Headteacher / Schools Briefing

Waltham Forest

Monday 19 October 2026

Mary Jarrett | Corporate Director for Education

Welcome to the first Heads Briefing for this academic year

Feedback about communications:

- Hub now up-dated regularly
- Meetings with Primary and Secondary Chairs
- Regular attendance at Heads meetings.
- Schools and Colleges Newsletter
- Early Years Newsletter
- SEND Newsletter

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Staffing changes within the Education Service

- Kate Howell, Assistant Director SEND & Commissioning
- Alex Bowman, Head of SEND Commissioning (responsible for SB and Transport)
- Lewis Teasdale, Interim Head of Service for Statutory SEND
- Ric Euteneuer- Head of Place Planning and Admissions
- Fern Edwards – Head of Education Operations and Payments
- Matthew Fisk- SEND Reform Lead

- Holly Hutchins – Early Learning & Inclusion Strategic Lead
- Temi Adeniji- Education Enrichment & Childcare Operations Manager
- Vira Yurchenko- DSG Payments Manager
- Alex Stainton – Neurodiversity Specialist Support Lead
- Suki Glendining – Elective Home Education Lead
- Anthony Jackson – Governor Services Manager

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Education Strategy: Update

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Deborah Brooks | Education Transformation Lead

Education Strategy: Draft Launch

Following a period of engagement with school leaders, stakeholders, education staff and pupils we are planning to consult on a draft education strategy that lays out Waltham Forest's ambition for the next five years (2027-31)

The strategy was led and developed by the Education Strategy Partnership Board that is made up of representatives from across the education sector and partners

It involved consultation with more than **350 pupils**, school leaders and stakeholders. Further consultation with parents and carers is planned.

Thank you to everyone who took part, especially the Steering Group!



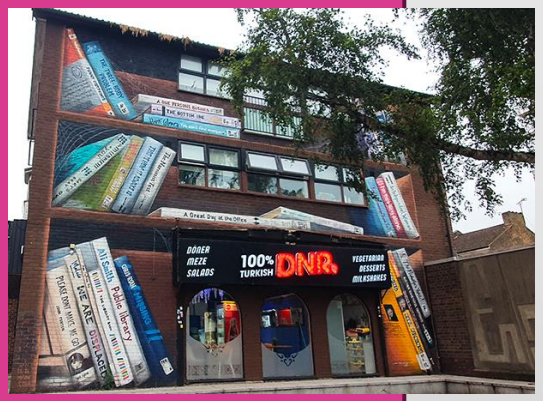
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Find your path, Shape your Future

This Strategy is written with and for the children and young people of Waltham Forest. We want to create the conditions that mean:



I Belong Here
My Voice Matters Here
I Thrive Here
I Learn Here
I am Safe Here
I am well prepared for life in the modern world





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Our Priorities



All Waltham Forest children and young people feel that they belong, their voices are heard and that they are healthy and safe.

All Waltham Forest children and young people are well-prepared for adulthood and achieve their potential.

Waltham Forest has a strong, effective, collaborative and sustainable Education workforce.

We will work together to ensure our settings are financially sustainable, and we make effective use of resources.

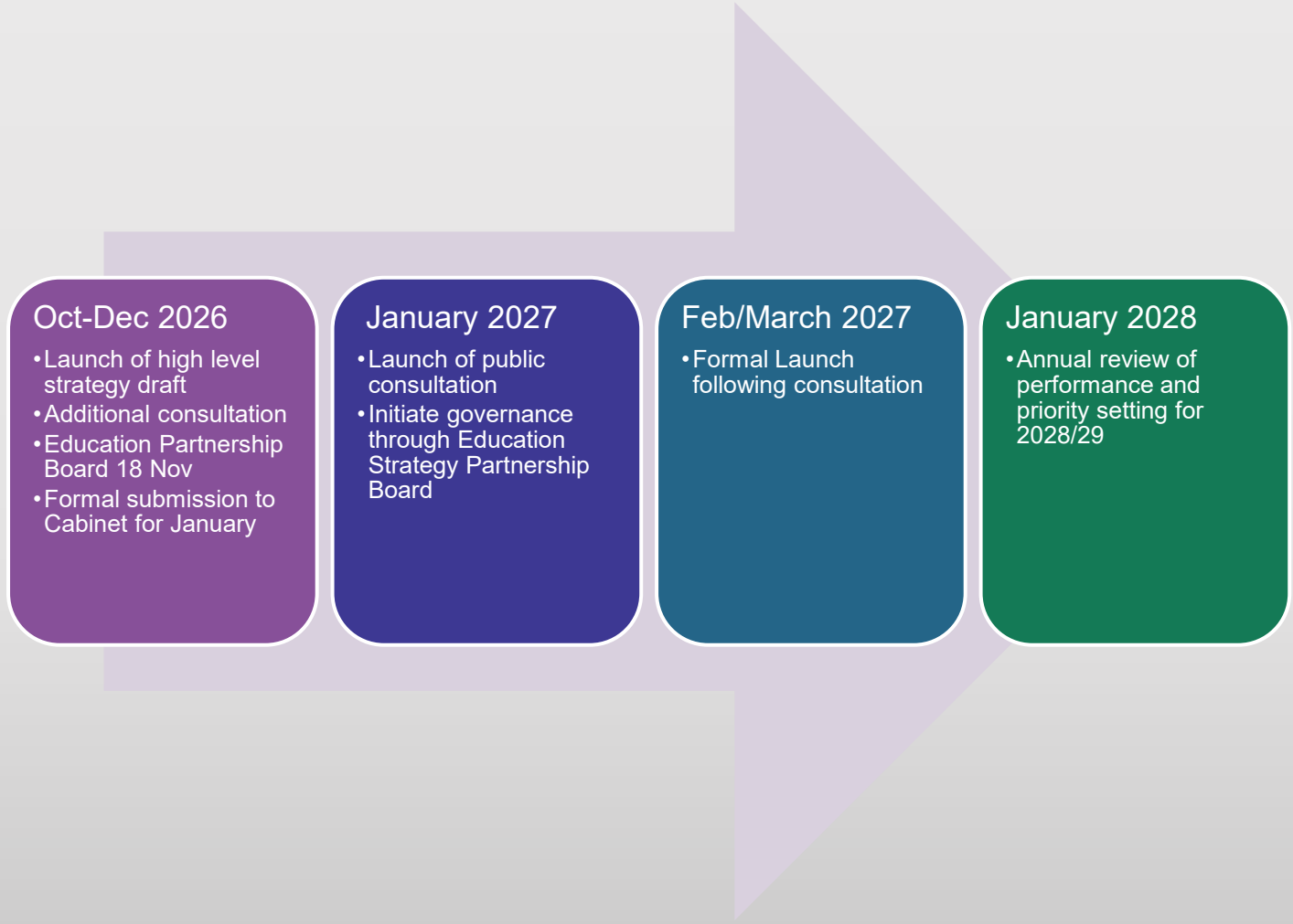
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Next Steps

Give us your views on the draft (will be circulated again with this slide pack) by completing this survey

And/Or

Join the **Steering Group** that will reconvene after Half Term. Email deborah.brooks@walthamforest.gov.uk if you would like to join.
Thank you!



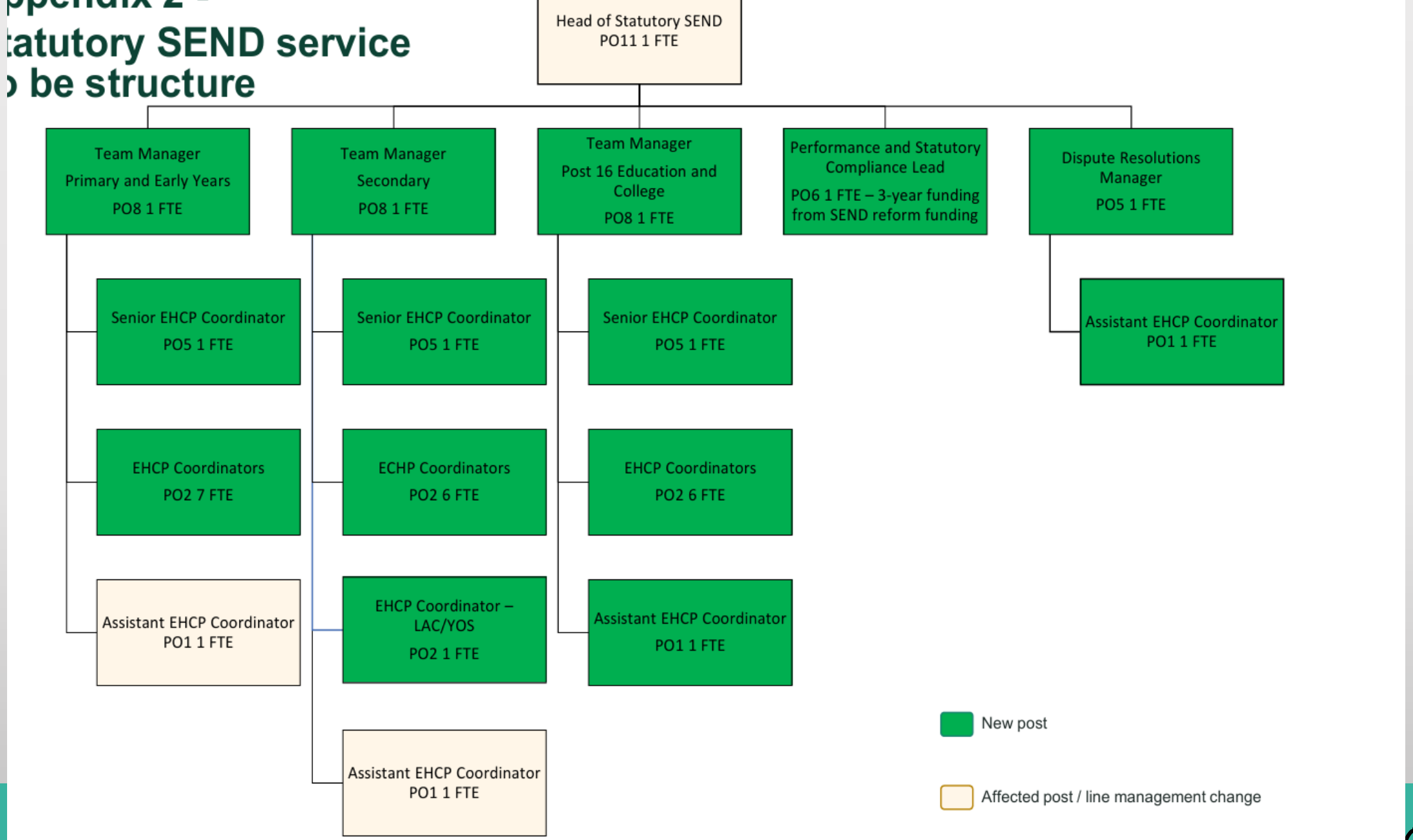
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SEND Service update

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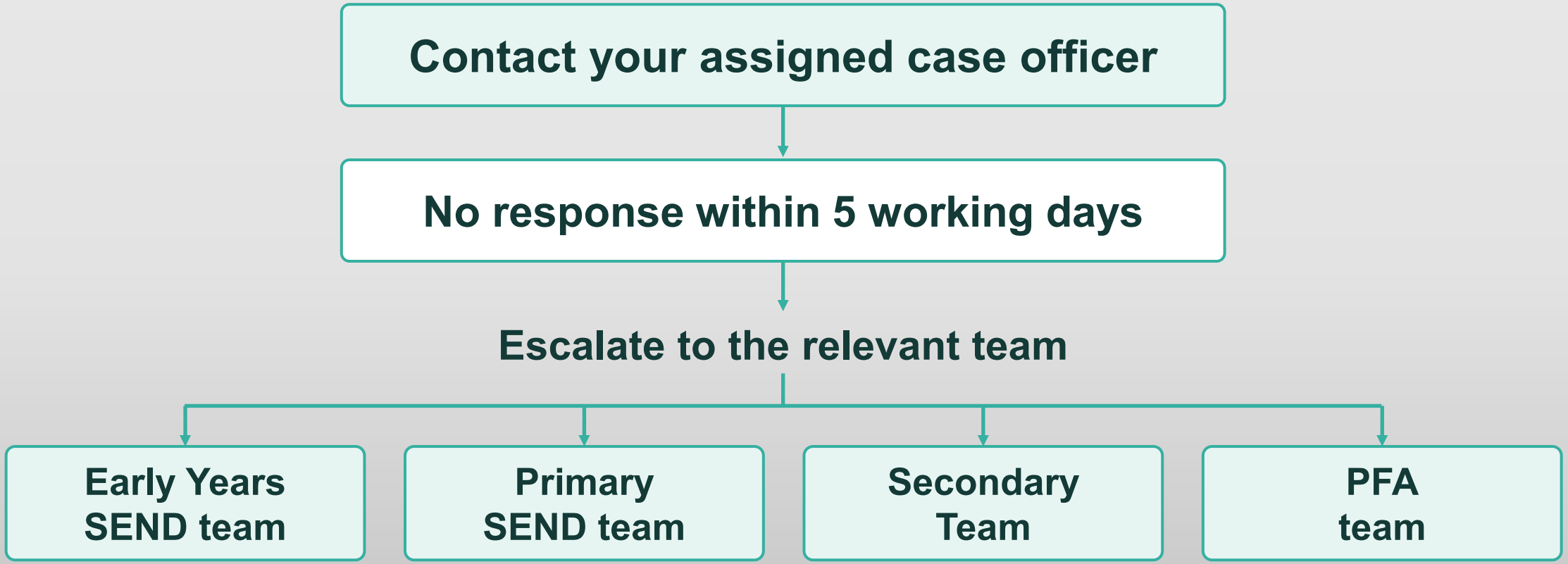
Kate Howell | Assistant Director, SEND & Commissioning

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tatutory SEND service
o be structure



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SEND contact and escalation flow



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Contacts

- **Early Years SEND Team –** for children aged 0-5 years and those attending early years settings

Email: SEND.EarlyYears@walthamforest.gov.uk

- **Primary SEND –** For children attending primary school (reception to Year 6)

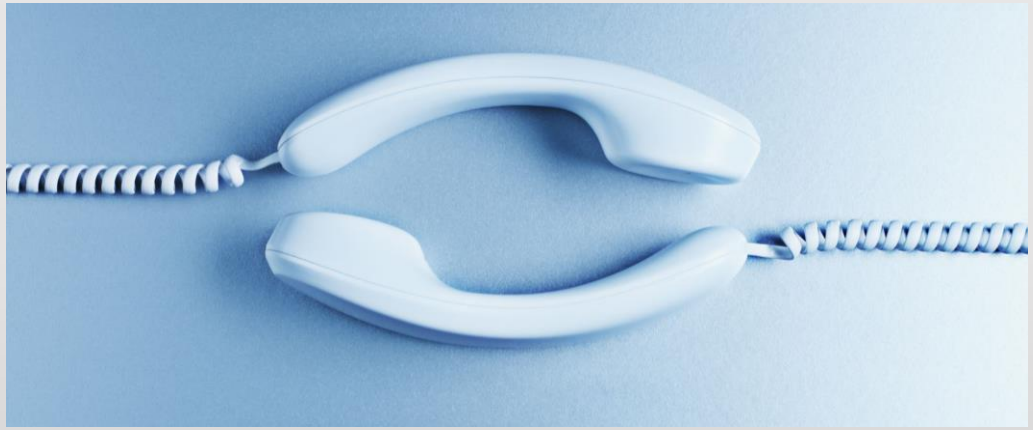
Email: SEND.PrimaryYears@walthamforest.gov.uk

- **Secondary SEND Team –** for young people attending secondary school (Year 7-11)

Email: SEND.SecondaryYears@walthamforest.gov.uk

- **Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) Team –** for young people aged 14-25 including post 16 for education, transition planning, further education, employment, training, independent living, and adulthood outcomes. –

Email: SEND.PFA@walthamforest.gov.uk



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Waltham Forest SEND Reform Programme

Kate Howell | Assistant Director, SEND & Commissioning

Key Feature: Experts at Hand



Experts at Hand is the delivery mechanism for SEND Reforms, developing a group of professionals that can provide inclusion support to schools, children and young people and their families. The current focus is to recruit to the team, establish clear referral routes and design a sustainable offer.



This provision includes speech and language, educational psychology, occupational therapy and advisory teaching for education settings. Specialist support will be available earlier and more consistently in mainstream settings, without children needing a diagnosis or an EHCP to receive support. Specialists will work alongside education staff to build capability and support children in their everyday learning environment.



Support could include small group interventions, consultation and advice for teachers and SENCO's, workforce training and taking a whole-school approach.



To deliver this new offer, a programme of stakeholder engagement and a new implementation plan is being put in place with support from experts in Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) which will be the methodology used to rollout speech and language support.

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Experts at Hand

Earlier support for children and young people in mainstream settings



Helping children and young people get the right support earlier

What is Experts at Hand?

Experts at Hand is a new programme being introduced as part of the Government's wider reforms to the SEND system. It aims to help children and young people get the right support earlier, within their mainstream setting, before they need an EHCP.



Where will it be available?

Experts at Hand will work across **mainstream early years settings, mainstream schools** and **mainstream colleges** in Waltham Forest.



Who is it for?

It is for children and young people who are receiving SEN Support, or where there are early concerns about additional needs.

A diagnosis is not needed to get support through Experts at Hand.



What support will be available?

Mainstream settings will be able to access advice and support from specialist professionals, including:

- **Educational Psychologists**
- **Occupational Therapists**
- **Speech and Language Therapists**
- **Specialist Teachers**

They may observe a child or young person, work with staff and families, suggest practical strategies and adjustments, and help settings put the right SEN Support in place.

What is the aim?

- ✓ **To provide earlier help and prevent needs from becoming bigger.**
- ✓ **To support settings to identify and understand needs early.**
- ✓ **To build staff knowledge, skills and confidence.**
- ✓ **To help put effective SEN Support in place.**
- ✓ **To work in partnership with families.**

What Experts at Hand is not

- ✗ **It is not for children and young people who already have an EHCP.**
- ✗ **It does not provide the individual provision written into an EHCP.**
- ✗ **It does not replace existing specialist services.**

Children and young people who already have an EHCP should continue to receive the provision set out in their plan. They may, however, benefit indirectly from Experts at Hand, for example through additional training and support provided to staff in their school or setting.



Additional specialist capacity

Additional specialist staff are being recruited specifically for Experts at Hand. This means the programme is intended to increase capacity and provide earlier support, rather than taking specialists away from children and young people who already receive support through an EHCP.



Working together

The Council, Waltham Forest Parent Forum, Education Settings and NELFT are working closely together to shape how Experts at Hand will work locally. Parents have told us they want help to be available earlier, for families and children to be listened to, and for specialist advice to result in real changes and support in their setting. We will continue to involve parents / carers and children and young people as the programme develops.

Find out more

Scan the QR to read more about Experts at Hand on the Government's website or visit bit.ly/wfsendreform

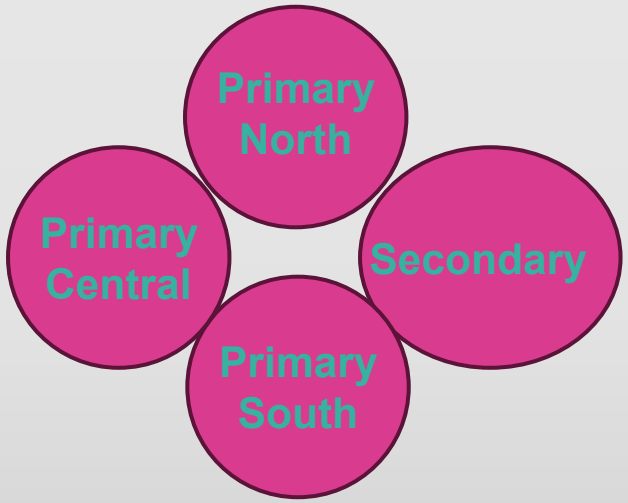
NELFT NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

WALTHAM FOREST PARENT FORUM

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What Experts at Hand will look like for mainstream settings

A Cluster Model



- Support from an Inclusion Support Partner
- Peer-led support
- Localised connections, including to Family Hub

Early Support

Settings will be able to work with experts to deliver support in settings at early points.

- Speech & Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Educational Psychology
- Advisory Teaching

Training

School staff will receive CPD, as well as advice and training to support inclusion.

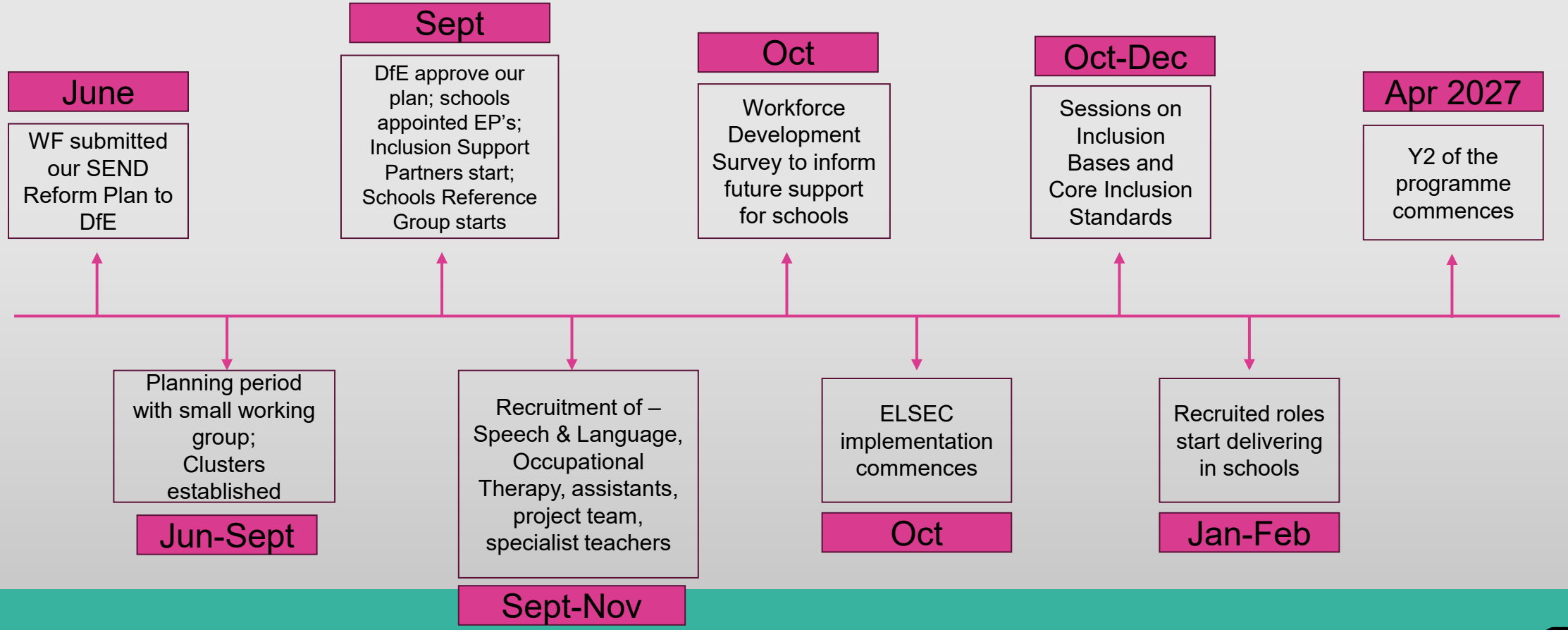
'Experts' won't just go in to fix a problem but will equip settings with the tools to continue good practice themselves.

Schools, parents / carers and children and young people should all feed into what the training offer should be.

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What does the SEND Reform timeline look like?

The SEND Reform programme runs for three years until 2029. From September 2029, new statutory duties and legal changes take effect. This programme will prepare schools, families and wider services for future changes and put in place earlier support and intervention.



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What support is there for schools now?

HEP are supporting Experts at Hand delivery through:

Inclusion Core Standards
Work is underway to review Inclusion Core Standards and distribute booklets to schools

Cluster Groups
Cluster groups and Inclusion Support Partners are now in place to support peer learning and local alignment

SENCO Forum
Quarterly meetings in place: 14 October, 10 February 2027, 26 May 2027

Verbo is an online platform with resources, CPD, screeners and more focused on speech, language and communication support that all schools can access.

Your setting should already be using Verbo, and it can help identify need earlier and give you practical tools to support children within their learning environment.

Waltham Forest EP Service & Advisory Teachers

Each school will already have been assigned an EP. Mainstream schools will receive termly core planning meetings / sessions (Primary = 2 / Secondary = 3).
Once other support (SLT / OT) is in place they will also join these meetings.
The Advisory Teaching service has now come in-house and is available for school training & support.

We also have a Schools Reference Group with school leaders advising on the direction of Experts at Hand. If you would like to join, please get in touch.

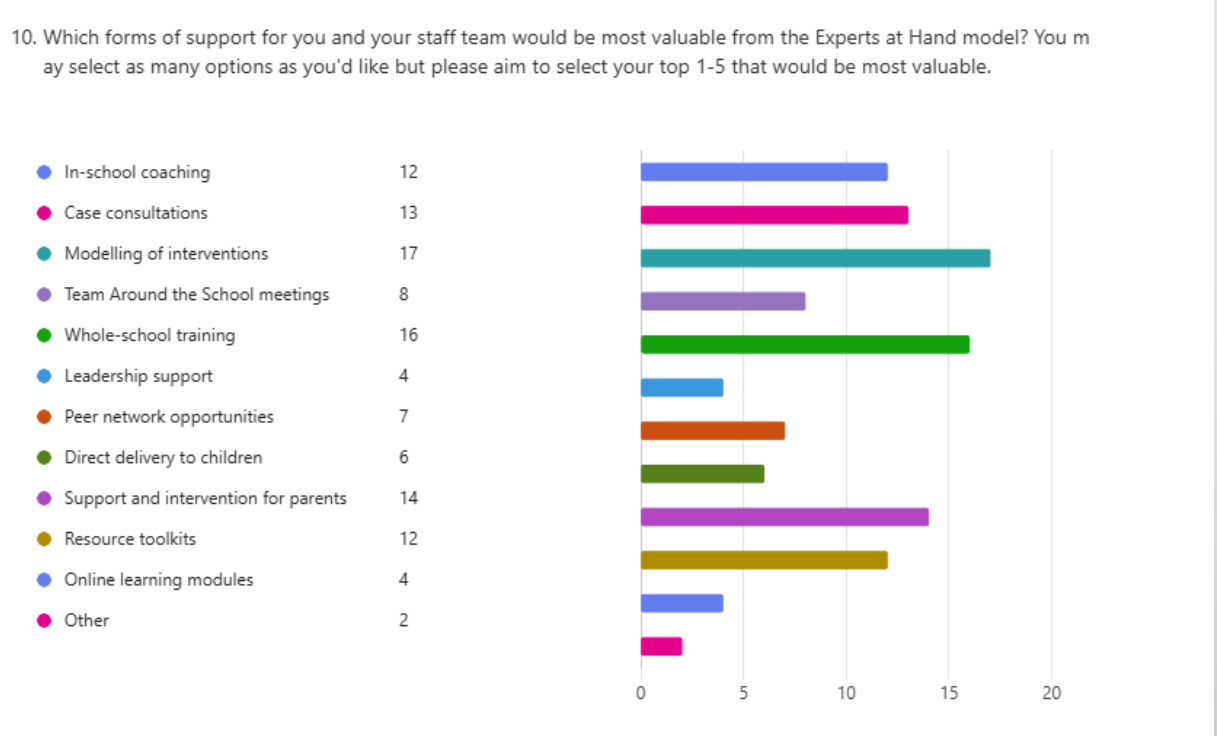
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Workforce Development Survey – some initial findings

The survey is open until Monday 19 October 2026 so please complete it if you haven't already. So far mostly primary schools have responded so we especially want to hear from Secondary schools.

How confident are staff in your setting in identifying and managing the following areas?

Topic	***Avg. Rating*** (out of 10)
Supporting pupils with Autism	7.11
Speech, language and communication needs	6.59
Social, emotional and mental health needs	6.56
Cognition and learning needs	7.11
Sensory and/or physical needs	6.48
Physical disability and accessibility needs	6.44
Complex or multiple needs	5.15



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45–60 MINUTE INTERACTIVE SESSION

Protecting your school

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Prevent · Detect · Respond

Practical fraud awareness for Head Teachers and School Business Managers

Jamie Branch | Internal Audit & Anti-Fraud Manager

Moving from findings to action

Five outcomes for every school

UNDERSTAND

What the Health Check tells us

RECOGNISE

Fraud, bribery and corruption risks

TEST

Whether controls work

RESPOND

What to do when concerns emerge

IMPLEMENT

Strategy, Work Plan and actions

Outcome: a clear, owned and reviewable school action plan

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The clearest gaps are strategy, response and awareness

Schools Anti-Fraud Health Check · 35 responses

95% response rate

35 of 37 surveys returned

6 of 35 incidents

fraud, bribery or corruption

3 of 6 reported onward

CAFT, Police or Action Fraud

48% no clear response plan

34% no plan · 14% unsure

41% weak / unknown strategy

32% weak · 9% unsure

54% expense time-limit gap

none in place or not known

A policy that is not understood, used or evidenced does not provide reliable assurance.

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Build on the good practice already in place

The Health Check also identified a positive foundation

RECRUITMENT

DBS checks, employment references and right-to-work evidence widely in place

PAYROLL

Segregation of duties and independent sign-off commonly reported

EXPENSES

Headteacher expenses commonly subject to governor approval

ASSETS

Many schools maintain asset registers and carry out physical checks

The next step is consistency: make controls understood, evidenced and routinely reviewed.

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Fraud, bribery and corruption can sit inside routine processes

Watch for access, pressure, conflicts, influence and weak independent review

PAYROLL & STAFFING

Ghost staff · false overtime · unauthorised pay changes

PROCUREMENT

Split purchases · false invoices · collusion · favouritism

PAYMENTS

Supplier changes · duplicate invoices · mandate fraud

EXPENSES & CARDS

Late claims · weak receipts · personal spend

ASSETS

Theft · private use · missing stock

CONDUCT

Conflicts · gifts and hospitality · secondary employment

Discuss: which risk is most relevant to your school, and which control would detect it?

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Scenario 1: urgent supplier bank-detail change

An established supplier emails immediately before the payment run

THE EMAIL LOOKS GENUINE

- Uses usual branding
- Invoice marked overdue
- Claims the bank account has changed
- Requests immediate confidential action

VOTE BEFORE THE DEBRIEF

A Update the details

B Reply for confirmation

C Use trusted contact details

D Ask a colleague to review

Does the procedure require independent verification, or do you simply hope staff would do it?

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Controls must be accessible, understood and evidenced

Test policy, process, people, evidence and independent review



Is it documented and current?

Can a new budget holder find it?

Is the correct route clear?

Are approvals and exceptions retained?

Who independently reviews it?

PROCUREMENT CHECK

Could a new budget holder find the procedure, select the correct route and understand when competition or additional approval is required?

EXCEPTION CHECK

Are departures from normal procedures justified, authorised and supported by a retained audit trail?

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When something looks wrong: pause, preserve and report

Act within authority and avoid an informal investigation

PAUSE

Pause a related transaction or activity only where authorised and safe

Do not confront or tip off

PRESERVE

Secure emails, invoices, approvals and records

Keep originals and restrict circulation

REPORT

Use the school route and seek specialist advice

Escalate promptly and record actions

Corporate Anti-Fraud Team | fraud@walthamforest.gov.uk | 0300 003 1099

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Your Fraud Strategy should be a working management tool

Six questions to test whether the strategy is usable

RISK

What fraud could affect this school?

PREVENT

Which controls reduce the risks?

DETECT

How will abnormal activity be identified?

REPORT

How can staff raise a concern?

OWN

Who is accountable for each action?

LEARN

How are incidents and weaknesses addressed?

Draft School Fraud Strategy template available in the Schools Hub · see Appendix A

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The annual Fraud Work Plan turns strategy into action

Include clear reactive fraud and reporting arrangements

WHY THIS MATTERS

34% had no documented response plan

14% were unsure whether one existed

ACTION

What will be done?

OWNER

Who is responsible?

TIMESCALE

When and how often?

EVIDENCE

How is completion shown?

REPORTING

Who is contacted?

LEARNING

What changes after an incident?

The Work Plan records preventative and detective controls, accountability and review. It should also make reporting and escalation clear.

Draft Schools Fraud Work Plan available in the Schools Hub · see Appendix B

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Scenario 2: overtime just below the approval threshold

A pattern is spotted alongside a possible relationship conflict

WHAT HAS BEEN NOTICED

A staff member repeatedly claims overtime just below the level requiring additional approval.

The usual approver is a close friend of the employee.

No allegation has been made.

RISK

What concerns arise?

CONTROL

Which controls should operate?

EVIDENCE

What should be preserved?

ESCALATION

When should advice be sought?

A red flag is not proof. Assess objectively, preserve information and escalate appropriately.

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Fraud awareness must reach the people operating key controls

Build awareness into induction, role-based training and refreshers

INDUCTION

Include fraud, bribery, corruption, reporting routes and expected conduct

ROLE-BASED

Prioritise finance, payroll, procurement, recruitment, cards, suppliers and assets

REFRESH

Repeat periodically and respond to changing risks, incidents and lessons

EVIDENCE

Record attendees, date, content delivered and planned refresher date

Ask: would a new employee know what a fraud concern looks like and exactly where to report it?

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Your school action checklist

Select priority gaps and assign an owner and review date

STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE

Strategy current
Fraud risks documented
Governor oversight scheduled
Named owner

PREVENTION & DETECTION

Supplier changes verified
Procurement accessible
Conflicts and gifts declared
Assets and payroll checked

AWARENESS & REPORTING

Induction includes awareness
Role-based refreshers planned
Whistleblowing route clear
CAFT contact accessible

RESPONSE & LEARNING

Fraud Work Plan current
Evidence handling clear
Escalation roles defined
Lessons improve controls

Specific Health Check action: set and communicate a time limit for expense claims, with an approval route for exceptional late claims.

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Appendix A: draft School Fraud Strategy template

Editable example signposted in the Schools Hub

PURPOSE

Prevent, detect and respond to fraud, error and malpractice

PRINCIPLES

Govern · Acknowledge · Prevent · Pursue · Protect

KEY RISKS

Payroll · staffing · agency · suppliers · conflicts

RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors · Headteacher · SBM · Council · CAFT

REPORTING

Whistleblowing and direct CAFT reporting

REVIEW

Annual Work Plan, monitoring and improvement

Customise: school name · strategy period · approval date · next review · local arrangements

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Appendix B: draft Schools Fraud Work Plan

Including reactive reporting and escalation arrangements

School name · academic year · Headteacher · Chair of Governors · approval date

ACTION	OWNER	TIMESCALE	EVIDENCE
What will be done?	Who is responsible?	When / how often?	How is completion shown?

Examples in the template

✓ Annual secondary-employment declarations
✓ Agency roles and hours approved in advance
✓ Agency timesheets independently approved
✓ Supplier bank changes independently verified
✓ Termly review and Governing Body reporting
✓ Concerns reported promptly through agreed routes

Corporate Anti-Fraud Team | fraud@walthamforest.gov.uk | 0300 003 1099

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Know your risk.
Test your controls.
Know your response.



Next step: agree three actions, three owners and three review dates.

Jamie Branch | Internal Audit & Anti-Fraud Manager

fraud@walthamforest.gov.uk | 0300 003 1099 | jamie.branch@walthamforest.gov.uk

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Creating Stronger Schools Programme

Waltham Forest



Sharie Omoragbon | Programme Lead - Creating Stronger Schools

Programme update

Phase 1: Increase SEND Sufficiency

- 60 new SEND places became available from September
- A further 100 places will become available over the next four years

The overall SEND increase will deliver:

- 100 places at the Lime Academy Trust
- 15 places at Kelmscott
- 15 places at Willowfield
- 10 places at Connaught school for girls
- 10 Thorpe Hall
- 10 Mayville School

Phase 2: Reduce Surplus places

- The consultation on a proposal to close Edinburgh Primary School opened on Friday – no decision has been made. It is important to hear the views and concerns of the school community at this stage. Please share your views at https://talk.walthamforest.gov.uk/

- The Lammas school in partnership with the DfE have confirmed the Lammas school will close in August 2027 – we are working with the school to make future arrangements for Year 8 and 9 students from September 2027

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Inclusion Panel

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Tonnie Read | Assistant Director, Learning & Inclusion

Inclusion Panel

After half term

New referral form

A refreshed form will support clearer, more complete information for Panel consideration.



PLACEMENT
AP and therapeutic placements

REINTEGRATION
Supported returns to mainstream

COORDINATION
SEND, health, SEMH and outreach

INTERIM SUPPORT
Education and practical barriers addressed

Key message | The Panel is not simply an AP allocation route. It considers coordinated support, reintegration and placement where appropriate.

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Triage & Panel: After Referral

A MORE CONSISTENT, MULTI-AGENCY DECISION PROCESS

TRIAGE

- Check referral information and evidence
- Seek additional information where needed
- Identify the most appropriate pathway
- Prepare cases and provisional options for Panel

INCLUSION PANEL

- Consider the referral and partner advice
- Agree support or "system" AP where appropriate
- Escalate complex cases where a multi-agency response is required
- Record decisions, destinations and repeated referrals

OUTCOME

- Clear next steps communicated to school
- Support / outreach / AP route identified
- Start and end dates confirmed where a placement is agreed
- Cases tracked for review and learning

The review design principle from the secondary AP work was that every request reflects a need for support: the Panel should offer a solution or a clear next step, rather than simply return a case.

What Heads Need to Know

A clearer front door, with flexibility for urgent or exceptional circumstances

1. **Use support early**
   Evidence inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments, graduated SEND response and relevant multi-agency support.

2. **Bring the child's story**
   Parent engagement, child voice and aspirations should be visible in the referral.

3. **Bring the right professional**
   Someone who knows the child well should be able to present the case and answer questions.

4. **Plan for reintegration**
   Where AP is time-limited, planning for a sustainable return should begin from the outset.



Fortnightly in term time

Urgent cases can be considered between meetings through Chair's Action following consultation.

After half term: new referral form + clearer referral pathway

https://thehub-beta.walthamforest.gov.uk/learning-and-inclusion

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Primary AP Review: Where we are now

Update from Ben Bryant, 15 October 2026

24 Sep	**Roundtable**	Successful discussion to test and develop the proposals.
1 Oct	**Primary Heads**	Overview shared; positively received with useful feedback.
Now	**Final report**	Report finalised using the roundtable steers and feedback from Primary Heads.
18 Nov	**Strategic Board**	Report goes to Education Strategic Board for formal sign-off of recommendations.
26 Nov	**Primary Heads**	Full report returns to Heads for joint presentation and in-depth discussion of next steps.



Implementation direction

- Start introducing and testing new support elements this academic year
- Particular focus on Tier 1 universal and Tier 2 targeted-plus support
- Take a phased approach to wider system architecture changes, aligned with SEND developments

The emphasis is on phased implementation with school leaders, rather than moving immediately to a new implementation working group.

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Fair Access Protocols & The Admissions Process

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Eve McLoughlin | Assistant Director, Education Operations & Performance

Fair Access Protocols & Processes

Secondary FAP

Information set in Hub e-newsletter to schools on 7th October re availability of updated FAP processes

The FAP provides a clear, transparent and equitable framework through which the Council schools, admission authorities and partner agencies work together to i**dentify appropriate mainstream educational placements** for children who have been unable to secure a school place via the standard admission process, meet the relevant Fair Access criteria, do not have an EHCP.

Full details of Fair Access Process, Referral Form and Fair Access protocols are available on the Hub at https://thehub-beta.walthamforest.gov.uk/fair-access-process

Primary FAP

Unchanged from process last academic year, will be revied as phase 2 of FAP review

All FAP panels

•There is a new draft referral form which will be reviewed during Autumn Tern, with a view to implementing in Spring Term

•New FAP school placement impact and evidence form for completion where parent/carer has expressed a preference for your school. Schools must ensure they are clear as to why they are refusing to on roll a child in line with the Schools Admissions Code and FAP Protocols, as decisions made by FAP panel must stand up to challenge if case goes to appeal and/or tribunal

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Fair Access Protocols & Processes

FAP: where a mainstream move is not currently appropriate

- FAP determines the appropriate route to a **new mainstream placement**. It does not commission AP or additional inclusion support.
- A FAP referral does **not transfer responsibility** for the child or young person away from their current school/AP setting.
- Where the child remains on roll, the current setting must continue to secure appropriate educational arrangements and support to meet child/young persons needs.
- The focus should be on a **planned, inclusive and sustainable pathway**, including preparation for reintegration where appropriate.
- Where needs require wider intervention or AP, **Inclusion Panel should be considered**.
- FAP can subsequently support identification of a mainstream school where reintegration becomes appropriate. Your current referral form expressly states that FAP does not determine whether a child should leave AP and may consider the mainstream placement once reintegration is appropriate.

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Admissions-Secondary Transfer 2027 Entry

The **closing date** for submitting **secondary** school applications is **Saturday 31 October 2026.**

Primary schools are asked to remind all parents and carers of Year 6 pupils to submit their application before the closing date. As of 14 October 2026, just over 1,400 applications have been submitted online, representing just over half of the Year 6 cohort expected to apply for a secondary school place for September 2027. Schools' support in promoting the application process to families is therefore particularly important.

There is information for parents on our website, including how to apply: Apply for a school place | London Borough of Waltham Forest

Applications received after 31 October 2026 will be treated as late and may reduce the likelihood of securing a place at a preferred school.

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Admission Arrangements Consultation 2028/29

Schools that are their own Admission Authority (for example, academies, foundation schools and voluntary aided schools) should be aware that **consultation on admission arrangements for the 2028/29 academic year must take place between 1 October 2026 and 31 January 2027.**

Any consultation must run for a minimum period of 6 weeks.

In line with the School Admissions Code, admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements if changes are proposed, or if they have not consulted on their arrangements within the previous 7 years.

Admission authorities should ensure that any required consultation is completed within the statutory consultation window.

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Audits: Adverse weather & Resources Bases

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John Cattermole | Head of Schools Delivery

Adverse Weather Resilience

Increasing occurrences of extreme weather and challenges around keeping schools open during these periods is recognised.

The school estate presents challenges because of the varying building types and ages. Implementation of additional measures to help with extreme weather can also have significant implications on energy and maintenance costs for the school.

What we are doing:

- As part of the capital repairs and life cycle replacement we continue to implement solutions that meet the latest regulations in terms of environmental performance and sustainable options to support decarbonisation.
- We have expanded our audits this year to capture more information around what schools already have in terms of provision for climate resilience and particular issues being experienced. This information is to be used to establish priorities and what practical measured can be taken to help with future resilience.
- Advice, information and resource to support each school remains available via the Hub and continues to be updated / shared with each school (through the H&S team).

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Inclusion Bases in Schools

The DfE published non-statutory guidance in June 2026 outlining the requirement for inclusion bases - specialist provisions inside mainstream schools (both primary and secondary) designed to support children with SEND, pastoral needs, or behavioural support. The DfE clarifies inclusion bases under two broad models:

- Support bases - commissioned and funded by individual settings, academy trusts or local groups of schools; and
- Specialist bases - commissioned and funded by the local authority

The Council is currently undertaking an exercise to verify what prevision mainstream schools across the borough currently have and how this meets the criteria as set out by the DfE.

The output from the review is anticipated to establish:

- Schools where adequate provision is provided, both in terms of physical space and resource
- Schools where support or specialist bases exist but require enhancement
- Schools where Inclusion bases need to be set up / established.

Following the review the Council will then look to allocate resource where enhancement or new provision is needed in relation to specialist base provisions.

Waltham Forest

Safeguarding Partnership Updates

Waltham Forest

Zahra Jones | Head of Strategic Partnerships

Safeguarding Partnership Update

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review into Restrictive Practices

- Key learning for education settings
- Action Plan shared with headteachers on 30 September via email + now being implemented
- All schools also requested to complete a **'Restrictive Interventions Assurance Self-Assessment Tool':**
  - Intended to support honest reflection and continuous improvement
  - Involve DSL, SENCO and safeguarding governor or trustee, as appropriate
  - Ensure completed assessment has suitable governance oversight
  - **Return completed tool to Strategic Partnerships by 23 October 2026**
  - Responses will be collated into a thematic analysis to identify strengths, common themes, gaps and areas where schools may require further support
  - An opportunity for collective assurance that restrictive interventions are used lawfully, safely, proportionately and only when necessary to prevent harm*
  - Will be used to inform next round of S11 audits

* From summer 2027, schools will be asked to provide **annual data on restrictive interventions and evidence of governor or trustee scrutiny**, strengthening local oversight of their use and impact

Waltham Forest

Safeguarding Partnership Update

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review into Restrictive Practices continued

- A reminder of new guidance published April 2026 - Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools
  - Significant change in expectations
  - Expectation is to minimise restrictive interventions
  - Culture and relationships matter
  - SEND pupils require particular consideration
  - Some practices are explicitly unacceptable
  - Seclusion now receives much greater attention
  - Staff training and support are critical
  - Recording, reporting and learning are now central

- **Statutory requirements placed on governing bodies -** Section 14. Messages have been shared with Governors / Trustees

Action for schools:

- **Complete and return Restrictive Interventions Assurance Self-Assessment Tool** – Involve relevant others + ensure oversight and governance
- **Increase your school's awareness and understanding**
  - Read and get familiar with the guidance
  - Organise training as required
- **Use findings from your school's self-assessment to improve procedures** on the use of force and seclusion and comply with guidance

Safeguarding Partnership Update

New Information sharing duty for children's safeguarding practitioners commenced 30 September. The duty means practitioners must share information where it is relevant to safeguarding and promoting a child's welfare. This includes where concerns relate to early help, prevention and unmet need

Reminder of Safeguarding Partnership Resources:

- **Quality of Care Toolkit** - supports with identifying neglect
- **Escalation** – professional disagreement

Contact Strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk for more information

Waltham Forest

School-Aged Children and Young People's Health

Update covers:

- School based interventions autumn term
- Support for your school
- Opportunities to promote to young people

Nicola Ellis | Catherine Hutchinson | Public Health Team

Health and Wellbeing in Schools | The Hub - Waltham Forest Education Hub

School vaccination information 2026/27

Vaccination UK are commissioned by NHS England to deliver vaccinations to children and young people aged 5-25 in Waltham Forest – this includes children at your school. They will be working closely with you to deliver these in 2026/27.

Date	Vaccination	Year group
September – December	Flu	All year groups
January – mid-March	Td/IPV (3-in-1 booster) MenACWY	Year 9 Year 9
April - June	HPV	Year 8
All year round	MMR	All year groups

Key responsibilities of schools:

1) Provide space and time for vaccination clinics (and catch-up clinics if required)

2) Share parental contact information and class lists with Vaccination UK well in advance of clinic days. This is in line with GDPR regulations outlined here.

3) Bring children whose parents have consented to vaccination **AND** children whose parents have not completed consent forms down on clinic days – this will allow Vaccination UK to attempt to contact parents to obtain consent on the day.

If you need to contact Vaccination UK for any reason, please use the details below. Parents should also use these details.
Phone: 0208 017 4291 | **Email:** walthamforest@v-uk.co.uk
The Hub: Health Protection | The Hub - Waltham Forest Education Hub

Waltham Forest

School entry and secondary transition health assessments

- The School Nursing service provides vital health assessments to all children in Reception and Year 6. This includes vision and hearing screening (YR); National Child Measurement Programme (YR and Y6) and health assessment questionnaires (YR and Y6)
- Supporting these assessments, particularly NCMP, as part of a whole-school approach can strengthen health education, demonstrate a commitment to pupil wellbeing, and help children and families develop lifelong healthy habits.
- The NCMP is a statutory annual programme and helps to inform local planning, support safeguarding and tackle inequalities
- Parent letters have been updated to use more supportive and non-stigmatising language and advice and support is available to families
- **Please support this process by:**
  - Sharing a letter to Reception and Year 6 parents
  - Providing class lists to the school nursing service for Reception and Year 6
  - Identifying a room or area where measurements can take place

If any questions, please contact the School Nursing Team via email on thgpcg.walthamforestschoolscreening@nhs.net

Waltham Forest

Healthy Schools London Programme

- One final Healthy Schools London (HSL) application support workshop will take place on:

22 October, 12–1pm on Microsoft Teams.

- Many schools' Bronze Awards have now expired and can be renewed by completing the Bronze Award Tool application. The application is available on the HSL website, or you can contact Nazmin for support. Get an award: Schools | London City Hall
- We are updating our records, if you have assigned a designated person to lead on your application, please let Nazmin know with contact details.
- For more information or assistance with your application, please contact:

Nazmin Islam, HSL Lead, Nazmin.Islam@WalthamForest.gov.uk



The Hub: Healthy Schools London Programme | The Hub - Waltham Forest Education Hub

Waltham Forest

You're Invited: Virtual Training for Education Leaders



Literacy, Trauma, Exclusion & the Communication-Risk Pathway

Who should attend?
Headteachers, deputies, SENCos | safeguarding leads

About the Session

- How speech, language & communication needs (SLCN) & trauma shape engagement, relationships & decision-making
- The links between language and communication difficulties, trauma, exclusion & risk, including offending

What you will gain

- ✓ Insight into the hidden drivers of behaviour and exclusion
- ✓ Understanding unidentified risks & misinterpreted behaviours.

'Unidentified communication needs are a key driver of exclusion and vulnerability.'

Facilitated by

- Speech & Language Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
  (WF Vanguard Team, London VRP)

Training Details

- Location: Teams
- Date: 21/10/2026
- Time: 10am-12pm

Reserve your place now! Email Cassandra.Woo@nelft.nhs.uk

Waltham Forest

The Round Table – A new project for Black boys aged 13-18

An opportunity to interview mental health professionals and explore important issues through podcasting and storytelling.

Participants will learn:

- Podcast recording, directing and editing
- Interviewing and research skills
- Camera and documentary storytelling techniques
- Confidence in discussing mental health and wellbeing

What's included?

- Drinks and refreshments
- All equipment provided
- No experience necessary
- Opportunity for selected participants to create an award-winning short documentary

When: Six Tuesdays from 3 November 2026
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm
Where: Wood Street Library, E17 3HB
Places: Limited to 12 participants
Register interest: shorturl.at/OyQ5A

Young people will develop practical media and communication skills while leading conversations with Black male clinicians and other professionals.

Waltham Forest

Youth Health Champions

- **Youth Health Champions (YHCs)** are trained young people who promote health and wellbeing among their peers. Through an accredited programme, they develop leadership, communication and health promotion skills, delivering campaigns and signposting fellow students to appropriate support services.
- The first cohort will receive training on **17 to 18 November 2026.**
- There will be attendance from various partners including school nurses.
- Training will equip young people with the skills and knowledge to promote health and wellbeing among their peers.
- Venue: TBC.
- The Hub: Youth Health Champions | The Hub - Waltham Forest Education Hub

Waltham Forest

Benedicts Law

Waltham Forest

Geoff Schooling & Nadia Ahmed | Health & Safety

Supporting schools to meet Benedicts Law requirements



- From September 2026, **Benedict's Law** introduces new requirements for schools to strengthen the management of pupil allergies, helping to ensure appropriate policies, training, and emergency arrangements are in place.

- The Health, Safety and Wellbeing team provide guidance on the requirements of Benedict's Law through our Traded Services portal, which is available to all schools. We also have published a model health and safety policy which includes allergy arrangements.
- For **maintained schools** and schools purchasing our **Enhanced Health & Safety Service**, we also review allergy management arrangements as part of our health and safety audits, including:
  - Allergy policies and procedures
  - Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with allergies
  - Staff awareness and training
  - Emergency response and medication arrangements
  - Compliance with Benedict's Law requirements

- Following the audit, schools receive recommendations to help strengthen their arrangements and support compliance with their legal responsibilities.

Waltham Forest

“Learning that changes lives”

Waltham Forest

Mark Beyer-Woodgate | Harris Institute

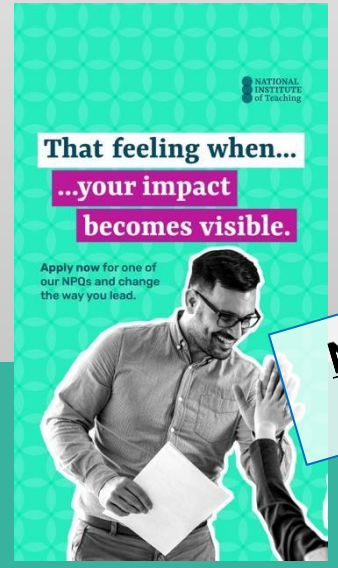
October 2026 Update

North East London
Waltham Forest Teaching School Hub

- Funded places still available for **all Leadership and Specialist NPQs,** the deadline to apply with the National Institute of Teaching is **22nd November**. Visit: https://niot.org.uk/programmes

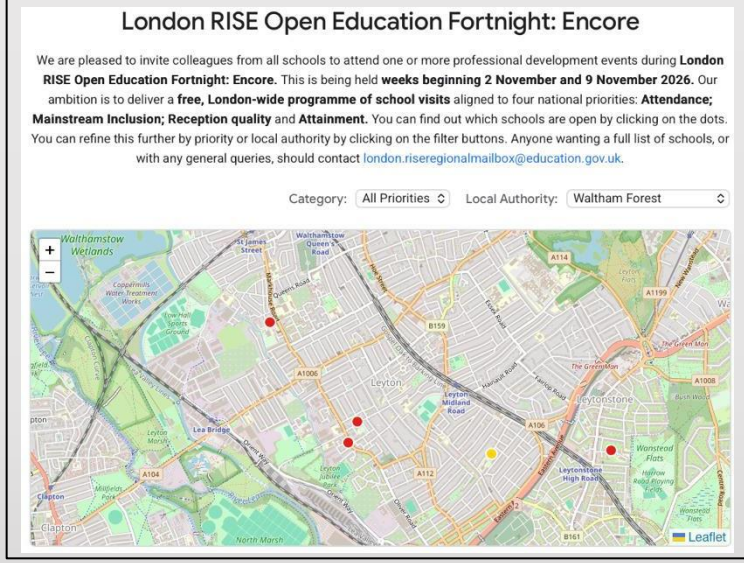
- *Join a network of leaders across North East London focused on local school improvement.*
- *Connect with schools across the country as part of our series of virtual visits to share best practice.*
- *Become the leader you've always wanted to be. By studying an NPQ, you'll gain:* ***Professional development, Confidence,***

Collaboration & Energy!





DfE London RISE Universal



https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-rise-calendar/universal-rise-upcoming-events

Visit the DfE London RISE website to access a wide range of events next month as part of the Open Education Fortnight:
2nd to 13th November 2026:

https://script.google.com/macros/s/AKfycbwNb5Y7i2kuqMdvJ6QpJZtZO-WNIz26FMYyXwPiLVbTO6GKS-G5b6WolFVj0n6SrZm4/exec

Schools across London, including Harris Academies, will be sharing best practice and working together to address the national priorities:

- Attainment
- Attendance
- Inclusion
- Reception Year Quality







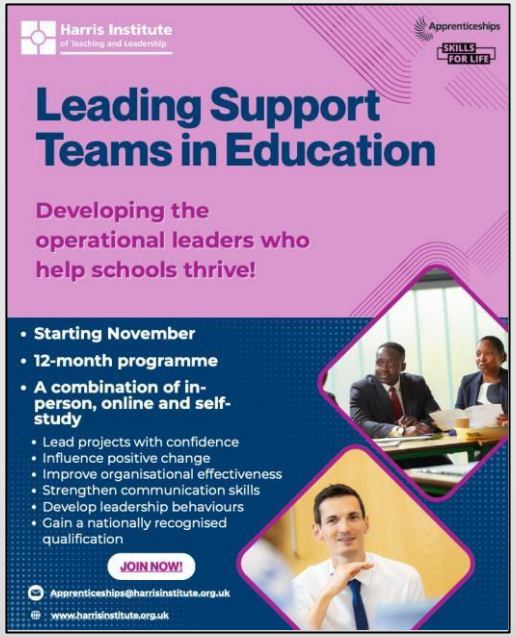




Apprenticeships

Department for Education

North East London
Waltham Forest Teaching School Hub



The Harris Institute offer a wide range of **fully funded apprenticeships** bespoke for all education staff.

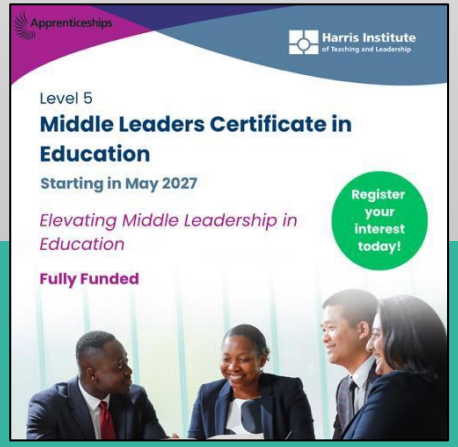
- **Leading Support Teams in Education** is designed for non-teaching staff who are leading others. This will provide them with operational and strategic business skills to drive improvement.

Applications for the next cohort close at the end of November.

- **The Middle Leaders Certificate in Education** is designed for aspiring and current Middle Leaders in Primary, Secondary, Post 16 or Special settings to lead others successfully through a dynamic landscape of curriculum change and SEND reform.

- For more information, please visit our website:

https://www.harrisinstitute.org.uk/1734/apprenticeships-1







Information for Waltham Forest Schools

1. All LA maintained schools will need to first apply via WF LA and notify Apprenticeships Manager: Richard Davenport, Richard.Davenport@walthamforest.gov.uk
2. Eligible participants will need approval from their employer to access their or shared levy funding. These programmes are funded by the EFSA. **Engagement audits will be taken each month.**
3. Please scan the QR code to apply:

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TEACHING Research Updates

25 June 2026

National Institute of Teaching to support delivery of Teach Lead Change programme

The National Institute of Teaching is proud to be supporting Teach First in delivering the Teach Lead Change programme, following the Department for Education's recent contract award.



As a partner on the **Teach Lead Change programme**, NIOT will deliver the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), provide trainee support services, and contribute research and school-led insights to strengthen delivery and maximise impact. To find out more visit: https://niot.org.uk/news-events/national-institute-of-teaching-to-support-delivery-of-teach-lead-change-programme

30 July 2026

What the evidence tells us about mentoring for school leaders

Professor Sin-Wang Chong, Head of Evidence Synthesis at the National Institute of Teaching, reflects on the findings of our latest evidence review of mentoring for school leaders.





Findings from the **Rapid Evidence Assessment** suggest: Mentoring supports leaders' professional growth and wellbeing, Relationships matter more than models, Sustained structure helps when it remains flexible, Benefits extend beyond individual leaders, Some leadership outcomes depend heavily on context. To read the full report visit: https://niot.org.uk/insights/what-the-evidence-tells-us-about-mentoring-for-school-leaders

24 September 2026

Why teachers can't fact-check their way out of a conspiracy theory

Dr Rob Nash, Head of Psychological Research, National Institute of Teaching, discusses findings from a national pilot on the psychology that teachers need for tackling misinformation.



NIOT's **Centre for Digital Information Literacy in Schools** (CDILS)
The debate about misinformation in schools can easily become abstract or alarmist. But schools need support that is evidence-informed, context-sensitive and realistic about the pressures teachers face. For more support visit https://niot.org.uk/news-events/why-teachers-cant-fact-check-their-way-out-of-a-conspiracy-theory

TSH Steering Committee

If you would like to play a more strategic role in your local Teaching School Hub moving forwards, please sign up to become a steering committee member.

Many of our current members work for the Headteacher professional associations in the area, some are current Headteachers, CEOs or PD Leads along with representatives from the Local Authorities and other Teaching School Hub professional development partners such as Curriculum Hubs and Research Schools.

We meet online once each term and use this time to address the training needs for the region and plan future programmes of professional learning to meet those needs.

Steering Committee Dates 2026-27:

10th December 2026, 18th March & 15th July 2027 11:00am - 12:30pm

Please contact Martha Lopez: Martha.Lopez@Harrisinstitute.org.uk our Teaching School Hub Senior Administrator, to be added to this group.

We will be discussing:

- DfE SEND & Inclusion Training for All Schools
- Exceptional ITT Provision with NIOT
- Appropriate Body Support and Equity for Neurodiverse ECTs