



Christmas survival guide tips

Activities and events to access across
Essex over the Christmas period

Dimensions Relaxed Cinema – check the Dimensions website or social media for the latest relaxed film screenings at local Cineworld, Odeon and Vue cinemas. They are usually Sundays and feature the latest films such as Frozen 2 <https://www.dimensions-uk.org/get-involved/campaigns/autism-friendly-cinema-screenings/>

Ronnie's Way! – special events for special children, arranges private hire events at venues across Essex to offer children with additional needs and their families the chance to access a fun activity when it's not too busy. There are several events planned over the Christmas period including a party with Santa at Stay & Play in Basildon on 16th December, a session at Base Jump in Rayleigh on 22nd December and Colchester Leisure World on 4th January 2020. <https://www.facebook.com/ronniesway2017/>

Colchester Castle Relaxed Sessions on Sunday 1st December and 5th January, when visitors with ASD will be offered an opportunity to visit the museum at a quieter time, between 10am and 12noon, with various adaptations to make the visit more comfortable. <https://colchester.cimuseums.org.uk/events/relaxedopening-dec19/>

Essex Short Breaks Winter Newsletter lists clubs and activities across Essex that have events over the Christmas holidays. http://www.snapcharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ShortBreaks_Dec-2019-Feb-2020.pdf

Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre in Thurrock is running a Festive Fun Day on Saturday 14th December. Lots of outdoor activities for all ages and abilities. http://www.snapcharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Grangewaters_Festive_Fun_day_2019.pdf

Relaxed performances

A Relaxed performance is designed to make the theatre experience more comfortable for children and young people with additional needs. Changes may be made to the lighting or sound, and there can be an increased capacity for wheelchair users. During relaxed performances, if a child is struggling, they are able to leave the theatre and re-enter as they please.

Dick Whittington, Towngate Theatre Basildon – Monday 9th December 2019 at 5.00pm. <https://towngatetheatre.co.uk/dick-whittington/> Box office: 01268 205300

Robin Hood and The Merry Men, Cliffs Pavilion Southend – Tuesday 31st December 2019 at 11.00am. <https://southendtheatres.org.uk/Online/panto-southend-essex-pantomime> Box office: 01702 351135

Peter Pan, Civic Theatre Chelmsford – Thursday 2nd January 2020 at 2.00pm. <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/theatres/whats-on/children-and-families/relaxed-performance-of-peter-pan/> Box office: 01245 606505

Cinderella, Mercury at Abbey Field Colchester – Sunday 8th December 2019 at 12.00noon. <https://www.mercurytheatre.co.uk/event/cinderella-2019/#dates> Box office: 01206 573948

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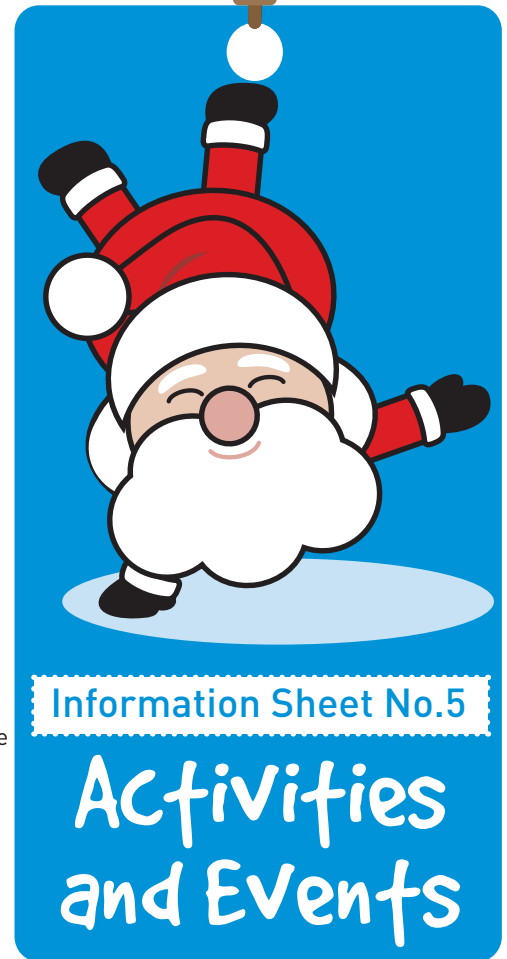
The Boy Who Cried Wolf, Brentwood Theatre – Friday 20th December 2019 at 2.00pm and Sunday 29th December 2019 at 11.00am <https://brentwood-theatre.co.uk/event/the-boy-who-cried-wolf/> Box office: 01277 200305

Dick Whittington (relaxed and signed), Thameside Theatre Thurrock – Monday 16th December 2019 at 6.30pm <https://thameside.ticketsolve.com/shows/1173592263> Box office: 0345 300 5264

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Prince's Theatre Clacton-on-Sea – Friday 27th December 2019 at 2pm <https://princetheatre.ticketsolve.com/shows/873605846> Box office: 01255 686633

Robin Hood, Queen's Theatre Hornchurch – Thursday 2nd January 2020 at 5.30pm <https://www.queens-theatre.co.uk/whats-on/show/robin-hood/> Box office: 01708 443333

School of Rock, Gillian Lynne Theatre London – Monday 20th January 2020 at 6.30pm <https://www.mousetrap.org.uk/relaxed-school-of-rock>





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Information Sheet No.5

Santa's Grottos

Below is a selection of Santa's Grottos and Christmas Events that can be accessed in the Essex area. We have recommended some specific experiences based on their accessibility and sessions for children with additional needs, however you can find a wider selection of Santa's Grottos on Essex Mum's Festive Fun page.

<http://www.essexmums.com/seasonal/christmas-meet-father-christmas/>

Fully accessible Christmas Grotto Experiences: The Father Christmas Experience at Marsh Farm

Marsh Farm has a Father Christmas Experience on throughout the month of December that can be accessed by all the family. They have good accessible facilities including a Changing Places room, and accompanying carers are able to go in for free. Call 01245 321552 to book. <https://www.marshfarm.co.uk/events/father-christmas-experience/>

Santa's Grotto and skate at Bluewater

Bluewater Shopping Centre is offering a Santa and Skate experience located by the lakes at the West Village. The grotto is fully wheelchair accessible and wheelchair users are also able to go on to the ice. When booking online, make sure you mention your child's additional needs in the comments box so that staff are aware, and can make adjustments if necessary. <http://admiticket.com/bluewater>

Perrywood Garden Centre in Tiptree has a Santa's Grotto for children with additional needs on Friday 13th December between 2.00pm and 4.00pm. Tickets bookable via their website: <https://perrywood.digitickets.co.uk/category/15544>

Sensory Santa at Liberty Shopping Centre in Romford is a free autism-friendly grotto for children or adults with learning disabilities or autism, at 4.00pm to 5.00pm on Wednesdays 4th, 11th and 18th December 2019 <https://thehavingdaily.co.uk/2019/11/14/an-inclusive-christmas-at-the-liberty-sensory-santa-arrives/>



Sensory Christmas activities

If your child or young person is overwhelmed by the thought of accessing clubs and events over the festive holidays, why not try sorting some activities for them to try at home? Produced by the company Twinkl, below is a link to a selection of Sensory Christmas Activities you could consider incorporating into your child's Christmas routine. When looking for sensory activities on the Twinkl website, make sure to type Sensory Christmas in to the search bar.

* Please be aware there is a subscription charge to access all of the resources produced by Twinkl. We would suggest asking your child's school if they are subscribed to their services as they may be able to share some of the resources with you.* <http://www.twinkl.co.uk/search>

The contacts and links given via this SNAP information sheet have been shared as a starting point for your own research. We believe the information to be genuine and correct at the time of publishing, however no responsibility for loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of the material contained herein can be accepted by SNAP.