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# **Education Bulletin**

Dear Colleagues,

All of sudden it feels like the end of term is fast approaching. Our attendance section on page 6 contains specific advice for the approach to attendance in the lead up to Christmas and this long term.

Following the conclusion of the coroner's inquest into the tragic and sad death of Ruth Perry, Ofsted have released a statement of response including that any inspections will be delayed by a day next week. My thoughts are also for this family and community and for the wellbeing of Worcestershire education leaders and staff.

On 28 November 2023, the Department launched a consultation on <u>Minimum Service Levels (MSLs) in</u> <u>education</u>. The consultation aims to gather views from teachers, parents, learners, employers and other sector leaders as they all have a stake in the outcome. The <u>Secretary of State sent an email</u> to teachers outlining what minimum services are for. The consultation closes on 30 January 2024.

The Transforming Public Procurement programme will also affect the education sector. All the information schools and multi-academy trusts (MAT's) need can be found at <u>Transforming Public</u> <u>Procurement</u>, including guidance documents to help with planning and preparation, recent webinars, and details of the learning and development package available. Schools and MAT's can also contact the <u>Get Help Buying for Schools team</u>.

A reminder that settings can access an <u>online directory of providers who offer SEND and Alternative</u> <u>Provision</u>. Please note schools are advised to complete their own quality assurance, monitoring and safeguarding checks of these providers.

In today's bulletin you can find important details on how to claim vouchers for eligible students who receive free school meals. Schools will have access to the Edenred portal from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 until Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to allow for placing orders for the Christmas holiday.

Wishing you all the best.

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# Latest education news and updates

## Edenred Portal access will be available for the Christmas Holiday

During the Christmas holiday, eligible students will receive free school meals through the voucher system provided by Edenred. Edenred is the council's contracted provider to issue free school meal vouchers for the school holidays, and no other platforms are authorised to issue them.

All vouchers issued during the Christmas period will have a validity period of <u>one month</u> from the date of the order. Schools are instructed to issue vouchers only for the corresponding holiday period.

Schools will have access to the Edenred portal from **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023** until **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024**. This will allow a window for placing orders for the Christmas holiday.

Vouchers cannot exceed **<u>£30</u>** per eligible FSM pupil for the whole period.

Vouchers are <u>not available</u> for nursery age children or 6<sup>th</sup> form students, and vouchers must not be ordered to replace term time meals.

You must use the WCC ordering site with your existing WCC account (22463), the login page can be accessed here: <u>Edenred Online Ordering</u>

Please ensure you have the correct recipient email address and that parent/carers are notified they will be in receipt of a voucher to ensure they are expecting it and do not leave vouchers to expire.

To help monitor the vouchers issued under this scheme please can you ensure you include the URN or UKPRN for the school when placing the order.

No voucher which has previously been ordered and expired can be re-issued by schools. For any queries regarding the re-issuing of vouchers please contact: <u>FSMHolidayVouchers@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk</u>

It is important to remind schools that as eligibility is linked to FSM status there maybe families who although have FSM status their circumstances have changed. This is a finite pot of government funding and with the government protection on FSM status, regardless of circumstance change, there are families that may no longer require the vouchers. Please ensure that vouchers are issued to those children and families who require the support and who are receiving FSM.

Below are lots of helpful links and guides to answer common questions and issues:

- Forgotten password please reset your password using password reset
- Forgotten email address contact <u>FSMHolidayVouchers@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk</u> and we will advise of the email address your account is set up with.
- Edenred <u>user guide</u> including supermarket details and how to order.

- Order "pending" you will need to agree to the terms and conditions and confirm your order for it to be processed.
- Order "held" we will ensure any held orders are released.
- "Ordering window is closed" please check you are logged into the correct portal. The DfE portal is closed, but the WCC portal is open.
- Redeem eCodes Visit the Edenred <u>redeem eCodes webpage</u>. Please note, we are unable to control which supermarkets you can redeem vouchers at.
- Once a voucher has been redeemed by a parent/carer, we are unable to assist with errors with the eCode itself. Queries will need to be directed either to the supermarket or Edenred. Please advise the parent/carer to check all the supporting information on their voucher email before raising a query.
- Parent/carer FAQ's can be found here: <u>Parent Carer FAQs</u>

The <u>user guide</u> will answer many of your common questions and should be your first point of call for any queries. If after reading the user guide and links, you still need assistance then please contact <u>FSMHolidayVouchers@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk</u> where we will be happy to help you. Please be aware however that you will not receive and instant response as this inbox is one of many that are manned by our team. The fastest way therefore to resolve your issues will always be to read the guides and links in the majority of cases.

<u>Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme</u> at the County Council is available to signpost families to other local sources of support.

For support around the cost of living please signpost parents/carers to our <u>Cost of living support</u> <u>website</u>.

## Act for Youth launch

The PSHE Association has released new and improved Act for Youth lesson plans in collaboration with the Department for Education and the National Counter Terrorism Security Office.

Act for Youth is aimed at 11-16 year olds to teach them about the three recommended actions to take during a marauding terrorist attack – RUN, HIDE and TELL. These lesson plans will support those in the sector to mitigate the risk from terrorism and protect their students.

The lesson plans use a film and activities to show students that, if caught up in an attack, they should RUN to safety, HIDE if they are unable to run, and TELL the police when safe. It is designed to be delivered through structured lessons embedded in a developmental PSHE curriculum.

For more information please visit: <u>https://www.protectuk.police.uk/act-youth-run-hide-tell</u>

## The Digital Switchover is coming

The UK's telephone network is changing. Openreach are removing the old analogue Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) between now and 2025 to a fully digital network across the UK.

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) 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 please visit The Digital Switchover is coming webpage (WCC)

## Classroom Ready Resources to support Primary RE Syllabus

If you use an RE Today RE syllabus, this may be of significant interest.

NATRE have launched a new school enhanced membership. The new membership will provide you with a wide range of benefits to help solve your Primary RE issues with ready-made Lesson Plans, PowerPoints, and Knowledge Organisers, all written and designed by expert teachers for teachers.

For more information including details of all the benefits of the new enhanced membership, please download the <u>letter from NATRE on new membership</u>. If you have any questions please contact Chris Hooper, RE Today Services I NATRE at <u>Chris@REToday.org.uk</u>.

# Latest attendance news and updates

## End of Term and Friday Absence

Evidence shows that absences from school on Fridays and in the final week of term increase. This Christmas may be particular risk as a number of schools will be breaking up later in December than usual. Richard Prime, headteacher at Dame Elizabeth Cadbury School shares six actionable steps that schools can take to promote pupil attendance on Fridays and in the final weeks of term: <u>Gov.uk</u> <u>Teaching blog</u>

## Ofsted and attendance

Ofsted has recently published a useful <u>blog</u> and <u>webinar on attendance</u>. The webinar features Ofsted and DfE colleagues discussing the landscape of attendance and Ofsted's inspection approach regarding attendance.

## Talking attendance with Parents and Carers

As different factors are continuing to influence decision making for some parents, carers and pupils regarding school attendance, talking openly to formulate trusting relationships is key. Produced in September the DfE's toolkit provides examples that schools can use to assist communications with parents and carers about school attendance: <u>Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to</u> <u>support attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>

The toolkit recognises that being in school and having the best attendance possible supports pupil wellbeing and a sense of belonging. It also recognises that for some pupils attending school every day will be harder than for others.

The following guide for parents encourages partnership working with schools. You may wish to revisit this to share the most relevant parts to support your schools ongoing attendance promotion and messaging: <u>Attendance Guide for Parents (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)</u>

# Latest news from Teaching School 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 dates for Conference 2 in the Spring term. These face-to-face conferences are for ECTs who started their induction in September 2023. The booking link is below: https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/ect-teacher-conferences-january-2024/

Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	09:00	16:00	Stourport High School
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	09:00	16:00	Prince Henry's High School
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	09:00	16:00	Rivers Teaching Alliance
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2024	09:00	16:00	Marlbrook Primary School
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2024	09:00	16:00	University of Worcester

#### NPQ Update

Applications for the Spring 2024 cohort are now open and will close on the 5<sup>th</sup> February. These programmes are fully funded by the DfE for academic year 2023-24. Please see the Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub website below for further details: <u>https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/npg/</u>

For colleagues interested in the NPQ leading Primary Maths please contact Catherine Atkinson at Rivers MAT, <u>catkinson@riverscofe.co.uk</u>.

Autumn 2023 cohorts have now begun and dates have been emailed to participants regarding their national webinars and local sessions.

#### 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. Early Career Teacher and Appropriate Body Registration Form 2023-24

If schools are unsure then please contact Andy Duffy, the Teaching School Hub Director, at ad@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk.

## Tudor Grange Teaching School Hub

#### **Appropriate Body**

Thank you to everyone who has submitted formal assessments or progress reviews this term. The deadline for these was Friday 24 November. If you have any assessments or progress reviews outstanding, please ensure these are submitted as soon as possible to ensure they can be reviewed before Christmas.

They are coming to the end of an assessment window for the majority of ECTs. Please ensure that your ECT assessments are submitted on ECT Manager. If you need any support with this, please contact tsh@tgacademy.org.uk or give them a call on 0121 703 8250.

#### **National Professional Qualifications**

#### Spring 2024 Cohorts: Registration is open and the deadline is 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

They are delighted to offer the following courses: NPQ for Executive Leadership, NPQ for Headship, NPQ for Senior Leadership.

They will also be offering the following courses through their Shires Partner Hub: NPQ for Leading Teaching, NPQ for Leading Behaviour and Culture and NPQ for Leading Teacher Development.

Places are limited for these cohorts, so please apply here soon to avoid disappointment.

#### \*NEW\* Spring 2024 NPQ for Leading Primary Mathematics

They are thrilled to announce that they are partnering with Teach First and Origin Maths Hub to offer the NPQ for Leading Primary Mathematics. Prospective applicants need to have a secure understanding of the Teaching for Mastery programme run by maths hubs. Further information can be found on their <u>website</u>. <u>Apply here</u>.

# Latest SEND news and updates

## Groups, Activities and Short Breaks Provision Online Portal

# On behalf of our Parent Carer Forum, Families in Partnership, can you please help promote the following short survey to help find out about families' experiences of short breaks and activities.

### Download Families in Partnership Survey Flyer

Families in Partnership want to hear from you about your experiences booking and using Groups, Activities and Short Breaks Provision across Worcestershire for your child/young person.

The following data collection is completely anonymous, and we will feed this back to Worcestershire Children First who are developing their provision to ensure that it is easily accessible, with a variety of opportunities across the spectrum of needs. They aim to do this through a One Stop Shop Online Portal where you review and book group activities and short breaks. Some services will be available without assessments whereas others will require an assessment to identify level of support needed.

#### Short breaks & activities survey

## Exploring the Experiences of Culturally Deaf Parents and Hearing School Staff

Ruby Noble, a Trainee Educational Psychologist on placement with Worcestershire Children First, is exploring the experiences of culturally Deaf parents and hearing school staff of collaborating with one another for their doctoral research.

They are aiming to conduct online interviews with school staff to explore their experiences of interacting and collaborating with culturally Deaf parents (i.e. parents who are Deaf and whose preferred method of communication is British Sign Language) of children in their schools. This would take place on Microsoft Teams and would last for around one hour. The date and time would be agreed at a later point depending on the availability of those involved. The interview would be recorded using the Teams function so that it can be transcribed, but the video would be deleted once transcription is complete. The transcription would be anonymised. They would also like to interview Deaf parents individually in person or online with the support of a British Sign Language interpreter to explore their experiences.

More information on the parent and staff participation can be found in the links below:

Parent Participation Information Video - Google Drive Download Participate Information Sheets - Google Drive

If you have any potential participants: Deaf parents whose preferred language is British Sign Language; and hearing school staff (either teaching staff or pastoral staff) who are currently working with Deaf parents in a school setting or have worked with Deaf parents in a school setting in the last five years, please get in touch with Ruby via email at <u>rxn110@student.bham.ac.uk</u>.

# Latest health news and updates

## Measles

Worcestershire's Public Health Team are raising awareness of measles and encouraging uptake of the MMR vaccine following a further increase in cases of across England.

Measles can be a very serious infection, especially if it spreads to other parts of the body, such as the lungs or brain, causing pneumonia, meningitis, blindness, and seizures (fits).

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth. The rash usually starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body. The spots of the measles rash are sometimes raised and join together to form blotchy patches. They're not usually itchy and look brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

Measles is one of the easiest diseases to catch through coughing or sneezing. It can spread quickly from person to person, especially in schools and a child with measles will infect almost all unprotected children they have contact with.

#### **MMR vaccination**

The most effective way to control measles is by having 2 doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Outbreaks can occur in schools when not enough children have been vaccinated.

Whilst MMR vaccines are usually delivered as part of the routine childhood immunisation programme, this may have been missed due to a number of reasons. It is never too late to catch up and parents should be encouraged to speak to their GP if they are unsure if their child has received the vaccination or to arrange for it to be given.

#### Response to a case

Although many suspected cases will not turn out to be measles it is important to avoid exposing contacts to other infectious causes of rash illness. Individuals with measles infection are infectious from about 4 days before rash onset until 4 full days after the rash appears.

#### Unvaccinated contacts of a confirmed case of measles are required to isolate for 21 days

This rule applies to both staff and pupils and can therefore have a significant impact on education. Increasing the number of vaccinated children and adults within the school will help to reduce this risk.

#### Reporting

If you suspect a child has measles or notified of a confirmed case, please contact UKHSA immediately for support and advice on 0344 225 3560 Option 2.

#### Guidance and resources for educational settings:

- 1. <u>Measles: information for schools and healthcare centres.</u>
- 2. <u>Health Protection in children and young people settings including education.</u>
- 3. A <u>vaccines communications toolkit for universities and other higher education settings is</u> <u>available to download</u>. This toolkit contains information and resources on vaccines including MenACWY and MMR and the diseases they protect against.
- 4. <u>Briefing pack for secondary schools adolescent programmes.</u>
- 5. <u>Back to or starting nursery, primary or secondary school reminder postcards and posters for</u> <u>parents</u>
- 6. Publications including posters and leaflets on measles and other infectious diseases can be ordered, in bulk free of charge <u>here</u>. Publications are available in different languages and are delivered within 3-5 working days.

## Supporting Babies and Children's Mental Health

Information and guidance from the Department for Education on supporting babies and children's mental health is now available on the Help for Early Years providers platform.

#### How you can help

They are asking for your help to promote the guidance to your Early Year's settings. Please reach out to make them aware of this new resource.

To help you with this, they have created an example message you may want to use.

#### Example message for early years settings

We all have mental health, just as we have physical health. In the same way that we can be more or less physically healthy from time to time, we can also be more or less mentally healthy from time to time too.

Help for Early Years Providers has added <u>new information and guidance on supporting babies and</u> young children with their mental health.

The guidance:

- explains how practitioners can support positive mental health in early years children
- includes emotional and behavioural support strategies to use in early years settings
- links to further reading and resources

For more guidance on supporting children in the early years, visit the <u>Help for Early Years Providers</u> <u>website</u>.

## Sexual Behaviours Survey

## FAO Middle/Secondary headteachers and pastoral leads

The University of Birmingham has launched a survey as part of research into young people's sexual behaviour in the UK. Sexual behaviours in children and young people (CYP), aged 13-18, is an unexplored research area within the UK context, and no assessment tools for these behaviours currently exist that are underpinned by UK focussed research. This study is gathering data from a range of sources including young people themselves in order to create evidence-based definitions of normal, problematic and harmful sexual behaviours in CYP in the contemporary UK context. The data will be used to develop a tool to assess sexual behaviours in CYP to safeguard young people's health and to support them with their sexual well-being.

The survey is aimed at 13- to 18-year-olds in the UK.

Action: Please consider sharing this survey sensitively with parents/carers and young people.

Find out more: <u>Understanding sexual behaviours in children and young people in the UK</u> Link to the survey: <u>Young people's sexual behaviour survey</u>: now live

## Vapes - Free Promotional Materials

Schools and colleges can still order free posters about what constitutes an illegal vape. These are ideal for staff rooms, parent areas, dining areas and student common rooms.

## Order illegal vapes posters for your setting

In addition, if you haven't previously accessed and circulated the parent carers leaflet about vaping last summer, you can download the leaflet from <u>Google Drive</u>.

## National Survey of Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use (SSD) Amongst Young People

NHS England is inviting all secondary schools in England to participate in this survey during the autumn term. Some schools may have been invited individually as part of the random selection process but for the first time schools can also volunteer to take part. As the government's main information and data source on alcohol, drug and tobacco/vaping use among young people in England, the findings are used by numerous government departments and councils to inform policymaking.

Schools who take part will receive a personalised report showing how their school's data compares against national averages. The survey takes 20-30 minutes and is completed online by pupils in school. Findings are completely confidential, and full instructions will be provided ahead of the survey taking place. To take part, please email the Ipsos survey team at <u>SDDsurvey@ipsosresearch.com</u> or call 0808 101 2066.

Find out more about the SDD Among Young People in England Survey

# Latest Government updates

## SAFE taskforces

On 29 November, the DfE published a document outlining how SAFE (support, attend, fulfil, exceed) taskforces can help schools to keep children safe from the impact of serious youth violence.

Read DfE guidance on SAFE taskforces (www.gov.uk)

## GCHQ Christmas Challenge - reminder

Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), the UK's intelligence, security and cyber agency, is running its annual Christmas Challenge for 11-18-year-olds on the 14 December. Students can put their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills to the test in a series of puzzles.

Schools can register now to get early access to the puzzles.

<u>Teachers will also be able to download a hints sheet, lesson plan, printable certificates and a 'good luck' message</u> from GCHQ Director Anne Keast-Butler.

A coordinated day of puzzling will take place on 14 December, with classes encouraged to share their progress on social media.

Register your interest ahead of the 14 December launch date. Resources to promote the day can be found at the link below.

Schools, colleges and youth organisations can sign up now by filling in the registration form here.

# Other local news and events

## New specialist fostering scheme launched

Worcestershire Children First Fostering have launched a new specialist fostering scheme for people who have experience of caring for vulnerable children.

We value family life and for those children who are not able to remain living at home safely we want them to live with foster carers, being cared for as part of a family.

We have a number of young children, 11 and under who are currently living in residential care and we want to find suitable foster carers for them.

The new scheme is looking for people with personal or professional experience of looking after vulnerable children who may have experienced a number of challenges in their family life, and may have a range of needs and complexities that require a specialist skilled foster carer.

In return for making a difference to a child's life you will receive ongoing professional development and training and an enhanced fee payment of £1,000 per week plus age-related allowance. You will also receive support from the service including your own social worker and access to regular support groups and activities for you and your family and paid membership to Foster Talk which provides advice and many benefits.

More information on the specialist fostering scheme can be found in our <u>specialist fostering flyer</u>.

If you are interested in making a real difference to a child's future, please visit <u>www.worcestershirefostering.co.uk</u> or call 0800 028 2158.

## Worcester Child Contact Centre

Worcester Child Contact Centre are the only free supported contact centre in Worcester. They offer a twice a month session for non-resident parents to meet their children. Its aim to reach families where parental conflict is effecting a parent seeing their children - often due to parents not wishing to see each other.

Their aim is to provide a safe space and help with handover of children so parents can avoid eachother and reduces risks such as the resident parent not knowing where the child is going or when they might be bought back. They are accredited by NACCC (National Association of Child Contact Centres).

Contact sessions run twice a month on a Saturday afternoon and are free to use. Families have to do a self-referral process through NACCC to use the centre.

Your support in raising awareness about the service would be most appreciated. Please display the <u>Worcester Child Contact Centre poster</u> or circulate with any parents who may benefit from this service.

For more information, please visit <u>www.worcesterchildcontactcentre.org.uk</u>

## Exciting opportunity for young people passionate about the environment

Arena Online are creating a Responsible Business Strategy which maps out strategically the next ~10 years and the actions they want to achieve to improve their impact across their people, suppliers, communities and the environment.

It's being developed internally from the bottom-up by their RBS steering group who have been meeting frequently since the beginning of November. They recognise the importance of capturing the views of our external stakeholders too and have the following opportunities:

#### **Responsible Business Strategy Steering Group**

They are extending an invitation for up to 3 passionate students to join them on their Responsible Business Strategy steering group meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024. They want students to help represent the voice of future generations as they set targets to reduce their impact on the planet.

It will be a great opportunity for young people to gain experience in a business environment, build their network and help them stand out on their CV's. They're flexible as to whether they want to join in-person (they're happy to discuss travel arrangements and reimbursements) or online, but we would need them to be accompanied by a sponsor.

Download Arena RBS Steering Group Invitation

#### **Community Consultation**

They have developed a community consultation to help them understand what is important to their local Worcestershire community. They're trying to get as many responses as possible so they'd really appreciate it if you could share it with your teacher network and, if possible, they'd welcome the encouragement of schools to share with parents too.

They're conducting the consultation anonymously to remove any preconceptions and potential bias.

#### Download Arena Community Consultation Invite

For more information, please contact Jessica Latham, ESG Manager at: jessica.latham@arena.online

## New Junior Parkrun

A new parkrun event, in Diglis, now takes place every Sunday from 9am, starting from Diglis Fields, Diglis Lane, Worcester, WR5 3FB.

Find out more: Diglis Fields junior parkrun.

Local volunteers have been at the heart of making the project happen, with the County Council working alongside them and Worcester City Council. Public Health in Worcestershire have provided £4,000 to fund this project.

#### Are you interested in creating a Parkrun?

If you are interested in creating a Junior Parkrun in Worcestershire, together with other passionate volunteers, but need support to make this happen, please contact <a href="https://www.uk.kom">https://www.uk.kom</a>.

Best wishes,

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



