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Education Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

I hope the return after the half-term break has been a smooth and positive one for you.

You will be aware that the [SEND White Paper, Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#), was published last week and that the 12-week consultation period has started. As a Local Authority, we are now taking the time to read the paper carefully and discuss the detail as the SEND Local Area Partnership – to ensure that we can fully understand its implications. It is important to remind families that the publication of the White Paper does not immediately change SEND law, and their child’s legal rights remain in place. There are some useful links below to share with families if you deem necessary:

- You can read the full White Paper here: [Every child achieving and thriving \(HTML version\) - GOV.UK](#)
- You can read the proposed SEND Reforms (in various formats) here: [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - GOV.UK](#)
- You can read summaries and supporting documents here: [Every child achieving and thriving and SEND consultation supporting information - GOV.UK](#)
- You can respond to the proposals here (closes 18th May): [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

As well as the national proposals set out in the SEND White Paper, this bulletin also includes important updates on local support, initiatives and changes across Worcestershire.

And finally, thank you to the schools that have already returned the EYES Data Sharing Agreement. If your school hasn’t yet completed this, please prioritise it — full details of what’s needed can be found on page 4.

Wishing you all the best.

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Important Updates for Information and Action

Reminder about upcoming changes to the Education Data System

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION BY ALL SCHOOLS

This is an important reminder about the upcoming changes to how Worcestershire County Council records and manages children’s education data. We are moving to the new Early Years Education System (EYES), which will bring education data onto the same secure platform used for Social Care, Early Help and SEND. This will support better accuracy, stronger collaboration and a more joined-up view of each child.

The system for school-age and post-16 education is due to go live in July 2026, with Early Years following in July 2027.

Around 50% of schools have already signed the EYES Data Sharing Agreement. Thank you to those who have completed this. We now need the remaining schools to sign so that system set-up and testing can continue on schedule.



Percentage of schools that have signed the EYES Data Sharing Agreement as of 25 February 2026

Actions required

1. [Sign the EYES Data Sharing Agreement](#) - this allows us to set up and test connections now, ensuring everything is ready for the transfer of school data from September 2026.

To download a copy of the agreement for signing, use the link above and select **File > Download > Microsoft Word (.docx)**.

Once signed, please return the document to chs.system.support@worcestershire.gov.uk

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) bookings open 4 March

PLEASE SHARE WITH FSM ELIGIBLE FAMILIES

The Department for Education funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme has been extended for a further three years (2026–2028), continuing to provide vital support to children and young people from low-income families.

This Easter, over 50 holiday club providers across Worcestershire will be offering thousands of FREE holiday activity places for children eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals (FSM).

The HAF programme supports children to:

- Access enriching experiences
- Stay safe and connected
- Be more physically active
- Enjoy healthy meals
- Remain engaged during school holidays

Please share this information with your FSM-eligible families:

- Children aged 5-16 who are eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals can book up to **4 FREE holiday club sessions** over the Easter holidays.
- Bookings open **Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 12 noon**.
- There is no need to pre-register before bookings go live.
- Families can browse activities as they are added and book directly via the link below.

[Browse and book sessions for Easter 2026](#)

For more information about HAF, please visit: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/HAF>

Your support in promoting HAF ensures eligible children across Worcestershire can access healthy food, enriching activities and safe holiday provision.

Free Exploitation and Vulnerability Training

PLEASE SHARE WITH STAFF AND PARENT CARERS AS APPROPRIATE

West Mercia Police are offering a free exploitation and vulnerability training workshops to anyone living or working in Worcestershire. Available both online via MS Teams and in-person delivery, the workshops aim to cover the various aspects of vulnerability and the signs and symptoms of exploitation.

Parent and carer session (1 hour)

The exploitation and online safety session aims to raise awareness and provide valuable insights on how to protect vulnerable children. The session will cover:

- Spotting the signs that your child might be being exploited
- How to keep your child safe online
- How online influencers might be shaping the views of your child
- Practical tips for you to help to keep your child safe online
- Why some children are more at risk of exploitation than others

Professionals and people who work with children session (1.5 to 2 hours)

The exploitation and vulnerability session aims to raise awareness and provide valuable insights on how to protect vulnerable children. The session will cover:

- Why some children are more at risk of exploitation than others
- Spotting the signs that a child might be being exploited
- What exploitation is ([child sexual exploitation](#) and [child criminal exploitation](#)) including consent
- [County lines and cuckooing](#)
- What is [modern day slavery](#)
- The impact of using victim blaming language

Exploitation and modern-day slavery - adult safeguarding session (1 hour)

The exploitation and modern slavery session aims to raise awareness and provide valuable insights on how to protect vulnerable adults. The session will cover:

- Why some children and adults are more at risk of exploitation than others
- Spotting the signs that a child/adult might be being exploited
- [County lines and cuckooing](#)
- [Modern day slavery](#)
- The impact of using victim blaming language
- Who can help

For more information including session dates and how to book a place, please visit the [West Mercia Police website](#). If you have any questions or require additional information, please email trainerswdbc@westmercia.police.uk

Worcestershire Virtual School - Create a Character Competition

PLEASE SHARE WITH CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER

To celebrate World Book Day and World Theatre Day, Worcestershire Virtual School is inviting Children Looked After and Previously Looked After to take part in a creative Create a Character competition, supported by Malvern Theatre.

Two short videos from Toby and Zoe at Malvern Theatre introduce the challenge and offer helpful tips:

- Launch video: <https://youtu.be/EKrNH9MUgeQ>
- Character creation tips: <https://youtu.be/HLoAgwo6ls4>

The Challenge

Children and young people are encouraged to design an original theatre character and produce a short character profile. Characters can be human, animal, mythical, or entirely imaginative. Profiles may include:

- Name, appearance, and costume
- Personality traits
- Backstory
- A special talent or unique feature

Optional creative additions - such as drawings, monologues, or short performance videos - are welcome but not required. The activity is fully inclusive and suitable for all ages and abilities.

Prizes

Thirty entries demonstrating imagination and originality will each receive a £10 Amazon voucher.

How to Enter

Send entries to virtualschool@worcestershire.gov.uk and include:

- Child's name
- School
- Age
- Character name

Deadline

Friday 27 March 2026

Worcestershire Virtual School looks forward to celebrating pupils' creativity and meeting their wonderful characters.

Latest Attendance News and Updates

VYED - Monitor your school attendance dashboard

Most Worcestershire schools have now accessed the DfE attendance data dashboards for attendance related information and comparison reports.

If you are new to the role of attendance or haven't yet had chance to access these, we would invite you to do so to ensure you are not missing out on the revised data and comparative information available. Details of how to do so are below:

Access the Monitor your school attendance dashboard

Schools and academy trusts with access to the tool can log into [view your education data \(VYED\)](#) to access attendance data.

If you have not used the tool before, you will need to [request access](#)

Support

If you have any issues using the tool, access the [DfE customer help portal](#). Log in using your DfE sign-in credentials, select 'Get help with DfE systems' then 'Attendance reporting/Wonde'.

DfE further improving the similar schools comparison report

DfE are currently conducting user research and want to speak with staff who use or would like to use the similar schools comparison reports. To take part, [complete our short sign-up form](#).

DfE's Monitor your School Attendance Webinar Recording - January 2026

The recording of the DfE's latest attendance webinar held on 28 January is available for all school attendance leads and attendance staff to view: [Monitor your school attendance webinar - transition - YouTube](#).

This session has a specific focus on the importance of utilising attendance data to support transition and shares the practices utilised by Fulwood Academy *Turning Attendance Insights into Action*.

Rise School Attendance Conference for Primary Leaders on 4 and 5 March 2026

Following the successes of the attendance conferences held for Secondary Leaders last year, the DfE have further announced virtual attendance conference dates for Primary Leaders. This two-part primary conference is to be held on successive afternoon sessions on 4 and 5 March 2026.

Primary leaders can find more information and book a place using the link below:
[Eventbrite.co.uk/e/rise-school-attendance-conference-primary-leaders-BOOK a place](https://eventbrite.co.uk/e/rise-school-attendance-conference-primary-leaders-BOOK-a-place)

Latest Education News and Updates

Free webinar on children and young people in complex situations with multiple needs

The UK Trauma Council are launching the online community of practice funded by DfE ([The UK Trauma Council Community of Practice](#)) with a free webinar as part of DfE/NHSE's joint programme to improve cross-sector support for children in complex situations at risk of or deprived of their liberty.

The launch event will take place on 12 March, 9.30 am to 11.00 am, and will feature Prof. Rachel Hiller, Emma Smale, Dr Beverley Barnett-Jones, and Dr Kate Ward. Together, they will explore how professionals across sectors can work more effectively to support these children.

Drawing on research and frontline practice, the webinar will examine integrated, intersectional approaches across social care, health, education and justice to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. **You can [book a free space here](#).**

Libraries go all in for the National Year of Reading 2026

Libraries bring people together. Through stories, events and welcoming spaces, local libraries support people of all ages to discover, enjoy and share a love of reading. In addition, libraries are one of the few places you can visit without any cost, as membership is FREE for everyone who lives in Worcestershire.

Throughout 2026, Worcestershire County Council's libraries will be going all in on reading, offering a wide programme of activities, including new book clubs, a range of author talks, clubs and activities for all ages. From everyday opportunities to read and relax to special campaigns and challenges, there will be something for everyone to enjoy all year round.

New for 2026, children aged 7 to 12 (Key Stage 2) can visit the library and explore our Fantastic Fiction Finder Map. This new resource helps young readers discover new authors and genres, with a specially designed bookmark to build confidence in choosing books they'll love. As the year continues, libraries will be offering even more ways to get involved, including seasonal events, author talks and national initiatives such as the Summer Reading Challenge, alongside regular reading groups and family activities.

Young Friends Against Scams

The National Trading Standards Scams Team run Friends Against Scams awareness training and this now been extended to include *Young Friends Against Scams* aimed at 11- to 18-year-olds. They have created a pack to help raise awareness to young people to empower them to protect themselves, families and communities from scams. This is of growing importance with the increase in scams which we are seeing which are sent out to mobile devices and popping up on the internet.

The online pack is designed to aid teachers and leaders of youth organisations on this subject with information and activities set up to run a 30–60-minute session with young people. Alternatively, Worcestershire Trading Standards do go out and deliver Scams Awareness Training sessions and would be happy to come out and raise scams awareness in a tailored session.

For more information you can visit the website www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/young-friends or contact Lorraine Boulton at Worcestershire Trading Standards via email at Lorraine.Boulton@Worcestershirets.gov.uk to arrange a Scams Awareness session.

Health & Safety Webinar for Schools

Worcestershire County Council Health and Safety Team are delivering a free 90-minute Health & Safety Webinar for Schools on 11 March 2026, 10am to 11.30am.

The 90 mins will cover the following:

- Compliance management (Dean Judge)
- Learning outside of the classroom (Mike Smith)
- DSE/Workstation assessments (Richard Daffern-Clarke)
- Incident reporting using Prime (Mel Cooper)

Audience: Heads/SLTs, Site Managers/Caretakers and Health and Safety School Governors

For schools to attend on 11 March, 10am to 11.30am they simply need to use the following link - [Health and Safety Webinar for Schools | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

If on the day delegates encounter any problems, please contact the Health & Safety team directly via healthandsafety@worcestershire.gov.uk

Worcestershire Co-Production Training Offer

We are delighted to launch the **Worcestershire Co-production Training Offer**, designed to support meaningful participation and co-production across education, health, social care, and voluntary sector services.

All sessions are **free of charge** and open to:

- Staff and volunteers working in the Local Area Partnership, across education, local authority, health, social care, and the voluntary sector in Worcestershire
- Young people and parent carers who wish to attend and contribute

The training offer is made up of three Levels:

- Level 1 Online Training Materials
- Level 2 Co-Production Core Offer
- Level 3 Bespoke Co-production Training

Level 1 Online Training Materials (coming soon)

A range of short training videos, that can be completed individually or used within team meetings or CPD sessions to develop shared understanding of co-production and participation. Current video topics include:

- Introduction to co-production: vision, commitment, and outcomes
- The Flower of Participation
- What is co-production? (overview)
- Top tips for engaging children and young people
- Alternative methods of communication

To request access to Level 1: Online training materials please email: sendco-productionteam@worcestershire.gov.uk

Level 2 Co-Production Core Offer

The Core Offer provides online training sessions focused on building a shared understanding of co-production across services and settings, over the summer term we are offering the following courses:

- Introducing participation and co-production (CPD code 10698)
- What are different methods to gather the authentic voice of young people? (CPD Code 10699)
- How can I make sure everyone is able to contribute? (CPD code 10700)
- What could I introduce in my organisation? (CPD Code 10701)

All of the above courses are available to book via [CPD](#) using your school / setting CPD Leader login details. If you encounter any issues when booking, please speak to the Training Team on 01905 844 420 / workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk

Level 3 Bespoke Co-production Training

Our Bespoke Offer is tailored to the specific needs of your service, team, or setting. Developed collaboratively to ensure they are relevant, practical, and aligned with your priorities. Here is a list of tailored training we can deliver:

- How can I set up and run a group of young people e.g. SEND Council or forum?
- How to teach children and young people the skills to contribute and participate
- Creating a detailed action plan; this is specific to your service area

If there is something you would like support with that is not listed above, please do get in touch. We are happy to tailor sessions to meet the specific needs of your service, setting or team.

To organise your bespoke co-production training then contact the Training Team by emailing workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk, the team will then organise a 1 hour meeting with Amy and Chanika who will then agree focus / content and a date for delivery.

As always if you have any questions regarding Co-Production and what that means for your school / setting then please contact Amy or Chanika via SENDco-production@Worcestershire.gov.uk

To support schools and settings a detailed overview of the Co-Production Training is available by visiting www.worcestershire.gov.uk/education, select "Training, Conferences & CPD" and then select "Training Directories"

RISE (Responses to Food Insecurity in School & Educational Environments)

A PhD researcher at the University of Birmingham is conducting a study on the roles schools play in supporting students and families who may be experiencing difficulties in affording food. They are inviting schools across the UK to take part in this research, led by Ellie Ansell. The study involves a 30-minute online survey about your school's current food approaches and support strategies, with an optional follow-up interview.

Who can take part?

Senior school staff or those who are involved in school food support strategies:

- Headteachers/Principals
- Pupil Premium Leads or equivalent role
- Senior Leadership Team
- Safeguarding Officer

Participants can enter their school into a prize draw for one of three **£300 Love2Shop vouchers**.

To take part, **please click the link** to access the survey <https://redcap.link/RISEPROJECT>

Questions? Contact Ellie Ansell at ema440@student.bham.ac.uk

Latest SEND News and Updates

New SEND Newsletter for Parent Carers

We're pleased to share our refreshed SEND newsletter, published on behalf of the Local Area Partnership (Worcestershire County Council and NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire).

The newsletter is designed for parent carers and practitioners and includes updates on services for children and young people with SEND, along with progress against our improvement plan. Parent carers told us they wanted a clearer, more professional newsletter delivered through a modern platform. In response, we are now using Mailchimp to make our updates easier to read, access and share. We encourage practitioners to sign up to receive the newsletter as a quick and convenient way to stay informed about the information being shared with families, so you can support conversations and explain any recent changes.

You can read the latest edition here: [SEND News and Updates - February](#)
Sign up to receive future editions here: [Join our SEND mailing list](#)

Please share this information within your teams and with your families.

SEND Local Area Partnership update: Vision, Commitment and Outcomes

Over the past 8 months the Co-production Officers have been meeting with children and young people in Worcestershire to ask them important questions about life and future goals. Amy and Chanika asked 'What does a good life look like?', 'What is your one key message to leaders?' and 'What makes you happy?'. From these and other questions the [participation/ co-production vision, commitment and outcomes](#) have been created.

- The vision is what we would like to achieve for young people with SEND
- The commitment is how the staff within organisations will work moving forward.
- The outcomes will form the foundation of the SEND offer from the Partnership moving forward. As the SEND strategy is being rewritten through 2026, they will underpin service expectations.

We are going to be asking schools and organisations to sign up and commit to following the 'we will' commitment statements. We can then expect a way of working that involved children and young people with SEND.

We are creating different ways of hearing about the three key elements. We will have a booklet, a visual, videos and more. They will be available on the website when each method is completed. [Co-production and how to get involved \(SEND\) | Worcestershire County Council](#).

Co-production Toolkit

As part of the Local Area Partnership's commitment to co-production, we are pleased to launch the new [Co-production Toolkit](#) on the Local Offer. This resource has been created by our Co-production Officers, Chanika and Amy, and brings together practical advice and guidance to support effective co-production. It includes documents and templates such as:

- Project information template – linking your project to the [outcomes](#) and establishing the [level of participation](#) you will be undertaking.
- Terms of reference template - a group agreement on project principles set around the four cornerstones of co-production
- Examples of workshops/materials you can use when co-producing with children and young people.

The toolkit is designed not just as a resource, but as a living collection that grows with your experiences. This is the first version of the toolkit, and we will continue to expand it over time - guided by your feedback. Please use the feedback link on the webpage to tell us what would support you further within the toolkit.

The Co-production Officers are also available to support you on your co-production journey. If you need advice, guidance, or help embedding co-production in your work, you can contact them at: SEND Co-Production Team: SENDCo-ProductionTeam@worcestershire.gov.uk

We want to hear how you are working with children, young people and their families within your service area, and how their voices are shaping your decisions, priorities and service design. Your examples will help us understand what good co-production looks like in practice and where further support or resources may be helpful. Please share your participation journey with the SEND co-production team: SENDCo-ProductionTeam@worcestershire.gov.uk

SENDIASS Free Transitions Training for parent carers

[The SEND Information, Advice and Support Service \(SENDIASS\)](#) have developed a new Transitions Workshop. The FREE Workshop, [Supporting your child to cope with change \(Transitions\)](#), is aimed at parents and carers of children and young people with SEND who will be transitioning into another phase of education within the next few years.

SENDIASS are looking for schools that would be interested in hosting this workshop for their families and would be happy for families of other schools to attend.

If you are interested in this opportunity for your setting, please complete the [SENDIASS Training Request Form](#) and the SENDIASS Training and Development Officer will be in contact to confirm details.

Free Autism Parent/Carer webinars

FAO: Pastoral Leads, SENCOs, Comms Leads

Please share widely with your parents and carers through your newsletters, websites and social media.

In June and July Autism West Midlands will be delivering a set of webinars for parents and carers. Topics include:

- Anxiety
- Communications
- sensory differences
- behaviour
- the teenage brain
- supporting autistic teenagers
- navigating the system.

Please download the [autism webinar flyer](#) and share with your parents and carers and specifically, on a one-to-one basis, with parents and carers of children/young people with autism or awaiting assessment.

All these webinars are also open to professionals so please share with staff in school too.

ADHD and Autism - Right to Choose for under 18s

Every patient in England has the right to choose an alternative NHS commissioned provider of health services at the point of referral or where the waiting list for the referred service is longer than 18 weeks.

Right to Choose applies to autism and ADHD assessments for children under the age of 18 years.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire has published some information for parent carers about Right to Choose, which includes a list of the accredited Right to Choose providers:

[ADHD AUTISM Right to Choose under 18s](#)

Please circulate within your teams and feel free to share with parents and carers.

Changes to ADHD referral form for children and young people in Worcestershire

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust has introduced a new, streamlined ADHD referral form for children and young people across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The new form is shorter, clearer, and easier to complete, helping to ensure referrals are made consistently and reach the right team quickly.

The form should be submitted by a professional, in partnership with parents and carers. Professionals who can make a referral into the service include:

- School staff (for example, a SENCo, teacher, or educational psychologist)
- School nurse
- Social care professional
- Family support worker
- GP

Parents and carers remain central to the referral process. Your knowledge of your child, your concerns, and your experiences are extremely important. These should be fully discussed with, and included by, the professional supporting you when the referral is completed. Working together in this way helps us build a clearer picture of a child or young person's needs and ensures referrals are considered fairly and consistently.

Supporting information

The new referral form and guidance can be accessed here: [Herefordshire and Worcestershire Children's Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder \(ADHD\) service](#) and should be returned to: whcnhs.access.commpaeds@nhs.net. Please ensure all locally held copies of the referral form and associated guidance are updated on your systems.

Thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration in helping us improve the ADHD assessment pathway in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Change Programme Updates

The DfE published an interim evaluation report on the Change Programme last week [Evaluation of the SEND and AP change programme - interim evaluation summary](#). This report highlights the feedback that has been gathered and in particular notes the benefits of the AP Outreach, ELSEC and approaches to establishing Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision.

As Phase 3 of the Programme continues in Worcestershire, we can report that:

- Over 350 children have received support through the AP Outreach programmes being delivered by our AP schools across the Authority
- 39 First and Primary schools are being supported by Children's Speech and Language Therapy Services with a bespoke offer through the Early Language Support for Every Child workstream
- 40 school and SEND Leaders from 27 of our schools have been working with the University of Worcester and WCC to refine and review the Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision guidance to ensure that there is a shared understanding and definition for OAIP across the Local Authority
- Stakeholder engagement with SEND leads is underway to begin to plan and build resources to support the Local Inclusion Support Offer; a guide to support available within the Local Authority
- The Assistive Technology Lending Library steering group have selected three partners to work with, this information was shared at the SENCo Network meeting on 2nd February, a recording of the meeting is available. We will be in touch with details of a launch of the library in which our partners; Dolphin, Scanning Pens and Clicker will share details of the resources available for schools via the Lending Library.
- The Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools project is drawing to a close; our 31 Primary and First PINs schools have been asked to submit their proposals for their Bespoke offer of support by Friday 6th February; [PINs Bespoke Offer – Fill in form](#) and we very much look forward to the PINs celebration event on 12th March at Worcestershire County Cricket Ground.
- Perryfields Primary PRU has launched the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce for Primary schools in South Worcestershire. The APST is a multi-disciplinary team that meets to identify, sign post and allocate support to pupils who are experiencing barriers to learning and can be accessed through Perryfield's Outreach Team.
- The Wyre Forest Multi-Disciplinary Team prototype: a collaboration of Severn Academies Education Trust, Health and WCC colleagues working together to identify early intervention opportunities, sign post and provide support for children experiencing disruption to learning and has launched

Latest Public Health News and Updates

Chefs in Schools: school chef course

Public Health have the opportunity to support a small number of school chefs with training to improve the quality, taste, presentation of school meals plus engagement with children about food.

The 10-week course will be delivered by Chefs in Schools, see details here: [Training | Chefs in Schools](#)

Your school will need to meet the following criteria:

1. School meals cooked from scratch at school (not frozen then heated up or brought onto site pre-cooked). Please explain arrangements.
2. Your head chef would have to be released to attend training (2 off site days and 8x 45 mins online outside of school mealtimes plus 30 mins self-directed learning each week. This is a 10-week course).
3. Your staff member would need to attend every training session and be keen to learn and provide better food? Basically, is there an ethos to do even better *and there is autonomy to improve school meals*.
4. Your staff member would need access to a computer and email address for online courses?

If you and your head chef are interested in this opportunity AND meet the criteria, please could you get in touch with the following information:

- Preferred days of the week for a course (there is no guarantee which day the course will be delivered).
- School INSET days for the rest of the year
- Name of head chef who will be attending and their email address

The course is likely to start w/c 20 April.

Please send expressions of interest to ccharlton@worcestershire.gov.uk confirming you meet the criteria and your head chef has availability to attend, including the offsite course days in a single location in the county.

Schools with places already confirmed need not take any further action.

Mental health directory of services

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust has developed a universal Directory of Services for mental health for Children and Young People (CYP) for professional use. Its purpose is to provide a consistent way of describing levels of need for children and young people, using the iThrive model to ensure a shared language and understanding of mental health and wellbeing support across all settings.

The directory brings together mental health and wellbeing services available to children and young people in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, including provision from health services, local authorities, the VCSE sector, and regional or national organisations. As a working document, it will require regular review and maintenance which HWHCT will update quarterly.

You can view the resource here: [Find support for children and young people | Herefordshire and Worcestershire CAMHS](#)

Please share this on with your teams.

Latest Government News and Updates

Government to publish new gender guidance for schools

[On 12 February, the Department for Education announced schools and colleges will soon have new gender guidance](#) instructing them that they must take a very careful approach when a child asks to socially transition.

Legal duties will be absolutely clear after government embeds guidance within Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE), the established statutory safeguarding framework schools are expected to follow. KCSIE is kept under regular review to make sure it is meeting the need of schools, colleges and families, allowing for further changes as new evidence emerges.

[A consultation on the proposed changes to the statutory guidance was launched on 12 February and will close on 22 April, with a view to implement the proposed changes in September 2026.](#)

Webinar for schools on their disability duties

The Council for Disabled Children has recently uploaded a [webinar](#) onto YouTube for schools on their disability duties. This complements three sets of guidance on disability duties from July. [See guides and training packages for schools on the disability duties in the Equality Act](#) for more information.

The Department for Education commissioned the materials to support inclusive practice and to help disabled pupils achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.

Expansion of support scheme to help thousands of people back into work

Up to 250,000 more people with health conditions will receive support to stay in or return to work, as a groundbreaking programme proven to transform lives and boost living standards is to be rolled out across England.

WorkWell provides personalised, early help for people struggling with their health — connecting them to local services such as physiotherapy, counselling and workplace adjustments. WorkWell forms part of the Pathways to Work offer, created to help disabled people and those with health conditions move from welfare into work and provide a joined-up support system for local residents.

WorkWell is designed differently by acting as an early-intervention, health-led service that is locally designed and integrates with local NHS, council, and community services to prevent people from leaving work due to health issues or supporting them back to work quickly if they fall out. Following the success of the WorkWell pilot - a pioneering health and employment support programme in 15 areas – it will be rolled out across all of England, backed by up to £259 million over the next three years.

[Expansion of support scheme to help thousands of people back into work - GOV.UK](#)

Latest Training and Conference News

Pupil Premium Network Meeting – Come join us!

Our Pupil Premium network meetings bring together Pupil Premium champions and inclusion leads to provide an opportunity to share effective practice and gain updates and information on Pupil Premium related topics.

In addition to providing meaningful opportunities for networking with leaders from other schools/settings, these termly half day Pupil Premium Network meetings cover the following:

- the latest national and local legislation, information and updates
 - solution focussed strategies which respond to learner needs
 - access to exemplar policies, templates, tools and materials
 - sharing and discussion of effective practice
 - where to access additional support services and agencies that provide specialist support
 - development of partnership working or peer to peer support and challenge
 - continuing professional development opportunities
-
- Meeting 1: Information supplied via the Google drive
 - Meeting 2: 10 March 2026, 1pm to 4pm, Worcester
 - Meeting 3: 06 July 2026, 1pm to 4pm, Worcester
 - Cost: £50 + VAT

You can still join the Pupil Premium Network meeting by emailing the Training Team workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk, with the delegate name / email. The confirmation email will confirm the venue and provide links to access the Google Drive

Lunch and learn: creating documents that work for everyone

We are pleased to offer a series of lunch and learn sessions to take place during March 2026. These sessions will be led by Helen Wilson, Digital Accessibility Lead at Worcestershire County Council, and Lydia Beech, a member of the Voices United forum for young people with SEND. The sessions are designed to help colleagues remove document accessibility barriers and create documents that work for everyone. By working in partnership with Lydia, the sessions provide practical guidance from someone with lived experience.

The sessions are as follows:

04/03/2026: 12:00-12:45 – Word session 1 – headings, images and links

10/03/2026: 12:00-12:45 – Word session 2 – colour, contrast, plain English and tables

18/03/2026: 12:00-12:45 – PowerPoint pointers and key features

24/03/2026: 12:00-12:45 – Excel pointers and key features

Please use this link to sign up to one or more sessions: [Expression of interest - lunch & learn sessions - SCULPT for Accessibility – Fill in form](#). You will need to add a save a date to your own calendar and a TEAMS link will be sent out to you.

Health & Safety Webinar for Schools

Worcestershire County Council Health and Safety Team are delivering a free 90-minute Health & Safety Webinar for Schools on 11 March 2026, 10am to 11.30am

The 90 mins will cover the following:

- Compliance management (Dean Judge)
- Learning outside of the classroom (Mike Smith)
- DSE/Workstation assessments (Richard Daffern-Clarke)
- Incident reporting using Prime (Mel Cooper)

Audience: Heads/SLTs, Site Managers/Caretakers and Health and Safety School Governors

For schools to attend on 11 March, 10am to 11.30am they simply need to use the following link - [Health and Safety Webinar for Schools | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

If on the day delegates encounter any problems, please contact the Health & Safety team directly via healthandsafety@worcestershire.gov.uk

NEW Family Place modules

The following modules are delivered via Family Place on behalf of Virtual School and are fully funded. These modules are open to Education professionals working with Statutory School aged children / young people. They are particularly intended to improve outcomes for Previously Looked After Children- Inclusive of Special Guardianship, Adoption and Kinship.

Understanding how the creative arts can be used to support a child's emotional regulation

This online workshop is for educational professionals will explore different ways to use the creative arts to support children's emotional regulation. This might be through music and rhythm, art and drama. All can support regulation, expression, communication and managing transitions. The creative arts can often impact children nonverbally in a much deeper way than we might expect.

During this session practical ideas will be shared and explored:

- How to use the creative arts in everyday routines at school
- How to use the creative arts in periods of dysregulation, in order to support emotional regulation
- Enhance your educators tool kit

Cost: Free - funded via the Virtual School

5 March 2026, 3.30pm to 5.30pm, virtual delivery, course code 10676

Transitions: Session One: Tools for planning an effective transition

This online workshop is for educational professionals and will present a range of helpful tools for planning school transitions. Transitions are stressful and can be particularly hard for children who have experienced early adversity. Their sense of security is directly challenged, and we often see children reverting to earlier patterns of behaviour when a transition is coming up. Early planning and preparation can have a very significant impact on how well the child will manage.

During this session we will cover:

- What do transitions involve?
- Why are they so difficult for children who have experienced attachment disruption?
- Impact - emotions, behaviours and daily life
- Tools for educators in planning an effective transition
- What factors to take into account
- How to prepare the child and network
- What can supporting adults do?
- The benefits of a child specific plan

Cost: Free

17 March 2026, 3.30pm to 5.30pm, virtual delivery, course code 10677

Support with student behaviour

Build your understanding, confidence and skills with accredited training you can trust.

Join [Team Teach](#) for a 1-day Level 1 Behaviour Support training course in Worcester.

- **Date:** Friday 6th March 2026
- **Times:** 9am to 4pm
- **Location:** Hall 3, The Warndon Community Hub, Shap Drive, Worcester, WR4 9NX

With this 1-day course you will learn practical, person-centred de-escalation skills, and positive behaviour strategies you can use straight away to support your students more effectively and respond to their behaviour in a way that is reasonable, proportionate, necessary and respectful.

- ✓ Reduce interruptions to learning
- ✓ Strengthen relationships with your students
- ✓ Help avoid crisis situations
- ✓ Reduce risk to keep everyone safe
- ✓ Learn best practice when recording, reporting and reviewing incidents
- ✓ Foster healthy, respectful learning environments

You'll also get access to the Team Teach Connect Knowledge Hub, which has over 100 hours of quality resources from our behaviour specialists for 24/7 on-going support.

From checklists, templates, guides and articles, to videos, webinars and podcasts, the Knowledge Hub brings together practical resources covering all areas of behaviour, to save you time, and support you when you need it most.

Please contact Amit Kapila for bookings, prices and more information at amit.kapila@teamteach.com, or on 07843 342756.

Headteacher Briefing

17th March 2026 | 09:00 – 12:00 | Virtual Delivery

Join us for our upcoming Virtual Headteacher Briefing, designed to provide school leaders with the latest strategic updates, key policy developments, and essential information to support planning for the term ahead.

This online session will bring together headteachers and senior leaders from across the area for a focused, high-quality briefing that ensures you remain informed, connected, and equipped to lead with confidence.

Book Now : [Headteacher Briefing](#)

Assistive Technology Lending Library Launch

3rd March 2026 | 15:30 – 17:00 | Virtual Delivery

We are delighted to invite you to the launch of the Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL), a programme funded through the DfE Change Programme. This event will introduce the ATLL offer in full, with representatives from our partner organisations—Dolphin, Clicker and Scanning Pens—joining us to share how their technologies support learners.

Come along to explore how the library can help children in your school access tools that support reading and writing. We are pleased to confirm that every child in every Worcestershire school will have access to Dolphin EasyReader, and all schools will be able to trial Scanning Pens for 60 days at no cost. The offer also includes 120 Clicker licences, which we hope to pilot in whole-class settings; expressions of interest for this will open after the launch.

Join us to learn how you can take part in this fully funded initiative, discover how the ATLL can support pupils in your school, and see how it provides a risk-free, cost-free way to explore a range of assistive technologies—while also helping you champion the National Year of Reading across Worcestershire.

Book Now : [Assistive Technology Lending Library Launch](#)

Empowering Mathematical Thinking: Oracy and Daily Reasoning in Action Conference

18th March 2026 | 09:00 – 14:30 | Worcester

Join us for a unique face to face conference on the 18th March that will transform the way you teach maths.

This Conference examines how purposeful talk and simple, everyday reasoning routines can strengthen pupils' mathematical understanding.

We are excited to welcome speaker Ben Shakespeare. Ben is a Senior Lecturer in Primary Education at the University of Worcester and enjoys supporting trainee teachers to develop their passion for primary mathematics. He is also a local leader of mathematics education for the GLOW Maths Hub and ITT Regional Lead for the NCETM. Before moving into higher education, Ben worked in Gloucestershire schools for 10 years as a class teacher, mathematics subject leader and a member of SLT.

We also welcome Ed Neale. Ed is the Maths Hub Lead for the GLOW Maths Hub. He is a passionate Maths Lead with over 15 years of experience in primary education, having worked in schools in Leeds and Gloucestershire. Ed is a firm advocate for professional development, believing that every teacher has the opportunity to grow and refine their skills. He is committed to creating collaborative environments where educators can share best practice and strives to ensure that teachers and students can access the highest quality of maths education.

Book Now : [Empowering Mathematical Thinking](#)

Handwriting Matters: Building Strong Foundations for All

21st April | 09:00 – 12:30 | Worcester

Unlock the power of handwriting with an expert-led masterclass that transforms teaching and boosts pupil success. Want to raise standards and make handwriting a whole-school strength? This high-impact session gives teachers and leaders the proven strategies and confidence to deliver outstanding results.

During the morning you will hear from Sue Smits a handwriting specialist and the founder of Morrells Handwriting. Sue is a trusted name in handwriting, education and resources who is recognised as a key contributor to the 2025 Writing Framework. Sue has worked alongside educational experts and policymakers to shape national standards for handwriting instruction.

Packed with practical tips and actionable techniques, this masterclass explores everything from early pencil grip to fluent, joined-up writing, whilst also including a diagnostic approach to identify handwriting challenges and tailoring support effectively.

Book Now : [Handwriting Matters](#)

If you need any assistance booking or have any questions, please email:

Workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk

Early Years Summit

26th or 27th June | 09:00 – 16:00 | Worcester

There has never been a time in education where the light is shining so brightly on the Early Years. We want to support all schools and settings in the best way possible

Our Early Years Summit brings together schools, childminders, and PVI settings for a dynamic day of learning, inspiration, and collaboration. The programme blends thought-provoking keynote speakers, Ofsted and practical workshops designed to strengthen pedagogy and deepen understanding by supporting high-quality practice across all Early Years. Alongside the main sessions, delegates can explore a marketplace featuring a range of exhibitors offering resources, services, and innovative tools to enhance Early Years provision.

Friday: Join us as we welcome Alistair Bryce-Clegg, joined by the brilliant Ruth Swailes for a day of insight, energy, and practical expertise.

Saturday: We are excited to host Shonette Bason- Wood, alongside Ruth Swailes for another day packed with inspiration, creativity and professional learning.

Book via CPD using your CPD Leader login details: [Early Years Summit](#)

Course Code: 10689

Confirmations are sent directly to the delegate email provided and will include venue instructions, if you require any assistance booking, please email : Workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk

Book your place on our training and conferences 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

Lauren Child headlines Worcestershire Libraries Power of Libraries Conference

Worcestershire Libraries Power of Libraries Conference is back for a second year with headline speaker Lauren Child, award-winning children's author and illustrator, and creator of some of the UK's most loved characters including Charlie and Lola, Clarice Bean and Ruby Redfort.

During her talk, she will share insights into the importance of reading in the early years, children's reading rights, and how practitioners can help develop intrinsically motivated readers from the very start of a child's life.

Hosted by Worcestershire County Council's Library Service, the conference will bring together nursery and reception practitioners, early years leads, and childminders, to inspire a lifelong love of reading in children aged 0–5. It will showcase creative approaches to shared reading and highlight how libraries can support early years settings in developing strong, confident reading cultures.

Attending the conference will help settings strengthen reading for pleasure and embed a positive reading culture, supporting strong Ofsted outcomes. Attendees will gain practical, research-based strategies for impactful storytimes, build staff confidence, and learn how to demonstrate clear intent, implementation, and impact in their reading practice. Participants will also receive free books and resources to enhance their environment and curriculum.

Tickets cost £60 and lunch and refreshments will be provided to all delegates.

Find out more and book your place here: [Worcestershire Libraries Power of Libraries Conference](#)

Latest News and Updates from Teaching School Hubs

Prince Henry's Teaching School Hub

School Centred Initial Teacher Training - applications for the 2026-27 SCITT cohort are now open!

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. Please use the link below to book onto these - www.ticketsource.co.uk/phtsh. For clinics, you will be sent the details to join via email.

- Year 1 ECT Events:
 - Clinic 3 – 11th June 2026
- Year 2 ECT Events:
 - Clinic 5 – 19th March 2026
 - Clinic 6 – 18th June 2026
- ECT Mentor Events:
 - Conference 2 for Year 1 Mentors – March 2026

AB Update

DfE registrations for the 2025-26 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/> You should have now received an email regarding our Service Level Agreement. If you have not yet received this, please email cemms@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk

NPQ Update

**Applications are now open for school or self-funded NPQs beginning in April.
New NPQ Apprenticeships now open for an April start**

Best Practice Network are pleased to launch 3 new leadership apprenticeships that combine an NPQ with funded apprenticeship training: NPQLT, NPQLTD and NPQLBC. These NPQs are mapped to the Level 3 Team Leader apprenticeship, with the NPQ providing the knowledge, and the apprenticeship supporting the skills and behaviours in practice.

These routes allow schools that are not eligible for DfE scholarship funding to access NPQs funded through their levy. As there is not a scholarship funded route for Spring 2026, this is a unique opportunity to start an NPQ ahead of the Autumn term.

Leader Apprenticeship with **NPQH**
Leader Apprenticeship with **NPQSL**
Leader Apprenticeship with **NPQLT**
Leader Apprenticeship with **NPQLTD**
Leader Apprenticeship with **NPQLBC**

If you would like to find out about the range of Apprenticeships available to support professional development in schools, you can visit the Worcestershire Hills Trust apprenticeships page here: <https://www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/worcestershire-hills-trust>

****NEW for SPRING 2026** [AI Practitioner Level 4:](#)**

A fully funded apprenticeship that prepares school staff to coordinate the ethical and effective use of AI and automation across schools and trusts. The programme prepares apprentices for roles including AI Coordinator, AI Implementation Lead, Digital and AI Lead and Automation and Systems Lead.

Latest Community News and Updates

Sessions available to help access local support services and make secure referrals

Worcestershire Advice Network is hosting online sessions to help schools access local support services for families and make secure referrals using Refernet, the county's GDPR-compliant referral system.

Why attend?

- Learn about voluntary sector and council services available to families
- Discover how Refernet simplifies secure referrals and improves support pathways
- See a live demonstration of the system

Sessions (Microsoft Teams)

- Thursday 5 March, 4–5pm
- Tuesday 10 March, 10–11am
- Thursday 19 March, 4–5pm

Booking Link

[Log into the Children's Services Portal to book your space: Community Awareness Information Signposting session](#) *(booking link opens in web browser)*

If you are unable to log into the Children's Services Portal, please book your space via: [Community Awareness Information Signposting session](#) *(booking link opens in web browser)*

If you have any questions, please contact us via FSMHolidayVouchers@worcestershire.gov.uk

Don't miss this opportunity to strengthen your school's support for families!

Governor Recruitment: Promote Vacancies via Love Volunteering

Love Volunteering, a new, free, countywide volunteering portal, has launched and could be a great way to support the recruitment of school governors.

LoveVolunteering.co.uk helps connect schools with potential governors from a wide range of backgrounds and skill sets and is promoted across the county through local volunteer networks.

Schools with governor vacancies can register for free and post opportunities to reach a broader audience and strengthen their governing boards.

If you require more information about Love Volunteering, please get in touch via:

LoveVolunteering@worcestershire.gov.uk



Sarah Wilkins

Assistant Director for Education, Early Years, Inclusion and Pupil Place Planning

