

St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School



Dear Parents/Carers,

We approach the end the Autumn term and of a year which will remain unforgettable for its challenges and trials for generations to come. Covid-19 has certainly altered the way in which we go about our daily lives, but it will not defeat us and I remain confident that we will all emerge victorious over this disease and resume the normality in our daily lives which we all yearn.

End of Term Arrangements

On Tuesday 8th December we received guidance from the Department for Education regarding end of term arrangements. After previously stating that schools would not be allowed to amend their terms dates in any way possible – they decided that Friday 18th December could be a closure day for students and a professional development day for school staff.

I took the decision to close the school to students on the 18th December 2020 and this has become a professional development day for all staff in line with the Government position.

There are a number of reasons why I believe that this is the correct decision for St Andrew the Apostle School.

- Schools are expected to undertake contact tracing (more information below) for 6 days following the end of term. This avoids the need for school staff to work on Christmas eve, or for families to worry about contact from school on Christmas Eve regarding potential coronavirus exposure.
- There is the potential for a substantially reduced workforce if we were to open as usual on the 18th December. Many staff have young children and their own children’s schools may close on the 18th December, leading to a need for childcare and absence from St Andrew the Apostle School.

I know that many parents are also worried about potential exposure to Covid-19 prior to Christmas and meeting with family members, this closure does allow an additional day of no contact in advance of Christmas.

I am sorry that we needed to inform you of this at such short notice and I do understand there may be some inconvenience for some families. As ever, we appreciate all of your support and I do recognise that in my decision making I am never going to please every viewpoint all of the time!

Contact Tracing over the Christmas Holidays

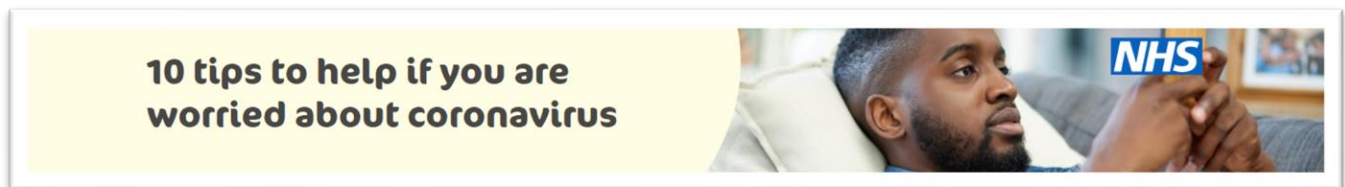
As parents will be aware, schools have taken on the role of contact tracing and issuing isolation advice in the event of a positive test result for a member of the school community. The Government have made it clear that this is a service they expect schools to continue provide until the 6th day after students last attend the school (hence the suggestion of closing to students on the 18th December 2020.)

. If you need to report a positive coronavirus test result for a student of St Andrew the Apostle School, please do ensure that the entire household is isolating and contact us via email at admin@standrewtheapostle.org.uk providing the following information.

- Date the student was last in school:
- Date that coronavirus symptoms began:
- Date of the Covid-19 test
- Date the positive test result was received:

This information will then allow us to begin the contact tracing process. If we need to contact students or families with advice to self - isolate we will do so via text message.

Coronavirus Preventative Measures



I know that we all want to ensure as good a Christmas as possible under the current restrictions, and I have stressed to students the importance of following all relevant safety measures with particular care in the final days of term. I would be grateful for your support in re-enforcing this message at home and also ensuring that all restrictions and protections are followed outside of school. If we are all able to do this effectively, we will reduce the risk of transmission.

It is also worth remembering the 3 main symptoms of Covid-19: a high temperature, a continuous cough and a loss or change of taste /smell. Please note that the temperature does not need to be diagnosed with a thermometer, the NHS advice is that this can just be feeling hot or hot to the touch.

What to do if you are worried about Covid-19

As the pandemic wears on, we know that there are more and more individuals coping with living in a heightened state of anxiety. This can affect children, parents and staff alike. If you do find yourself negatively affected by anxiety about the pandemic and the safety of yourself and those that you love, please do be aware that there is support available. The NHS have a dedicated website <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/> which contains helpful advice on how to manage these feelings and links towards further support.

Now that we are fully familiar with working in a bubbled system, 2021 will be about securing excellent standards of learning and achievement, across the curriculum and with every single student in every year group.

Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch

What a joy it was to see so many of our students getting into the Christmas spirit on Wednesday 16th December as they came into school adorned in a variety of different Christmas themed jumpers as an addition to their school uniform on this one day of the year which has become an annual tradition for us now at St Andrew the Apostle. More importantly, it has also allowed us to use this day as an opportunity to raise funds for charity. This year all our donations were made available to the Trussell Charity which organises the Barnet foodbank. We are grateful for the contribution you made to our choice of charity.

On a slightly different note, it was also great to see our students and staff tucking into their Christmas dinner on the same day and for this I must also say a huge thank you to our wonderful catering team led by Jo Alves.

Staff Changes



Miss Kupeli will be leaving St Andrew the Apostle's Science department after over a year and a half of dedicated service. Miss Kupeli will be leaving the profession to pursue other interests. Miss Kupeli has been a great inspiration to many during her time at the school and I know that she will be missed by students and colleagues alike. We wish Miss Kupeli every success in her future endeavours.

Finally, you are also keenly aware by now that we have appointed a permanent Headteacher – Mrs Indira Warwick – who will be joining us in January. Mrs Warwick has visited the school on numerous occasions since her appointment and has spent five days in school, meeting students, staff members and governors. She is very much looking forward to starting with us in January. I will be returning to my previous role of Deputy Headteacher. I would like to take this opportunity to say just how much I have enjoyed the challenge of leading our school during these uncertain times and I will always be grateful to you all for your words of kindness and support that I have received from you.



I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all well at this special time of the year and hope 2021 brings us all renewed hope and deliverance from the traumas brought about by Covid-19. This has been one of the most challenging times in our lives. In time, our community will grow stronger because of the awful things we are currently facing. This thought fills me with pride.

I end my newsletter by hoping as far as possible that this Christmas is filled with magic, love, peace and goodwill and that all your dreams and wishes come true. Let us all embrace the true meaning of Christmas which is one of hope as we eagerly await to mark the birth of our Saviour. Let us also remember that Christmas is a time of spiritual reflection as we celebrate God's love for the world through the birth of the Christ child: Jesus.

I wish you a safe, merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

God Bless you all!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Vassiliou'.

Michael Vassiliou

Headteacher – Acting



'Young Carer from St Andrew the Apostle School raises a £1,000,000M for Charity'



Photograph of Antonia with Acting Headteacher, Michael Vassiliou

Antonia Bilgin, a Young Carer who lives in Enfield has taken part in Global Radio's 'Make Some Noise Emergency Funding Campaign' which raised a million pounds for small charities across the capital who are supporting vulnerable people at this time. As a result a grant was secured by Enfield Carers Centre where Antonia is part of EyPIC (Enfield Young People in Caring), the Young Carers Support Project at the centre. The grant also went towards support for adult carers in Enfield.

Antonia was interviewed in March on Heart FM and her inspirational story of support and care for her family was shared across the radio-waves. In response to this interview, over a million pounds was raised.

On Tuesday 8th December Antonia, aged 11 and currently in Year Seven at St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School, was surprised by Heart FM live on air. She received a package of Christmas presents to congratulate her for all her hard work and efforts and in recognition for the support she has given her family over lockdown and since students returned to school in September. As a young carer, Antonia not only looks after her family, she also supports her mother with her 5 younger siblings: Maria, 10, Alitia, 8, Raphaella, 7, Ilkinos, 5 and Nikita, 2, who also received Christmas presents.

Antonia's Mother, Niki Bilgin, said, "She is my pride and inspiration. She has had an enormous responsibility thrust upon her at a time where she ought to be carefree and yet I have never heard her complain."

Antonia herself has said, 'I don't mind ... anyone in my position would do the same for their mum. When I found out I did not know what to say, but I was over the moon. I really like raising money for charity and helping other people.'

Acting Headteacher at St Andrew the Apostle School, Michael Vassiliou, and all at the St Andrew Apostle School community are incredibly proud of Antonia. Mr Vassiliou stated, "Antonia is an inspiration to us all. I am humbled and proud to have such a student representing our school."

The manager of the young carers project at Enfield Carers Centre, Carla Brain, said:

"We are very proud of Antonia and all of the Young Carers that we support in Enfield, we currently have 600 Young Carers all aged under 18 who are caring for a loved one. They are an inspiration to us all. We would also like to thank Global Radio for all their support and the people of Enfield who have donated over 500 Christmas Gifts to the Young Carers Project this year.

If you know a Carer or Young Carer who needs support, please call us on: 0208 366 3677 or look us up on our website: www.enfieldcarers.org.

Attached is the following:

Audio copy of Antonia's first interview with Heart (please see below)

For More Information Contact:
The Headteacher's PA, Mrs Helen Marcou
h.marcou@standrewtheapostle.org.uk
Tel: 020 3195 5444
Website: www.standrewtheapostle.org.uk

The logo for Heart, featuring the word "heart" in a bold, red, lowercase sans-serif font. The letter 'e' is stylized with a heart shape inside it.

St Andrew the Apostle – Thoughts for the Week

Bible Readings and Prayers for this time:



Psalm 22

You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honour him!
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

²⁴ For he has not despised or scorned
the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him
but has listened to his cry for help.

²⁵ From you comes the theme of my praise in
the great assembly;
before those who fear you¹ I will fulfil my
vows.

²⁶ The poor will eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the LORD will praise him—
may your hearts live forever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
will bow down before him,

²⁸ for dominion belongs to the LORD
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹ All the rich of the earth will feast and
worship;
all who go down to the dust will kneel
before him—
those who cannot keep themselves alive.

³⁰ Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the
Lord.

³¹ They will proclaim his righteousness,
declaring to a people yet unborn:
He has done it!



Jesus, as you healed the sick,
bring healing to those in our
families who are ill today.
Jesus, Lord of love,
in your mercy, hear us.

Christ born for us,
Son of God, given for us,
help us to know you,
to worship and to serve you.
Amen.

Theme of the Week – Week beginning 18th December

Theme of the week	Key Dates/Events	Bible Quotation	Inspirational Quotation	Questions to consider
Honesty: Reflecting back on this term and looking forward to Christmas	20 th December – Human solidarity Day 25 th December - Christmas	“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” – Isaiah 9: 6	The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost two thousand years. - George Matthew Adams	How honest are you about your own successes and areas to improve? Has this been the term you hoped for in term of the targets you set at the start of the year?

Future Events for the Diary

<u>Week 17</u>	<u>Key Events</u>
Monday 4 th January 2021	Inset Day
Tuesday 5 th January 2021	Start of Term – Normal Time
Wednesday 6 th January 2021	
Thursday 7 th January 2021	Y11 Virtual Parents / Carer Evening 3:45 – 7:00pm Click here to access
Friday 8 th January 2021	6 th Form Taster Day

ST ANDREW THE APOSTLE GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL: NEW, PERMANENT BUILDING – CONTRACTOR APPOINTED



Wonderful news to end the calendar year and another significant milestone passed on the route to our new, permanent building at St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School. This week we have been able to confirm the appointment of our building contractor.

Bowmer and Kirkland (B&K) has been appointed by the Department for Education and is commencing work on the final design to be followed by construction beginning in 2021. The construction team including the project architect is visiting site this week to start working with us on finalising plans. This process will continue with a series of focussed meetings in the New Year.

The appointment of B&K builds on the strong working relationship that the sponsor for St Andrew the Apostle School – The Russell Education Trust – has with this company; B&K is currently building the permanent site for another Trust school, Turing House, in Whitton in the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.

Newly appointed Headteacher at St Andrew, Mrs Indira Warwick, said: “In these times of uncertainty, it is a relief to know that our state-of-the art new building is on its way and is in such trustworthy hands. We look forward to sharing further details with the community as we move ahead with this exciting project.”

Her views were echoed by the school’s Chair of Governors, Mrs Mary Karaolis OBE: “Having B&K appointed to this project is the best Christmas present the school could have wished for.”

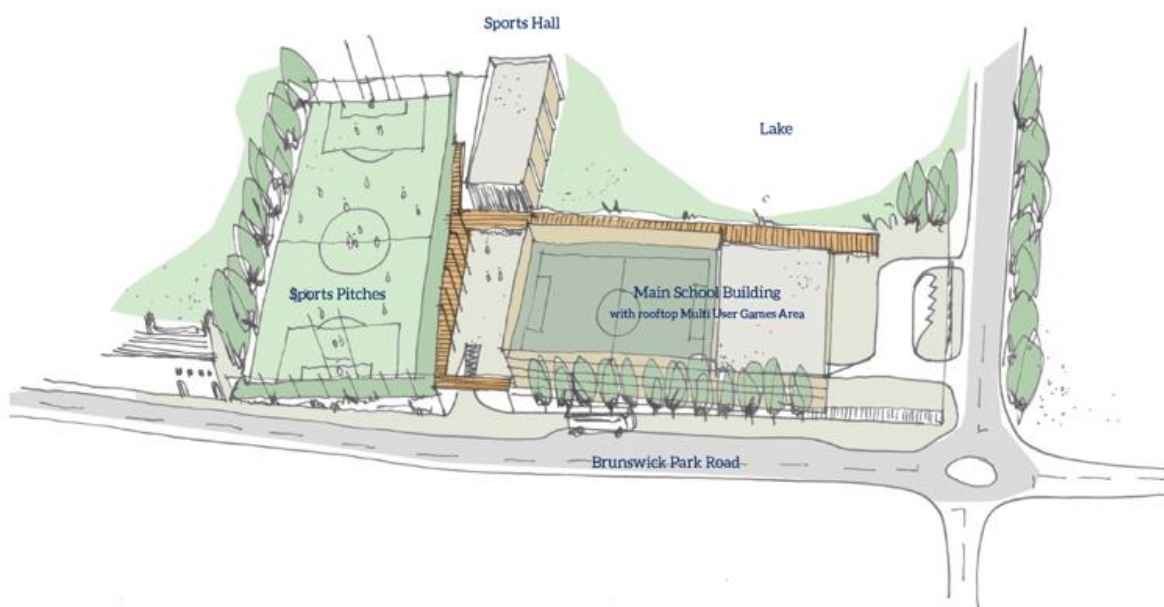
The school is looking forward to sharing progress of any next steps and the detailed plans as they are developed and implemented.

Please see proposed designs below:

Proposed Permanent Buildings



Bird's eye view of St Andrew the Apostle School Buildings and pitch

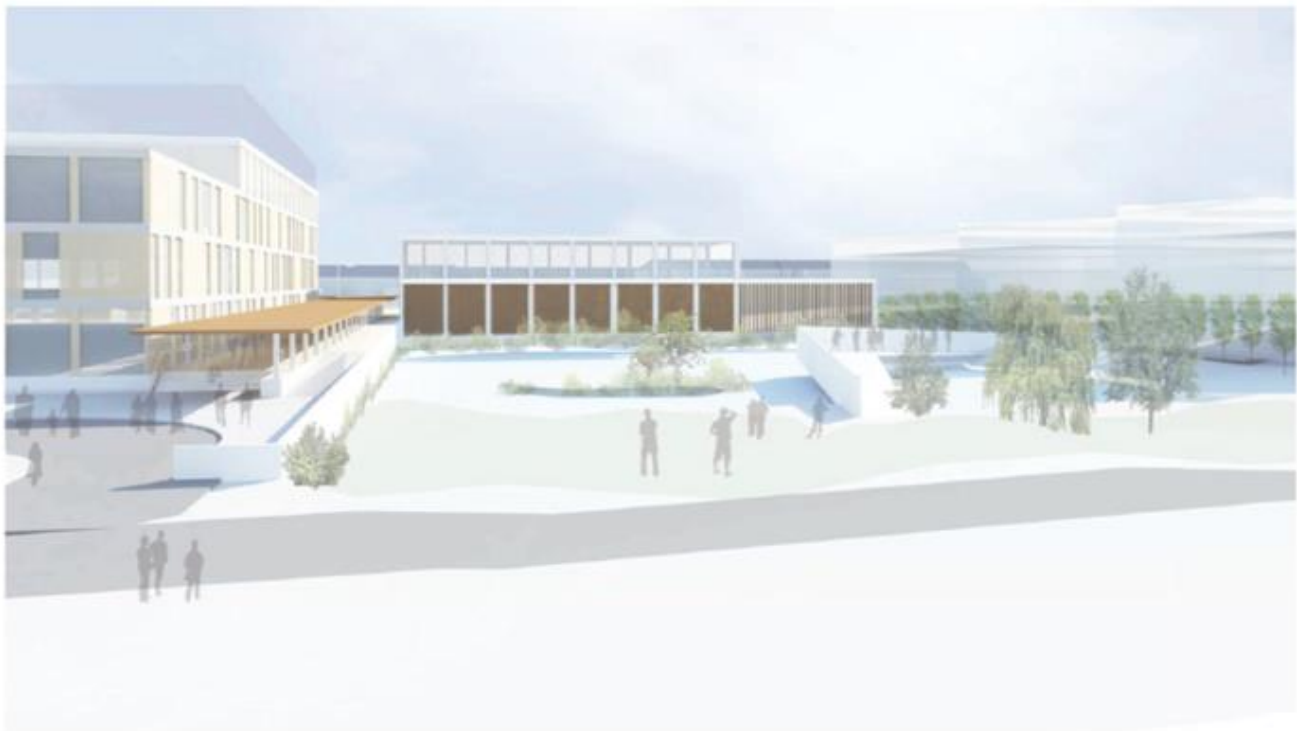




Proposed St Andrew the Apostle School showing relative positions of main building, sports pitches and front entrance from Brunswick Park Road



View of the proposed School across the lake



Sixth Form



Year 13 Financial Workshop

In between the gruelling process of mock exams and UCAS applications, year 13 students have been participating in a live virtual workshop with City University. In preparing for their next academic journey, students have been engaged with thinking ahead and planning for their financial options with regards to tuition fees and living arrangements. The link has been shared with students for future use and a Financial workshop will be in place for next year to guide students through their financial application process. In the meantime, it has been a pleasure to watch these future academics realise their potential and consider the responsibilities that lie ahead.

Message to Parents/Carer from the Leader of Barnet Council

Putting the Community First



London Borough
of Barnet

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure that you will join with me in sending our ongoing and heartfelt gratitude to all Barnet schools for their continued dedication and commitment during the COVID-19 crisis. I know that many of you will be showing your thanks to all the staff in many ways and that this is much appreciated by schools.

During this whole period, schools have tried so hard to stay open as much as possible and have attempted to keep 'business as usual' for all children and young people in their care. We know that continuing to provide education and a safe environment is vital for every child and young person and that all schools are fully supportive of this. It was so rewarding to see how happy all children and young people were to be back in school full-time at the start of the autumn term.

We know that it can be frustrating for all concerned when individuals, classes, bubbles or even whole schools, must close. Schools continue to review and update their rigorous risk assessments to ensure that children and staff continue to be safe in school. We know these are shared with you, usually via the school's website. The decision to close part of, or even a whole, school only happens because there is a health risk to all those concerned. We are grateful to you for your understanding. Schools are also working tirelessly to ensure that their online and 'blended' learning offer is as good as possible when children and young people need to learn remotely. Schools are grateful for any positive and constructive feedback they receive. They do review their practice as a result and put in place any improvements that are practical and possible to do.

In all aspects of education, schools will be striving to offer as much as they possibly can. However, we still need to remember that every school is different and that the educational offer, both onsite and remotely, as well as each individual school's risk assessments, will vary from school to school.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your continued support of Barnet schools and wish you and your families well during these extremely challenging times.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Thomas".

Councillor Daniel Thomas
Leader of the Council

www.barnet.gov.uk

Winter Family Support

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our lives in many ways. It has caused disruption to family life, to work and school and the way in which we access support services.

We have produced [a simple guide for families](#) within the borough to find the range of advice, help and support that is available to them at this tough time. It includes financial support, children centres, local food banks and community groups, mental health and well-being information.



Song Academy Song Writing Competition



We're calling all creative & musical young people to get ready to enter The Young Songwriter 2021 competition! It's a wonderful opportunity to engage your pupils and celebrate their creative talents.

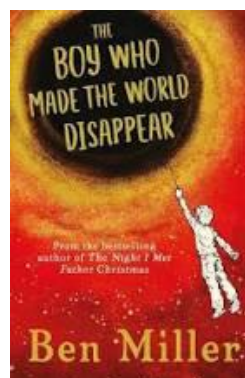
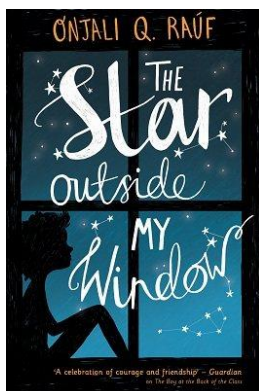
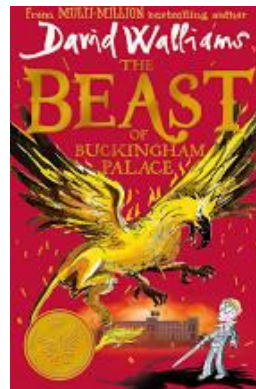
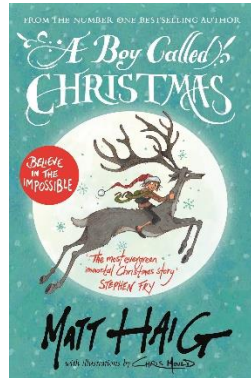
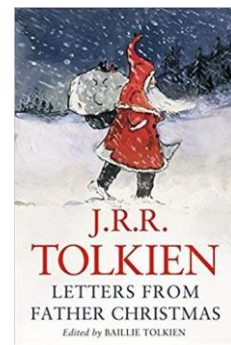
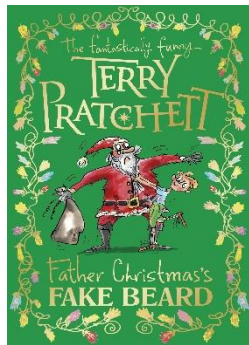
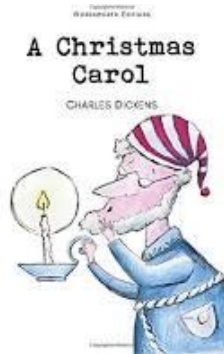
With judges including Fraser T Smith, Tom Odell, Miranda Cooper, Calum Scott & Tom Grennan plus fantastic prizes, including a recording studio session and Yamaha equipment worth £1,000, this year is set to be bigger than ever!

Please spread the exciting news in your pre-Christmas holidays newsletter! It's a perfect creative and rewarding activity for the Christmas holidays.



Cosy up this Christmas with a good book!

As the chill of winter takes hold, why not snuggle up with a hot chocolate and a good book? There are so many great stories to leap into and new weird and wonderful worlds to explore! Here are some recommendations for this Christmas:



Recommended book list this Christmas:

A Christmas Carol – Charles Dickens

Father Christmas' Fake Beard – Terry Pratchett

The Christmasaurus – Tom Fletcher

Letters From Father Christmas – J.R.R. Tolkien

The Girl Who Saved Christmas – Matt Haig

The Boy Called Christmas – Matt Haig

The Beast of Buckingham Palace – David Walliams

The Book of Dust (volume1) – Philip Pullman

The Star Outside My Window - Onjali Q. Rauf

Boy Giant – Michael Morpurgo

The Boy Who Made The World Disappear – Ben Miller

Forgotten Fairy Tales of Brave and Brilliant Girls – Kate Pankhurst

Useful Websites to Help your Mental Health



- <https://www.childline.org.uk/> – contains tips and resources for victims
- <https://www.bullying.co.uk/> – help and advice for victims, parents and schools
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> – help and advice for parents and families
- <https://www.kooth.com/> – a good source of independent counselling for students