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Education Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back after what I hope was a relaxing and/or rejuvenating half-term break.

We recently welcomed the announcement that Worcestershire are one of 35 areas who will get additional funding to support financial pressures in our maintained schools. Our schools are in the bottom quartile of funding per pupil in the country and it is pleasing that this has been recognised with Worcestershire being one of only three authorities set to receive more than £1 million from the one-off package. We appreciate the funding will not go far across our maintained schools, so we will be considering and approving the criteria for allocation to ensure it impacts with the schools in the most effective way and will discuss this with representative leaders at the next Worcestershire Schools' Forum.

It's **UK Parliament Week** (6th to 12th November 2023) and Worcestershire Youth Cabinet is hosting an event this Friday, 10th November at 5pm in The Hive in Worcester. The event aims to provide young people aged 11 to 18 across the county with an opportunity to explore the work of the Youth Cabinet and, most importantly, learn how their voices can be heard. Please share the event poster in your school and encourage any budding politicians or pupils interested in politics or wanting to find out more to reserve their place at the event, via email at: youthvoiceteam@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Next week is **Anti-Bullying Week** (13th to 17th November) and the theme this year is 'Make A Noise About Bullying'. The week will be kicked off with Odd Socks Day on Monday 13th November, where adults and children wear odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique. The Anti-Bullying Alliance has everything you need to make Anti-Bullying Week happen in your school all provided free of charge. [Download school resources for Odd Socks Day and Anti-Bullying Week.](#)

Finally, our colleagues in the Health and Safety Team at Worcestershire County Council are proposing to run the first, of hopefully an annual occurrence, Health and Safety Conference specific to schools. This will be online and free for schools/academies with an SLA or contract with the team. For the day to be as useful as possible, I would encourage you to take 5 mins to share your opinions of how you would like the day to be structured via this [short H&S Conference survey](#).

Please read through the contents and find some really helpful resources for you, your children and families.

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Latest education news and updates

Children who Cannot Attend School (CCAS)

You will be aware that Worcestershire Children First has been developing a fresh approach to supporting Children who Cannot Attend School (CCAS). The new CCAS Panel combines and replaces the previous Medical Education Team panel and Section 19 panel, both of which supported children who cannot attend school. The panel started in September 2023, chaired by Sarah Wilkins, and meets weekly to review the existing cohort and identify actions for new cases. This is a far more collaborative and inclusive approach.

We are delighted to announce the release of a comprehensive guide and terms of reference for this CCAS Panel, which has been developed in partnership with colleagues in education, health and social care.

The document was emailed to schools on 18 October.

We hope this clarifies any remaining queries regarding CCAS. As the partnership work on CCAS progresses, we will review this document accordingly and continue to value your input.

Promote strong attendance throughout the autumn term

As we approach winter it is a good time to reshare resources for parents on key attendance practices such as [Is my child too ill for school?](#) and the Chief Medical Officer's [letter](#) to schools, which aid in making judgements about mild illness.

There is also guidance on [how to seek support with attendance challenges](#), and [good practice examples](#).

Schools can use our recently published [toolkit](#) for communicating with families to support attendance. This can help set high standards for attendance, ensuring children miss as little school as possible and is a helpful resource to respond to early patterns of absence in children.

Targeting support to children who have been absent is a key part of an effective strategy. [Research by FFT](#) shows pupils absent during the first week of term were up to 58% more likely to become persistently absent.

Use the 'Monitor your school attendance' service

Schools and local authorities of all sizes can use the 'Monitor your school attendance' tool to analyse attendance data and tackle absence, and recently we have been hearing about your experiences of using this.

- A deputy head of a small primary school uses the service to identify children at risk of persistent absence. They have told us it's much easier than their own Management Information System to switch between sub-groups and use the insights with staff and parents.
- An assistant head teacher of a rural secondary school told us: "it's really good that it's all in front of you. It makes you want to dig in more."

Find out how to [access the service on this page](#), and give your feedback. You can also [give access to your attendance leads](#).

To find out more, [sign up for our next webinar](#) on Wednesday 29 November.

Find out more about promoting positive behaviour in schools

Creating a culture with high expectations of behaviour is a priority for the Government. Establishing calm, safe and supportive environments conducive to learning benefits both staff and pupils.

Join the Department for Education's Lead Behaviour Advisor, Tom Bennett OBE, for a free 60-minute 'Behaviour in Schools' webinar at 4:00pm to 5:00pm on 13 November 2023.

The webinar will focus on the updated [Behaviour in Schools guidance](#) and the [statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance](#) as an essential tool to support all schools to improve and maintain high standards of behaviour.

The webinar will provide an opportunity for school leaders and workforce, local authorities and governors to improve their understanding of the legislation, policy and practice on managing behaviour and in carrying out their functions in relation to school exclusion.

Please [register using this link](#) and share among your networks.

Apprenticeships

The Apprenticeship Team at Worcestershire County Council would like to share some of their recent success stories with you all. Congratulations to all the apprentices based in our Maintained Schools who over the last 12 months have achieved the following qualifications:

- Level 3 Community Sport & Health Officer (1)
- Level 3 Early Years Educator (1)
- Level 7 Senior Leader Masters; Educational (2)
- Level 6 Teacher (1)
- Level 3 Teaching Assistants (5)
- Level 3 Teaching Assistant PE (1)

To see the full list of apprenticeships available, please visit: [Apprenticeships at WCC \(Sharepoint\)](#).

Alternatively, please contact Senior Training Co-ordinator Pam Kasperczyk via email at: PKasperczyk@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Hospital Theatre Recruitment Event - Saturday 11 November

Are you currently in your final year at school or college and looking to start a career in healthcare? Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust invites you to an exciting **Theatre Recruitment event on Saturday November 11th at the Alexandra Hospital's Arafa Education Centre** between 10 am to 4 pm. Come along for an informal chat with our team to learn about the many fantastic career opportunities in our Theatres.

The Trust operates 23 theatres across three hospital sites at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital, the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch, and the Kidderminster Hospital and Treatment Centre and this recruitment event is an opportunity to:

- Explore apprenticeship opportunities and career advancement
- Tour their brand new operating rooms where life-changing surgeries are performed. Learn about the investment and facilities that are transforming healthcare including the introduction this year of robot-assisted surgery
- Engage with experts to understand the Theatre roles, including the role of the Theatre Support Worker and Operating Department Practitioner
- Discuss professional development and HR support
- Learn about education and training
- Uncover the NHS staff benefits and support

It's an incredibly exciting moment to consider a career with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. If you interested in starting a career working in their theatres, then please come along. They have a number of vacancies available, and visitors are free to drop in at a time convenient to them.

For more information visit www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/work-for-us/ or register an interest via the Facebook event at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1399162467665467>.

Latest news from Teaching School Hubs

Rivers Teaching Alliance

They are now open for applications for their February 2024 cohorts of the following fully-funded NPQs:

- NPQ Leading Primary Maths- [NPQ in Leading Primary Maths – The National Institute of Teaching \(niot.org.uk\)](https://www.niot.org.uk/npq-leading-primary-maths)
- NPQ Leading Literacy- [NPQ in Leading Literacy – The National Institute of Teaching \(niot.org.uk\)](https://www.niot.org.uk/npq-leading-literacy)
- NPQ in Senior Leadership- [NPQ in Senior Leadership – The National Institute of Teaching \(niot.org.uk\)](https://www.niot.org.uk/npq-senior-leadership)
- NPQ in Headship- [NPQ in Headship – The National Institute of Teaching \(niot.org.uk\)](https://www.niot.org.uk/npq-headship)

If you appoint an ECT during the school year, please get in touch to see how they can support you with the ECT support programme: [Early Career Framework \(ECF\) – The National Institute of Teaching \(niot.org.uk\)](https://www.niot.org.uk/early-career-framework)

They look forward to working with you.

[Teaching Alliance | The Rivers CofE Multi Academy Trust](#)



 **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of Teaching**

 **The Rivers Teaching Alliance**

NPQ in Leading Primary Maths
The National Professional Qualification in Leading Primary Maths is an exciting new programme designed to equip teachers and leaders with the knowledge, skills, experience and network to know how to lead Maths in a primary phase or whole-school.

NPQ in Leading Literacy
Our NPQLL is designed for ambitious teachers and middle leaders, who want to – or already – have responsibility for leading literacy across a school, year group, key stage or phase.

NPQ in Senior Leadership
Our NPQSL is designed for ambitious classroom teachers and leaders who want to be – or already are – senior leaders with cross-school responsibilities.

NPQ in Headship
Our NPQH is designed for ambitious school leaders who want to be – or already are – a headteacher or a head of school with responsibility for leading a school.

Latest SEND news and updates

New Early Years Inclusion Process

We have launched a new Early Years Inclusion Process (EYIP) to make sure the right professionals put the right support in place for children aged 0 to 5 years who may have special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The new process is also designed to support education settings implementing the graduated response by providing additional support for children, families and settings.

We have created two new web pages, one for parents & carers and one for early years settings to explain more about the new process.

[Early Years Inclusion Process for Parents and Carers](#)

[Early Years Inclusion Process for Early Years Settings](#)

To help promote the new process with parents and carers, please download the [EYIP poster](#) and display it in your setting.

The Solihull Approach – Understanding your child with additional needs

This course is for parents or guardians who care for a child with physical or learning disabilities. This free '[Understanding your child with additional needs](#)' course will help parents, relatives and friends of children with a physical or learning disability to better understand your child.

The course looks at the ways you feel and act as a parent or carer, and the impacts this can have on your child's behaviour. It will introduce you to different styles of parenting and the ways they can make it easier to work with your child's behaviour and support their development.

Parents can access this course for FREE by visiting [In Our Place website](#) and using the access code PARENTSROCK.

Herefordshire & Worcestershire SENDIASS

Free Training for Parents/Carers & Professionals

[Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS](#) offer FREE training to local education, health and social care professionals, children, young people, and parents/ carers to increase knowledge of Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND).

SENDIASS would appreciate your help in informing the families that you support about the following opportunities. **We have attached a flyer for you to distribute to families or share in your newsletters.**

SENDIASS run FREE daytime and evening, face to face workshops and online information sessions for parents/carers and professionals in Worcestershire.

Workshops currently available for **Parent Carers:**

- [What you need to know if your child has an additional need/ disability- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [What does a good Education Health & Care Plan \(EHCP\) look like? – HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Who are SENDIASS and how can they support me? Online Information Session- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Autism and Me \(developed by autistic young people\)- HW SENDIASS](#)

Workshops currently available for **Professionals:**

- [Autism & Me \(Developed by Autistic Young People\) Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS Online Information Session for Professionals](#)
- [Special Educational Needs \(SEN\) Support and The Graduated Response in Schools Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [What Does a Good Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\) look like? Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Parent Carer Engagement in Schools Workshop for Professionals \(Worcestershire\)- HW SENDIASS](#)

All sessions are interactive, enabling participants to ask questions.

Find dates and book online using the links above or follow [HW SENDIASS Training-Eventbrite](#).

If you have any questions about the workshops or would like to host a session at your setting, please contact SENDIASSTraining@worcestershire.gov.uk for more information.

Latest health news and updates

HANDi App - Don't let bugs play on your mind

On behalf of our colleagues at NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire please find below information to promote the usage of the HANDi app to your parents and carers. Your support in displaying the poster, sending the information out in your communications to parents and carers and putting the information on your websites would be most appreciated.

They are requesting that settings help the local health systems to promote the paediatric HANDi App which gives parents and carers local advice on what to do when their child is unwell whether that's looking after them at home, taking them to see a GP, using NHS 111, or visiting an urgent care service.

[Download HANDi campaign poster and social static](#)

HANDi App - Don't let bugs play on your mind

If your child is unwell, use the HANDi App to check their symptoms and get instant, NHS-approved medical advice.

Developed and approved by local Paediatric Consultants, the HANDi App provides expert advice on how best to manage the most common childhood illnesses, including:

- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- High temperature
- 'Chesty baby' illnesses, such as bronchiolitis, asthma and croup
- 'Chesty child' illnesses such as wheezing and asthma
- Abdominal pain
- Common newborn problems.

The app is free, and can be downloaded to any Apple or Android smartphone or tablet.

Why use HANDi?

HANDi is designed to help you know what to do when your child is unwell - whether that's looking after them at home, taking them to see a GP, using the NHS 111 service, or visiting an urgent care service.

If your child is unwell, HANDi will ask you questions about your child's condition to help you decide the best course of action - and with all the advice on HANDi developed and approved by local NHS paediatricians and other healthcare professionals, you can rest assured that you're getting the best possible advice.

For more information, to download the app and to hear from our Clinical Lead for Children and Young People, Dr Louise Bramble, please visit the website <https://www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/handi-app>

[Download HANDi campaign poster and social static](#)

Winter infections in children 23/24

Colds, sickness bugs and other infections are common, especially in children and young people, in winter. Children are particularly vulnerable so ensuring good infection control and prevention (ICP) practices and preventative measures are important to reduce the risk of infections spreading and causing an outbreak. Last year, 10,000 children were hospitalised across the country because of complications after catching flu. As well as reducing risk of serious illness in children, the flu vaccine helps stop the spread of flu in the family and wider community – helping to protect those who are more vulnerable and older people, such as grandparents.

Public Health, Worcestershire County Council, has recently developed some local guidance and advice which you should have received by email. We hope you find this useful.

The local guidance includes general advice as well as links to further guidance about winter infections in children and is aimed at supporting education settings this winter. It includes information about:

- Common winter illnesses
- How infections are spread
- What measures schools can take to stop the spread of winter infections
- How long staff and children should remain of school, if required, for different infectious diseases
- Vaccinations to prevent infectious diseases
- Worcestershire school immunisation service – Vaccination UK
- How and who to reporting infectious diseases to.

Further information can also be found in the following links:

[Health protection in children and young people settings, including education](#) -- A practical guide produced by UKHSA for staff on managing cases of infectious diseases in education and childcare settings. Updated 7/12/22.

The [UKHSA blog](#) contains useful articles around respiratory infections including how to be winter strong. [They have also produced a blog aimed at parents](#) with steps they can take now and throughout the coming term to help protect their family from seasonal illnesses.

[e-bug](#) resources - which includes information, games and lesson plans also provide useful tools for teaching children about infectious diseases and preventative measures.

You can also access the local 'Clean Hands Safe Hands' toolkits which include ideas, activities, and messages to encourage children to regularly wash their hands as part of their everyday routine. The key message is washing your hands with soap and water is still the best way to make sure your hands are germ-free as hand sanitisers are not effective against some germs like the winter sickness bug, Norovirus. The toolkits for schools and nurseries to use can be accessed below:

[Download the Early Years Toolkit](#)

[Download the Primary School Toolkit](#)

Drug Law Update: Nitrous oxide change in law (8 November 2023)

FAO: PSHE/Pastoral Leads

Nitrous oxide is a colourless gas, also known as 'laughing gas'. It can be misused for its psychoactive effects – or to 'get a high' – by inhalation. Heavy nitrous oxide use can result in serious health harms such as neurological damage and even death due to the risk of falling unconscious and/or suffocating from the lack of oxygen. There have also been road deaths due to drug driving.

It is already illegal to produce, supply, import or export nitrous oxide **for psychoactive purposes**, however it has legitimate uses in medical, culinary, industrial, and other fields.

Nitrous oxide (NOS) was used by about 4% of 16 – 24 year olds in the last year and will become illegal for recreational use from 8 November 2023.

[Read media fact sheet on the Nitrous Oxide ban](#)

The law has been updated.

From 8th November 2023:

- Possessing nitrous oxide without a valid reason will be illegal and categorised as a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. If found in possession with the intention of inhalation for psychoactive effects, individuals could face an unlimited fine, community punishment, or a caution. Repeat offenders could face up to two years in prison.
- The penalty for supplying or producing NOS has doubled, with a potential prison sentence of up to 14 years.

[Access the alcohol, drugs and smoking teacher training module](#)

Drug prevention teaching resources can be found on the PSHE Association website:

- KS4 [Drugs and alcohol education \(pshe-association.org.uk\)](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- KS5 [Drug and alcohol education lesson pack for KS5 / post-16 \(pshe-association.org.uk\)](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

[Download accurate and reliable drug information from FRANK](#)

Immunising pre-school children against flu

This year's flu vaccination programme is underway. Children aged 2 and 3 years old (on 31 August before flu vaccination starts in the autumn) are eligible for a free flu vaccine given as a nasal spray.

Those working in the education sector have an important role to play in raising awareness amongst parents about the annual flu vaccination programme for preschool children.

Annual vaccination of children helps provide protection to each child and reduces the spread of flu to their families and the wider community, protecting others who are at increased risk of becoming seriously ill from flu. The flu vaccine also promotes a healthy working environment in nurseries and childcare settings by reducing the risk of flu being spread to others including staff.

[A leaflet for early years providers](#) giving information about the programme is available and it includes details about how to [order free resources to display or give to parents](#) including translations in multiple languages.

Your support in sharing this information with families who have pre-school children would be most appreciated.

Senior Mental Health Leads - additional funding

FAO: SLT/Pastoral Leads

If your senior mental health lead has moved from your school and this role is now vacant, applications can now be made for a second DfE SMHL training grant to train up your next Senior Mental Health Lead.

[Apply for funding if the training can commence before 31st March 2024.](#)

For more information, please see the attached leaflet on [Google Drive](#).

Latest Government updates

Sharing curriculum resources with parents

On 24th October the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, wrote to all schools in England to provide information on sharing the curriculum, particularly relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) resources with parents.

[Read announcement in full from the Education Secretary](#)

[Download letter to schools about sharing curriculum resources with parents](#)

New support for teachers powered by Artificial Intelligence

On 30th October, the DfE announced that every teacher in England is set to benefit from new resources powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), supporting them to plan lessons and build classroom quizzes, and helping to reduce workloads.

The Government is investing up to £2 million in [Oak National Academy](#), which was established to support teachers with high-quality curriculum resources online, to create new teaching tools using AI – marking the first step towards providing every teacher with a personalised AI lesson-planning assistant.

[Read announcement in full on government investment to improve and expand AI tools for teachers](#)

Latest training news and conferences

Free parent's workshop - Supporting my Teen's Mental Health

FAO: Pastoral Support/Comms

Action: please share widely with your parents via your website, social media and parent communications, scheduling to match the workshop dates.

All Worcestershire parents are able to access, free of cost, a parenting workshop delivered by the NHS Starting Well (Community & Parenting) Service. The online workshops are available for parents, carers and guardians with children aged 11-19 and includes:

- CBT (cognitive behavioural training) techniques to boost mood for the whole family.
- Tools and techniques to help manage anxiety and low mood with your teens.
- Live Q&A with a practitioner.

Workshops are on the following dates, and a place can be booked using the links below:

- **Wednesday 8th November 2023 at 1pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 6pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 6th December 2023 at 1pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 20th December 2023 at 6pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 3rd January 2024 at 1pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 17th January 2024 at 6pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 1pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 14th February 2024 at 1pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)
- **Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 6pm** — [Mental Health – Supporting my Teen](#)

Or use this link: <https://www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk/actonit>

Schools may also wish to consider arranging a face to face workshop in school, to discuss this option, please email stuart.Stokes@actionforchildren.org.uk

Bullying: the data, the impact and the evidence: what works?

As part of Anti Bullying Week, Public Health will deliver a webinar sharing the data on bullying, the impact of preventing bullying and the interventions that evidence shows are effective.

This free webinar is open to anyone working within schools across Worcestershire.

- 13 November 2023, 4pm to 5pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10437 / 84036

Book your place via [WCF:CPD](#) using your CPD leader login details. Please note the confirmation goes to the delegate email provided at the point of booking on CPD.

Other local news and events

Young Persons ECO-Poetry Competition with VERVE Poetry Festival

VERVE Poetry Festival are excited to announce an inspiring opportunity for your students to engage with their creativity, connect with nature, and make a positive impact on our environment. They kindly request your assistance in spreading the word amongst your students about their ECO-Poetry Competition.

About the ECO-Poetry Competition:

The VERVE Poetry Festival's ECO-Poetry Competition aims to foster environmental awareness and eco-consciousness among young minds through the art of poetry. This competition encourages students to explore the beauty of nature, the urgency of environmental conservation, and the power of their words. They believe that poetry can be a powerful tool to inspire change and create a greener, more sustainable future.

Competition Details:

- **Theme:** ECO-POETRY
- **Eligibility:** Secondary school students 11-17
- **Submission Deadline:** THURSDAY 30th NOVEMBER
- **Prizes:** Exciting prizes and opportunities for the winners, including publication in an anthology, a free professional writing workshop and a chance to perform at the VERVE Poetry Festival.

For more information please visit: <https://vervepoetryfestival.com/competition-kids/>

How You Can Help:

They kindly request your support in promoting this competition among your students. Here's how you can assist:

1. Share the competition details with your students during your classes, via newsletters, or through your school's communication channels.
2. Encourage your students to participate and explore their creativity in expressing their thoughts about nature and sustainability through poetry.
3. Offer assistance and guidance to interested students who may need help in preparing their submissions.
4. Print off posters and post in English department/around school. ATTACHED.

They appreciate your valuable support in spreading the word about the VERVE Poetry Festival's ECO-Poetry Competition.

If you have any questions or require additional materials for promotion, please do not hesitate to contact Hayley, Assistant at VERVE Poetry Festival via email at hayley@vervepoetryfestival.com.

[Download VERVE Poetry Festival Competition Poster and Flyer](#)

Interested in learning more about Sustainability in Worcester?

Follow Worcester City Council's dedicated sustainability Instagram - sharing news, events and information from the Sustainability Team at Worcester City Council.

A wide range of content is shared, including promoting key sustainability awareness days (such as Recycle Week, The Big Walk and Wheel and Earth Day), highlighting local sustainability initiatives, sharing tips on how to be more sustainable and informative videos on important topics such as eating seasonally and composting.

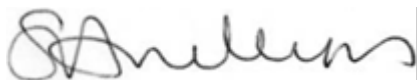
Increasing awareness of environmental issues in both a global and local context is critical for creating a sustainable future for Worcester, with schools a central part of this. The @sustainableworcester page is a great resource for schools, teachers, parents and students alike to engage with sustainability in their local area!

Follow **@sustainableworcester** on Instagram and share with staff, parents and students at your school to support sustainability in Worcester.

For more information contact Becki Hocknell (rebecca.hocknell@worcester.gov.uk) - Environmental Sustainability Support Officer at Worcester City Council.

[Download Sustainable Worcester social media assets and poster](#)

Best wishes,



Sarah Wilkins
Director for Education, Early Years, Inclusion and Place Planning

