

# Head of School

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025

UPDATE

Dear parents/carers and students,

We have now completed Term 3 – and what a busy term it has been!

Our House Teams once again have inspired collaboration, competition and personal success as they bring together students from all year groups to raise their aspirations and challenge themselves to complete challenges and competitions as a collective. This term is not dissimilar to any other, as once again, we have had some fantastic House successes! A highlight has been the ‘Go the Distance’ challenge which saw the Orange House running team student members win, they ran the furthest combined house distance and were the only house to beat our staff Head of House staff team to victory! We have had many other House competitions this term which students have been able to get involved in, including Inter-House Futsal, Riddle challenges and a Plastic Bottle competition. Congratulations to all of the winners of this term’s House competitions and well done to Red House who are not only this term’s House point champions but also the year to date current champions (as seen below)!

| 1ST            | 2ND            | 3RD            | 4TH            | 5TH            | 6TH            |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Red House      | Green House    | Blue House     | Orange House   | Yellow House   | Purple House   |
| 266,362 points | 263,214 points | 261,311 points | 259,362 points | 249,717 points | 240,137 points |

Last Friday, our Year 10 and 11 History students saw history brought to life even though it happened over 100 years ago! Thanks to Virtual Reality our History students were able to go back in time and experience life in a World War One trench. Using VR headsets and footage created by Time Travel Education, students were able to be fully immersed on the battlefield and see for themselves what it would have been like for an injured soldier. The immersive experience will be invaluable to students understanding of the ‘Medicine on the British Sector of the Western Front’ unit of their History GCSE.





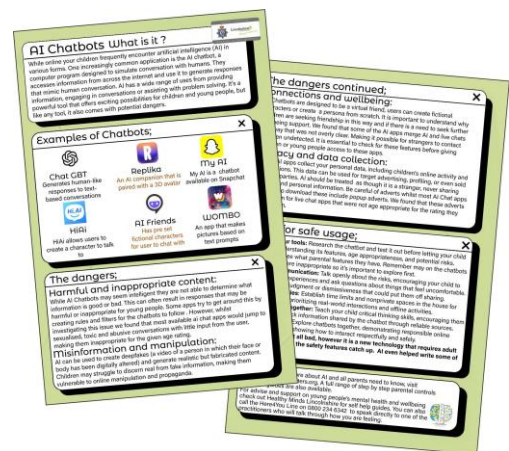
On Thursday, we celebrated the end of the Year 11 Prefect duties with a celebration Prefect Breakfast. They now hand over the baton to Year 10 students who have been selected for Temporary Prefect positions following successful applications. We have been able to award 32 students in Year 10 with temporary prefect status in this trial position prior to being awarded full prefect status. Congratulations to all Year 10 students who have been awarded this important role in the school.

It was an absolute delight this week to experience the hard work, creativity and commitment of our Year 11 food students who are currently completing their trial practical examination. All students have excelled themselves as chef connoisseurs in the Giles Academy kitchen! I have equally enjoyed visiting the students to see and taste the finished products! The selection of foods, the difficulty levels and presentation of meals continues to rise year on year, with all students showcasing their talents – masterchef style!



As we approach the half term break, I would like to remind parents and students about our school active safeguarding support over the holiday period. If any student requires support for an ‘out of school hours’ concern, we have a designated email address ([worried@gilesacademy.co.uk](mailto:worried@gilesacademy.co.uk)). This email address is active during the holiday period with designated staff available to respond. There may not be an immediate response due to it being a staff holiday period however, please be reassured that there will be support and advice signposted as soon as possible.

Attached to the end of this update, I have included a parent/carer helpsheet regarding Artificial Intelligence Robots (AI Robots). There has been a rise in the popularity of this amongst our young people and in an ever-changing world of social media and apps I wanted to raise the awareness of this. Whilst AI can be a really creative tool and has many benefits that will change how we use the internet, it is important parents are aware that safety features are not in line with most commonly used apps, and they therefore need to be checked by an adult and monitored in order to avoid harmful content being seen or created by children and young people.



If you or your child require further safeguarding support, specialist external support and helplines are listed on our school website ([www.gilesacademy.co.uk/safeguarding](http://www.gilesacademy.co.uk/safeguarding)). This can be found on the Pastoral tab / Safeguarding and scroll to ‘Who can offer additional support?’

In celebration of 'World Book Day' on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025, we are inviting our Year 7 students only to dress up as a character from their favourite book. They may arrive to school in their costume and remain in their costume throughout the day. They are welcome to bring with them a copy of the book that they are dressing as a character from but they do not need to do this. On this day, we are also having a 'Best Costume' competition in our Library. Students wishing to enter the competition should attend the Library at 1.20pm on the day. There will be prizes available for winning entries. We do ask please that parents/carers ensure costumes are appropriate for school and clearly relate to a character from a book. This is not an additional opportunity for a non-uniform day.

Finally, in sporting news, congratulations to our Year 8 Netball team who beat Boston High School 22-1 on Wednesday night. It was an excellent team performance with a really positive competitive team spirit. The Players Player was Darci Smith due to her incredible shooting success, and Coaches Player was Florence Mackay because of the way she completely dominated the court. A special mention also goes to Ema Doksvele for making her team match debut and playing so well in defence. What an amazing result and well done to all of the players!

Term 3 has been an amazing term and we look forward to welcoming all students back to school on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

I hope you and your families all have a fantastic half term break.

Kindest regards,



**Miss Katie Belcher**  
Head of School, Giles Academy



## For the latest news

You can follow Giles Academy on our official social media platforms as follows:

- [www.instagram.com/GilesAcademySLAT](https://www.instagram.com/GilesAcademySLAT)
- [www.facebook.com/GilesAcademy](https://www.facebook.com/GilesAcademy)
- [www.twitter.com/GilesSLAT](https://www.twitter.com/GilesSLAT)

# AI Chatbots What is it ?

While online your children frequently encounter artificial intelligence (AI) in various forms. One increasingly common application is the AI chatbot, a computer program designed to simulate conversation with humans. They access information from across the internet and use it to generate responses that mimic human conversation. AI has a wide range of uses from providing information, engaging in conversations or assisting with problem solving. It's a powerful tool that offers exciting possibilities for children and young people, but like any tool, it also comes with potential dangers.

## Examples of Chatbots;



**ChatGBT**  
 Generates human-like responses to text-based conversations



**Replika**  
 An AI companion that is paired with a 3D avatar



**My AI**  
 My AI is a chatbot available on Snapchat



**HiAi**  
 HiAi allows users to create a character to talk to



**AI Friends**  
 Has pre set fictional characters for user to chat with



**WOMBO**  
 An app that makes pictures based on text prompts

## The dangers;

### Harmful and inappropriate content:

While AI Chatbots may seem intelligent they are not able to determine what information is good or bad. This can often result in responses that may be harmful or inappropriate for young people. Some apps try to get around this by creating rules and filters for the chatbots to follow. However, whilst investigating this issue we found that most available ai chat apps would jump to sexualised, toxic and abusive conversations with little input from the user, making them inappropriate for the given age rating.

### Misinformation and manipulation:

AI can be used to create deepfakes (a video of a person in which their face or body has been digitally altered) and generate realistic but fabricated content. Children may struggle to discern real from fake information, making them vulnerable to online manipulation and propaganda.

## The dangers continued;



### Connections and wellbeing:

AI Chatbots are designed to be a virtual friend, users can create fictional characters or create a persona from scratch. It is important to understand why children are seeking friendship in this way and if there is a need to seek further wellbeing support. We found that some of the AI apps merge AI and live chats in a way that was not overly clear. Making it possible for strangers to contact children undetected. It is essential to check for these features before giving children or young people access to these apps.

### Privacy and data collection:

Many AI apps collect your personal data, including children's online activity and interactions. This data can be used for target advertising, profiling, or even sold to third parties. AI should be treated as though it is a stranger, never sharing private and personal information. Be careful of adverts whilst most AI Chat apps are free to download these include popup adverts. We found that these adverts were often for live chat apps that were not age appropriate for the rating they were given.

## 5 tip for safe usage;



- 1. Know your tools:** Research the chatbot and test it out before letting your child use it, understanding its features, age appropriateness, and potential risks. Check to see what parental features they have. Remember many of the chatbots we used were inappropriate so it's important to explore first.
- 2. Open communication:** Talk openly about the risks, encouraging your child to share their experiences and ask questions about things that feel uncomfortable. Try to avoid judgment or dismissiveness that could put them off sharing.
- 3. Set boundaries:** Establish time limits and nonprivate spaces in the house for chatbot use, prioritizing real-world interactions and offline activities.
- 4. Fact-check together:** Teach your child critical thinking skills, encouraging them to double-check information shared by the chatbot through reliable sources.
- 5. Be the guide:** Explore chatbots together, demonstrating responsible online behaviour and showing how to interact respectfully and safely.

**Remember AI isn't all bad, however it is a new technology that requires adult supervision whilst the safety features catch up. AI even helped write some of this newsletter.**



To learn more about AI and all parents need to know, visit [InternetMatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org). A full range of step by step parental controls guides are also available.

For advice and support on young people's mental health and wellbeing check out Healthy Minds Lincolnshire for self help guides. You can also call the Here4You Line on 0800 234 6342 to speak directly to one of the practitioners who will talk through how you are feeling.





TRAIN TO TEACH WITH  
LINCOLNSHIRE ITT



# Get Into Teaching OPEN EVENING

**Wednesday 12th March 2025 • 5.30pm to 7.00pm**

South Lincolnshire Academies Trust (SLAT) are now one of the **Lead Partners for Lincolnshire ITT** and can talk to you about starting your teaching journey with us. At this 'Get Into Teaching' event, which will be held at Spalding Academy, you will discover how you can gain a recognised teaching qualification with our one-year school centred Initial Teacher Training.

If any of the following applies to you, you will benefit from attending:

- Recently gained a Level 6 undergraduate degree (e.g. BA, BSc, BEd, BEng) in any subject
- Currently studying a Level 6 undergraduate degree (e.g. BA, BSc, BEd, BEng) in any subject
- Currently studying A-levels or Level 3 BTECs and wanting to get into teaching
- Wanting to change career and become a teacher
- Working in a non-teaching role within a school or college environment and wanting to get into teaching

**You could train either at the schools in our highly successful Trust (Bourne Academy, Spalding Academy, Giles Academy and Cowley Academy) or at a variety of other secondary schools in the Lincolnshire, Rutland and Peterborough areas.**

This event starts at 5.30pm where there will be a presentation then the opportunity to speak to staff informally. You will learn about the different training pathways, entry requirements and details about student finances. We will cover school placements, the course content, support available plus timescales. We can also provide help so you can successfully apply.

To attend, please visit [www.slat.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.slat.org.uk/vacancies) to register in advance.



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South Lincolnshire  
Academies Trust

Spalding Academy, Neville Avenue, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 2EJ  
[www.slat.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.slat.org.uk/vacancies)