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## Education Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are having a good week.

This week, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have been visiting Worcestershire to inspect our arrangements for children with special education needs and disabilities. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contributed information or participated in the inspection. Your involvement is greatly appreciated.

Last Thursday, I had the pleasure of attending the Worcestershire Education Awards, an event that shines a spotlight on those who are making a difference in education. The awards also recognise the achievements, passion, and dedication of those working in the sector, from nurseries to primary and secondary schools, as well as colleges and training schemes. A huge congratulations to all the nominees and winners this year. For a full list of winners and photos from the awards please visit the [Worcestershire Education Awards website](#).

The Academy Sponsor Free School Presumption Competition for the new first school in Foxlydiate, Redditch is now open. The competition will be tendered in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures and follow the Department for Education Free School Presumption Process. Please note you must be registered as a multi-academy trust by the close of the competition on 14th June 2024 to be considered. For the latest information please visit: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/firstschoolredditch](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/firstschoolredditch) or register on [In-Tend](#) to express an interest using tender reference number WCC 00003913.

Earlier this month, Superintendent Ed Hancox, Head of Prevention at West Mercia Police wrote out to all schools to outline some changes that West Mercia Police are making to their youth engagement offering and the way they support schools. The changes include youth engagement and education, exploitation and vulnerability training and projects such as Steer Clear, Climb and Neighbourhood Matters. [Read letter from West Mercia Police in full](#).

Wishing you all the best.

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## Latest education news and updates

### Wraparound Schools Survey

We are requesting that all schools with children from Reception to Year 6 complete a survey about the wraparound provision that is available to their pupils. We would like all schools to submit a response, even if there is no wraparound provision available. The information provided will be used to inform LA planning as well as to inform parents and carers of the childcare available for their school age children.

#### [Complete Wraparound Provision Survey](#)

Please ensure you have submitted your response by **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May**.

### School Compliance Audit

A message about the School Compliance Audit has been sent out to maintained schools in the past few days requesting initial information with copies of certificates and reports. If you have not received this message, please contact: [schoolpremisesrisk@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolpremisesrisk@worcestershire.gov.uk).

### Asbestos: Duty to manage

The HSE, as part of its [Asbestos: Duty to manage](#) campaign presents a free webinar.

**The law, the risk to health and how to safely manage asbestos** webinar is taking place at 10:30am on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May. It covers all buildings, not just schools, but there is a section about what happens during an HSE inspection which may be of use during the current HSE Asbestos Management in Schools initiative. It may also be a useful reminder to duty holders and anyone who has responsibility for managing asbestos, particularly business and site managers, or to other school staff who wish to know more. We recommend that you book a place on the webinar, even if you cannot watch it live, as you should be sent a link a few days later which allows you to watch at your convenience.

Register here: [Course: Duty to Manage Asbestos in Buildings \(hse.gov.uk\)](#).

For more school-specific information, please see [Managing asbestos in schools - Frequently asked questions \(hse.gov.uk\)](#).

### Information for schools: Advice and guidance on buying for schools

The Department for Education (DfE) [is hosting free webinars](#) for school business professionals who buy goods and services for their schools. DfE has also made available [two pre-recorded webinars providing information about the free 'Get help buying for schools service'](#) for schools' procurement needs, and the risk protection arrangement, the DfE's alternative to commercial insurance.

## The Digital Switchover

A reminder that the UK's telephone network is changing.

Between now and 2025, Openreach are removing all old analogue lines (analogue lines are also often referred to as copper wire connections used by most old telephone services) public switched telephone network (PSTN) and changing to a fully digital network across the UK.

This means that most telephone providers will be moving their customers from an old analogue line over to a new upgraded digital landline using a digital service such as fibre.

Changes have already started across the UK including some areas of Worcestershire.

Schools should treat their telephone lines as any other business line, contact their providers and start making the changes to a digital alternative before the cut off in 2025.

For more information, visit: [The Digital Switchover is coming](#)

## Latest attendance news and updates

### Worcestershire Attendance Forum and Network Event

Don't forget to book your place at the Worcestershire Attendance Forum on 1 July 2024 at Worcestershire County Cricket Club.

This event will provide updates of all changes for schools, supporting school attendance leads to ensure compliance with required statutory duties for the new academic year. To find out more please download the [Worcestershire Attendance Forum Flyer](#).

Book your place via [WCF:CPD](#) using your school CPD leader login details.

If you have any questions, please email the Conference Team at:

[Conferences@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:Conferences@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

### Year 11 Pupils - Use of Study Leave

#### **Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination**

DfE guidance makes clear where study leave can be granted by schools for Year 11 pupils:

*Study leave should be used sparingly and not granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete.*

*If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.*

Leave of absence for pupils **during public examinations** can therefore be granted when agreed in advance with a parent with whom the pupil normally resides with, (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Public examinations for 2024 begin on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

For any schools granting study leave during the public examination period, register code 'S' is to be used when the pupil is not in attendance for exams.

For statistical purposes this is classed as an authorised absence.

It is good practice for schools to consider how best to support students for whom you believe remaining in school, rather than taking study leave, may be in their best interests, or advantageous regarding any home/situational difficulties.

Schools must take into consideration how best to continue to support the most vulnerable/potentially vulnerable pupils and uphold all safeguarding duties until Year 11 pupils complete their statutory education on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

## DfE Attendance Webinars

The DfE are holding a series of webinars for schools to assist understanding of the required changes in the updated [Working together to improve school attendance guidance](#). Due to the number of expected attendees these events are bookable through **Eventbrite**. You will receive a link to the webinar and reminders through the Eventbrite site.

**The Senior Attendance Champion role:** school senior lead for attendance

**7 May 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will explore the key role of the senior attendance champion within the school SLT. It will cover their role in relation to setting the strategy and vision; developing effective policies; and use of data and evaluating impact. [Sign up here](#)

**Working Together to Improve School Attendance:** DfE guidance overview for schools

**13 May 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will cover the key principles behind the DfE's 'Working Together to improve school attendance' guidance. It will highlight the main expectations for schools, and what has changed in the latest update for Autumn term 2024. [Sign up here](#)

**School attendance register:** attendance and absence codes

**22 May 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will provide an overview of recording attendance and absence in the register using the codes that will be mandatory from August 2024, in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. [Sign up here](#)

**National Framework for Penalty Notices overview**

**4 June 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will provide an overview of the new national framework for penalty notices for schools and other stakeholders (e.g. early help staff) which applies from August 2024. It will summarise the new national threshold for considering a penalty notice, the escalation for repeat offences and the use of the 'notice to improve' where support is appropriate. [Sign up here](#)

**School admission register:** deletion from the school roll

**10 June 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will provide an overview of when a pupil's name can be deleted from the admission register, highlighting changes made by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. [Sign up here](#)

**Data Returns: sharing attendance information with local authorities and others**

**25 June 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will outline what information from school registers must be shared with local authorities and how the daily attendance data tool can support this. [Sign up here](#)

**Holding effective targeted support meetings between schools and LA**

**2 July 3.30 – 4.30pm**

This webinar will explore what makes an effective Targeting Support Meeting (TSM) between the school and LA. It will cover the expectations on TSMs; aims of the meetings; collaborative working; use of data; and action planning for persistently absent and severely absent pupils. [Sign up here](#)

## Latest SEND news and updates

### SENCO Attendance at Placement and Provision Panel

Each Tuesday and Thursday morning 9-11am the Multi-agency SEND Placement and Provision Panel takes place. The purpose of the SEND Placement and Provision Panel is to ensure there is transparent, consistent, fair and focused decision making, in line with the legislation for the educational placement of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans).

The SEND Placement and Provision Panel is where a decision is made about the type of educational setting that a child or young person requires. They also make decisions relating to:

- any changes to the level of support
- not to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan following an assessment or reassessment
- cease to maintain an Education, Health and Care Plan
- all requests for a Personal Education Budget or EOTAS package
- any requests that have a financial cost for example requests for a change in banding

More information can be found on the [SEND Local Offer website](#).

Each panel is attended by a SENCO who contributes to the decision-making process. If you are a SENCO, in any phase, and would like to be part of the panel process, please follow the link below to request access to the sign up spreadsheet. Once accessed, you will be able to identify the dates that are available, and which you are able to attend.

 [SENCO Panel Attendance.xlsx](#)



## Latest health news and updates

### Mental Health and Wellbeing in Educational Settings

We have been working together with settings and services to support the development of services, provision and guidance in meeting the mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people in settings across Worcestershire. To gain a clear view of the impact of this work we are asking Designated Mental Health Leads in settings to respond to this short survey at different points through the process. This survey should only take 5 minutes of their time.

[Complete Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools Survey](#)

**The deadline for responses is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

### Health Screening In Schools

#### Year 9 Health Screening 23/24

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust have now completed Health Screening in 22 high schools across Worcestershire and keen to complete screening in the remaining schools with your support so that their universal offer is extended to all young people in Year 9 across the county. A significant number of unmet health needs that were not previously known to other professionals have been identified. In response, Public Health messages have been issued with advice how to access local and national support. All questionnaires submitted have been triaged by Specialist Public Health Nurses and 1:1 follow up appointments arranged as necessary. 'FLAG meetings' have also taken place with schools to discuss all young people who present with increasing concerns. Many referrals have also been made to other services to ensure health needs are met.

#### Reception Health Screening 23/24

Health Screening for children in Reception started after February half-term and is being rolled out across all primary and first schools over the coming months. This screening programme is extended to over 6000 families across Worcestershire each year and has the potential to make a significant difference through the advice and support that can be offered. They have already seen positive outcomes for the support they have been able to provide to families.

The uptake, however, has been lower than expected therefore they are asking for support from schools to ensure the parent/carer letters are sent out via email using the email template provided. The email template contains brightly coloured graphics and a link to a short introductory video, in the hope that it is 'eye-catching' to the recipient.

They would be grateful if the School Screener posters supplied by the School Health Nursing Team are displayed in prominent places around school to also promote uptake. Any other support to promote this initiative would be hugely appreciated so that they can support children and families to address any unmet health needs e.g. sharing information via parent newsletters and on school websites etc.

## Reception Health Screening for 24/25 cohort

They are focussing on a 'School Readiness' approach for the Reception 24/25 intake, so that children who are due to start school in September 2024 are offered advice and support to address some of the emerging issues over the summer holidays e.g. toileting, dressing, feeding, behaviour, child development etc.

The School Health Nursing Team will be making contact to request the dates of any planned New Parent intake evenings. Where possible they would like the opportunity to attend and either deliver a short presentation or display a stand to promote this universal health screening programme. Parent/carer leaflets and letters will be provided (to go in packs of information etc.) so that parents can register their child/children on the School Screener platform and submit the questionnaire before they start school.

## Year 6 Health Screening 24/25

From September 2024 the School Health Nursing Team will be offering health screening to all children in Year 6.

The School Health Nursing Team will be making contact to plan sessions with all Primary and Middle Schools across Worcestershire in preparation for the new academic year. Parents/carers will receive a letter and will be able to opt-their child/children out of the screening programme if they wish.

To complete the questionnaire children will need access to the ICT suite or tablets and will be supported by their team to complete and submit their questionnaire. Parents will then receive a summary letter with further information via the School Screener Parent Portal. Any emerging health 'themes' will be shared with schools and their team will make contact to discuss how these themes can be addressed.

### **If you would like to know more about School Screener or contact their service for more information:**

- Access: [SchoolScreener | Child Health In-School | Used by School Nursing Teams](#)
- Access your School Health Nurse via their One Number: 01905 520032.
- Access their website: [Starting Well Partnership | Worcestershire | Starting Well \(startingwellworcs.nhs.uk\)](#)

If you would like more information to add to your school website, please get in touch via [whcnhs.startingwell@nhs.net](mailto:whcnhs.startingwell@nhs.net)

## Tick Awareness

As we head into spring and summer, we are reminding people to be 'tick aware' as they enjoy the great outdoors. Ticks are small, spider-like creatures that are found in leafy, grassy areas and feed on the blood of animals and humans. Ticks can be active all year round, but they are most active in the months April to July.

Ticks live in many different outdoor environments, but they are particularly common in grassy and wooded areas. You are therefore more at risk of being bitten if you take part in activities such as hiking, cycling, or camping. You might also be exposed to ticks while on a walk in some urban parks and gardens.

Ticks can carry infections, including [Lyme Disease](#) and, very rarely, [tick-borne encephalitis](#) (TBE).

In the UK, the most important tick species to human health is *Ixodes ricinus*, more commonly known as the sheep, castor bean or deer tick. This species can be found feeding on humans and is the principle vector of Lyme Disease and other tick-borne infections.

### Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that can be spread to humans by infected ticks. Studies in Europe estimate that 1% to 5% of tick bites can lead to Lyme disease. It is easier to treat if diagnosed earlier.

One of the most common symptoms of Lyme Disease is a spreading, 'bullseye' rash at the site of the tick bite which typically develops 3 to 30 days after being bitten. This rash does not occur in all cases. Other symptoms include mild flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache and fatigue, a facial droop, nerve pains and numbness or tingling in the hands or feet.

Lyme disease should not deter you from enjoying the outdoors because you can reduce your chance of infection by following the precautions below.

[More information on Lyme disease treatment can be found on gov.uk.](#)

### Tick-Borne encephalitis (TBE)

Tick borne [encephalitis](#) (TBE) is a viral infection which can also spread via the bite of infected ticks.

Although it is prevalent in many parts of the world, including several European countries, in the last few years, ticks carrying TBE have been found in a few areas in England. A very small number of human TBE cases have been diagnosed that are thought to have been acquired in the UK.

Most people with TBE do not have any symptoms. Those that do develop symptoms tend to become unwell 7-14 days after being bitten by an infected tick. Symptoms may be a mild flu-like illness but some people will develop severe infection in the central nervous system such as meningitis (infection of the membrane around the brain and spinal cord) or encephalitis (swelling of the brain).

Symptoms of severe disease can initially include a high fever with a headache, vomiting and neck stiffness. This can then progress to confusion, seizures or fits, weakness of the arms or legs reduced or loss of consciousness.

If you think you, or someone you know might have severe TBE dial 999, mention if you have been bitten by a tick or have been travelling as TBE is much more common in many other countries than in the UK.

Remember that advice and treatment is readily available through the NHS. If you think you have been bitten by a tick and have symptoms, contact your GP and accept the treatment that is offered to you.

### How to avoid tick-borne infections

While walking in green spaces, stick to clearly defined paths and try to avoid brushing against vegetation where ticks might be present. Also consider wearing clothing that covers your skin such as long trousers or long sleeved tops. This will make it more difficult for ticks to access a suitable place to bite.

Use insect repellent (for example DEET) and regularly check clothing or exposed skin so that you can spot any crawling ticks and brush them off.

After spending time outside, it's very important to check yourself, clothing, pets, and others for ticks. Remove any attached tick as soon as you find it using a tick-removal tool or fine-tipped tweezers. Fine-tipped tweezers are different from regular tweezers that might be used to remove eyebrow hair. They are very narrow and pointed at the tip and ensure that ticks are not squashed during removal.



[Access additional resources to raise awareness of ticks, including a leaflet and poster](#)

## SMHL Training Grant

**Secure your grant to improve your school or college's approach to mental health and wellbeing in 2024.** Grants of £1,200 are still available to access continuing professional development (CPD) for your school or college's mental health lead. If you haven't already done so, claim your grant this term and join the 15,000 schools and colleges that have already accessed a DfE quality assured [senior mental health lead](#) course, including 74% of schools in Worcestershire. The training will develop your mental health lead's [knowledge and practical skills](#) to embed an effective [whole school or college approach](#) to mental health and wellbeing.

87% of senior leads who completed the training in 2021-2022 said that it enabled them to plan or improve their approach, and 83 per cent said that they would recommend the course to others. The training includes important topics to lead change in your setting, such as:

- Understanding and identifying mental health and wellbeing needs and monitoring the impact of support
- Approaches to plan and lead change aligned to the work of your DSL and SENCO
- Developing your universal and targeted support offer
- Engaging students/pupils and developing positive relationships with parents, families and carers.

Take five minutes to [claim your training grant](#). You can also use the grant to pay for supply cover while leads are engaged in learning and/or to pay for additional training or resources to help with implementing your approach. Choose from over 90 quality assured courses at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels, delivered on-line or face-to-face and tailored to the needs of your settings.

You can now also [claim a 2nd grant](#) if your trained mental health lead left your setting before fully developing your whole school or college approach.

### Recently launched:

Access a [new resource hub](#) to help mental health leads embed a whole school or college approach to mental health & wellbeing. This has been developed with Anna Freud, in partnership with education representatives and mental health experts.

A new [targeted mental wellbeing support toolkit](#) is also available. This provides a practical guide and filterable tool to help schools and colleges review, refresh and develop effective targeted support for pupils and learners with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Senior leads tell us about the action they've taken to shape their approach by enabling student voice – read about this [Department for Education Teaching Blog](#).

## YourSpace Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs

YourSpace are mental health and wellbeing hubs for children and young people aged 11-25 available in community locations across Worcestershire.

YourSpace recognises the need for early support to help children and young people cope better with their mental health and wellbeing and prevent escalation to more serious mental health difficulties.

They provide a single point of early access, without the need for an appointment to both one to one and group support for children and young people. No referral is required for anyone over 16 years but those under 16 will need a parental/professional referral with parental consent.

YourSpace can help children and young people facing a range of issues including:

- Low mood, anxiety and stress
- Improving self-esteem, confidence, and building resilience
- Managing emotions
- Support with relationships, family, friends, bullying and boundary setting
- Self-care, exercise, sleep, routines and motivation
- Difficulties in school and college
- Online safety
- Housing and benefits

YourSpace may also facilitate access to more intensive support and interventions.

### Where you can find YourSpace:

- [The Old Needleworks, Redditch](#) - Mondays, 12noon to 7pm - starting 29th April
- [Malvern Cube](#) - watch this space!
- [The Hive, Worcester](#) - Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 12noon to 7pm - starting 1st May
- [Riverside Health and Wellbeing Hub, Evesham](#) - watch this space!
- Redditch - watch this space!
- [Droitwich Wellbeing Hub](#) - watch this space!

Further information on YourSpace including a flyer, postcard, briefing note and press release can be downloaded from [Google Drive](#).

## Air Quality in Worcestershire – survey reminder

There is still time to share your views on air quality and air pollution in Worcestershire.

The survey covers various aspects of air quality including perceptions, behaviours, concerns, as well as suggestions for improvement. By actively participating, individuals can contribute to shaping future air quality policies and initiatives to help make Worcestershire air better for everyone.

To complete the survey, please visit [www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/airquality](http://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/airquality)

**The survey closes on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

We would like as much feedback as possible, so please do share the [survey link](#) and [survey flyer](#) with colleagues, networks and the school community.

## Resources for schools for 11 to 13-year-olds on vaping

The Department of Health and Social Care released [evidence-based vaping resources for Year 7 and 8 students this week](#).

Linked to the Health Education and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, the resources will improve students' understanding of the potential effects of vaping and help them build strategies for resisting pressure to experiment.

## Latest news from School Teaching Hubs

### Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub

#### Initial Teacher Training

As part of the ITT Market Review, all Teaching School Hubs have an increased role in supporting ITT providers within our region to offer ITT placements, Intensive Training and Practice Placements and map school engagement. The link to the ITT survey commissioned by the West Midlands Teaching School Hub is below, and we are asking if someone from every school across WM1 could complete it. Responses will remain confidential and will only be shared with the DfE. Results will be used solely for the purpose of improving teacher training in our area.

[Initial Teacher Training School engagement National Survey](#)

#### ECF Update

For colleagues enrolled on the Prince Henry's ECF programme with Ambition Institute, please note the following upcoming date for the Twilight Clinics in the Summer term for Year 1 and 2 ECTs. Details for these will be sent closer to the time.

- Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – Year 1 ECT Clinic 3
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – Year 2 ECT Clinic 6

The next face-to-face conferences are also due to take place in the Summer term. You can book onto these now using the following link: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/phtsh](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/phtsh)

#### NPQ Update

Applications for Autumn 2024 will open in the Summer term. [Register your interest](#) to ensure you receive up-to-date information on the application process, you can register your interest using the link below. For colleagues interested in the NPQ leading Primary Maths, please contact Catherine Atkinson at Rivers MAT via email at: [catkinson@riverscofe.co.uk](mailto:catkinson@riverscofe.co.uk).

#### AB Update

Schools can still register ECTs for the Appropriate Body using the link below. Where ECTs are starting their induction midway through a term or are on short term supply contract, they must complete one full term in order for this to count towards their induction. Anything less than one full term does not count.

[Complete Early Career Teacher and Appropriate Body Registration Form](#)

If schools are unsure then please contact Andy Duffy, the Teaching School Hub Director, via email at: [ad@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:ad@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk).



## Tudor Grange Teaching School Hub

### Helen Dunnico – Head Teacher Advocate

Helen Dunnico, the Head Teacher Advocate at Tudor Grange Teaching School Hub, is keen to visit schools in the Hub region, to better understand your contexts, share what the Hub can currently offer and to discuss ways in which we can potentially provide further support. As a former Head Teacher, she understands how busy your days are, but hopes that engaging with the Teaching School Hub will provide some positive outcomes for staff and ultimately children.

She will be contacting schools in the coming weeks to arrange a short visit and it would be really helpful if your office staff were aware to expect a call.

She hopes to meet with many of you soon.

### ECF and AB Support Events

They are offering regular online sessions to support you with ECT induction and delivering the Early Career Framework. Over the summer term they will be offering:

- **Headteacher Briefings** - these briefings will provide clarity on registration for AB and ECF for Autumn 2024, together with providing information on costings, statutory guidance and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.
- **Induction Tutor Training** - these training sessions will share information on the role of the induction tutor and facilitate opportunities to share best practice.
- **How to Write a Formal Assessment** - these sessions will provide clarity on how to write a formal assessment during the ECT induction period.
- **Drop-In Clinics** - these drop-in clinics are for all school stakeholders for ECF and AB. Pop in with questions or problems and a member of the team will be on hand to support you.

### NPQ Briefing Events

They are offering targeted online 30-minute briefing sessions to explain more about the National Professional Qualifications. To sign up for any of the above events, please visit their [Eventbrite](#) page.

### Take part in an EEF project

The EEF is recruiting schools, colleges and early years settings to take part in trials of high-potential programmes. They are also subsidising programmes that have previously shown to have a positive impact on student attainment, so more schools can benefit.

You can [search your setting](#) to find out which trials you could join, and which subsidising programmes are on offer where you are.

## MAT SEND leaders play pivotal role in addressing the growing list of SEND challenges

A new NFER report highlights that SEND provision in multi-academy trusts and schools is coming under increased pressure. The study entitled [The MAT Factor – Exploring how multi-academy trusts are supporting pupils with SEND](#), emphasises the crucial role MAT SEND leaders are playing in tackling these problems.

### Appropriate Body

**Calling Heads and Induction Tutors!** Would you like more professional development and understanding of the ECT induction process? They are looking for a small team of heads and induction tutors to support the Appropriate Body with the ECT induction assessments. This is a great experience to see the best practice and get more insight about the support they offer schools and ECTs.

If you are interested, please contact Billie via email at: [bstewart@solihull.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:bstewart@solihull.tgacademy.org.uk)

### NPQs

#### Funding for Autumn 2024

Scholarship funding to cover the full cost of NPQs will be available to teachers and leaders from:

- 50% of schools with the highest proportion of students who attract pupil premium funding.
- 16-19 education settings identified as having high disadvantage.

You will be able to check eligibility when the DfE portal opens for registrations in July, but if you have any questions, please get in touch with them. Additionally, the following courses will continue to be fully funded for teachers and leaders from state-funded schools or 16-19 organisations:

- NPQ Leading Primary Maths
- NPQ SENCO (**not restricted to SENCOs** – also available to existing or aspirant senior leaders)
- NPQ for Headship
- NPQ Early Headship Coaching Offer (if you are/have done the NPQH and are in the first 5 years of headship)

Funding for Spring 2025 has not yet been announced.

### Autumn 2024 Cohorts

Registrations are not yet open for the Autumn 2024 cohort, but expressions of interest can be made via the [Teacher Development Trust website](#).

## Latest government news and updates

### Ofsted's 'Big Listen' consultation to hear from children – reminder

A reminder that on 21 March, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) extended its [Big Listen consultation to hear directly from children, seeking their views on how Ofsted can improve](#).

The consultation gives children (up to age 18) the chance to tell Ofsted what they think inspectors should look at when they visit their school or social care setting.

The children's consultation aligns with the main [Big Listen consultation](#), which opened on 8 March for parents, carers and professionals working in education and social care.

**Both consultations close on 31 May.**

[Read announcement in full](#)

### Flexible working toolkit to support schools

From 6 April, all employees, including those in education settings, will have the right to request flexible working from day one of a new job. If an employer is considering rejecting a flexible working request, they will now be required to consult with the employee, which can help ensure that all relevant information is understood before a decision is made.

The Department for Education, with [support from other sector experts](#), have produced the [Flexible Working Toolkit](#), to support schools to:

- Increase their understanding and awareness of flexible working in schools, including its benefits
- Develop and implement a flexible working policy
- Help employees to request flexible working

### Review your cyber security policies ahead of exams 2024

As exam season approaches it is vital for schools and colleges to review their cyber security policies. Schools and colleges have a critical role to play in maintaining the integrity of assessments. Please confirm with your IT team or provider that they are taking action to meet our [cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#). By meeting these standards, schools and colleges can increase cyber resilience and help protect student data.

The National Cyber Security Centre has also published a [free cyber security training package](#) specifically tailored for school and college staff. The training includes hints and tips on password creation and management, multi-factor authentication, and protecting against phishing threats.

## Exam stress – useful resources for teachers, parents and pupils

We are aware that exams have the potential to exacerbate feelings of anxiety and stress amongst young people. That is why it's important that whilst pupils should be encouraged to work hard, this should not be at the expense of their wellbeing.

There is a range of advice and guidance for students and parents to help alleviate or lessen the anxiety they have about sitting exams, including:

- [NHS Help your child beat exam stress](#)
- [Anna Freud: How to identify the signs of academic stress, and ways to help](#)
- [Student Minds – resources, tips and blogs about exam stress](#)
- [Ofqual: Coping with exam pressure – a guide for students](#)

## Latest training news and conferences

### What is the SCERTS Approach?

**SCERTS: Social Communication Emotional Regulation Transactional and Support**

SCERTS is an evidence-based framework for assessing children who need support with their social communication and emotional regulation skills, including autistic children. Transactional support is the support given to children to reach their goals and achieve their potential.

The SCERTS approach is not a prescriptive curriculum, and it works alongside practice in settings and home. Designed to be collaborative and to value the contributions made by settings and families to a child's development, setting goals to reflect what the child can do with the right support. A strengths-based approach, so it starts with what a child can do instead of what they can't do.

To find out more about SCERTS access Stage 1 of the programme a free webcast. Once your setting / school has watched Stage 1 you can progress onto Stage 2.

**We are soft launching “What is the SCERTS Approach” therefore from 15 April 2024 until 12 May 2025 those who are working with EYFS children in Settings / Reception / School ran nurseries can access this webcast.**

When booking via [WCF:CPD](#) search course code: 10462. Only one member of staff needs to be booked to get all the Stage 1 information, as once you have the webcast it can be shared amongst your EYFS team.

Stage 1 schools / settings can access Drop-In Sessions and if they have questions and wish to progress onto Stage 2 and access the full training please contact the training team by emailing: [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

### Managing change and transitions

This course aims to:

- Describe some of the reasons transitions and change can be difficult for CYP.
- Explore how we can support CYP with change and transitions in school and the theory that underpins this.
- Apply learning to think about what your setting already does to support transitions for CYP and what you might do moving forward

Cost: £20 + VAT

- 21 May 2024, 3.30pm to 4.30pm, virtual delivery, course code 10466 / 84689

## Inclusion Conference

**Develop your strategic oversight of SEND: by supporting the leadership and development of an inclusive culture, to achieve an ethos that enables your pupils and teams to thrive.**

At our 2024 Worcestershire Inclusion Conference we aim to inspire everyone, with keynote speakers, workshops and the opportunity to discuss and reflect with others in schools/settings across Worcestershire. Hear from two inspirational Keynote speakers.

During the day delegates will attend three workshops which include: Using the revised dyspraxia pathway to support pupils in school, Everyday transitions: What makes a school day challenging for autistic children and how can we help? and Intensive Interaction.

This conference is aimed at SENCOs, Inclusion Leads, Senior Leadership Teams and all those working in educational environments, with a role and passion for supporting all those in their community to achieve their aspirations.

[Book your place on Inclusion Conference](#)

## TIAAS Network Meeting

An opportunity to come together, share what's working well and co-construct the Worcestershire TIAAS (Trauma Informed Attachment Aware settings) Pathway.

Open to all schools / settings regardless of whether they attended the Introduction to Worcestershire TIAAS Pathway or not.

Cost: Free and a maximum of two delegates per school / setting

- 17 June 2024, 3.45pm to 5pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10444 / 84823

Book your place on any of the above training via [WCF:CPD](#) using your school CPD leader login details. Confirmations are issued at the point of booking and go to the delegate email provided. If your school requires support when booking, please contact the training team on 01905 844 420 or email [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

## First Aid Training

Our Health & Safety colleagues in Worcestershire County Council have a variety of first aid courses available to staff in schools throughout 2024. Courses include:

- **Emergency First Aid** (1-day course)
- **Paediatric First Aid** (2-day course)
- **First Aid at Work Certificate with Paediatric First Aid Combined** (3-day course)

Please download their [First Aid Courses Flyer](#) for details of dates available, costs, course times and locations.

To book a place on any of their courses, please email: [healthandsafety@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## The RE Today Roadshow 2024

RE Today are delivering an inspirational day of CPD for primary teachers of religious education, these will run regionally across the nation in 2024. Affordable, high-quality, and intensely practical training, showcasing the best resources from RE Today and NATRE - giving you and your school the support and confidence to teach about religious and non-religious worldviews.

Led by one of the most inspiring speakers on Religious Education you will ever hear, Lat Blaylock will draw upon a career in RE to give a clear vision for the future of the subject in the next five years including an engagement with worldviews, using different ways of knowing in RE and the latest Ofsted requirements.

Please download and share the [roadshow flyer](#).

Click on each link for further detail about the roadshows:

- [Leeds – 3 June 2024, Venue - Hilton Leeds city centre](#)
- [Birmingham – 18 June 2024 , Venue - the Eastside rooms](#)
- [Reading – 1 July 2024, Venue - Holiday Inn Reading South](#)

The day will include:

- 4 seminars from Lat Blaylock focussing on 'Challenge and Inspiration in RE'
- Practical ideas you can take away and use instantly in your classroom the next day
- Celebrating RE and its fantastic community of teachers
- Networking opportunities – make lasting connections around your region
- Exclusive on-the-day offers and discounts in our Roadshow exhibition
- Time and space away from the classroom to reflect on your RE and vision for the subject in your school

Cost: £125 (NATRE members save 25% and pay only £93.75), discounts available for group bookings. If you require any further information, please contact [Chris@retoday.org.uk](mailto:Chris@retoday.org.uk)

## Latest funding news

### Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust for Schools

Following the launch of the Families Strategy in January 2022, the MOD created a dedicated fund, 'The Armed Forces Families Fund' (AF3). This programme sits within the AF3 Fund. The MOD has partnered with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to administer the AF3 Fund.

Under this programme, the Trust will award grants for projects which support Service children along their Educational Pathway. This funding will enable Service children to reach their full life potential. This programme is primarily focused on schools and local authorities across the UK.

Applications can only address the needs of children aged 4-18 in full-time statutory education, who are from currently serving Armed Forces families. This includes pupils whose parents are on full commitment as part of the full-time Reserve Service.

This funding is for stand-alone projects lasting up to two years.

For more information please visit: [The Service Pupil Support programme \(covenantfund.org.uk\)](https://covenantfund.org.uk)



## Other local news and events

### Careers with The Curiosity Museum

If you're part of a primary or middle school in Worcestershire, you're eligible to sign up for the FREE [Curiosity Museum Online Pilot](#) sponsored by Worcestershire LEP.

Introducing Years 5 & 6 to Careers with the Curiosity Museum supports key stage 2 students to find out about the different careers through the power of curiosity and what interests them.

[Add your school's name to their list](#) to get started before anyone else in Summer 2024!

Find out more by visiting the [Curiosity Museum website](#) and watch their [short video](#) or [sign up now for the FREE Summer 2024 Online Pilot!](#)

### A weekend of elite goalball comes to Worcester!

On the weekend of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Worcester will play host to a unique blind sport event showcasing the highest calibre of goalball in the UK.

Goalball UK, along with Goalfix Sports Ltd, are excited to bring this intriguing, fast paced Paralympic sport to the city of Worcester. It's free to attend and a fantastic spectator sport with quick-fire games and a test of the senses not seen anywhere else.

Goalball is a Paralympic sport designed for blind and partially sighted people. Originally the sport was created to help rehabilitate injured soldiers after World War II. Nowadays the sport is played and loved globally by many people at all levels.

Players all wear blacked out eyeshades, so everyone's level of vision is the same. The game is played 3-a-side with the aim being to score into your opponent's goal using a weighted ball with bells in.

At the top level, players throw the 1.25kg ball at speeds up to 45mph, meaning there are lots of thrills and spills as players defend with their bodies using their senses of sound and touch to locate the ball. The Goalfix Cup is the highest level of goalball competition in the UK, the FA Cup of this sport if you like. The event takes place on **Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th June 2024** at the University of Worcester's St John's Sports Centre.

Players and teams from across the UK will converge on Worcester in hopes of lifting the trophy. In 2023 Fen Tigers were crowned champions, breaking Northern Allstars' back-to-back reign. The event is open to everyone to come and watch. There are plenty of seats available but please reserve a ticket for each person in your group. Audio descriptive commentary will be available throughout the weekend. To use the audio commentary guests need to bring their own headphones. Book your free tickets at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/goalfix-cup-2024-tickets-865597333927?>

Visit the official Goalfix Cup 2024 webpage for more information: <https://goalballuk.com/goalfix-cup-2024/>

## Don't miss out on Free Home Improvements now available to Worcestershire residents

The Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUGs) is designed to tackle colder homes that do not have mains gas central heating. Homeowners and tenants in Worcestershire could benefit from a variety of measures to help reduce energy bills including: internal and external wall insulation, loft and cavity wall insulation, air source heat pumps, solar panels, draught proofing and many more.

Worcestershire County Council is working in partnership with Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils to deliver this programme.

Worcester City Council and Wyre Forest District Council are administering their own HUG2 scheme and information can be found on their websites.

To qualify, households must **not** use mains gas to heat their home, have a gross annual income of less than £36,000 with a current Home Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D to G.

Funding is also available for landlords in the charity and private rented sector.

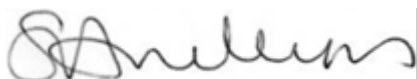
Those who qualify for the scheme will undergo a free technical survey to determine the most suitable energy efficiency measures.

For more information, including full eligibility, and to register your interest visit: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/home-upgrade-grant-scheme-hug2](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/home-upgrade-grant-scheme-hug2) or contact Act on Energy on their free advice line **0800 988 2881**.



All projects must be completed by March 2025.

**Your support in sharing the scheme with parents and carers via your newsletters and other communication channels would be most appreciated.**



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

