



Year 8

Parent Information and Support Evening

Thursday 25 September 2025



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Evening Structure

Character, Mobile Phones and Safeguarding - *Mr Beattie - Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead*

Curriculum and Pastoral Care - *Mr Gurney - Head of Year 8 and Teacher of PE & Maths*



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Character, Mobile Phones and Safeguarding - *Mr Beattie - Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead*



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*It's easy to think exam results will define your future. They're important. But, whatever you do next, **hard work, focus and resilience** will always be the things that give you the best chance of success.*

Alistair Brownlee



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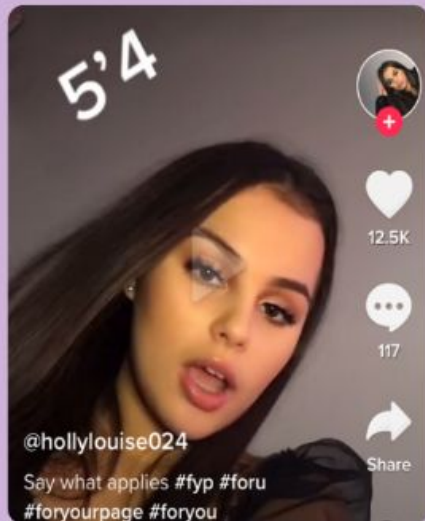


Phones

PAPAYA

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR KIDS AND THEIR TECH

Top tips: Reduce exposure



Delay apps & screentime limits

Delay social media use. Set app limits and schedule downtime. Encourage the use of Do Not Disturb modes. Try the Forest app.

Reduce distraction

Reduce push notifications. Try using a flip cover, delete or hide distracting apps and turn it off.

Create screen-free spaces

Keep all internet-connected devices out of bedrooms. Avoid devices during meals and discourage multi-screening.

Pre-teens lose the equivalent of a nights sleep per week to social media

73%

of teenagers take their phone to bed with them



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PAPAYA

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR KIDS AND THEIR TECH

Top tips: Preventative Action



Control downloads & apps

Control software and app downloads with a password. Use [InternetMatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org) to review and set up apps. Increase privacy settings.

Block adult content

Turn off explicit material (in apps, broadband, and data plans). Watch out for VPNs, relays, and private browsers.

Parental controls & monitoring

Use parental control software (e.g., Google Family Link, Norton Family, or Qustodio).



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LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR KIDS AND THEIR TECH

Parental Control Software

BASIC

The tools you need for core protection.

£39.95/year
SAME AS £3.33/MONTH

[Buy now](#)

Basic includes:

- Games & apps blocking
- Daily time limits
- Web filtering
- Location monitoring
- Pause internet access

COMPLETE MOST POPULAR

Advanced safety features with full customization.

£69.95/year
SAME AS £5.83/MONTH

[Buy now](#)

Complete includes:

- Games & apps blocking
- Daily time limits
- Web filtering
- Location monitoring
- Pause internet access
- Ad-powered alerts
- Social media blocking

Free

Apple ScreenTime
& Google Family Link

Mid

e.g. Norton Family

Expensive

e.g. Qustodio

Qustodio is the premium product using a VPN for extensive controls.

58%

of teens say they've never had controls put on their phone by parents

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

47%

of teens with controls in place say they have bypassed them

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

And teens find multiple ways to bypass controls:

Performing a factory reset

Using VPN software

Hacking the WiFi router

Memorising your passcode



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Child protection	Risk Assessments	Complaints/ Whistleblowing, Managing allegations against staff & volunteers	Staff conduct/low level concerns & Safer work practice	The School Environment inc. Building & Security	Attendance, PA, Exclusions, Children Missing Education, Transition, off site provision
Contextual Safeguarding	Up-skirting	Early Help	Governance	SEND & Inclusion	Training
A listening School/Service	Criminal exploitation	Behaviour Management	IT filtering and monitoring	Peer-on-peer/ Anti bullying policies	Curriculum inc RHSE, online safety, digital resilience, PSHE
Health and Safety	Serious violence	AI	Safer recruitment and selection	EYFS	Sixth form provision



Safeguarding Team

If you have any safeguarding concerns, you should report them to one of these members of staff as soon as possible:

					
Miss Vroomen Second in Inclusion	Mr Khalil Assistant Headteacher	Mr Beattie Deputy Headteacher	Mrs Kirk Deputy Headteacher	Mr Roberts Assistant Headteacher	Ms Gaches Head of Sixth Form
					
Mrs Miles Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer	Mrs Bennett Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer	Mrs Burt Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer	Mrs Tuohy Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer	Miss Collings Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer	Mrs J Shaw Safeguarding & Pastoral Support Officer





The culture of safeguarding at Ashlyns

- Lanyards - green and red - challenge
- Training, INSET, CPD, safeguarding snippets
- Posters, leaflets, noticeboards
- CPOMS and Record of concern forms
- Safeguarding team meetings
- Pastoral curriculum - tutor time, PSHE, assemblies
- E Safety - Monitoring and filtering
- Policy - CP, behaviour, Esafety.....
- Equality groups
- Student voice - anti bullying survey, safeguarding survey, SDQs, focus groups
- Safeguarding quick reference
- Lanyards





National Context

- i. There has been a **threefold increase** in **under 18s** investigated for involvement in terrorism in just 3 years;
- ii. At the same time, there has been an **increase in referrals to Prevent for teenagers, in relation to concerns around serious violence;** and
- iii. Five Eyes counter-terror partners “*have warned about growing radicalisation of minors, happening as so many of our children and teenagers are being exposed to ever more disturbing materials online. An online ecosystem that is radicalising our children while safety measures are whittled away.*”





National Context

In the year ending 31 March 2024, there were **6,922 referrals to Prevent**. This is **an increase of 1.5% compared to the previous year (6,817)**, and the third highest number of referrals since the first period reported on (2015 to 2016).

- the **Education sector** made the highest number of referrals (2,788), **accounting for 40% of all referrals this year**; this is similar to last year and this is the highest proportion for any source of referral since data was first published in 2015 to 2016
- In the year ending 31 March 2024, of the 6,906 referrals where sex was specified, **the majority were for males (6,114; 89%)**. Males also accounted for the majority of the referrals discussed at a Channel panel (813 of 893; 91%) and those adopted as a Channel case (465 of 512; 91%).





Southport Attack - Axel Rudakabana

On 13 July 2024, aged 17 years old, he purchased a large knife. On 29 July, he travelled to the Hart Space on Hart Street, Southport. He targeted a dance workshop for young girls, mostly aged 6 to 11 years old. There were 26 children at the workshop. **Within 15 minutes, he killed three of those girls, and attempted to kill eight more. He attempted to kill two adults who tried to stop him.**





Southport Attack and Online Promotion

Violent Southport protests reveal organising tactics of the far-right

An influencer on X associated with Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, who posts under the name of “Lord Simon”, was among the first to publicly call for nationwide protests. His account promoted false claims that the alleged Southport attacker had been an asylum seeker, recently arrived in the UK by boat. His video has been viewed over a million times.

“We have to hit the streets. We have to make a huge impact all around the country. Every city needs to go up everywhere,” he said.

“That reflects the nature of the contemporary far-right. There are large numbers of people engaging in activity online but there’s no membership structure or badge - there are not even formalised leaders, but they are directed by social media influencers. It’s like a school of fish rather than traditional organisation.”





Social Media Impact

Telegram - a messaging app which also has channels for publicly broadcasting posts - has historically been used by far-right activists who, until recently, struggled to avoid being banned on the Twitter/X platform.

Terrorgram

Proscribed as a terrorist group on 22nd April 2024

Online channel on Telegram

6th White Supremacist group to be proscribed in the UK

[Terrorgram added to list of proscribed terrorist organisations - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/terrorism-proscribed-groups)



[List of National terrorist groups](#)



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Adolescence

The thing to recognise – and teach children to recognise – is that the extreme sexist viewpoints usually aren't what children are seeking out.

Instead they see content of memes, silly videos, maybe chat on a gaming site, health and fitness trends – all innocent enough. But when they've clicked on these, the algorithms set into motion, sending more content by the same and similar creators – who also have content of this more worrying nature. So a child clicks on that, the algorithm then sends more and this spirals downwards into extreme views about women and minority groups in society.





INCEL



- **Elliot Oliver Robertson Rodger** (July 24, 1991 – May 23, 2014) was an English-American mass murderer and former college student responsible for the 2014 Isla Vista killings.
- **On May 23, 2014, Rodger killed six people and injured 14 others by using knives, semi-automatic pistols, and his car in Isla Vista, California**
- **Hours later, Rodger uploaded a video on YouTube titled "Elliot Rodger's Retribution," in which he detailed his intentions to target Isla Vista**
- **He explained his motivations were to "punish" women for their lack of interest in him**





Signs of Radicalisation

- Withdrawal from family and friends, or changing circle of friends
- Hostility towards others
- Talking as if from a script
- Being unwilling to discuss their views
- Increased levels of anger
- Being secretive, particularly around what they are doing on the internet
- Using extremist terms to exclude people or incite violence
- Expressing the values of extremist or terrorist organisations (including political or religious based grievances)
- Supporting violence and terrorism towards other cultures, nationalities, or religions
- Writing or creating artwork that promotes extremist values
- Talking about being a 'martyr'
- Possession of extremist literature or other material, or trying to access extremist websites
- Possession of any material about weapons, explosives, or military training





What can you do.....

- TALK....have open conversations
- Administer parental controls
- Stay up to date with new apps and information that come from sites on the following slides
- Please see a key link below:

<https://www.educateagainsthate.com/what-can-i-do-to-protect-my-child/>



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Online Safety- Parental Support

[Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get help more help and support

[Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings and other information about all types of media for children and their parents

[Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child abuse, sexting and cyberbullying

[Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

[How Can I Help My Child?](#) Marie Collins Foundation - Sexual Abuse Online

[Let's Talk About It](#) provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online





[Stopitnow resources](#) from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just online)

[National Crime Agency / CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

[Net-aware](#) provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and the O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games

[Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment:](#) a guide for parents - this is the Children's Commissioner's parent guide

[#Ask the awkward](#) - Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre guidance to parents to talk to their children about online relationships





Curriculum & Pastoral Care

Mr Gurney - Head of Year 8

Teacher of PE & Maths



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Home Learning

- Purposeful
- Vital for progress in every subject
- Consolidates and extends existing knowledge
- Build important skills: revision, research, independence and organisation, literacy and numeracy

Core subjects = twice per fortnight

Other subjects = once per fortnight

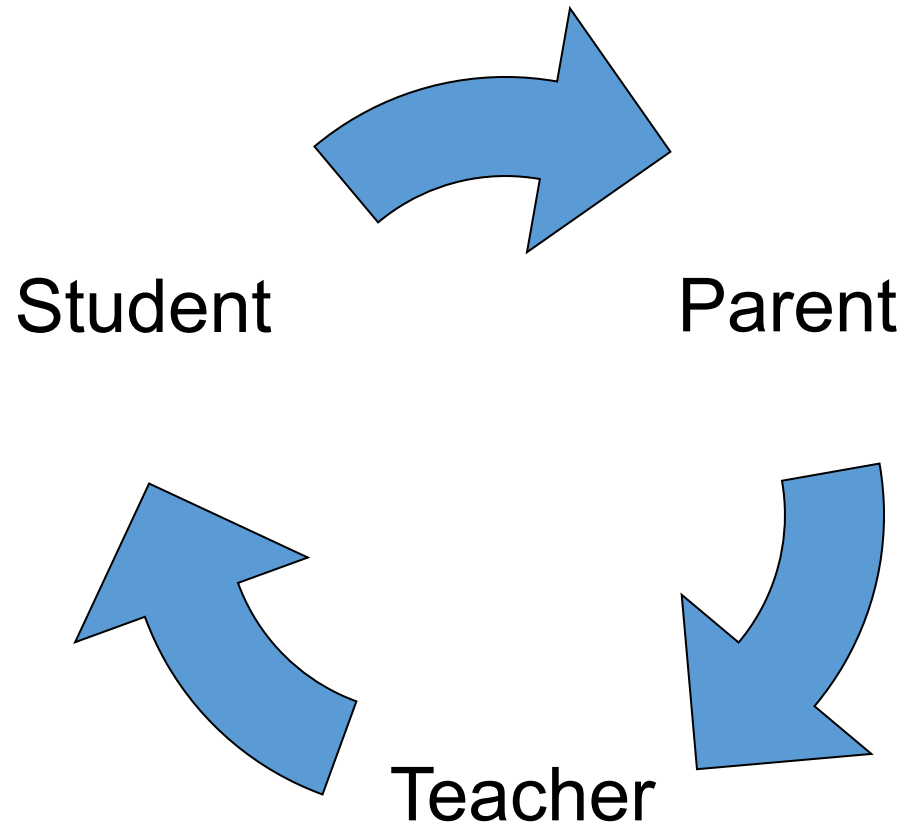
Average length for tasks = 40 minutes



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How will all year 8 students “Aspire and Achieve”?





How you can help: Logistics

- Somewhere to work
- Limit distractions
- Drinks and snacks
- Planned breaks
- Remain positive/encouraging/rewards
- Help them get into good habits/routines
- Communication is key





Teens And Sleep

- The amount sleep affects learning and behaviour
- Young people need help to develop regular sleep routines
 - Have a regular night time routine
 - Reduce late night screen time
 - Encourage relaxing time before bed
 - Avoid stimulants – food, drink, screens





Attendance Matters

Research suggests that a 10% drop in attendance equates to a drop of one grade in every GCSE.

Recent national data also shows that 84% of students with no missed sessions over Key Stage 4 achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and Maths, compared to 36% of students who were persistently absent (ie had an attendance rate below 90%).

The Department for education (DfE) research goes beyond academic metrics, highlighting the impact of attendance on students' social and emotional well-being. Regular school attendance fosters a sense of belonging and connection within the school community. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to develop positive relationships with peers and teachers, enhancing their overall emotional resilience and mental health.





Year 8 – the critical transition year?

Used to be referred to as a ‘dip’ year

- Actually a huge opportunity for students
- In the year that they become teenagers
- To transition from being a ‘child’ learner...
- To being an independent ‘adult’ learner, who takes ownership and responsibility
- Be mindful of the ‘Teen Brain’
- Adopting a Growth Mindset can help with this



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Teen Brain: A Time of Major Change

- An enormous amount of change from puberty onwards
- The change is more rapid in some areas and can be different in girls and boys
- New skills are developing
 - Abstract thinking, vocabulary development, decision making skills
- There is increased reward sensitivity
 - Thrill seeking/risk taking
- Less ability to think ahead





Year Focus:

Organised - Be prepared!

Good Habits/Routines - HL/In lesson/Sleep

Independence - Take responsibility

Praise/Rewards - Weekly (class/Individual), Termly

Best in class!



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Pastoral support

- atutor@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk (sample)
- igurney@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk
- lmiles@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk





Key Dates

Thursday 2nd October

Open Evening (students are expected to support)

Friday 3rd October

INSET Day: School closed

Thursday 13 November

Extended Learning Day

Friday 28th November

Occasional Day: School closed

Monday 1st December

INSET Day: School closed

Tuesday 10th March

Extended Learning Day

Wednesday 29th April

Year 8 Parent-Teacher Consultation



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