

Sarah Wilkins

Director for Education, Early Years, Inclusion and Place Planning

Email: swilkins@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tel: 01905 846082

Our Ref: CV190

Date: 15th November 2024

Education Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you all had a nice half-term break and a good couple of weeks back. I am delighted to be sending a bulletin that includes news of service and practice change and improvements, contacts for support and some resources. Please make sure that you are sharing the content with relevant colleagues.

This week, thanks to Worcestershire Association of Governors, we hosted an inspiring conference for governors focussing on understanding and providing for our children with disadvantage. We hope to put on further governor events in the future.

During the half-term break the Chancellor delivered a Budget that promised to fix the foundations of our economy. The Budget included a range of measures to break down barriers to opportunity, so every child has the chance to succeed in life. The [Secretary of State has written to schools](#) and the Minister for Skills will shortly be writing to those working in further education colleges and sixth form colleges to outline what the budget means for them, and more information will be shared with other sectors in due course.

On 25 September, the government launched [a call for evidence for the Curriculum and Assessment Review](#). The Department for Education is seeking views from stakeholders to share their perspective on potential improvements to the curriculum and assessment system. The deadline to respond is 22 November. If you have any questions, contact: curriculum-assessment.review@education.gov.uk.

And finally, I wanted to let you know about Steer Clear, an early intervention program for young people ages 10-17 in West Mercia who may be at risk of becoming involved in knife crime. Through interactive group sessions and one-on-one support, they work to guide individuals toward positive paths before trouble arises. Download the latest [Steer Clear newsletter](#) to learn more about the support on offer, how to make a referral, inspiring case studies, and insights into emerging trends. Together, let's help keep our young people safe and empowered.

Wishing you all the best for the remainder of the autumn term.

Contents

Latest attendance news and updates	3
Monitor your school attendance webinar	3
Latest education news and updates	4
Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme - Winter 2024.....	4
Trauma Informed Attachment Aware Settings 24-25 (TIAAS)	4
Early Years Toolkit Evaluation	5
Transforming Literacy Leadership for Disadvantaged Children	5
Education Engagement Inclusion/EHE update	6
Latest SEND news and updates	8
What we're doing to improve SEND services	8
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Survey.....	9
Empowering Autistic Young People	9
Latest health and wellbeing news and updates	10
School Screener - Health Screening Schedule for 2024/25	10
Occupational Therapy Advice Line.....	11
Lumi Nova - Big Sign-up for Children with Anxieties and Worries	12
Mental health App co-design opportunity for young people	12
Drugs and alcohol training for your school staff.....	12
School Healthy Relationships Education Programme	13
Future use of INTENT - Smoking Prevention Teaching Resource.....	14
Get ready for a healthier Winter	14
Latest news from School Teaching Hubs.....	15
Tudor Grange Teaching School Hub	15
Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub	16
Latest government news and updates.....	17
Managing asbestos in your school or college	17
GCHQ Christmas Challenge.....	17
Latest funding and grants news	18
Department for Education's Condition Improvement Fund Opens to Applications.....	18
Latest training news and conferences	19
Other local news and events	21
Welcome to Your Vote Week 2025	21
IOPC Youth Panel Survey 2024	21

Latest attendance news and updates

Monitor your school attendance webinar

Schools across England now have a statutory duty to share attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE).

[DfE is holding a webinar from 9:45 to 10:30am on 19 November to share more about how reports can help manage attendance, latest policy developments and new features of the data portal.](#)

If you have any questions that are related to this event, please email:
dailyattendance.data@education.gov.uk.

[The webinar will be uploaded to YouTube](#) for those unable to attend on this occasion.

[Read guidance on how to share your daily school attendance data](#)

Latest education news and updates

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme - Winter 2024

The Worcestershire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme is back for winter 2024!

During the school holidays, eligible families can book FREE holiday activities, family passes and events through the programme.

Funded by the Department for Education, HAF is primarily for children in receipt of benefits related Free School Meals aged 5-16, however, the programme does support other children and young people otherwise considered vulnerable (including LAC, SEND and refugee status).

Families can search and book activities through the HAF booking site. Information and booking instructions to share with families are included in the [HAF Winter 2024 School Comms Toolkit](#). The information is in different formats so can be tailored to the communication channels you use in school.

School holidays can be a difficult time for families, we want to make sure the HAF Programme reaches as many of those who need it as possible. Please support the HAF Programme in your school by:

- Sharing the information linked with eligible families.
- Encouraging families to book activities (HAF activities are FREE to families, no hidden cost (fully funded by the Department for Education)).
- Encouraging new starters to sign up to HAF as they sign up to Free School Meals.

More information about the programme is available on the [Worcestershire County Council website](#) or you can contact the HAF Team at providers@hafworcestershire.co.uk

Trauma Informed Attachment Aware Settings 24-25 (TIAAS)

Worcestershire Virtual School is on a mission to ensure that every single education setting in the county is demonstrating TIAAS (Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Settings). Evidence-based, trauma-responsive and attachment aware approaches are a core element of our day-to-day work with our children, settings, and families.

Worcester Virtual school would like to recognise and celebrate two schools who have achieved GOLD accreditation (TIAAS). The certification process allows settings to reflect on their journey towards trauma informed attachment practice and is linked with the Attachment Research Community Audit.

St Matthias CE Primary and **Meadows First school** have both evidenced certification at the gold standard which focuses on individual practitioners, the setting and the wider community.

A huge well done to both settings and thank you to all schools who are working hard to embed TIAAS.

If any school/ setting would like more information on the accreditation process, please contact: virtualschool@worcestershire.gov.uk

Early Years Toolkit Evaluation

You were previously made aware of the new Early Years Transition Toolkit created by Worcestershire County Council to support transitions from Early Years to School settings. We are looking to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of this toolkit and as part of this, we are asking for Early Years settings and schools who have used the toolkit to complete the following survey:

<https://forms.office.com/e/6b35hvxVib>

For reference, please find a link to the transition toolkit: [Early Years transition toolkit | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Transforming Literacy Leadership for Disadvantaged Children

FAO Senior Leaders, Pupil Premium Leaders, English Leads

Worcestershire County Council has worked in collaboration with the EEF, the Research Schools Network and local school leaders to co-construct a two-year partnership for Worcestershire schools. The slides from the 3 briefing webinars are available from LBradbury@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Drawing upon local expertise and research evidence, the partnership has been designed to enable leaders to create and communicate a clearly defined vision for literacy across the curriculum, ensuring that all children are equipped to achieve.

The programme, which will launch on 5th December 2024, and will provide two high quality, evidence-informed training pathways, one for school leaders and another complimentary pathway for literacy leads in Worcestershire schools. [Please download the flyer with details of the conference.](#)

We are now looking to recruit **60 schools** to this partnership, with representation from across all phases and districts.

The EEF is contributing funding to support the delivery of the partnership. However, we are asking schools to contribute £250 per year to support with the delivery of bespoke implementation support.

To support engagement, small schools in Wychavon can apply for a bursary to cover the costs of supply.

For more information, please email Lisa Bradbury (LBradbury@worcestershire.gov.uk) at Worcestershire County Council or Karl Rogerson (k.rogerson@billesleyschool.co.uk) at Billesley Research School.

Education Engagement Inclusion/EHE update

The Education Engagement (Inclusion/EHE) Team underwent great change over 2023-24 and saw some significant staff developments.

We are pleased to be starting the new academic year with all new staff fully inducted into their roles and the team working collaboratively alongside schools and partner agencies to promote an inclusive education for all.

Elective Home Education

The Elective Home Education Team has seen the recruitment of two EHE Engagement Officers and an additional Officer to focus solely on our GRT EHE families. Re-aligning the EHE process has enabled us to offer a home visit to any EHE families at each stage of the process. We have placed greater focus on contacting all families who chose to home educate their child, within 10 days of their removal from a school role. This has resulted in the identification of those cases removed from a school roll to EHE inappropriately and has allowed the team to work with families and schools in ensuring any concerns raised can be resolved in a timely way, assuring the young person is able to access a suitable education.

The EHE Engagement Team can be contacted as follows:

Sonya Guvenir – Education Engagement Officer (North)
sguvenir@worcestershire.gov.uk
01905 643266

Jane Trickett – Education Engagement Officer (South)
jtrickett@worcestershire.gov.uk
01905 643772

Susan Carrier – Education Engagement officer (GRT)
scarrier@worcestershire.gov.uk
01905 843663

EHE Inbox for general enquiries – electivehomeeducation@worcestershire.gov.uk

Exclusions and Re-integrations

The Education Engagement Team (Inclusion) went through a re-organisation in September 2023, which saw the deployment of three Education Engagement Officers being allocated to each alternative provision school. This has facilitated the prevention of 56 permanent exclusions across the year, with some fantastic collaborative working across schools, alternative providers and families.

From October 2024, should you have a pupil identified as 'at risk' of exclusion where you have already requested/accessed support from your alternative provision school and completed other adjustments as part of your graduated response to preventing the exclusion, you can now notify the Education Engagement Team (Inclusion) via the Children's Services portal absence notification form to request additional support. Notifications will only be accepted with the submission of a completed IEP/PSP and

costed provision map, detailing what support you have already provided and attempted over the previous term. We have worked hard alongside schools to understand the varying cohorts of 'at risk' young people and aim to support where needed to prevent an actual exclusion.

All permanent exclusion notifications will now require a completed pupil passport, which provides information and detail on each child. This enables us to ensure the appropriate alternative provision arrangement is put in place as soon as possible and meets the individual need and circumstance of the child.

Our aim is to support schools to providing an inclusive education for their most dis-engaged learners, by exploring short term strategies which enable the young person to continue accessing an education suitable to their needs and aptitude.

The Inclusion Education Engagement Team can be contacted as follows:

Exclusions/Re-integration support for Newbridge School and Perryfields PRU – Kate Turner

kturner1@worcestershire.gov.uk

01905 643592

Exclusions/Re-integration support for The Forge and The Beacon Short Stay Schools – Kirsten Walton

kw Walton@worcestershire.gov.uk

01905 643625

Exclusions/Re-integration support for Continu Plus Academy, The Aspire Academy and Unity Academy – Gethin Howells

ghowells@worcestershire.gov.uk

01905 843931

Exclusions Inbox for general enquiries – exclusions@worcestershire.gov.uk

We continue to offer advice and guidance to schools on supporting their GRT families and young people. For any GRT related enquiries please contact – grt@worcestershire.gov.uk

Latest SEND news and updates

What we're doing to improve SEND services

Here you will find some key updates on what the local area partnership has been working on during October. Read more about these updates on the [SEND Local Offer website](#).

Improving information while you wait

- We have been developing a suite of information and resources to support families while they wait for health appointments or interventions.
- An online information booklet for parent carers has been developed to provide support whilst families are waiting for children to have an Autism or ADHD diagnostic assessment – due to be published in November.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust is developing a list of support and services for children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Work is underway to establish the new the Children and Young People's Early Intervention and Preventative Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing service for 0-25 year olds. It is too early to share what the service might look like yet, but we are hopeful that new services will be in place by 1st April 2025 as planned.
- We have seen the launch of [Lumi Nova](#); a digital therapy platform for children and young people aged 7-12.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- The SEND team is making sure new EHCP requests within the same family are assigned to the same Case Work Officer – allowing families to have a single point of contact for updates.

Feedback and coproduction

- Healthwatch Worcestershire is running a survey to understand parent/carer experiences of EHCPs. Find out more and access the survey via the [Healthwatch Worcestershire website](#). (Closes 30th November.)
- Patients and their carers, families and friends are being asked to share what matters most to them when they are in Worcestershire's hospitals. Visit the [Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust website](#) to find out more. (Closes 5th Jan 2025.)
- September marked the launch of Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum's (WPCF) new SEND 'Views & Voices' events. This is a programme of 50+ events now rolling out across Worcestershire offering peer support, friendly advice and SEND system empowerment. Keep up to date with future events on the [WPCF Facebook page](#).
- We met with the Youth Cabinet to ask for their thoughts about how the Local Area Partnership could improve how SEND services connect with children and young people with SEND. They talked about connecting to other youth groups, suggesting how to improve the reach to children and young people with SEND via social media and exploring the use of digital technology.

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Survey

Healthwatch Worcestershire is a statutory service, and their aim is to give local communities a stronger voice in order to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided locally.

Due to the amount of feedback received from parent/carers about Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), they are running a survey during November to understand parent/carer experiences in detail. They would therefore ask that any parent/carer who has applied for an EHCP (even if declined) or whose child or young person has one currently, to please complete the survey. Parent/carers can then be entered into a prize draw to win either an iPad or £100 Amazon gift card as a thank you for their time.

Can we kindly request your support in sharing this survey with parents and carers using the poster and information which are available to download from [Google Drive](#).

Many thanks in advance for your support in sharing this survey.

For more information and the survey link: <https://www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk/education-health-and-care-plan-ehcp-survey>

Empowering Autistic Young People

The National Autistic Society (NAS) have created a collection of free resources designed to **help autistic teenagers better understand their unique experiences**. The **'Know Yourself'** collection aims to give teens the knowledge and confidence to navigate their self-discovery journey.

Resources include videos, PDFs, worksheets and downloadable guides, to support autistic teenagers in understanding what being autistic means to them.

Weblink: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/resources-for-autistic-teenagers>

The series will cover six topics in total over the course of three years. The first four topics, 'understanding yourself', 'energy accounting', 'exploring your identity' and 'setting yourself up for success' are available now on the above weblink. Young autistic people also share personal stories and strategies that have helped them.

Latest health and wellbeing news and updates

School Screener - Health Screening Schedule for 2024/25

National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP- heights and weight)	Hearing Screening	Reception 'School Readiness' Health Screening	Year 6 Health Screening	Year 9 Health Screening
From January 2025	Paused until further notice	June- end September 2024	September- end December 2024	January- May 2025

The School Nursing Service in Worcestershire are commissioned to carry out Health Screening to all children and young people across all state maintained, academy, free schools, and alternate provision settings. This year they also plan to ensure those children who are home schooled or not in education are included.

Hearing Screening

The school entry hearing screening programme in Worcestershire is currently under review and therefore on hold until further notice. In the meantime, if staff or families have concerns about a child's hearing they should be directed to their GP. Schools will be advised of any developments soon.

Reception 'School Readiness' Health Screening

The School Nursing Service attended or provided information for all New Parent intake evenings during the summer term 2024, to promote the 'School Readiness' Health Questionnaires. Their Specialist Public Health Nurses triaged all questionnaires and responded to any families in need of support during the summer holidays. When children started school in September, they reissued the headteacher and parent letters to all schools and asked schools to apply stickers they provided to children at the end of a school day, reminding parents to complete the questionnaire. The good news is that the uptake improved considerably, and this has enabled them to offer early intervention advice and support to ensure these children get the right health information and the best start for their school journey.

Year 6 Health Screening

The School Nursing Service are currently in the process of the Year 6 Health Screening PILOT programme. Approx 1/3rd of all schools across Worcestershire have been selected to take part. The PILOT will enable them to compare 2 different approaches to health screening i.e. targeted versus anonymised. They will be completing a thorough evaluation of both approaches once the screening and follow up has been completed, findings of which they plan to share.

Following completion of the questionnaires, members of their team will get in touch to discuss the anonymised data reports for your school. Collaboratively they will discuss how emerging health themes can be addressed.

Where children have completed a targeted questionnaire, their team may get in touch with parents and carers to offer additional support.

School Health Roadshows may be offered to schools where children completed the anonymised questionnaire. Based on the health themes from the data report, a roadshow will comprise of a one-off event to offer Health Promotion activities in a fun and interactive way.

Year 9 Health Screening

Year 9 Health Screening will begin from January 2025. Members of the School Nursing Team may have already been in touch to secure dates for the screening to take place.

They were fortunate to carry out young person engagement sessions last year and have used the comments shared to revise the questionnaire and processes for the coming year to make it much easier for young people to complete. They will not be required to register for an account before completing the questionnaire this year, instead the link provided will take them directly to the questionnaire. They will be asked to enter their name, date of birth, and sex at birth only. Once screening is complete all young people will be issued with a QR code/ Public Health messages to access advice and support where needed.

The School Nursing Team will require a private and confidential space/location within school to offer 1-2-1 appointments to young people who need to be actively followed up.

Following completion of the questionnaires a member of their team will get in touch to discuss the anonymised data reports for your school, and any children who have been highlighted through triage who are considered priority due to potential increased level of risk.

If you have any queries or would like more information do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing Julie.lunn@nhs.net.

Occupational Therapy Advice Line

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust are pleased to share their latest [Children's Occupational Therapy Advice Line poster](#). This is their Universal Provision that aims to support with any questions or concerns you, teachers, parents and carers may have related to a child's occupational therapy needs related to participating in self-care, productivity, leisure and play. Please refer to the [poster](#) for more information.

It would be helpful if you can share this within your school and pop it up somewhere it can be seen by teachers and parents and carers easily.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Fiona Petts, Children's Occupational Therapist via email at fiona.petts@nhs.net or call 01905 681883.

Lumi Nova - Big Sign-up for Children with Anxieties and Worries

Please share with SENCOs, DSLs, Pastoral Leads and Classroom Teachers.

Lumi Nova: Tales of Courage is a digital therapeutic mobile game supporting children with fears, worries and anxiety. Designed for children aged 7-12 years, Lumi Nova helps children to reflect on their feelings, build resilience, and learn lifelong skills to self-manage their worries in a fun intergalactic adventure.

Lumi Nova launched in October in Worcestershire and over 200 families have already accessed the offer! A big thank you to all those who have signposted families. We have seen good engagement from schools in Wychavon and Bromsgrove districts and would encourage schools from other districts to attend a Lumi Nova Discovery session to learn more.

- Spread the Word: Check out the [Lumi Nova Resource Kit](#) for resources to support you to share Lumi Nova with other professionals and families
- Stay connected: Subscribe to the [Lumi Nova Newsletter](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for new resources and updates
- Learn More: Join a [Lumi Nova Discovery](#) for professionals to learn more about the offer

If you would like to order posters/leaflets or have any questions, please reach out to the Lumi Nova team at luminova@bfb-labs.com

Mental health App co-design opportunity for young people

BfB Labs are in the early stages of developing a new intervention for teenagers experiencing low mood. They are looking to involve young people with lived experience in the design process to ensure that the new product meets their needs preferences and real life experiences.

If your school or college has a pre-formed school council or support group with lived experiences and would be interested in being involved in the design process (focus groups/co-creation workshops) so that the intervention addresses actual needs, preferences and real life experiences, please contact Kelly Tham via email at kelly.tham@bfb-labs.com who will be able to share the approach and timeline.

Drugs and alcohol training for your school staff

"I wanted to thank you for such an informative, well presented training session this afternoon. You have a fantastic knowledge, and I found the session insightful and incredibly useful to inform my planning and teaching" - this is just one example of the exemplary feedback the Hope UK drug and alcohol training sessions are receiving from school staff across the county.

There are still opportunities available to book a course for your school, up to March 2025. Training is for teaching and non-teaching staff. To discuss a date and time for your team, please email training@hopeuk.org

School Healthy Relationships Education Programme

Seeing an “Andrew Tate” effect? Misogyny increasing? Unhealthy relationships between pupils?

Expressions of Interest are welcomed from middle and high schools plus special, alternative provision schools to be part of a school healthy relationships education programme.

The programme includes:

- Awareness sessions for teachers and DSLs to support the messages given to students, empower staff to have sensitive discussions that students need and seek solutions through whole school approach. Typically, the staff course content includes an overview of the current situation (statistical data), strategies to empower staff for discussions with students, advice on creating a whole school approach, enhancing school policy and advice on where staff can find support.
- Pupil (Y7,8 & 9 determined by the school) sessions exploring healthy relationships – including gendered pressures and how they affect young people’s relationships with emphasis on inclusion & LGBTQ+. They explore harassment vs. flirting, communicating feelings, identifying abuse, sexual wellbeing and sexual violence, coercive control, understanding the law and safely intervening as a bystander.
- Some schools may also be offered, for up to 10 at risk pupils, 3 consecutive ‘Unspoken Truth’ group sessions. These are designed to teach students **how** to think, not **what** to think, promoting reflection and honesty around topics such as domestic abuse, gender stereotypes, objectification, harmful sexual behaviour and healthy relationships enabling students to develop core values that are essential to harbouring healthy relationships in the short, medium and long term future.
- There may be some 1:1 mentoring support for some pupils who are not in mainstream education.

If unhealthy relationships are a concern in your school and you wish to apply to be part of this programme, please complete this Expression of Interest form indicating why this programme is important for your school and pupils: <https://forms.office.com/e/aejN6y37Up>

Future use of INTENT - Smoking Prevention Teaching Resource

FAO: PSHE Leads

The licence for this teaching resource is soon to end. Public Health colleagues need to know how many schools use or plan to use the resources from January 2025. Please would you ensure that your school completes the very short survey below. Future licencing is likely to prioritise those schools who routinely use INTENT or have firm plans to do so. If you wish to use INTENT from January 2025, please ensure that Public Health are aware of this.

<https://forms.office.com/e/WFucNvwt2z>

Get ready for a healthier Winter

Now that the colder months are setting in, it's a good time to prepare for winter and take steps to stay healthy.

We have just launched our *Worcestershire Winters Well* webpage.

It's the go-to place for practical advice to help you stay physically, mentally, and financially well during winter.

Winter's cold weather and shorter days can affect our wellbeing, making it important to look after ourselves and those who may be more vulnerable, particularly older adults and children.

The advice includes a few simple things you can do to help protect yourself from common winter bugs and illnesses like flu, norovirus and COVID-19.

Staying well in winter is about more than just avoiding illness. The *Worcestershire Winters Well* webpage covers a wide range of helpful topics, including:

- Tips on preventing falls and staying active
- Ways to support your mental health
- How to sign up for cold weather alerts and flooding advice
- Information on cost-of-living support and energy savings
- Warm spaces available in libraries across the county
- Information on Healthy Worcestershire the free group-based lifestyle support and community safety advice programme
- Advice on staying safe while travelling in winter conditions

For more information visit [worcestershire.gov.uk/winter](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/winter)

[Click to download and share our Worcestershire Winters Well resources](#)

Latest news from School Teaching Hubs

Tudor Grange Teaching School Hub

Appropriate Body Assessments

Please find some short training videos on how to write assessments on their [AB Support webpage](#).

If you have any questions or queries, we will be running a weekly [online drop-in clinic](#) on Mondays at 4pm, starting on the 25 November until the end of term.

TA Level 3 Apprenticeship

What does the course involve?

- Monthly half day online sessions
- Independent online learning/coursework
- 1:1 tutoring – reviews every 6 weeks (online or face to face)
- Off the job training (new learning undertaken as part of existing job role)

Application deadline is 22 December 2024

Apply here: [Best Practice Network - Applications](#)

Grand Union Languages Hub

The Grand Union Languages Hub offers the following:

Partner School Work:

- Bespoke CPD offer and action plan support
- Funding to support staff, student enrichment offer, resourcing, HHCL

Open to all:

- CPD offer (face-to-face or online) based around pedagogical principles of language teaching
- Sharing of enrichment opportunities for students
- KS2-KS3 transition project
- Access to research
- MFL specific support for schools

Sign up to their newsletter via their [website](#) to receive all details.

Please get in touch via [email](#) if you would like to speak about anything in more detail.

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. 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 have now opened.

An update from Suzanne Lawson (Head of Strategic Partnerships (Secondary) University of Worcester):

Will you be looking for a Science, Modern Language or PE ECT in September? Could you grow your own? We are desperately looking for ITT placements in these three subjects for the spring/summer term. If you have any capacity, please contact c.rowlands@worc.ac.uk. Happy to talk about other subjects as well!

ECF Update

For colleagues enrolled on the Prince Henry's ECF programme with Ambition Institute, please note the following upcoming dates for this academic year. Book your place via: www.ticketsource.co.uk/phtsh

Year 1 ECT Events:

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 5 – 20th March 2025
Clinic 6 – 19th June 2025

ECT Mentor Events:

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 remain open. Please follow the link for guidance on how to register your ECTs with Prince Henry's TSH: <https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/registering-your-ect/>
If you have already registered your ECT/s with us, please be sure to complete the Service Level Agreement. If you have not received this via email, please contact cemms@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk.

NPQ Update

Applications for the Autumn 2024 programmes are now closed. Applications for Spring 2025 will open later this term, so please look out for details on our half termly newsletter or on our website using the following link: <https://www.princehenryshub.co.uk/apply/>

Latest government news and updates

Managing asbestos in your school or college

On 31 October, the Department for Education published guidance for school leaders, governors, local authorities and academy trusts about managing asbestos in schools and colleges.

[Download guidance on managing asbestos in your school or college](#)

GCHQ Christmas Challenge

[Government Communications Headquarters \(GCHQ\), the UK's intelligence, security and cyber agency, is running its annual Christmas Challenge for children aged 11-18 on 11 December.](#)

The challenge puts science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills to the test and encourages students to think laterally and work as a team, while showcasing some of the skills they might need to become a spy.

[Schools can register now to get early access to the puzzles.](#)

Teachers will also receive a pack of lesson resources, printable certificates, and a good luck message from GCHQ Director Anne Keast-Butler. A coordinated day of puzzling will take place on 11 December, with schools encouraged to share their progress on social media.

[Please register your interest ahead of the 11 December launch date](#) to ensure you get early access to the resources and content for this year's GCHQ Christmas Challenge.

Latest funding and grants news

Department for Education's Condition Improvement Fund Opens to Applications

The Department for Education (DfE) have announced the launch of a new Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) round.

Academies, multi-academy trusts, sixth-form colleges, and voluntary aided schools across England can apply now for capital funding to improve school buildings and expand academies and sixth-form colleges rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.

CIF's core priority is to keep school and college buildings safe and in good working order. These include issues with poor building condition, building compliance, energy efficiency or health and safety.

The highest priority will be given to projects that address compliance and health and safety issues. These include building safety matters, fire protection systems, gas safety, electrical safety or emergency asbestos removal. Priority will also be given to critical replacements of coal and oil-fired boilers with low carbon heating alternatives where there is a risk of school closure. Priority will be given to projects that ensure weather tightness of buildings and other projects for continuous heating and water supply.

CIF also supports a small proportion of expansion projects where Ofsted has rated the school or sixth-form college either good or outstanding in quality of education and leadership & management subcategories, and where the school needs to expand their existing facilities and/or floor space to either increase admissions or address overcrowding.

A total of £1.8 billion is available for this round. The maximum project threshold is £4 million.

The minimum project funding threshold for:

- Primary and special schools is £20,000.
- Secondary schools, all-through schools and sixth-form colleges is £50,000.

The majority of funds will be allocated for projects that complete by 31 March 2026. Larger projects may last up to two years, but all projects must complete by 31 March 2027.

In addition to grants, CIF Loans are available to applicants for all or part of the project costs.

The deadline for applications is 17 December 2024 (12 noon).

[Find out more information about the Condition Improvement Fund](#)

Latest training news and conferences

Managing School Attendance - Supporting Senior Leaders and Attendance Leads

This course is designed to support attendance leaders to embed the requirements of the DfE 'Working together to Improve School Attendance' practices and drive the requirement of attendance becoming everyone's business as part of school culture.

The course will be delivered as two virtual sessions, via teams and will:

- Consider DfE guidance expectations and the requirements upon attendance managers.
- Explore how Ofsted consider attendance.
- Explore how data can be strategically used to assist attendance management.
- Explore self-assessment and measuring Impact.
- Provide good practice examples.
- Consider DfE guidance expectations within the Worcestershire context.

Audience: School based Attendance Leads/Senior leaders with attendance responsibility

Cost: £60 + VAT per delegate

28 January and 4 February 2025, 10am to 11.30am, virtual delivery, course code: SCH 10434 / 90611

New to Attendance/Attendance Refresher - for School Attendance Officers/staff

This course is designed to support attendance officers new to the role, or experienced officers seeking a refresher to ensure good practice and compliance with the updated DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' expectations.

The course will be delivered as 2 virtual sessions, via teams and will:

- Outline current guidance, responsibilities, and legislation relative to school attendance.
- Enable delegates to understand the role and responsibilities of an attendance officer.
- Explore the importance of accurate pupil register coding and record keeping.
- Support officers to be able to identify and action attendance patterns of concern.
- Explore good practice models of addressing persistent and severe absence.
- Enable delegates to explore the important links between attendance and safeguarding.

Audience: School attendance officers/school-based attendance staff

Cost: £60 + VAT per delegate

30 January and 6 February 2025, 10am to 11.30am, virtual delivery, course code: SCH 10435 / 90612

Annual reviews and preparing for adulthood

SENCOs from all settings will understand how to start planning for adulthood from the earliest years for those CYP with EHC Plans, and how to use person-centred approaches for their Annual Reviews. The co-constructed toolkit for annual reviews, which includes a focus on how to support Year 9 reviews onwards, will be shared and explored. There will be time for networking and sharing of good practice to enable settings to start planning person centred annual reviews for their children and young people with EHC Plans. The session will be interactive, and refreshments will be provided.

Cost: Free – funded via the DBV grant

- 27 February 2025, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Worcester, course code: 10526 / 90738
- 24 March 2025, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Worcester, course code: 10526 / 90739

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 ran nurseries can access this webcast.

When booking via CPD <https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/LearnCPD/CoursesSearch.aspx> 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

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

Other local news and events

Welcome to Your Vote Week 2025

Every year the Electoral Commission ask schools and youth groups to join them in celebrating democracy by delivering democratic education with their students and young people.

Welcome to Your Vote Week will be taking place from **Monday 10 March to Sunday 16 March 2025**.

They aim to support young people to develop the knowledge and confidence they need to cast their vote and discover other ways to get involved in democracy. Welcome to Your Vote Week provides a time in the year for teachers and educators to start the conversation with their young people.

[Sign up now to take part in Welcome to Your Vote Week 2025](#) and receive free resources ahead of the week to help you get involved.

Their [year-round education resources](#) are also available to support you to take part in the week. These include:

- a series of six lesson plans, tailored to the curriculum
- short activities for youth groups or in form time or registration
- youth facing information including quizzes and animated videos

[Find out more information about Welcome to Your Vote Week](#)

If you have any questions about the week, please contact educationengagement@electoralcommission.org.uk

IOPC Youth Panel Survey 2024

This survey is a part of a youth-led project to influence policing across England and Wales. It has been designed by young people from the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) Youth Panel, for those aged 13-25 living in England & Wales.

The opinions of young people are really important and the results from the survey will be the footprint for the Youth Panel's recommendations for change for 2025.

The survey is anonymous and takes approximately 5-6 minutes to complete and they would welcome your support to share the survey with your students.

[Complete the IOPC Youth Panel Survey 2024](#)

The results will be published in Spring 2025.



Sarah Wilkins

Director for Education, Early Years, Inclusion and Place Planning

