



Inside Kingshurst

Non-Uniform Day to Make-A-Wish UK

As has become tradition, the final day of term for students will be a non-uniform day where we would ask each student to make a **£1 cash donation to their tutor during the morning registration**. **ALL** proceeds will be going to Make-A-Wish UK to support their incredible, life-changing wishes that they grant to critically ill children in the UK, something of which has the power to turn tears into cheers, and an ability to rescue the magic of childhood even in their toughest times and providing a lifeline for families to spend precious time together. Find out more at www.make-a-wish.org.uk



- **Year 11 (ONLY)** will have **Thursday 18th December** as their non-uniform day (due to this being their final day of the year (they have remote learning on Friday 19th December))
- **ALL OTHER YEAR GROUPS** have their non-uniform day on **Friday 19th December** (the final day of term, that ends at 12.35pm).



OAP Christmas Party

It was the 20th anniversary (!) of the long-standing OAP Christmas Celebration, supporting our community and OAPs from both the local area or indeed members of family to our own students. Once again, it was College Leader, Mr Tindall at the helm, who was supported by our brilliant Catering Team, fresh from knocking out hundreds of Christmas dinners earlier in the day, in addition to students volunteering to support the event and our school choir, bringing the Christmas cheer in the form of the a range of classic Christmas carols, led by Mr Bradley and Miss Foshay.

A table-full of sweet and savoury festive platters awaited our OAP diners in addition to entertainment in the form of a raffle, thanks to the donations from our staff, students, parents and carers and a hotly contested round of bingo. The top prize this year for a 'full house' was an unbelievable festive hamper, donated to the event by Mrs Anderson and the Ethos Team at the academy (who have also demonstrated incredible generosity as part of the Rigby Foundation for prepared a number of hampers for vulnerable members of the academy community) and some light relief throughout, courtesy of festive music that enabled some of our visitors to get up for a festive boogie with some of our students—wonderful stuff!

Key Dates:

Friday 19th December:

⇒ Term ends at 12:35

Christmas holiday:

⇒ Saturday 20th December
2025 to Sunday 4th January 2026

Monday 5th January 2026:

⇒ Inset day (no students)

Tuesday 6th January 2026:

⇒ Start of term for students
at 08:30



Christmas Dinner 2025!

Friday saw the return of the annual Christmas Dinner. Our thanks, as ever go to Denise and the Caterlink team for pulling out all of the stops and producing a delicious meal, complete with chocolate crunch (wow!) or brownie and custard pudding. It takes a massive amount of time and organisation to ensure our Academy community get to enjoy this festive food tradition and we appreciate the efforts of this brilliant team!



Working
for Children
and Families
in Solihull

Solihull Early Help: [On page 3](#), is a one-page summary of the Early Help support available across the borough ([CLICK HERE](#)) in addition to a link to the December Early Help in Solihull Newsletter ([CLICK HERE](#)).

National Online Safety: Top Tips for Safety Over the Festive Season



The holiday season is a time for celebration, relaxation and spending well-earned time with loved ones. While this period will hopefully be calm, it's important that parents acknowledge there are still things we can do to make these weeks as safe as possible for the young people in our care.

Of course, it's not immediately obvious what can or should be done to stay safe over the festive season. [This guide on page 2](#) offers expert advice on the steps you can take to enjoy a less fraught winter break, safeguarding any youngsters who might be present for the celebrations. [CLICK HERE](#)

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON.

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY



Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS



The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS



More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES



Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS



Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD



Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS



Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS



Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE



Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY



Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>

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Early Help in Solihull

The right support at the right time



Community-led Early Help assessments

An Early Help assessment is used to

identify and address the needs of children, young people, and their families at an early stage before problems escalate and require support.



Assessment form



<http://bit.ly/4qRq62>

Any professional can complete an Early Help assessment. The **Family Support team** will help to assess whether further support is needed based on the **Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership's** thresholds for support: <http://bit.ly/4qRm16>

Early Help Coordinators

Early Help Coordinators work with every school **education setting** in Solihull to support families.

They review and screen assessments, provide tailored **advice** to families, and **support** Designated Safeguarding Leads and other pastoral staff with Early Help.

For more information, please email earlyhelpcoordinators@solihull.gov.uk



<http://bit.ly/3WVBx1s>

Family Helpline

0121 788 4327

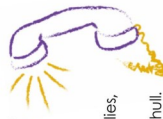
Mon-Thur - 09:00-16:30

Friday - 09:00-16:00

The Family Helpline is a **phone** service for parents, families, and professionals involved with supporting parents and children in Solihull.

The Helpline is staffed by Family Support Workers who help people **find the right services for them**, whether that be signposting to Family Hub sessions, facilitating Early Help assessments and referrals, or offering bespoke advice on next steps.

We acknowledge that not everyone will be able to access the Helpline. All are welcome to visit the Hubs in-person or email familyhubs@solihull.gov.uk to be directed to the right support service for them.



YOUTH OFFER

Our youth offer defines what activities, opportunities and support is available for young people between 11-18 years old or up to 25 years old for those with SEND. <https://bit.ly/4mDmMQ>



The SSCP includes organisations that work with children and families such as Solihull Council, West Midlands Police, local NHS services and schools. They work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people in Solihull.

www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk/bcp



Local centres where children, young people, parents, and carers can access support and take part in fun activities!

We work with trusted partners with expertise in areas such as education, finance, health, maternity, and SEND.

Partners include public services such as the NHS and schools and a range of established community groups and charities.

Elmwood (Smith's Wood)

37 Burtons Way, B36 0UG
elmwoodhubs@solihull.gov.uk
0121 779 1700

Evergreen (Kingshurst)

42 Kingshurst Way, B37 4DX
evergreen@colebridge.org
0121 779 1724

Hatchford Brook (Elmdon)

Old Lodge Lane, B92 8JF
hatchfordbrookhubs@solihull.gov.uk
0121 704 6943

Riverside (Chelmsley Wood)

289 Bosworth Drive, B37 5DP
riversidehubs@solihull.gov.uk
0121 779 1750

Outreach

Meriden Primary School
Fillingley Road, CV7 7LW
Shirley Heath Junior School
Coombe Road, B90 3DS



www.solihull.gov.uk/solihull-family-hubs

Family Support

The Family Support Service provide regular **drop-in sessions** at the Solihull Family Hubs.

Families can simply visit one of the Hubs and **chat with a Family Support Worker** without needing to book in advance.

The **Family Support team** can also complete an Early Help assessment and provide targeted support.

For more information, call the Family Helpline on **0121 788 4327**.



Start for Life offer

The Start for Life offer has lots of information and advice on planning for a baby, pregnancy, babies, toddlers, and more.

<https://bit.ly/4oxV4RN>

TOGETHERNESS

Bringing the Solihull Approach to the world
Mums, dads, grandparents, and carers who live in Solihull can access online parenting courses for free by entering the code **APPLEJACKS** on the **togetherness** website.

<http://bit.ly/3lqIXFe>



Childcare, activities and services for parents and carers

0800 389 8667

familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk <http://bit.ly/4cFRH74>

Local Offer

The Local Offer brings together support services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) between the ages of 0-25 in Solihull.

It includes information on:

- SEND Information, Advice, and Support
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Solihull Parent Carer Voice and Network
- Strategies such as Graduated Approach
- Engagement hub and surveys
- SEND funding and provision
- Service directory

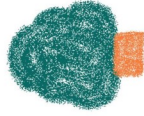
<http://bit.ly/4bewaaw>

My Solihull Map

The My Solihull Map highlights free and low-cost activities and services from the **voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector**.

Discover local community groups on the digital map.

www.solihull.gov.uk/communities/my-solihull-map



CONNECTED CARE NETWORK

Working across the NHS and the voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector to care for children and young people in Solihull.

<https://connectedcarenetwork.co.uk>



Overview of Emergency Closure of D Block Arrangements

DATE	YEAR GROUPS IN	YEAR GROUPS OUT
Mon 15 th Dec	8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13	7
Tues 16 th Dec	7, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13	8
Weds 17 th Dec	7, 8, 10, 11, 12 & 13	9
Thurs 18 th Dec	7, 8, 9, 11, 12 & 13	10
Fri 19 th Dec (half day)	7, 8, 9, 10, 12 & 13	11

