

Leading to the future

Information for School Governors

SPRING 2025

Welcome back, school governors!

As we begin a new school term, I want to extend a warm welcome back to each of you. The continued dedication and commitment shown by governors to our schools is invaluable, and thinking about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead in 2025, it will certainly be another busy year in education for all of us.

If we look back to the second half of the autumn term, the DfE launched its curriculum and assessment review, led by Professor Becky Francis CBE, an expert in education policy. The review began with an 8-week call for evidence which closed on 22 November.

The call for evidence sought to gain the views of experts, teachers, and other education sector members, as well as parents and young people, which will aid the panel in developing their final recommendations.

Why is the curriculum and assessment being reviewed?

The main purpose of the review is to ensure that the curriculum balances ambition, relevance, flexibility and inclusivity for all children and young people.

The review will span from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5.

The review will look to deliver:

- An excellent foundation in the core subjects of reading, writing and maths.
- A broader curriculum, so that children and young people don't miss out on subjects such as music, art, sport and drama, as well as vocational subjects.
- A curriculum that ensures children and young people leave compulsory education ready for life and ready for work, building the knowledge, skills and attributes young people need to thrive.
- A curriculum that reflects the issues and diversities of our society, ensuring all children and young people are represented.

- An assessment system that captures the full strengths of every child and young person and the breadth of curriculum.

Once all the responses that been reviewed, an interim report will be produced outlining some key themes and initial recommendations to be explored and this will happen in the spring term. The review team will continue to explore these specific areas more with the aim of publishing a full report later in the autumn.

We saw the removal of Ofsted's inspection single word judgements at the start of last term. A number of schools within the borough have received graded inspections during the autumn term and feedback has been generally positive.

As part of its aim to deliver a better accountability system, Ofsted will be continuing its live consultation throughout the spring and summer term as it prepares for the launch of its revised framework and proposed score card in September 2025, so more changes ahead.

We also wait with interest for the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill to come into legislation this year. First introduced in the King's Speech in July, it forms parts of the government's vision to raise standards in education, ensure children are fairly treated irrespective of their background and promote children's wellbeing.

Finally, I want to draw your attention to the latest Teacher Wellbeing Index for 2024 that was published at the end of last term. As governors we are acutely aware of the challenges our school colleagues face and it is essential for us all to consider our responsibilities in supporting the health and well-being of the head teacher and the teaching staff in our schools. The main findings from the report remain largely unchanged from last year with over three quarters (77%) of the workforce reporting mental health symptoms due to their work and data from school leaders reports that rates of anxiety, depression, burnout and acute stress remain at high levels this year. However, the ways in which schools are responding to mental health and wellbeing is improving with a 7% increase in the proportion of staff who think their organisation supports well those employees who experience problems with mental health and wellbeing. >>



>> As a reminder there are a number of tools to assist school leaders and governors in reviewing and improving the health and wellbeing provision in schools, and these include the DfE guidance on Reducing School Workload and the Schools Workload Reduction Toolkit and the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/reducing-school-workload>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-staff-wellbeing-charter>

Teacher Wellbeing Index 2024

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/ftwI04cs/twix-2024.pdf>

Pupil premium

The Pupil Premium grant was introduced in April 2011, with the aim of raising achievement for disadvantaged pupils. To be eligible for the grant, disadvantaged pupils are those whose parents/carers are known to be eligible for:

- Income support
- Income-based job-seeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – (for those who applied on or after 1 April 2018 household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax and not including any benefits ¹)

Pupils whose parents with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) are also eligible for free school meals, if they meet specific criteria.

In 2023 to 2024, the pupil premium was worth £2.9 billion, with approximately 2.2 million qualifying pupils. The Early Years premium was introduced in April 2015 and is additional funding for children aged between three and four who are attending state funded education. To be eligible, these children must be free school meals eligible or are a looked after/post

looked after child. Last year, this premium was worth approximately £40 million.

Pre pandemic, school's progress in closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers started to plateau. In 2023, by age 5, disadvantaged children were 4.6 months behind their peers. This grew to a gap of 10.3 months for children by the end of primary school, leading to a gap of 19.2 months for students by the end of secondary school. These students are likely to have GCSE grades more than three quarters of a grade lower than the grades of other high attaining students. The progress that these students make between primary and secondary school is less than their non-disadvantaged peers. Disadvantaged 16-19 students were 3.2 grades below their peers and this is the highest level since 2012. The Sutton Trust's 'Closing the attainment gap' report published in February 2024 describes the pandemic as 'wiping out 10 years of progress'.

Recently published Department for Education information (2024) indicates that the gap between disadvantaged children and their non-disadvantaged peers is widening, particularly for the youngest pupils.

- Are governors provided with information which helps you to understand how many pupils at the school are in receipt of the pupil premium?
- Does this information support you to understand the context of the pupil premium eligible pupils in your school?
- As the term disadvantage is wide ranging, with pupils eligible for funding for many different reasons, are you able to use the information to identify which are the largest and/ or significant groups within your school community?
- Do you know what the trend over time is for your school?

Guidance for school leaders is published on a yearly basis, with an expectation that leaders use the funding to support pupil premium pupils to reach their potential and close any gaps between them and their peers. School leaders can use the funding creatively to support these pupils and can be used to support the wider pupil community if needed. Conditions of the grant set out that leaders must create a 3-year pupil premium strategy which is available online, with a review of the effectiveness of the spending for each year. Leaders have until the 31 December each year to publish this online.

Schools do wonderful things to support their disadvantaged pupils. Many schools recognise that there are barriers which extend beyond academic outcomes and provide support

for these pupils through initiatives such as providing subsidised breakfast clubs spaces or access to uniforms. Is important that governors are aware of how the grant is supporting pupils at your setting to thrive.

- How effectively do leaders share with you what the barriers are for some pupil premium pupils which is preventing them from achieving their potential?
- Does your school's strategy clear outline with the barriers for your pupils are?
- Decisions leaders make regarding how to spend the funding often comes from research backed strategies. It is useful for you to know the rationale as to why school leaders have chosen to implement the actions they have.
- Do you know what leaders are doing to mitigate against barriers?
- Are the barriers the same for all the disadvantaged pupils?
- Has what been set out link to the school's overall development plan?
- How do leaders plan to measure if they have been successful?

It can often be a misconception that if a pupil is pupil premium, they must also be lower attaining. This is not the case for many pupil premium pupils and it is important as governors that you ensure that leaders are aware of the pupils.

- Does the school's pupil premium strategy outline what the school is doing to support higher attaining pupils as well as their lower attaining peers?
- Many of the schools in Telford undertook Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) training in the past two years – was your school one of them?
- If it was, do you know how the principles of RADY have been implemented and sustained?
- If your school did not take part, do you know why?

To further support your understanding of the pupil premium and how it is having an impact on pupils in your school, the EEF has recently updated materials related to the pupil premium and have included a helpful set of discussion prompts to support you as governors.

The recently published annual report of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2023/24 highlights how ensuring a high priority for the inspectorate will be to ensure that the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils receive the best possible education. The report sets out the ambition for schools to ensure that these pupils have 'the best chances and opportunities, whether they're achieving highly and need to be stretched, or struggling and in need of support'.

The final question to consider is – As governors, are you assured that this is the case in your school and how do you know?

Useful websites

[Explore our statistics and data – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK](#)

[EYFS results: Disadvantage gap widens for reception pupils](#)

[House of Commons Library research briefing on The Pupil Premium in England \(2023\)](#)

[Pupil premium: overview – GOV.UK](#)

[The annual report of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2023/24](#)

[Education Endowment Foundation | EEF](#)

¹ [Closing-the-attainment-gap.pdf](#)

Michelle Bishton, Quality Assurance Specialist

Are you looking to recruit Early Years staff for your school nursery?

Telford and Wrekin Council have been selected alongside six other local authorities to take part in a DfE recruitment financial incentive pilot. The pilot is an online live test, was launched by the DfE on 25 November 2024, and will run until 15 March 2025. This pilot has been created to help support early year's providers with recruitment challenges and encourage people in to working in the early years.

You should have received an email from the Department of Education to invite you to take part which would have come from claim.additional.payments.for.teaching@notifications.service.gov.uk

Should you not have received this please let us know by emailing talkingchildcare@telford.gov.uk

Useful information on eligibility:

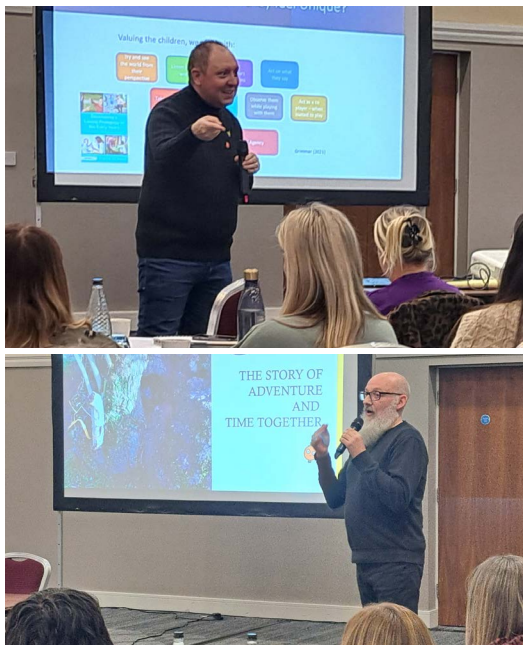
- New employee must not have worked in the Early Years profession within the last 6 months
- Must work directly with children in early years for a minimum of 70%
- Must have completed 6 months permanent employment with new employer to receive incentive.
- A new employee who has worked in EY in the 6 months before they took up their role can receive an incentive if the role was not permanent – i.e. it was voluntary or unpaid, casual and temporary.
- The employee does not need to be qualified to access the incentive.

A useful tool kit can be found here: [Early years financial incentives private beta \(live test\)](#)

This also links to the 'Be part of something big campaign' [Do something big – Early Years Careers](#)

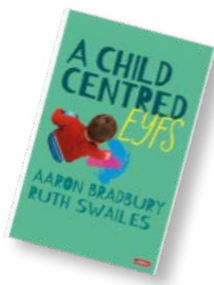
EYFS and wrap around childcare conferences

The Early Years and Childcare Team held two conferences during November, starting with the EYFS Conference on 8 November. The keynote speakers were Aaron Bradbury, Principal Lecturer for Early Childhood, Childhood and Early Years at Nottingham Trent University, and bestselling author Greg Bottrell.



The focus of the conference was 'A Child Centred EYFS'

Aaron's latest book was provided to attendees and is an excellent read for all primary schools with regards to the EYFS and child centred practice



On 9th November, the first Telford Wraparound Childcare Conference took place. This featured Ben Kingston-Hughes from Inspired Children and Rebekah Jackson Reece from the Out of School Alliance.

Both conferences also hosted stalls from organisations including NSPCC, Thrive Stronger Practice Hub, Telford College, Shrewsbury College Group and University of Wolverhampton.

These events were enjoyed by attendees as can be seen in the feedback provided.

Lisa Seymour, Early Years & Childcare Consultant Team Leader

Wraparound childcare programme update Spring 2025

Did you know you can be a part of the Wraparound Childcare programme and access funding?

We have been allocated funding from the DFE to support increasing wraparound childcare places and/or extending hours in Telford wraparound childcare which you would be able to access. Through this programme funding it will support your school to be a part of this initiative and support the costs of offering new places, extending hours and running costs.

This autumn term we have funded 17 wraparound childcare provisions (these range from schools, childminders and PVI settings) to date, who have signed up to be a part of the programme and committed to offer new places and/or extend their current hours.

Some examples of these funded developments that have been supported through the wraparound childcare programme is Teagues Bridge Pre-School a voluntary management committee run childcare setting on a school site, they identified that there was a need for an out of school club, through a consultation carried out with parents. They moved forward and discussed with Teagues Bridge Primary School who were happy for them to open this provision. They applied for funding through the initiative to support the development of the out of school club building up resources and equipment needed to support the development of the provision and also to support covering the additional staffing costs. Now operating and building their numbers they have supported Teagues Bridge Primary school with offering the out of school care to compliment the schools existing breakfast club thus enabling parents to access a full wraparound childcare provision on school site.

John Randall Primary School has implemented a brand new out of school provision, following consultation with parents during the summer term. They identified that there is a need to offer a full wraparound childcare offer to parents to not only meet the needs of working parents of school, but also to support future admissions to John Randall Primary School and to offer a robust wraparound childcare offer.

In September they opened a 30 place out of school club provision. The wraparound capital funding has enabled them to cover setting up the environment which is used by the children



in the out of school club creating comfy spaces to relax and play, additional resources to support tech, toys and resources. Through the wraparound programme funding it also supported covering the staffing costs in setting up the provision while they build numbers, promote and establish this vital childcare provision. Lyndsey Handy childminder extended her wraparound offer and used the funding to create additional spaces for the children to access a dedicated craft and activities room. This increases what she could offer to two local schools and supporting families childcare needs in a flexible approach.

Feedback from children this term from funded wraparound childcare settings:

'I love choosing my own crafts.'

'It's the best, we don't have to tidy up before tea anymore.'

'It's nice and quiet away from the little children.'

'I like listening to music and singing.'

Wraparound childcare can take various forms, each with unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges. The Department for Education (DFE, 2024) recognises several models, including: School-operated provision, Private/voluntary sector provider-led provision, Community cluster model: Multiple schools can pool their resources to offer childcare at a conveniently and accessible centralised community location, Childminders: Registered childminders bringing children to school at the start of the day or collecting children at the end. Childminders can apply to Ofsted to deliver their childcare time from non-domestic premises (for example they could be based on school site). These diversity of models allows for various approaches to meet the specific needs of communities, families, and children, and to fit neatly into the existing childcare provision in the local catchment area of the school.

So why do we provide wraparound childcare?

As well as being a key government aim, wraparound childcare can provide a number of benefits to the child, their parents/carers, and the school more generally.

- **Benefits for pupils** – Research shows that children who participate in wraparound childcare, especially breakfast clubs, are more likely to attend school regularly and show improved academic outcomes – especially in reading and mathematics. Coupled with a 'soft' start to the school day, the provision of a nutritious breakfast can improve children's concentration and cognitive functioning, enabling better engagement with learning. Additionally, after-school clubs have been associated with narrowing the attainment gap, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, by providing additional learning opportunities and fostering positive peer relationships, which are crucial for their overall academic success. Wraparound childcare can foster positive emotional, social, and behavioural development in children.
- **Benefits for parents and carers** – Wraparound Childcare plays a crucial role in supporting working parents/carers. It has the potential to support parents/carers into work, or to increase their working hours knowing their children are cared for in a professional, safe and nurturing environment.
- **Benefits to schools** – Offering wraparound childcare can make a school more attractive to families, having the potential to increase both enrolment, attendance and retention rates. Parents may be more likely to choose a school that provides comprehensive childcare solutions. Providing wraparound childcare can also generate additional revenue for schools. This income can be reinvested into the school, supporting further educational initiatives.

If your school currently offers wraparound childcare (breakfast club and out of school club), looking at expanding your current offer (either more places or extended hours), or looking to create a new provision get in touch with us we would be happy to support you with these developments and also support you in accessing the wraparound childcare programme funding that we have available.

Sign up before the end of March 2025 will guarantee funding till 2026. Contact us by email: wraparoundchildcare@telford.gov.uk



Responding to a need to enable children to aspire, grow and flourish

Like most schools, Meadows Primary School and Nursery in Ketley, is becoming increasingly aware of a growing number of children with significant and complex special educational needs and social, emotional and mental health challenges. While this has been a growing trend at Meadows in recent years, with related actions seeking to support, the particular abundance of need this academic year is so significant, the need to take swift and decisive action to ensure even better opportunities for the children have had to be quickly enabled. Alongside the hard work of his team, the school's Headteacher is now delighted to be able to offer a wealth of new provisions alongside it's only one-year-old 'nurture room' provision – 'The Meadow'. With a 'make do and mend' attitude, alongside some small grants made available children at Meadows can now access a brand new Sensory Den and Rainbow Room.

Meadows have been thrilled to introduce The Sensory Den, a unique and invaluable addition to the school. This dedicated space is designed to support children with sensory processing challenges, providing them with a safe and calming environment where they can explore and regulate their senses.

Benefits of the Sensory Den

- **Calming environment:** The Sensory Den provides a haven for children to relax and de-stress. With calming visuals, gentle sounds, and soothing textures, it helps reduce anxiety and sensory overload.
- **Enhanced focus and attention:** by offering a controlled sensory experience, the sensory den helps improve focus and concentration, enabling children to return to their regular classroom activities feeling refreshed and ready to learn.
- **Self-regulation:** the tools and activities in the sensory den empower children to manage their own sensory needs and emotional states independently, fostering a sense of autonomy and self-confidence.

- **Inclusive and Supportive:** While The Sensory Den is a specialised space, it is an integral part of our inclusive approach. It supports children in building the skills they need to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

The Rainbow Room, a dedicated space within the school designed specifically for children with complex special educational needs, has also been established with the knowledge that children with complex special educational needs often benefit from a more personalised approach to learning. In The Rainbow Room, a smaller classroom setting that allows for individualised attention and tailored support is ensuring each child's unique needs are met, fostering their social, emotional and academic development.

In The Rainbow Room, the priorities are:

- **Individualised learning plans:** Each child in the Rainbow Room receives a customised learning plan that addresses their specific strengths and areas for growth. Skilled educators work closely with each child to ensure they are progressing at their own pace.
- **Specialised resources:** a variety of specialised resources and teaching methods to engage and support our students are utilised. From sensory tools to adaptive technology, we ensure that every child has access to the tools they need to succeed.
- **Inclusive environment:** While The Rainbow Room offers a specialised, smaller setting, we also emphasise inclusion within the broader school community. The goal is to help children build confidence and social skills that will enable them to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Children are a part of our school, attend assemblies when appropriate, participate in whole school events and more. At Meadows, the children know, 'we are a family'.

At Meadows, the team believe that every child has the potential to aspire, grow, and flourish. The brand new Sensory Den, Rainbow Room and Nurture Room are vital parts of our commitment to providing an inclusive and supportive educational experience for all children. Society is changing, and in response, so are we as schools. As with all schools in Telford and Wrekin, we are dedicated to working in partnership with parents, carers and external professionals to ensure that each child receives the best possible education and support. We stand in solidarity with fellow colleagues, thank them for their work and welcome any support colleagues can offer our school!

Meadows Primary School

Adolescent vaccination programme

We are very grateful for the support of schools in hosting vaccination sessions and in enabling communications to parents and young people to facilitate the consent process. Delivering the programme through schools makes it more accessible to pupils, ensures timely protection, reduces inequality and results in higher uptake levels.

Three vaccines are routinely offered to young people as part of a long-standing programme to protect them from serious preventable diseases:

In January 2025 – for pupils in year 9 (and in years 10 and 11 who have missed a previous visit)

- the MenACWY vaccine, which helps protect against meningococcal groups A, C, W and Y, which can cause meningitis and septicaemia
- the 3 in 1 teenage booster (Td/IPV), which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and polio

In April 2025 – for pupils in year 8 (and in years 9, 10 and 11 who have missed a previous visit)

- the HPV vaccine, which helps protect against cancers caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) virus

We will also be delivering a catch up programme to include the HPV, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine to young people if they have missed any doses between January and March 2024.

More ways schools can support the programme

The target uptake for the adolescent programme is 95% and we would like to work together with you to improve the number of pupils being vaccinated across our local authorities.

Schools have an important role to play in promoting the uptake of the immunisation programme, because of the relationship they have with the parents and young people.

Vaccinations are included in the health education curriculum as part of the 'health and prevention' topic at primary and secondary school. It is also a statutory requirement that pupils should be taught the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination so these sessions could be timetabled to take place leading up to the day of vaccinations.

Please use all your communication channels to help promote uptake.

If you would like the School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) Team to deliver a school assembly, attend a parent evening, or provide you with information that can be delivered by the school, please contact us.

Consent

Consent is an essential part of the success of any of our vaccination programmes. We will send a letter to be

distributed to parents/carers with the link to the Econsent platform to each school. We would be very grateful if you could use your communication platforms for the duration the link is open to remind parents to complete a consent form.

The week prior to our visit we will send you the list of pupils who have returned a consent form and would ask that you send paper consent forms and follow up those that have not yet responded.

Consent process for pupils in year 9: If we do not receive a parental or carer consent decision for any of the vaccinations, every effort will be made to contact the parent to seek their verbal consent. If we cannot get hold of the parent we may allow the young person to self-consent to the vaccination on the day (known as "Gillick-competency"). We will only offer this opportunity to young people in year 9 and above, who have read the appropriate vaccination information and who are assessed by a health professional as having enough understanding and competence to fully appreciate what's involved. Only those who are clearly comfortable in receiving the immunisation will have it.

It is therefore worth reminding parents through your communication channels of the importance of completing the consent form they are sent ahead of the scheduled vaccination session and ideally discuss this with their child. However, your support to allow young people to consent to receiving vaccinations within schools is essential. Should you wish to discuss this further please contact the SAIS team.

If parents or carers have responded and refused consent, we will not overrule this decision but help to facilitate a conversation to take place with the young person and their parent.

School briefing session

As we are about to start the Adolescent vaccination and catch up programmes we would like to invite school nominated leads, head teachers and governors to join us in a briefing session to hear more about this programmes and our plans. This is also an opportunity to learn from each other around what makes a successful vaccination session and to answer any questions you may have.

We hope you are able to join us for one of the sessions: Tuesday 7 January 10-11am join the teams meeting (Meeting ID: 346 917 358 91 Passcode: M6mQSd)

Tuesday 7 January 2pm-3pm join the teams meeting (Meeting ID: 326 284 107 713 Passcode: h4is4H)

For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adolescent-vaccination-programme-in-secondary-schools/adolescent-vaccination-programme-briefing-for-secondary-schools>

School Age Immunisation Service 01743 730028
shopcom.immunisationteam@nhs.net
<https://www.shropscommunityhealth.nhs.uk/immunisations>



Football success for St Luke's

Here at St Luke's Catholic Primary School, we are a small school with big talent – especially in girl's football! In the space of the last 18 months, the sports offer and participation in external events has become an integral part of school life earning us the Gold School Games Mark.

Last year, we entered into the Y5/6 girls football competition as part of the TWSSP, and with the

support and coaching from one of our TAs – Mr Cunnington, our girls only went and made it to the finals at the New Bucks Head stadium!

Sadly, we did not win the final but this did not deter the fighting team spirit in our Y5/6 girls. In October, they won the ESFA tournament against other schools in Telford and Wrekin securing themselves a spot in the Shropshire finals.

So watch this space as our girls are unstoppable and the whole St Luke's family are behind you!

Samantha Green, St Luke's Catholic Primary School

Central cluster schools working together to promote anti-vaping

In October 2024, over 800 Year 6 and Year 7 pupils across the Central Cluster, took part in anti-vaping drama workshops run by the fabulous <https://londonbustheatre.co.uk/anti-vaping/>

The aim of these sessions was to ensure that pupils were fully aware of the dangers of vaping. The pupils listened brilliantly and joined in with discussions and role play to help them understand the risks to health from vaping.

The workshops were covered by BBC Radio Shropshire <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3rlr183x2go>

We are so pleased that we could work together as a group of primary and secondary schools to support our pupils to understand the health risks of vaping.

Thank you to all the schools that took part:

- Aqueduct Primary
- Captain Webb Primary
- Dawley Primary
- Grange Park Primary
- Hollinswood Primary
- Holmer Lake Primary
- Ladygrove Primary
- Lightmoor Primary
- Old Park Primary
- Telford Langley
- Randley Primary
- Windmill Primary

Thank you to Councillor Nathan England for supporting with this and visiting one of the sessions!

Holmer Lake Primary School

Improving School readiness for EAL learners in EYFS project

The early years are a crucial period in a child's life, during which they start to explore and understand the world around them. Recognising the importance of this developmental stage, the Multicultural Development Team (MDT) is working in collaboration with the Early Years Team to provide **FREE** support to Early Years settings and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in primary schools. The primary goal of this initiative is to improve school readiness for children who are English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners.

The Multicultural Development Team (MDT) already offers training, support, and guidance for schools and Early Years settings in relation to EAL (English as an Additional Language) and ethnic minority pupils, as well

as on issues of equality and diversity. We also provide specialist EAL assessment and teaching. Many settings have bespoke requests or require additional support, and MDT invites **FREE** direct contact to discuss any concerns and requests.

The aim of the Improving School Readiness for EAL Learners in EYFS Project (ISR) is to work in partnership with Early Years settings and provision in Telford & Wrekin to build the capacity of these settings to support the educational improvement of EAL learners. There is a wide range of **FREE** focused support available through consultancy visits, the CPD program, workshops, and EAL Network meetings.

The Multicultural Development Team (MDT) will provide four CPD training sessions (1.5 hours each) via TEAMS. These sessions will be **FREE** for all settings and staff, with no limit on the number of participants. Each session will be held in the evening and will be open to childminders, nurseries, and EYFS staff in schools.

Course title	Date (all at 6pm – 7.30pm)
Supporting children with English as an additional language in Early Years	Monday, 20 January 2025
Promoting equality of opportunity	Wednesday, 12 March 2025
Embedding cultural diversity	Tuesday, 20 May 2025
Identifying and Dealing with Racist Incidents	Thursday, 26 June 2025

MDT will also provide **FREE** bespoke termly network meetings for EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) via TEAMS. Each meeting will last one hour and will focus on topics highlighted by network members. These meetings will offer opportunities for delegates to raise issues, share good practices, and exchange resources.

Theme	Date (all at 6 – 7pm)
EYFS, and minority ethnic achievement (New framework and updated DfE guidance)	Wednesday, 5 March 2025
Supporting refugee families and vulnerable families in EYFS	Tuesday, 6 May 2025

In addition, MDT will also provide **FREE** in-person practical workshops for EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) staff.

Theme	Date/ Time
Using the EAL assessment framework to baseline children's English language proficiency and to identify next steps in their language development.	Monday, 10 February 2025 1pm – 3pm
Making early reading fun for children with English as an additional language in Early Years	Thursday, 3 April 2025 10am – 12pm
Use of Persona Dolls to tackle discrimination and inequalities	Monday, 12 May 2025 1pm – 3pm
Use of multicultural resources to create diversity within the curriculum and EYFS settings	Wednesday, 2 July 2025 10am – 12noon

Governors may wish to ensure that if their school has EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) provision, they are taking advantage of the **FREE** support available to promote equality, diversity, and cultural understanding.

Multicultural Development Team, email: multicultural.development@telford.gov.uk



Hate crime awareness in Telford and Wrekin schools

National Hate Crime Awareness Week (NHCAW) took place from **October 12-19, 2024**. This is a national initiative aimed at encouraging local authorities, key partners, and communities affected by hate crimes to collaborate in addressing local hate crime issues. The primary goal of NHCAW is to promote the reporting of hate crimes to the police, local councils, and independent third-party organisations, such as charities and schools.

The Multicultural Development Team (MDT) is aware that Hate Crime Awareness (HCA) Week has not previously been highlighted in detail in Telford and Wrekin schools, making it a new event for many schools. The focus for governors is to ensure that their school is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils. **Next year Hate Crime Awareness Week is the 11-18 October 2025.** Governors can begin evaluating equality and diversity provision in their schools now. The MDT has been advocating for a focus on hate crime, particularly racism, and the recording and reporting of racist incidents within schools. This focus is especially important in light of the social unrest and race riots that occurred in the summer of 2024, providing a context for discussion and understanding. Governors may wish to consider the following:

- **Statutory Requirement:** Are Governors making sure that they are complying with the equality legislation? Are Governors regularly informed of any racist incident in their schools? Are Governors informed of any other Hate Crime incidents?
- **Awareness of Hate Crime:** Evaluate the level of awareness among pupils and staff regarding hate crimes in their local area and the impact these crimes have within the school environment.
- **Handling Racism and Hate Crimes:** Assess how issues of racism and other hate crimes are addressed within the school. Are there clear policies and procedures in place?
- **Education and Reporting:** Ensure that pupils understand what constitutes a hate crime and know how to report such incidents. Are there educational projects or workshops that inform pupils about hate crimes and their consequences?

The Multicultural Development Team (MDT) has secured funding from the Local Council and West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

Hate Crime Awareness Week

Challenge it!
Report it! Stop it!



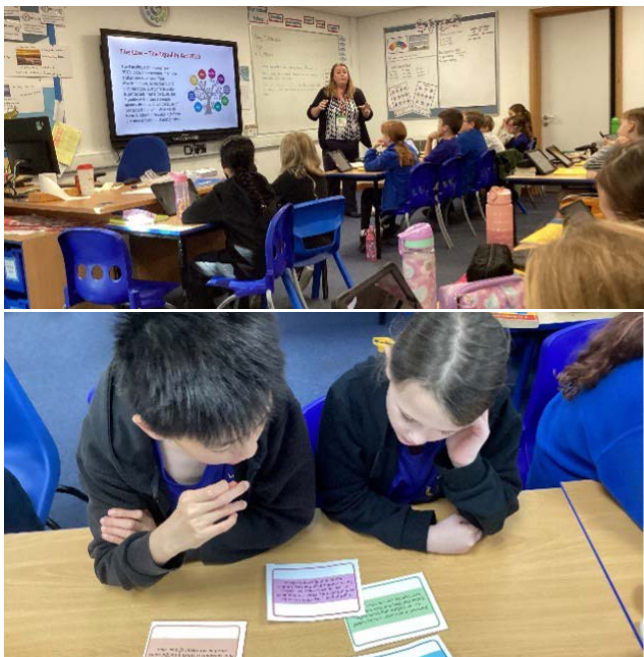
to enhance awareness of hate crimes among pupils in Telford and Wrekin schools. This initiative is designed to ensure that students understand what hate crimes are and recognise their significant impact on individuals and communities. In particular, this initiative focused on how these issues are linked to the curriculum. It emphasised teaching about Protected Characteristics and British Values, and educating pupils on what they can do to combat hate crimes.

The Multicultural Development Team (MDT) continues to deliver **FREE** workshops in primary and secondary schools, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), to a limited number of schools. The aim of these workshops is to focus on teaching about Protected Characteristics and British Values as a starting point of reference for pupils. Building on pupils' existing knowledge, the workshops:

- Highlight the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 that are often affected by hate crimes, with a particular focus on racism and religion.
- Engage children in activities that present real-life scenarios occurring in schools. Pupils discuss whether these scenarios constitute hate crimes (racist or religious incidents).
- Encourage children to share their thoughts about the incidents and discuss what actions they would take in such situations.
- Help children identify what hate crimes can look like both inside and outside of school. Examples include graffiti, physical or verbal abuse, and online abuse, including social media.
- Inform pupils about who they can report hate crimes to, ensuring they know the appropriate channels for seeking help.

The session concludes with a positive focus on combating hate crimes through looking at HCA literature and posters from various police forces nationally and other Local Authorities.

The goal is to empower children with the knowledge and tools to stand against hate crimes and promote a safe, inclusive environment. By participating in these workshops, pupils gain a deeper understanding of hate crimes and learn practical ways to address and prevent them in their communities.



The impact of the Hate Crime Awareness (HCA) workshops, support, and activities has been overwhelmingly positive. Both staff and pupils have shown high levels of engagement with the activities and events. Schools are leveraging these free workshops to deepen their understanding of hate crimes and integrate this knowledge into their teaching of British Values and Protected Characteristics.

Governors may wish to consider the following steps to enhance their school's approach to hate crime awareness:

- Conduct a thorough review of the school's current programs and initiatives related to hate crime awareness.
- Identify any gaps or areas for improvement to ensure comprehensive coverage of the topic.
- Develop strategies to ensure that pupils are well-informed about hate crimes and their impact on the community.
- Incorporate discussions and activities that highlight the importance of recognising and addressing hate crimes.
- Plan to include Hate Crime Awareness Week in the school calendar for the next academic year.
- Organise events and activities during this week to reinforce the importance of combating hate crimes and promoting inclusivity.
- Provide continuous education and support for both staff and pupils on the topic of hate crimes.
- Offer training sessions, workshops, and resources to keep the school community informed and proactive in addressing hate crimes.

By taking these steps, schools can create a safer and more inclusive environment, ensuring that all pupils are aware of the issues related to hate crimes and are equipped to respond effectively.

Multicultural Development Team

email: multicultural.development@telford.gov.uk

Supporting Telford's youth offer: a collaborative vision for the future

As the Youth Development Officer, I am proud to contribute to the development of Telford's Youth Offer, ensuring it remains a vital and responsive resource for our young people. The Youth Offer embodies a shared commitment to empowering youth by providing access to services, opportunities, and support that will enable them to thrive socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.

Working collaboratively with schools, local organisations, parishes, and youth projects, my role focuses on shaping a strategy aligned with the National Youth Agency's statutory guidance. Over the next 12 months, we aim to enhance youth engagement, develop inclusive programmes, and ensure every young person has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

School governors are critical to this vision, bringing leadership and insights that connect schools with the wider community. Together, we can bridge gaps, share information, and ensure our youth services truly reflect the needs of those we serve.

As we look to the future, your ongoing support and collaboration will be instrumental in delivering a youth offer that not only meets statutory duties but also inspires and uplifts young people across Telford and Wrekin.

Richelle Morris, Youth Development Officer,
Telford & Wrekin Council
email: richelle.morris@telford.gov.uk



The School of Sanctuary Award

Telford & Wrekin has welcomed many people over the years who have sought a place of safety. More recently, we have seen this in action with the support the people of Telford have given to refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

We are proud to announce that Randlay Primary and Old Park are the latest schools in Telford & Wrekin to achieve School of Sanctuary status, with support from the Multicultural Development Team (MDT).

Working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary provides schools with a powerful focus for possible school improvement. Governors who are keen to ensure that their school is embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) would be wise to look to Schools of Sanctuary, which ensure that EDI is at the heart of everything they do.

Schools Of Sanctuary – Why Become One?

A School of Sanctuary is a school committed to being a safe and welcoming place for those seeking sanctuary. It educates its students, staff, and wider community about what it means to seek sanctuary and how to support those in need.

Becoming a School of Sanctuary involves creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected. This commitment not only benefits those seeking refuge but also enriches the school community by fostering empathy, understanding, and a sense of global citizenship.

Schools of Sanctuary work to ensure that their policies and practices reflect their dedication to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). By doing so, they provide a powerful example of how educational institutions can lead the way in promoting social justice and human rights.

Becoming a school of sanctuary – an overview

Schools are often at the forefront of receiving and supporting those who are forcibly displaced. While some schools have a long tradition of welcoming students from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds, others may have no experience at all. It is important that all schools pre-emptively prepare for the arrival of young people seeking sanctuary.

Here are the steps to becoming a School of Sanctuary:



1. **Sign an Organisational Pledge:** Commit the school to support the Schools of Sanctuary charter and values by signing a pledge of support.
2. **Connect with Schools of Sanctuary:** Establish connections with the Schools of Sanctuary network to gain insights and support.
3. **Review Existing Practices:** Assess what the school already has in place or has done to date that contributes to and meets the award criteria.
4. **Submit an Application:** Provide an application outlining the school's evidence of having met the criteria for becoming a School of Sanctuary.
5. **Share the Achievement:** Once awarded, share the news on the school website, social media, and through local news outlets to celebrate and promote the achievement.

Becoming a School of Sanctuary involves creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all students, particularly those seeking refuge. This commitment not only benefits the students but also enriches the entire school community by fostering empathy, understanding, and a sense of global citizenship.

Schools of sanctuary criteria

The Schools of Sanctuary criteria are structured around three overarching processes: LEARN, EMBED, and SHARE.

1. **LEARN:** Understand what it means to seek sanctuary and the issues surrounding people who are seeking sanctuary. Learn how to support those seeking sanctuary within the school. This involves educating students, staff, and the wider school community about the challenges faced by





refugees and asylum seekers, and fostering empathy and understanding.

2. **EMBED:** Integrate the concepts of welcome, safety, and inclusion into the fabric of the school. This means making these values a core part of the school's ethos and daily practices. Schools should celebrate their achievements in creating a welcoming environment and ensure that these principles are reflected in their policies, curriculum, and interactions.
3. **SHARE:** Promote and share the values and activities of the School of Sanctuary across the entire school community, including students, their families, and the local community. This can be done through events, social media, newsletters, and partnerships with local organisations. Sharing these efforts helps to build a supportive network and encourages others to adopt similar practices.

How long does it take?

Every school is different, and their journey to becoming a School of Sanctuary is unique – so there is no standard or expected length of time to complete the process. The time it takes to become a School of Sanctuary can vary significantly depending on the school's starting point and level of experience with sanctuary-related activities. Some schools may already have met many of the criteria and may only need to document and share their work with the Schools of Sanctuary for recognition. Other schools may have significant learning to do about sanctuary issues and may need more time to embed best practices. Schools without pupils from a sanctuary-seeking background will have less direct experience and will want to spend more time learning about asylum and migration in the UK context. In general, it is recommended that schools engage with the program for at least a full academic year to fully embed the Sanctuary Principles before requesting a monitoring visit. Governors have a key role to play in School of Sanctuary application and are involved in the process all the way through. Governors have commented that it really helps them realise to fully appreciate the



hard work that gone into ensuring their school was open, welcoming and supportive and they themselves gained a lot by going through this process with staff.

If you are interested in more information about what it means to be a School of Sanctuary, you can visit the official webpage or contact the Multicultural Development Team (MDT) directly at:

Multicultural Development Team (MDT),

email: multicultural.development@telford.gov.uk

telephone: 01952 380828

website: <https://www.mdt.taw.org.uk>

School of Sanctuary

- <https://citysanctuary.org>
- <https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org>
- robert.douglas@shropshiresupportsrefugees.co.uk
- amanda.jones@shropshiresupportsrefugees.co.uk

Music in school – Is your provision up to scratch?

Recent remarks from the Prime Minister and DfE strongly suggest a growing understanding of the importance of the arts, and particularly music, in a child's education. This will be reflected in the emphasis placed on these subjects in future expectations of schools.



Students at William Reynolds receiving their Silver award alongside their headteacher.

The National Plan for Music The power of music to change lives: a national plan for music education (DfE 2022) shows the priorities as follows

- **Timetabled curriculum music of at least one hour each week of the school year for key stages 1-3.**
- **Access to lessons across a range of instruments, and voice.**
- **A school choir and/or vocal ensemble.**
- **Space for rehearsals and individual practice.**
- **A termly school performance.**
- **Opportunity to enjoy live performance at least once a year.**



Music hubs and services are tasked with supporting schools to improve their music offer, both in terms of the curriculum and the extra-curricular or co-curricular opportunities given to the children.

In Telford & Wrekin, our first step for any school wanting to improve their offer is a **Music Provision Audit**. This document allows school leaders to assess their current position, usually alongside a member of the Telford & Wrekin Music team as a 'critical friend'. Completion of this exercise almost always throws up some clear areas for improvement (as well as much to celebrate). These improvement areas form the basis of the school's Music Development Plan (MDP) Another requirement of the National Plan.

As part of **The Music Partnership**, the hub which covers Telford, Stoke, Staffordshire and Shropshire we are able to give schools an **Award for Music Provision Excellence** ranging from Copper to Platinum, based on their meeting a set of criteria laid out in the audit document. Recent recipients include:

- William Reynolds – Silver
- Short Wood – Silver
- St Patrick's – Silver
- St George's – Gold

If you think a free audit and award assessment for your school would be helpful, please email Telford and Wrekin Music: telford.music@telford.gov.uk or telephone: 01952 380981.

We'll be happy to help!

Sign up to the Healthy Telford Pledge – Be a role model and “Do it for” your school!

The Healthy Telford pledge

If you're striving for a healthier school, why not sign up to the Healthy Telford pledge – a 12 week email campaign to help you make small, simple changes to your lifestyle. This will in turn benefit your own and your school's health and wellbeing.

Who or what will you “Do it For”?

Whether it's for your future self, your loved ones, or even your school, the “Do it For” campaign focuses on creating healthier habits around a range of lifestyle topics and supports you to find the motivation and a realistic focus

for you to achieve your aim. Once you have signed up individually, you could promote and share the resources to support your school to become a healthy, positive environment for teachers, support staff, children and parents. This could even be your opportunity to implement a school health and wellbeing policy or development plan.

What will your pledge be?

When you join the campaign, you'll be asked to make a pledge – anything from cooking more homemade meals, to moving more, or starting your journey to quit smoking. The pledge helps to keep you accountable to the changes you want to make and gives you something to aim for.

Over the 12 weeks, you'll receive bitesize tips on a range of topics including food portions, being active, reducing alcohol intake and more, as well as weekly challenges to help you form new lifestyle habits.

[Visit the Healthy Telford blog for further advice and information](#) or [sign up here](#)



Making decisions by email

In maintained schools governors cannot make decisions by email. It is not allowed under the law.

In academy trusts the trustees can pass written resolutions under the model articles of association, which could be passed by email. Written resolutions of trustees must be unanimous.

The model articles also allow academy trust members to pass written resolutions. Written resolutions of members do not need to be unanimous. Whether local governors can pass written resolutions will depend on rules set by your own trust.

Decisions by email banned in maintained schools

The law for maintained schools says that decisions are made by a majority of the votes of governors present at a meeting.

“Every question to be decided at a meeting of the governing body is to be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors present and voting on the question.”

[Roles, Procedures and Allowances \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)

DfE advice on this law explains that governors are not able to vote in advance of a meeting because they must be present to vote. So voting by email, proxy voting or any method of voting outside of meetings is not possible.

“Members of the board and its committees must be present in a meeting to vote, but they may be present ‘virtually’.”

“The requirement to be present at the meeting means that proxy voting or voting in advance of a meeting is not permitted.”

“It is important that governors are present to hear and engage in the debate before casting their vote.”

[The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2013 Departmental Advice](#)

The DfE says that maintained school governors are not allowed to take decisions by email because new information may be heard at the meeting and the discussion could change a governor’s point of view.

If a governor is not present to hear that discussion, either in person or [virtually](#), they would be casting an ill-informed vote.

This means that maintained school governors cannot make any decisions via email. They cannot approve policies by email. They can’t approve the budget by email. They can’t appoint new governors by email and they can’t take any other board or committee decision by email.

If a quick decision needs to be made in a maintained school then an [extraordinary meeting](#) can be called. In serious situations the chair may be able to use [chair’s action](#). Governors can attend and vote [virtually](#), as long as they are attending in real time.

The DfE confirmed that decision-making by email is not possible, telling me that voting must take place during the meeting.

“We have examined the legislation: Roles, Procedures and Allowances (England) Regulations 2013 and the related guidance and we are clear that the department’s position is that voting must take place during the meeting.”

DfE Governance Team

The NGA agreed. The NGA Head of Advice explained that voting must take place “in the present” and cannot occur before or after the meeting.

“Our interpretation of the Roles, Procedures and Allowances 2013 Regulations is that the governor must be present.”

“They do not have to be physically present as regulations also contain the possibility for the governing board to approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings including, but not limited to telephone or video conference.”

“However, our interpretation is that governors must be voting ‘in the present’, either whilst being physically present at the meeting or by joining via telephone or video conference.”

“Although it is possible for academy trust boards to make decisions via written resolutions, the same option is not available to maintained school governing boards.”

Head of Advice,
[National Governance Association](#)

Professional development for governors



Spring Term 2025			
GO 504	Taking the Chair - part 1	Tuesday, January 21, 2025	4.30pm to 6.30pm
SG 103	Safeguarding Induction Training for Governors	Wednesday, January 22, 2025	9.30am to 2pm
CPD 609	Online Safety – a Safeguarding Responsibility	Thursday, January 23, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
HR Course	Accredited Safer Recruitment Training	Thursday, January 30, 2025	9am to 4.30pm
GO 504	Taking the Chair - part 2	Tuesday, February 04, 2025	4.30pm to 6.30pm
EY 009	Meeting the Statutory Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the EYFS	Wednesday, February 05, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
GO 603	The Importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage in Schools	Thursday, February 06, 2025	5.30pm to 7pm
HR Course	Managing Employee Capability (Performance Management)	Thursday, February 13, 2025	2pm to 5pm
SG 101	Raising Awareness of Prevent	Thursday, February 13, 2025	1pm to 2.30pm
GO 504	Taking the Chair - part 3	Tuesday, February 25, 2025	4.30pm to 6.30pm
GO 502	Induction Training for New Governors	Wednesday, February 26, 2025	9.30am to 3.30pm
SG 106	Designated Safeguarding Leads' and Safeguarding Governors' Termly Update	Thursday, February 27, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
GO 503	Designated Teachers & Governors for Children in Care Network (compulsory school age)	Wednesday, March 05, 2025	3.45pm to 5.15pm
SG 206	Safeguarding Refresher Training for Governors	Wednesday, March 05, 2025	5.30pm to 7.30pm
HR Course	Accredited Safer Recruitment Training	Thursday, March 06, 2025	9am to 4.30pm
GO 504	Taking the Chair - part 4	Tuesday, March 11, 2025	4.30pm to 6.30pm
PSS 028	Restorative Practice	Tuesday, March 11, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
SG 101	Raising Awareness of Prevent	Thursday, March 20, 2025	3.30pm to 5pm
SG 109	Prevent Duty Requirements for Education Settings Completing the Annual Risk Assessment using the DFE template to support your audit	Tuesday, March 25, 2025	3.30pm to 5pm
HR Course	Safer Recruitment Administration	Wednesday, April 02, 2025	3pm to 5pm

Professional development for governors continued



Summer Term 2025			
GO 508	Understanding School Finance	Tuesday, April 29, 2025	9.15am to 12noon
SG 101	Raising Awareness of Prevent	Wednesday, May 07, 2025	9.30am to 11am
HR Course	Accredited Safer Recruitment Training	Thursday, May 15, 2025	9am to 4.30pm
CPD 721	Pupil Premium Network Meeting	Tuesday, May 20, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
SG 103	Safeguarding Induction Training for governors - part 1	Wednesday, May 21, 2025	5.30pm to 7.30pm
GO 603	The Importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage in Schools	Thursday, May 22, 2025	5.30pm to 7pm
SG 101	Raising Awareness of Prevent	Wednesday, June 04, 2025	1pm to 2.30pm
CPD 620	Virtual School Conference for Designated Teachers and Nominated governors for Children in Care	Friday, June 06, 2025	All day - TBC
LSAT 514	AET Making Sense of Autism – an introduction to Autism for governors	Thursday, June 12, 2025	6pm to 7.30pm
SG 103	Safeguarding Induction Training for governors - part 2	Wednesday, June 18, 2025	5.30pm to 7.30pm
SG 104	governors' Responsibilities for Exclusions	Thursday, June 19, 2025	5pm to 7pm
GO 502	Induction Training for New governors	Wednesday, June 25, 2025	9.30am to 3.30pm
SG 106	Designated Safeguarding Leads' and Safeguarding governors' Termly Update	Wednesday, June 25, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm
CPD 721	Pupil Premium Network Meeting	Tuesday, July 08, 2025	4pm to 5.30pm

For further information, including the cost of courses, please contact cpdschoolimprovement@telford.gov.uk

Course bookings need to be made through your school.

Please note: Dates and times may be subject to change - the latest copy of the timetable of CPD courses can be found on the Telford Education Services site <http://www.telfordeducationalservices.co.uk/school-performance-team/schoolperformancedocs>

Where a course is delivered virtually rather than face to face a lower delegate fee will be charged to reflect any savings made on venue costs.

HR courses to be booked through Ollie or via email HRhelpdesk@telford.gov.uk

Contact us...

To contact School Governance, please email schoolgovernance@telford.gov.uk or telephone **01952 380808**