



PRESS RELEASE

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Secretary of State for Northern Ireland unveils winning logo at the launch of Rail Safe Friendly

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris MP today attended the launch of Rail Safe Friendly at a Northampton high school and unveiled a winning logo, designed by Year 9 students.

Hosted at Guilsborough Academy, Northampton, the Rail Safe Friendly launch event builds on the success of a five-year digital campaign aimed to educate young people across the UK on rail safety.

The initiative provides schools and the rail industry with an opportunity to work together using content from Network Rail's Switched On Rail Safety website.

All schools and industry partners that are part of the initiative will now display the Rail Safe Friendly logo on their website to showcase their involvement and support.

Year 9 Design and Technology students from Guilsborough Academy created the winning logo concept, which has now been professionally produced and was revealed at the event by Chris Heaton-Harris MP.

Since 2019, the You Vs Train campaign has reached over 17 million young people in 10,500 schools across the UK in collaboration with the Trespass Improvement Team at Network Rail and digital education partner Learn Live.

The campaign delivers rail safety messages through live or on demand content digitally into classrooms and assembly halls via the Learn Live platform. The system also has a moderated, GDPR compliant LIVE CHAT facility to promote interaction and involvement from the schools/colleges taking part in the initiative.

Chris Heaton-Harris MP said; "I am delighted to be here today to attend the launch of a national rail safety initiative at Guilsborough Academy. It was really lovely to meet the students and the teachers from the Academy, representatives from Learn Live, and the invited guests. Well done to the Year 9 students on their amazing logo designs. When I was Rail Minister, I became very aware of the dangers on the railways and I wish to thank all the members of the rail industry and everyone involved in important initiatives such as this, for their work in raising awareness, educating and helping to keep people safe."

Louise McNally, trespass prevention lead at Network Rail said: "It is important that every child knows the dangers that are present around the railway so that they can keep themselves safe when they are in a rail setting. We welcome any initiative that helps us to spread our rail safety message to children, their parents and carers, and the wider general public."

Supt Alison Evans said; "The rail industry and British Transport Police make strenuous efforts to educate young people about the dangers of the rail network – whether it be the dangers of the tracks, the risk of electricity from overhead lines or the speed of the trains themselves. But still, not all children and young people are aware of these risks which is why we welcome Learn Live's initiative to develop an accreditation scheme for schools.

With schools demonstrating their commitment to rail safety to achieve accreditation we know that these lifesaving messages are reaching young people in a way that is engaging, accessible and understandable.

Together with Learn Live and our industry partners we can build a sustainable safety legacy to protect our young people."

Gemma Lavery, Professional Head of Public Safety at RSSB said; "RSSB supports Network Rail, British Transport Police and the wider rail industry in creating safer and more secure railway environments. This new initiative is an innovative way to help spread awareness about the dangers of trespassing on the railway network and continues to build on the great work undertaken so far. It's a real privilege for RSSB to be involved and we believe that together, through collective action and education, we can ensure that our railways remain safe environments for all."

Louise Ward, Safety and Sustainability Director at G&W UK and Europe said; "Freightliner are delighted to support the Rail Safe Friendly Initiative. It is essential that young people understand how to access and use the railway safely. We are committed to collaborating with industry partners and the education sector to share this important learning, empower young people to make safe decisions, and help to save lives".

Simon Frazer, Principal at Guilsborough Academy said; "The tragic death of Harrison in 2017, when he was in Year 7 at Guilsborough, brought home to our community the importance of teaching our children about safety on the Railways. Schools play a vital role in keeping our children safe. We will never forget Harrison and including rail safety in our curriculum will help to save lives in the future."

Stuart Heaton, founder of Learn Live said; "We're delighted to continue our work with Network Rail and increase rail safety awareness amongst young people across the UK, ultimately saving lives through this compelling and engaging digital delivery having now reached over 17 million young people."

NOTES TO EDITORS;

Chris Heaton-Harris is MP for Daventry, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and is the former Rail Minister.

Learn Live runs innovative, interactive, moderated online News Channels that bring a world of opportunity and experiences directly into the classroom, home, or business. Each interactive Learn Live broadcast can be attended by an unlimited number of schools/colleges, job seekers or businesses simply by logging into the channel online.

The Learn Live News Channels continuously link schools/colleges/universities to employers and are working successfully with companies like Network Rail, Balfour Beatty, DWP, Gatwick Airport, Brook and The NHS amongst others to deliver PSHE broadcasts across the UK.

There will be 3 levels to the **Rail Safe Friendly Initiative** for schools to achieve:

Bronze level - A school will ensure that all pupils and teachers have watched the rail safety broadcast either live or on demand via the Learn Live channel. Schools will need to register to confirm their attendance and provide feedback after the broadcast has been viewed by the students. Schools will also need to sign up to the Switch On Rail Safety website to receive rail safety updates from Network Rail.

Silver level - To achieve the Silver level, a school will need to have completed the Bronze level and communicated to parents and carers the details of the rail safety broadcast. This can be done via newsletters, parent assemblies, school websites, social media channels or other forms of communication used by a school. The school will also be asked to promote the Switched On Rail Safety website on their social media channels.

Gold level - To achieve the Gold level, a school will need to have completed the Bronze and Silver levels and created a rail safety video, podcast or poster with their students to promote in their school and social media channels using a brief provided by Learn Live.

The Rail Industry partners will have 4 levels to join within the Rail Safe Friendly Initiative from Partner level to Gold level. Great Western Railway, MTR Elizabeth Line and ScotRail have already joined and will start supporting the initiative after the Easter break.