12th December!

As Head of Year, I am currently inundated with reference requests. Despite the increased labour demand, it is always a joy to have the opportunity to champion our students, and take the time to present our young people in the best possible light. When applying for courses, students need to understand that the reference requests aren't only about grades; **we also have to comment on attendance, punctuality and behaviour**. If your child has struggled with these areas hitherto, now is the time for them to make the change that could help them achieve their ambitions!

Students are not on their own and we are here to support them to be the best versions of themselves. This is why we have some incentives in place to motivate students to be present every day:

- For the next two weeks we have raffles for 100% attendance with £30-50 Amazon vouchers up for grabs!

So, what can you do as a parent/carer to support your child?

- Communicate with your child about their intentions for next year and take the time to look at options with them
- Support your child to attend sixth form/college open evenings
- Ensure your child attends every single day
- Check that they are completing the homework set by their teachers as this will build independence

Key Links to Sixth Forms and Colleges

Newhaven School - Sixth Form Curriculum | Newhaven School
St Mary Magdelene - Apply Now! - Koinonia C of E Schools Federation
Woolwich Polytechnic - Woolwich Polytechnic Sixth Form - Apply Here for 2026 - 2027
Plumstead Manor School - Plumstead Manor School - Sixth Form
Harris Academy Greenwich - Application Information - Harris Academy Greenwich
Leigh Academy Blackheath - Post-16 Subjects – Leigh Academy Blackheath
Shooters Hill - Shooters Hill Sixth Form College | Online Enrolment & Enquiries
The John Roan School - Apply Now | Sixth Form | The John Roan School
London South East Colleges - How to Apply | London South East Colleges
LLS - Home - LLS ONLINE | SIXTH FORM SPORTS COURSES

Together, we can give students the confidence to be the architects of their own futures, so let's start laying down the foundations today!

Mr B Dalby
Head of Year 11

Year 11 Parents' Evening - Thursday 8th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to invite you to our Year 11 Parents' Evening, which will take place on Thursday 8th January 2025. This event provides an important opportunity for you to meet with your child's subject teachers to discuss their progress, strengths, and areas for development as they prepare for their upcoming GCSE examinations.

Your engagement at this stage is vital in supporting your child's academic success. These appointments allow you to gain valuable insight into how your child is performing and what additional support may be beneficial in the months ahead.

All appointments must be booked in advance through the Arbor Parent Portal. Please log in to your account, select Parents' Evening from the menu, and choose your preferred times with each teacher. If you experience any difficulties accessing Arbor or making bookings. A detailed guide can be found here: https://support.arbor-education.com/hc/en-us/articles/203792102-Booking-Guardian-Consultations-Parent-s-Evenings-on-the-Parent-Portal-or-Parent-App.

If you experience any difficulties making appointments, please contact the school office who will assist in booking your appointments. Please send an email in the first instance to info@rgtrustschool.net.

Join Us for Our Winter Fair – A Fun Night for All!

We are delighted to invite all families to our Winter Fair: Fun Night!, taking place on **Wednesday 17th December from 4:00–6:00pm**. This much-loved event promises to bring our school community together for an evening of festive joy, entertainment, and celebration.

This year's Winter Fair will feature a fantastic range of activities, including Christmas karaoke, games, music, food and drinks, and plenty of opportunities for festive fun for children and adults alike. Entry is just £1 per person, making it an accessible and enjoyable event for the whole family. Please note this event is **only for RGTS families** and all families **must have their reference booking number on the night.**

Most importantly, the Winter Fair is an opportunity for us to support two remarkable causes. All proceeds will be donated to:

- GRACEAid, supporting refugees and asylum seekers
- The Ben Kinsella Trust, working to tackle knife crime and promote youth safety

To help us plan and ensure the smooth running of the event, we kindly ask families to sign up using the link below:

https://www.rgtrustschool.net/ticketing/event?id=146



Olive Dining - Winter Wonderland Menu

Olive Dining, our catering service provider, will be running a Winter Wonderland Menu every Wednesday throughout December. The menu for next week is below.



Flu Immunisation Catch-Up Session: Friday 12th December 2025

The immunisations team will be revisiting Royal Greenwich Trust School on **Friday 12th December 2025**, to run a **flu immunisation catch-up session**. Please complete the **consent form indicating whether you do or do not provide consent** to the immunisation using the following link or QR code below.

Consent Form

Families who have **not completed the form will be contacted on the day** by the immunisation nurses to confirm their consent preference.

