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Education Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

A very warm welcome to all new head teachers and staff joining us in Worcestershire this academic year. I hope that everyone had a restful summer break and feels rejuvenated for the new term.

The Education Bulletin has had a bit of a makeover in preparation for Children's Services transferring back to Worcestershire County Council on 1 October 2024. Please note that systems and business will remain as normal however the main difference you will notice is the removal of the Worcestershire Children First brand as the company will no longer exist. We have been busy updating our systems, website and documents over the summer to reflect this change. Email addresses will change to @worcestershire.gov.uk and you will start to notice this happening throughout September however please note that we will continue to receive emails to WCF until August 2025. Thank you for your patience during this transition period.

The big news last week was the announcement that Government is pushing ahead with its reform agenda by scrapping single headline Ofsted judgements for schools with immediate effect to boost school standards and increase transparency for parents. Ofsted will no longer provide a single overall grade of effectiveness when inspecting schools, however schools will still receive the existing sub-judgements across different areas of school life. Early Years provision in maintained schools and academies for children aged 2 and above, and maintained nursery schools are included in this change. [Read announcement in full on single headline Ofsted grades to be scrapped.](#)

The next Headteacher Briefing will take place on 17 October 2024, 9.30am – 12.30pm. The briefing will be delivered virtually by MS Teams and free to attend for all headteachers and/or deputy headteachers. Book your place now on this briefing and other events from our [Conference Programme for Autumn Term 2024/25](#) via [CPD](#).

And finally, as we start a new academic year, can I kindly request that you ensure your key holder and emergency contact details are up to date on the [Children's Services Portal](#) please. This is applicable for all settings to ensure we can contact you in the event of any child level incidents or school incidents out of hours, which sadly do occur more frequently than we would want.

Wishing you and your students, staff and governors all the very best for the new term.

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Latest attendance news and updates

Updates to the Children's Services Portal

As mentioned in the previous bulletin, over the summer holidays, we have made some changes to the Joiner, Leaver, Absence and Irregular Attendance, and Part Time Timetable and Flexi-Schooling Notification Forms. These include:

- 1) Changing the leaving reasons to reflect regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, applicable from 19th August 2024 – these are described in detail in the [Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance](#). The update includes the new leaving reason, a new guide for each reason and changes to what files/information also need to be uploaded.
- 2) Update of the de-rolling checklist – new version attached (only the relevant sections need to be completed depending on leaving reason). Schools no longer need to provide the Learner Profile document as part of the attachments for leaving reasons (other teams may still request a copy is completed at a later date in specific circumstances). The EHE exit form still applies.
- 3) Additional options to indicate a child's social care/early help status (available on all forms)
- 4) Additional options on the Absence and Irregular Attendance Form to indicate health services involvement with a child.
- 5) A tick box on the Absence and Irregular Attendance Form to allow schools to flag behavioural/risk of exclusion cases to the inclusion team – further information on expectations using this will be provided in due course.

The team that processes absence notifications has also been expanded and we are hoping that we can respond to absence notifications faster as a result. Where possible team representatives will also be happy to attend upcoming Trust or Pyramid/Network Attendance Meetings to discuss the above portal changes further – please contact ccas@worcestershire.gov.uk to enquire.

Also as a reminder, can schools please provide as much information as possible when sending through cases that might need discussion at CCAS panel and use their full DfE registered school name (or consistently use the same name) if prompted to do so when completing the notification forms – abbreviations or multiple variations of spellings makes it difficult to organise and manage effectively.

School leavers - reminder to schools

As a statutory requirement all schools are expected to advise Worcestershire County Council of in-year leavers and choose an appropriate reason for de-rolling via the [Children's Services Portal](#). The portal is the expected method of notifying the local authority of school leavers and should always be completed even if another service/team in the authority has also been advised.

These notifications also need to include children who leave the school during the summer holidays due to changing schools (outside of normal transition), moving away/leaving the country, moving into the Independent sector, or where parents have chosen to Electively Home Educate (EHE).

Last year the Children's Commissioner contacted all local authorities to undertake an exercise in confirming children's destinations who were at a school in the January 2022 census but not in the January 2023 census. Whilst providing the data for this response, it became evident that Worcestershire children who have a change of circumstances during the summer holidays are the most likely not to be notified to us and as such, we are asking that if a school is aware of a child that has moved away/left the country, changed schools, entered the independent sector, or left to EHE during the recent (and future) summer holidays, a portal leaving notification is completed as soon as possible.

Please do not send notifications for children transitioning between phases unless the child is no longer transitioning to their expected/allocated school due to the reasons above.

[Download School De-rolling Checklist](#)

Latest education news and updates

PRU/AP Travel Request Forms

Along with the new 'PRU/AP Travel Request Form' there will also be a button on the Children's Services Portal to track the progress of the request. You will need to enter the Transport Request ID number, Pupil's Surname, and Date of Birth, then click 'Track Request'. The current status of the request and which team the request is with will be displayed, 'Current Responsible Party'.

There are 3 different teams that deal with a request. The request will first go to the Education Engagement's dashboard to be authorised. Once authorised the request will go to the Education Travel Team's dashboard to be assessed. If the request has been agreed, it will then go to the Commissioning Team for transport to be arranged. Below is a table of each status that will show on the tracker, which team use that status and an explanation of what the status means.

Team	Status	Explanation
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	New	The request is new on the dashboard. When it shows as new in the Education Travel Team's dashboard it has previously been accepted by Education Engagement.
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	In Progress	The request is being looked at by the relevant team.
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	Awaiting Response	An email has been sent to the submitter asking for more information to help progress the request.
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	Response Received	The submitter has replied to the question the relevant team has asked. They can now progress with the request.
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	Withdraw	The request has been withdrawn by the relevant team.
Education Engagement and Education Travel Team	Rejected This will also include an 'Outcome' of 'Rejected' and 'Rejection Reason'.	The request has been rejected by the relevant team. The tracker will also state the reason for rejection. If the Travel Request is still required a new Travel Request form will need to be submitted.
Commissioning Team	Assessed This will also include an 'Outcome' of 'Assessed'	The Education Travel Team have assessed and agreed to the request. It has now been forwarded to the Commissioning Team to arrange transport. The progression within the Commissioning Team is not logged on the tracker.

If you have any questions regarding the form or the process, please email AlternativeProvision@worcestershire.gov.uk

Wraparound Programme Funding

Applications for funding to support the expansion of Wraparound childcare for children in Reception – Year 6 are now being accepted. Funding is available to:

- Create new wraparound provision (8am – 6pm, term-time).
- Expand existing wraparound provision, creating additional places and/or increasing offer to meet the 8am – 6pm requirement.
- Remove identified delivery barriers.

Applications can be for provision opening or expanding between September 2024 – March 2025, however priority will be given to projects that will increase wraparound before the end of the Autumn Term. Details of the application process, along with a link to the application form can be downloaded from [Google Drive](#).

Please note that due to changes in the national childcare agenda, funding for 2025/26 is no longer guaranteed. If you require funding to expand or create a wraparound offer, we urge you to apply as soon as possible; delivery of the project is expected to commence as soon as funding is awarded.

Support is available from the Early Years and Childcare Team, please contact Sharon Jones by emailing Wraparound@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Worcestershire Schools' Debating Competition

St Barnabas CE Primary are excited to let you know that they will once again be organising the Worcestershire Schools' Debating Competition which will take place on 21 November 2024 at St Barnabas CE Primary, Worcester. This date sits in UK Parliament Week, and they will be debating current issues during the debates.

There is availability for nine schools to join St Barnabas for an inclusive and fun debating competition which celebrates the oracy skills of our children. Each debating team will consist of six pupils from years 5 and 6 (a mix is fine) who will have been given a motion for debate before the day so they can prepare their arguments. Please contact Cathy Spence via email at cs1@st-barnabas-primary.worcs.sch.uk if you would like your school to be part of this day.

They anticipate that this will be a popular event and will allocate spaces on a first come first serve basis so please register your interest by Monday 16 September.

The current plan is that the competition will take part in the afternoon (1.30pm start) and the children will compete to be the winners of the Worcestershire Schools' Debating Competition trophy. A good way to prepare the children is to hold a school debating club to ensure the children are confident to speak publicly. Last year, the schools that had prepared their children fully and celebrated their oracy skills were very successful.

They will send further details out to schools once they have filled the spaces. Please forward this email to any colleagues who do not receive the education bulletin directly but may be interested.

Worcestershire's KS2 Careers Offer

Worcestershire's KS2 Careers Offer provides a range of activities which can be chosen on a pick and mix designed to support students in raising their aspirations.

Take a look at what's on offer in the [Worcestershire's KS2 Careers Offer flyer for Autumn 2024/25](#).

Solutions Not Sides - Olive Branch Award

Solutions Not Sides is an education programme that exists to provide humanising encounters, diverse narratives and critical-thinking tools in order to empower young people with the knowledge, empathy and skills to promote dialogue and conflict resolution, and to challenge prejudice in the UK.

The Olive Branch Award recognises schools' efforts to become safe and empowered spaces for learning about tough issues and applications are now open for 10 more schools to take part.

For more information and to register your interest, please visit:

<https://www.solutionsnotsides.co.uk/our-work/olive-branch-award>

Latest SEND news and updates

Worcestershire Life Beyond School Inclusive Show

This year's Worcestershire Life Beyond School Inclusive Show is taking place on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at Sixways Stadium, Worcester.

Our Life Beyond School event is for all students that hold an EHCP across Worcestershire or attend a SEND, AP or PRU school. It will give students the opportunity to engage with local colleges, training providers, employers and local community services and to discover their next steps, in an inclusive setting.

All Worcestershire schools are invited to bring students who will benefit from exploring local opportunities. More information and the school booking form can be found in the link below.

[Life Beyond School Inclusive Show 2024 | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Parent and Carers are also invited to attend this year's event. All parent/carers are required to book an entry time for the event through the Eventbrite link below.

[Worcestershire Life Beyond School Inclusive Show 2024 Tickets: 9:30am Tuesday 15 October 2024](#)

Neurodivergence Zone launched on Local Offer website

We have been working with parent carers and our colleagues in health services to create a new Neurodivergence Zone on our SEND Local Offer website. This is a specific section of the website that has information on children, young people and neurodivergence for families and professionals.

Neurodivergent means that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. The most common types of neurodivergence are:

- Autism
- ADHD
- Dyscalculia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia or Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)

The Neurodivergence Zone has information about how to support a neurodivergent child including diagnostic pathways, support groups and forums, education support, behaviours that challenge, mental health and information for family members.

[Access the Neurodivergence Zone on the SEND Local Offer](#)

Latest health and wellbeing news and updates

Cycle to School Week 2024

There is evidence that children who walk/cycle to school have a healthier body weight, so a great reason to support Cycle to School Week (23 - 27 September 2024). It can also help to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and parking issues around school.

Here are some ideas for the week:

- Mark on a local map where children have cycled from
- Tally charts for how children and staff got to school each day the week before and the week of Bike to School week
- Decorated bike parade
- Slow bike races
- Free breakfast or stickers for everyone arriving by bike

Pledge to support the week and encourage children and families to cycle to school and access free teaching resources by visiting the [Bikeability website](#).

Latest news from School Teaching Hubs

Rivers Teaching Alliance

ECT update (limited places left)

Rivers Teaching Alliance are delighted to let you know that they are now going into their second year as an Associate College for the [National Institute of Teaching](#). This means that they are able to offer the ECF fully funded programme and support your ECTs to continue their journey from their teaching qualifications.

They have outlined some of the advantages of registering your ECT with Rivers and the process to follow should you wish to do this. Please contact them if you have any questions or would like a phone conversation to discuss by emailing teachingschool@riverscofe.co.uk or call 01905 950700.

Why should I choose to use Rivers?

At Rivers Teaching Alliance they pride themselves on their personalised approach, being organised, having clear communication and always striving to provide support in a timely manner. They have an extremely strong track record of supporting local schools in a range of ways including teacher training and a wide variety of CPD. They receive consistently glowing feedback in all areas and aim to be part of a strong local school-led system.

For this year's ECT programme they have 100% satisfaction rates from their Mentors and ECTs and much of the feedback highlighted their clear communication and coming out to schools to support with any issues.

[Manage training for early career teachers \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

You will need the following information:

- ECT name, TRN and email address
- ECF mentor name, TRN and email address
- ECF Induction tutor name, TRN and email address

Choose the following:

- **Option 1:** Provider led programme
- **Appropriate Body:** Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub
- **Lead Provider:** National Institute of Teaching
- **Delivery Partner:** Rivers Teaching Alliance

They will then pass on your details to Prince Henry's so that you don't need to register with them separately.

NPQ Update

NPQ SENCO (applications close on 13 October 2024)

They have partnered with The National Institute of Teaching to offer the new fully funded SENCO qualification from Autumn 2024. They feel very privileged to have been involved in writing the materials for this qualification alongside local and national SEN specialists.

As with all NPQs at Rivers, the face to face sessions will be led by current, specialist practitioners with relevant classroom and leadership experience. There are a limited of number of funded places available nationally. Please apply via the following link:

[NPQ For SENCOs - Train with The National Institute Of Teaching](#)

- *The NPQ for SENCOs is mandatory for all practising and aspiring SENCOs*. They will need to complete this qualification within their first three years in the role.*
- **Please note that SENCOs who have already obtained the NASENCO qualification do not need to complete the NPQ for SENCOs, as well as SENCOs appointed before 1 September 2009.*

NPQ Leading Primary Mathematics (applications close on 13 October 2024)

This is a brand new NPQ focused on leading maths in primary schools which has been designed to complement the work of the maths hubs and teaching for mastery.

At Rivers, they are proud to have been part of the development of the materials and design of the programme. Their first cohort are well into their studies and have reported how useful it is and how they are able to implement the materials in their schools. They have a limited number of fully funded places left on this course. Please apply via the following link:

[NPQ in Leading Primary Maths - The National Institute of Teaching](#)

Other NPQs will be open for applications for a Spring start soon.

NATRE Local Primary RE Leaders' network

They are proud to host the NATRE RE leaders' network for Worcestershire. This is open to all types of schools and colleagues interested in developing their leadership skills as well as keeping up to date with current developments in RE.

The meetings are held between 4pm and 5pm at Rivers Teaching Alliance, based at St Clement's Primary School, Henwick Road, WR2 5NS. They look forward to welcoming you, whether you have been before or not. Please email teachingschool@riverscofe.co.uk if you would like further information or just turn up on the day.

- Thursday 10th October 2024
- Thursday 23rd January 2025
- Thursday 26th June 2025

Other upcoming courses

- EYFS The Power of Play: Skills for Life - 7th October 2024
- SEND in EYFS - 19th November 2024

- First Aid at Work
- Safer Recruitment
- Paediatric First Aid
- Positive Handling
- Fire Marshal

For further details on professional development opportunities, please visit [The Rivers CofE Multi Academy Trust website](#).

Haybridge Teaching School Hub

Making a Difference for Disadvantaged Pupils - New CPD 3-Day course

Following the success of their previous courses, Haybridge Teaching School Hub is once again working in collaboration with Billesley Research School which will explore the principles of effective Pupil Premium funding use, and the foundations of good implementation.

A good education, with qualifications to show for it, can transform lives for the better. Whilst young people who finish their studies without attaining the expected standards will struggle both in further study and the world of work. This is why a focus on the attainment gap between children and young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and their fellow students, is critical to ensure a positive future for all.

This course is ideal for Senior Leaders and Pupil Premium Leaders in primary and secondary schools.

The programme will take place at the 4 Stones Conference Centre based at the King Charles I School in Kidderminster, on all three dates:

- Thursday 28th November 2024 - 9:30am - 3:30pm
- Thursday 16th January 2025 - 9:30am - 3:30pm
- Tuesday 11th February 2025 - 9:30am - 3:30pm

The cost of this three-day course is £450 for up to 2 delegates however, Haybridge High School will once again cover £300 of this, meaning your school will only have to pay £150 for two participants to attend.

For more information and to book your place, please visit the [Eventbrite website](#).

If you have any queries regarding the course, please email nslater@haybridge.worcs.sch.uk.

Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub

Initial Teacher Training

Please be reminded that all ITT mentors are expected to complete the 7-hour tier one training before September. Dates for this training are available on the websites of the University of Worcester, Stourport SCITT, Tudor Grange SCITT and Prince Henry's and South Worcestershire ITT.

Applications for the 25-26 cohort will open on Tuesday 8th October 2024.

ECF Update

For colleagues enrolled on the Prince Henry's ECF programme with Ambition Institute, please note the following upcoming dates for next academic year. Please use the link below to book onto these.

www.ticketsource.co.uk/phtsh

Year 1 ECT Events:

Conference 1 – October 2024

Conference 2 – January 2025

Clinic 1 – 14th November 2024

Clinic 2 – 6th March 2025

Clinic 3 – 12th June 2025

Year 2 ECT Events:

Conference 3 – November 2024

Clinic 4 – 17th October 2024

Clinic 5 – 20th March 2025

Clinic 6 – 19th June 2025

ECT Mentor Events:

Conference 1 for Year 1 Mentors – September 2024

Conference 2 for Year 1 Mentors – June / July 2025

Clinic 1 for Year 1 Mentors – 6th February 2025

Clinic 2 for Year 2 Mentors – 7th November 2024

AB Update

DfE registrations for the 2024-25 cohort are now open. Please follow the link below for guidance on how to register your ECTs with Prince Henry's TSH.

<https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/registering-your-ect/>

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

NPQ Update

In Autumn 2024, they will be running the following cohorts:

- NPQH
- NPQSL
- NPQLBC
- NPQLTD

There are a very limited number of funded spaces available for schools in the top 50% for PP funding.

Please see their website for further details relating to funding.

<https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/npq-2/>

If you are interested in the NPQ for SENCO, please contact tsh@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk.

Latest government news and updates

Teachers Pay Award

Over the summer, the Secretary of State for Education confirmed what school teachers in England can expect to be paid this academic year. Everything you need to know about the 2024 pay award can be found on [The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/28/teachers-pay-award-2024/).

Ofsted Big Listen

On 3 September 2024, the Department for Education published their response to the Ofsted Big Listen which sought views from schools and children's social care to teacher training and early years. The Ofsted Big Listen response sets out the actions the Department for Education will take to address what they heard from professionals, children and learners, parents, carers and the public.

[Department for Education response to the Ofsted Big Listen](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2024/09/03/ofsted-big-listen-response/)

Keeping children safe in education

The September 2024 version of the Department for Education's guidance on keeping children safe in education is now in force. This statutory guidance replaces previous versions and includes guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment.

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/keeping-children-safe-in-education)

AI to assist teachers with marking and lesson plans

Artificial intelligence (AI) will be better at helping teachers mark work and plan lessons under a new project announced by the UK government on 28 August 2024. The project, backed by £4 million of government investment, will pool government documents including curriculum guidance, lesson plans and anonymised pupil assessments which will then be used by AI companies to train their tools to generate accurate, high-quality content. The content, such as tailored, creative lesson plans and workbooks, can then be reliably used in schools.

[Teachers to get more trustworthy AI tech, helping them mark homework and save time](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/28/ai-to-assist-teachers-with-marking-and-lesson-plans/)

Schools urged to capitalise on Paralympic success

On 6 September 2024, the Government reminded schools to ensure all children have equal access to PE and school sport with support from the Inclusion 2024 programme.

[Read Government announcement in full urging schools to capitalise on Paralympic success](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2024/09/06/schools-urged-to-capitalise-on-paralympic-success/)

Research on parent and pupil attitudes towards the use of AI in education

In response to the increasing prevalence of AI-powered tools in education, the Department for Education partnered with the Responsible Technology Adoption Unit within the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology to better understand parent and pupil attitudes towards the use of AI in education. This research also explored attitudes towards the use of pupil data for optimising AI-powered educational tools. The Department for Education published the findings on 28 August and can be read in full in the link below.

[Research findings on parent and pupil attitudes towards the use of AI in education](#)

Discussing the riots and ensuring a safe environment for all students

The Department for Education has collated the following guidance and resources to help schools address any concerns or questions from students about the riots over the summer.

- The Educate Against Hate website has a dedicated resource page on [online misinformation and the UK riots](#). There are also lots of [free resources](#), to help teachers and school leaders teach students about extremism, conflict, spotting mis and disinformation, online safety, and our shared fundamental British values.
- The Educate Against Hate website has a new blog from Joanna Fitsimmons, Liverpool Prevent Education Officer on her experiences of [supporting schools after the Southport attack](#) which you may find interesting.
- [The BBC Bitesize 'Other Side of The Story'](#) has videos, articles and guides for you to use in your classroom to help students reflect on what they heard and saw online about the riots.
- [The Education Hub blog](#) brings together support on how to speak to children and young people about violent disorder and the Southport attack.

Latest funding and grants news

School Partnerships Programme Opens for Applications

The Ogden Trust is accepting applications for new school partnerships starting in 2025-26.

The School Partnerships programme offers funding and support to groups of schools in England that are committed to enhancing physics teaching and learning. The programme provides funding for schools over a period of five years. To be eligible, partnership applications must have a minimum of six schools and be mixed phase (primary and secondary).

For more information including details how to apply, please click on the link below.

[The Ogden Trust: school partnerships programme](#)

The deadline for applications is 10 January 2025.

Last Chance to apply for Grants to Improve Library Services

The Foyle Foundation is accepting applications from UK state schools and special schools until the end of September when their School Library Programme ends. UK state schools and special schools can apply for grants of between £2,000 and £10,000. Priority is given to state funded primary schools (reception to end of Key Stage 2).

The majority of the funding will be awarded for physical library/reading books, although consideration will be given to library software, necessary IT equipment and furniture in order to create a suitable library space.

For more information including details how to apply, please click on the link below.

[School Library Scheme Guidelines – The Foyle Foundation](#)

The final deadline for applications is 30 September 2024.

Latest training news and conferences

Supporting Children Who Cannot Attend School: A WCF Multi-Disciplinary Training

This is an exciting new approach to our previous Emotionally-Based School Non-Attendance Training (EBSN) with a broader focus on Children Who Cannot Attend School (CCAS).

This training will be predominantly delivered by the Educational Psychology Service over two days with guest speakers from a range of different teams involved in supporting children with a variety of needs that prevent them from attending school full-time or regularly, as well as those children who might be in school but still struggling to access all of the opportunities available within school.

Cost: £94.50 +VAT per delegate

- 23 October and 20 November 2024, 9.30am to 3.30pm, Worcester, course code: SCH 10502 / 90282

What is the SCERTS Approach for EYFS / Reception?

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.

This is specifically for those working with EYFS children in Settings / Reception Classes and School nurseries can access this webcast.

When booking via [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. When your school / setting is ready to access Stage 2 of SCERTS please contact the training team by emailing workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Using legal action to address pupil absence: Guidance for schools

This training session is intended for Worcestershire school-based staff who may need to instigate a request for legal proceedings as part of their school attendance escalation process. The training will explore when a request for legal proceedings maybe appropriate and the requirements upon schools in making such requests. The session will focus on unauthorised pupil absence (including unauthorised leave in term time) and will provide delegates with the latest information and appropriate resources to demonstrate what is required in order for the Local Authority to consider the issuing of a penalty notice or undertake a prosecution.

Cost: £38 + VAT per delegate

- 13 November 2024, 9.30am to 12pm, Worcester, course code: 10283 / 90443
- 5 February 2025, 9.30am to 12pm, Worcester, course code: 10283 / 90444
- Further dates are available in April and June 2025

Court Process & Writing Effective Witness Statements: Guidance for schools

This training session will inform school staff regarding court processes and equip them with sufficient knowledge and resources to complete witness statements effectively for prosecution of cases under s444(1)/ (1)A of the Education Act 1996 for unauthorised absences. School Attendance Leads, Head teachers, School Attendance Officers, or any other school based associated staff with a key role in addressing pupil attendance, absence and welfare would be most welcome. Candidates are advised to have a good working knowledge of or, completed the Using Legal Action to Address Pupil absence: Guidance for schools training, for a better understanding of this session.

Cost: £28 + VAT per delegate

- 13 November 2024, 1pm to 3pm, Worcester, course code: 10284/ 90439
- 5 February 2025, 1pm to 3pm, Worcester, course code: 10284 / 90440
- Further dates are available in April and June 2025

If your school books a delegate onto both courses then the following discount will apply: Book a delegate to attend both Using Legal & Witness Statements on the same day (does not need to be the same delegate per session but must be the same school) then pay only £51 +VAT for both sessions in total, a saving of £15 (full price for both sessions prior to discount is £66 + VAT).

Book your place on the above training via [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@worcestershire.gov.uk

First Aid and Health & Safety Training 2024

Our health and safety colleagues in Worcestershire County Council are running a series of training courses throughout the autumn term. Courses include:

- Emergency First Aid (1-Day Course)
- First Aid at Work Certificate with Paediatric First Aid Combined (3-Day Course)
- Paediatric First Aid (2-Day Course)
- Visit Leader
- Educational Visit Coordinator
- Fire Warden Training
- IOSH Managing Safely

For more information including a list of available training dates, please download their [First Aid and Health & Safety Training Flyer for 2024/25](#).

To book a place on any of our courses, please email: healthandsafety@worcestershire.gov.uk

Prevent webinars and training opportunities

The West Midlands Regional Prevent Team have the following training opportunities available to schools in Worcestershire. Early booking is advised to avoid disappointment.

- Train the facilitator - DfE accreditation to deliver training within your institution. This session is for those who will deliver staff/student inputs on Prevent - 20 September 2024, 10am - 12pm
- Islamist Narrative session - All staff - 26 September, 10am - 12pm
- Extreme Right-wing terrorism - All staff - 10 October 2024, 2pm - 3.30pm
- Protect Webinar with DfE - An insight into lock downs from the DfE lead - 18 October, 10am - 11am.

[Book your place now](#)

Other local news and events

West Mercia Energy Social Value Fund

West Mercia Energy (WME) have launched a new initiative offering grants of up to £1,000 to support environmental projects in schools across the UK.

The social value fund is designed to encourage, help and support delivery of environmental initiatives across schools that will inspire and have a lasting impact on pupils and communities.

If you are an education establishment and a WME customer, then you are eligible to apply.

For more information and to access the application form, please visit the click link below.

[WME Launch Social Value Fund | West Mercia Energy](#)

Free STEM workshops for schools in partnership with npower Business Solutions

West Mercia Energy and nPower Business Solutions are offering 25 free school workshops for years 6, 7 and 8 to develop their knowledge and skills in STEM subjects, as well as their creativity and teamwork.

The “Power to Drive” workshops are a great opportunity for schools to enhance their curriculum and offer students a fun and interactive learning experience.

To find out how to apply, please click on the link below.

[WME Launch Free School Workshops | West Mercia Energy](#)

Fostering information sessions for parents and carers

Our fostering team would love the opportunity to deliver short presentations at your school in the autumn term for any parents and carers considering fostering, keen to find out more or just looking.

The format would likely be an informal 30-45 minute session just before school pick up with refreshments and cake, an opportunity to ask questions, hear real life stories and meet those involved.

For more information and to express an interest in holding a session, please contact our Fostering Recruitment and Retention Lead, Joy Pollock via email at: JPollock@worcestershirechildrenfirst.org.uk.

Consultation of County Volunteer Portal

Worcestershire County Council has secured funding from the Department of Health and Social Care's Accelerating Reform Fund to support volunteering across the health and social care system, by developing a county-wide volunteer portal. This will be an online location for organisations to advertise, and for residents to search for local volunteering opportunities.

The council is seeking feedback on this project from organisations that recruit and manage volunteers (or plan to in the future) to shape how the portal will work, to ensure it is fit for purpose. It is important that the council receives feedback from a wide range of organisations and therefore responses will be very much appreciated.

If you would like to give your views then please follow this link to complete the survey: [Worcestershire Volunteer Portal - organisations survey](#)

The survey will close on **Sunday 29th September 2024**.

Please do forward on to other contacts as relevant. If you require any assistance to complete the survey, please email strengtheningcommunities@worcestershire.gov.uk.

In addition, we would be very grateful if you could circulate the resident survey to any volunteers within your organisation. Template email wording is included below for use as relevant.

As a volunteer for xxxxxxxx, the county council would like to invite you to complete the survey regarding a proposed online volunteer recruitment portal for Worcestershire.

The council is looking for feedback from residents who volunteer, have volunteered, or are thinking about volunteering, to understand more around how people find out about volunteering opportunities and their preferences. This information will be used to help shape the development of a public online volunteering portal (database) for organisations to advertise, and for residents to search for volunteering opportunities in Worcestershire.

Your feedback as a volunteer is really important in the development of this portal so if you would like to share your views, then please follow this link to complete the survey: [Worcestershire Volunteer Portal - resident survey](#)

The survey will be open until Sunday 29th September.

If you require any assistance to complete the survey, please email strengtheningcommunities@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Deadline approaching for Worcestershire residents to apply for a Home Upgrade Grant

The deadline for Worcestershire residents to apply for Government funding to help save energy and make homes warmer is fast approaching.

Households wanting to apply for free Home Upgrade Grant funding have until Monday 30 September to make their application.

The Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUG2) 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 or contact Act on Energy on their free advice line 0800 988 2881.



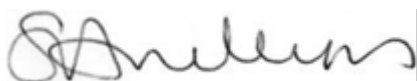
Your support in sharing the scheme with parents and carers via your newsletters and other communication channels would be most appreciated.

Last Chance to Complete Worcestershire's Summer Reading Challenge

As the summer draws to a close, Worcestershire County Council's Library Service reminds participants not to miss out on claiming their **Summer Reading Challenge Medal**.

To complete the challenge, children must visit their local library by **14 September 2024** to log the six books they have read with a library staff member. Children will then receive a certificate and be invited to an awards ceremony to receive a special medal in recognition of their accomplishment!

Thank you for supporting this year's challenge, and we hope you enjoyed participating in the **Marvellous Makers** theme!



Sarah Wilkins

Director for Education, Early Years, Inclusion and Place Planning

