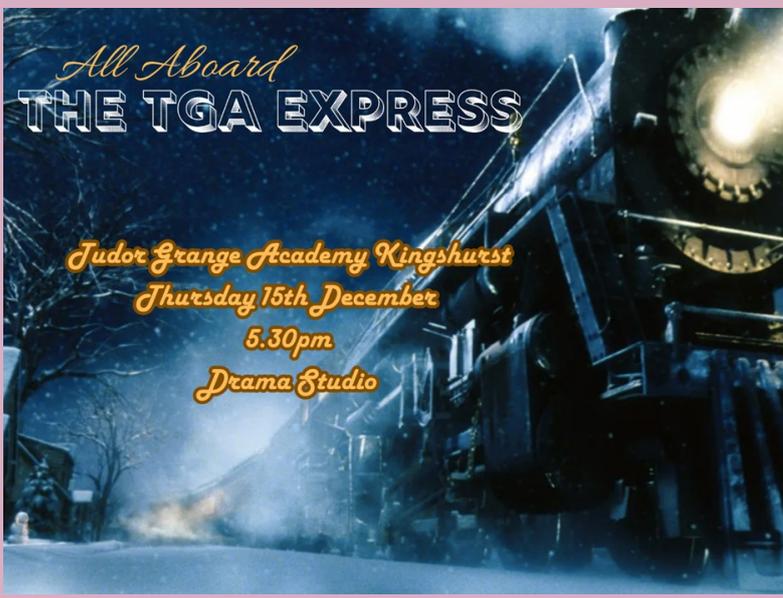




Which Week?

This Week: Monday 11th Dec (Week 1)
Next Week: Monday 18th Dec (Week 2)

Inside Kingshurst



All Aboard The TGA Express

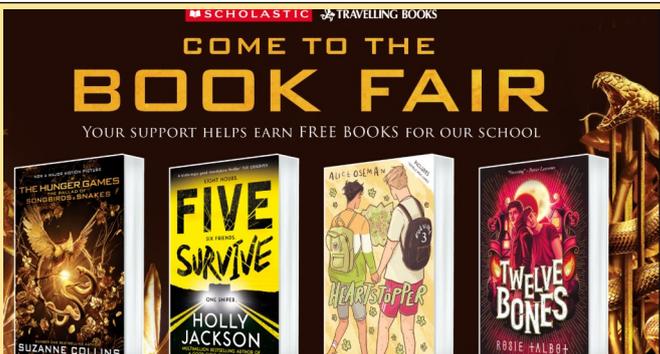
It truly starts to feel a lot more like Christmas when the Academy's festive production appears on the calendar.

Last year's "A Christmas Carol" was fantastic, and this year, the Performing Arts team are set to take us on a journey via "The TGA Express".

Anyone wishing to come 'aboard' will need to purchase a ticket for **Thursday evening and arrive for 5pm, in time for a prompt 5.30pm start.** Refreshment will be available to purchase prior to the start and will all take place in the Drama Studio.

Guests will be able to enter the Academy site via the gates by the D block playground area and enter the main building via the Student Foyer.

Please contact Mr Venson for more details via the following email address (bvenson@kingshurst.tgacademy.org.uk).



Every Little Helps Our Community



As we enter the **final full week of collecting donations** for the North

Solihull Foodbank, we thank all of the families who have already donated so generously for to the Foodbank.

A collection box will remain in both, the Dining Area and Main Reception for any student drop of a can of baked bean or bag of pasta at a convenient point in their day.

Every donation helps our local community.

Once again, items needed by the foodbank include: Long life milk, tea, coffee, juice or squash, rice pudding, tinned fruit, tinned meat, tinned soup, pasta sauce, toiletries, toothpaste.

The Information Centre team extend an invitation to all students to come and visit the book fair that is on until **Monday 18th December.**

Choose from a great collection of exciting new fiction books, diaries, notebooks and much more! **Scan the QR code to pay for your books online.**



National Online Safety: Smart Watches



Wearable tech is increasingly big business. More than 170 million smartwatches were sold globally in 2022, for example, with Apple biting off the largest chunk of the market (26% - some distance ahead of Samsung, in second with 9%). That's partly because they have more than 21,000 apps available for their devices, allowing users to customise their smartwatch experience.

Both Apple and Samsung's products, lean towards the higher spec end of the market – usually with price tags to match. Sourcing a less expensive alternative, however, often also means inferior safety features to protect young wearers. On page 2, you'll find tips on a number of potential risks such as location tracking, causing distractions at school and the danger of theft.

Applications for Sixth Form can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.kingshurst.tgacademy.org.uk/sixth-form/apply-online/>

Christmas Cracker Joke: What does Father Christmas suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Claustrophobia!

10 top tips for safely using SMARTWATCHES

Kids love gadgets, and smartwatches – available to buy from as little as £20 online – make a tempting gift. As with any type of mobile technology, though, smartwatches can pose risks to children unless they're used safely. Receiving unwanted calls, cyber-stalking and distracting a young person when they're crossing the road are all known risks associated with smartwatches. However, these devices can bring plenty of benefits for children and parents alike – so let's examine the pros and cons of smartwatches.

AVOID CHEAP OPTIONS

A quick search online yields a torrent of cheap smartwatches for kids, costing as little as £20. It's wise to avoid this bargain basement tech: it tends to deliver a poor experience with inferior battery life, and it's hard to have faith in the software's safety. There have been cases of smartwatches being hacked to track or contact children; stick to known brands who have a reputation to protect.

CONTROL CALLING

Many smartwatches have the facility to make or take calls. As with a phone, you may want to restrict who your child can call – or be called by. On Apple Watches, you can select trusted contacts who are allowed to ring your child, while other watches' controls vary hugely. Some need to connect to a linked phone for calls, so you may be able to block unknown contacts via that device instead.

BEWARE HIDDEN COSTS

For a smartwatch to allow calls independently (that is, without being connected to a phone via Bluetooth), it will need its own mobile data plan. This might take the form of a tiny SIM card that you slot into the watch – or an eSIM, where the physical card is replaced by software settings. Either way, this will incur an additional monthly cost that you'll need to factor into any buying decision.

ENABLE FAMILY SHARING

Apple Watches aren't cheap, but they do offer superb safety features – allowing parents to control calls, messages and emails on the device, as well as a location tracking system that can send alerts if kids wander beyond pre-set boundaries. Their SOS function enables children to contact emergency services instantly if they're in trouble, which simultaneously also alerts parents and carers.

MAKE THEM COOL FOR SCHOOL

Some schools have banned smartwatches, as pupils have been using them as substitute phones. If your child's school does permit them, some devices can be set to prevent distractions in class. For example, Apple's Schooltime feature turns their watches into ordinary time-keeping devices during school hours. The display changes in this mode, showing teachers that it isn't being used for other purposes.

BE MINDFUL OF BEDTIME

Many smartwatches offer sleep tracking, which some (usually older) children use to justify wearing them to bed. However, that also presents a temptation to message friends or check social media late at night, even if their phone is downstairs. Unless there's a valid reason not to, you could encourage your child to remove the watch in the evenings and ensure the charger stays in a different room.

TRACK ITS LOCATION

Both Apple and Android devices have apps which allow you to track a smartwatch's location. They can also initiate an audio alert – avoiding those cushion-hurling panics when a treasured device can't be found at home. If you're planning to track your child's location via their watch, make them aware of that in advance. You could even make it a condition of them getting the watch in the first place.

THINK 'SAFETY FIRST'

Smartwatches are often worth hundreds of pounds, which can make young people wearing one a target for thieves. Advise your child to keep the watch hidden in public (when possible) and not to resist if muggers demand their watch. If you manage to track a stolen device, pass that information to the police: location data isn't always accurate, so you could end up wrongly accusing someone.

STORE MEDICAL INFO

Devices including the Samsung Galaxy Watch and Apple Watch can store the owner's medical details (such as their blood group and any pre-existing medical conditions), potentially giving emergency services access to vital information in a crisis. These devices also have 'hard fall' detection, which sends a text message to selected contacts along with a map showing the wearer's location.

USE THEM AS MOTIVATION

If you're worried your child's spending too much time slumped on the sofa staring at screens, smartwatches are great fitness trackers and can be a powerful incentive to get moving. Some devices will alert the wearer if they've been inactive for a long time and encourage them to do some exercise. Many watches record the user's daily step count and measure other health metrics.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *BBC Newsnight*, *Radio 5 Live* and the *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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