

Staff Wellbeing Newsletter



We're nearly there!!!!

It's been an extremely busy start to the academic year and the end to 2023!

We hope you have plans to rest up over the Christmas period, either with friends or family, or snuggled up in the warm with some 'me time'...

This Christmas newsletter, we've added quite a lot of support and guidance, because we know that it's tough out there at the moment, both with the job we do and outside of school; we all have things going on. There's family support, financial guidance and application forms, as well as freebie days out for over the festive period - some in amongst the Christmas hullabaloo and some away from the hustle and bustle if being in 'the thick of it' isn't for you this year. However you're planning to spend your time off this year, 'it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

Resources and support for you and your family

We know how difficult it is to juggle the daily challenges and stresses... whether that's looking after your family, looking after other loved ones, all whilst going out to work. Life is hard sometimes. Below are some links to advice and guidance to help you look after yourself, whilst looking after everyone else; you're important too.

Anna Freud Centre for children and families is a fantastic resource, which offers an array of guidance and information regarding mental health and wellbeing. The link below takes you to the parent/carer self-care page, which highlights exactly what to do and why you should also take care of yourself.

<https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/self-care-for-parents-and-carers/>

Finance help - the Kent Family hub at the NHS also has a lot of information for families and/or individuals who need support with finances and benefits. There is a list of resources on there, with a number to access the Kent Money Advice Hub. You can also find guidance for those with children under 5 and those with school-aged children.

<https://family.kentcht.nhs.uk/support/your-family/family-finances-and-benefits/#:~:text=Visit%20kentmoneyadvicehub.com%20or%20call,tax%2C%20housing%20and%20debt%20advice.>

Southern Water Financial Hardship Fund has been set up this year to provide additional assistance to individuals who are experiencing financial difficulty. Through this fund, they offer three types of assistance:

- A one-off bill reduction (of up to 50%)
- A debt write-off (of up to £2,000)
- A grant towards specific home appliances & furniture (of up to £1,000)

To qualify, you must be able to demonstrate significant financial hardship, either long or short term, or challenging personal circumstances that have a financial impact. There is a short online form to complete and they will let you know the outcome within six weeks.

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/water-for-life/community/customer-and-community-grants/customer-hardship-fund>

There is also funding and Support for Individuals

And a reminder that KCF has a list of alternative funders and support, [download here](#).

KCF Funding for Individuals - their funds are open for nominations all year round, more info and how to [apply here](#).

New Year, New Application Process

In the new year, the KCF application process will go online, rather than via a word document. This is part of their new system through which they process all applications and nominations for funding.



If you want to have someone else do the cooking for you at any point this December, Morrisons have launched their Christmas menu, starting at just £4 over this holiday season. It may be worth a visit for a meal as 'cheap as chips'!

<https://www.kentlive.news/whats-on/food-drink/morrisons-unveils-new-christmas-caf-8910910>



We understand that Christmas isn't the same festive time for everyone and sometimes we just need to have some 'alone time'.

The following are some ideas for you and your family, and/or links to spend time away from everything and just focus on you.

<https://www.visitmaidstone.com/blog/read/2023/11/christmas-serenity-your-guide-to-escaping-the-holiday-crowds-b81>

Festive fun for the family



Whether you have young children, teenagers, or just love getting festive yourself, here's some things to do over Christmas in Kent if you want to be in the thick of it. There's some that are free, some that are not so free and a whole host of Santa's Grottos to visit...

<https://flashpackingfamily.com/christmas-events-in-kent/>

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/christmas/>

<https://kent.muddystilettos.co.uk/things-to-do/kent-festive-activities/>

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/free-outing/>

Visit Kent and Kent Attractions are websites which always have some wonderful ideas all year around - below is the link that showcases everything to do in Kent this festive season. We've even added Christmas trails.

<https://www.visitkent.co.uk/visit-kent-blog/christmas-trails/>

<https://kentattractions.co.uk/outing-ideas/christmas/>

With money not always in abundance, especially at this time of the year, the link below highlights some activities that cost very little, or don't cost a penny.

<https://seekent.co.uk/free-family-festive-events-in-kent/>

We've also included a list of Christmas markets in and around Kent, which you could just pop along to for a day out and browse!

Festive Markets across Kent:

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/whats-on/news/times-and-dates-of-kent-farmer-s-markets-this-christmas-278565/>

Or if you'd rather be snuggled up indoors making, baking and crafting, then here's 30 Christmas activities that could be a lot of fun to do, as well as some tree decorations to make in the lead up to the big day.

<https://www.redbookmag.com/life/mom-kids/how-to/g3780/christmas-activities-kids/>

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/christmas-ideas/g34112389/christmas-crafts-for-kids/>

And these 12 days of Christmas activities are absolutely free!

<https://www.familyeducation.com/fun/christmas-activities-traditions/12-days-fun-cheap-christmas-activities-families>

And finally, these are all local events happening in and around our local villages:

Family Festive Fanfare

Saturday 16th December 2023

1:30-4:30pm (concert starts at 3pm)

Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, Buckland Road, Maidstone, ME16 0SF

Free parking on site

Book online and save up to £10 per family compared to on the day prices:

£12 for adults (£15 on the day)

£8 for seniors and children aged 5+ (£10 on the day)

£30 for a family of four (£40 on the day)

Under 5s get in FREE!

www.maidstonewindsymphony.org

What better way to celebrate
than by sending your Christmas
cards with us!

Post your Christmas cards for the Kingswood
Village in this postbox for a donation and the
Leeds and Kingswood Beavers/Cubs and Scouts
will deliver them over the next few weeks!
Final delivery is:
Saturday 23rd December 10am followed by
tea/coffee and mince pies in the Scout hut
afterwards!

Beavers/Cubs and Scouts will be raising money
for their next camp!

#SkillsForLife

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ST MARGARET'S CHURCH, BROOMFIELD

CAROLS AT BROOMFIELD

Sunday 10 December

at 3.30pm

**Please come along and bring the children
Mulled wine and mince pies after the service**

There's also some 'elf on the Shelf' ideas if you're starting to run out of inspiration! Ha ha!

<https://www.thepragmaticparent.com/easy-elf-on-the-shelf-ideas-for-busy-parents/>



Discount time!



Who doesn't love a discount??!! Well, we've scoured the web again for any sites offering discounts over the Christmas period for teaching staff and those working in a school... and here they are... there's even some advice on where to look with the first link!

<https://www.yourmoneysorted.co.uk/blog/discounts-for-teachers>

<https://www.discountsforteachers.co.uk/christmas-deals>

Not to mention our very own local authority (KCC) reward scheme for all employees...

<https://kcc.rewardgateway.co.uk/Authentication/Start>

And some advice on how to access it!

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/do-you-know-how-to-access-your-employee-benefits>

Well done to everyone this term for pushing through this year - we've almost made it!

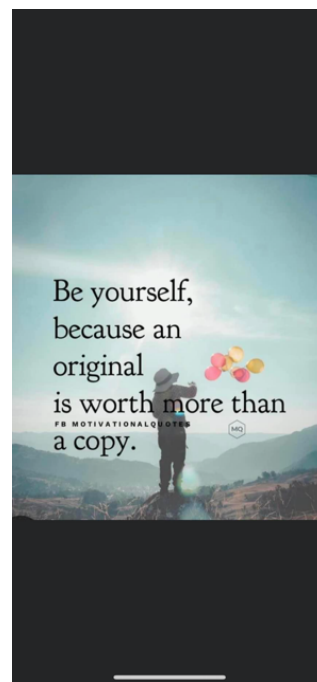
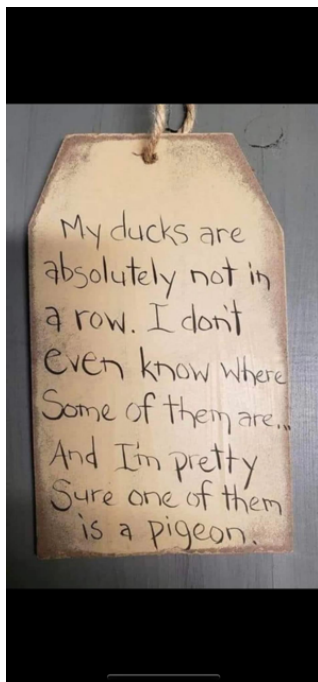
Don't forget you can get in touch with the wellbeing team via email if you need anything or want to opt in with ideas for the newsletter:

wellbeing@aspire-kent.org.uk

And even if you just need a chat, then please don't hesitate to contact us...

If you'd like to speak with someone independently, then the Education Support helpline 08000 562 561 - 24/6 - 365 days

And we'll leave you with some thoughts to think about...



Have a safe and festive Christmas everyone!

If we don't see you on Friday 15th December for a sausage and bacon cutty, then we'll see you in 2024!

The ASPIRE Wellbeing Team xx

