



CONNEX Connects

Summer 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of Connex Education Partnership's school newsletter for academic year 2023-24. We hope you have had a fulfilling summer break and are optimistic for the term ahead.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Schools will be aware of the changes made to the [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) statutory guidance for schools and colleges which came into effect on Friday 1st September 2023. A summary of edits from previous versions can be found on page 176.

Connex Education Academy are pleased to have partnered with safeguarding expert Ella Savell-Boss to produce an online webinar covering all the policy changes. Access to the recording is available and free to access for anyone. This could be a useful opportunity for any colleagues who perhaps missed the start of year staff training, or for those on the front line of safeguarding who may benefit from more time to process the information.

Access the free online course from [Connex Education Academy here.](#)

In this edition, we'll be exploring:

- **Updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**
- **Improving your School's Wifi Connection**
- **Increasing Number of EHC and SEND Plans in English Schools**
- **50% Subsidy for Tuition through the NTP and Connex Education Partnership**
- **Youth Unemployment Improved by Extra-Curricular Engagement**
- **Bite Back 2030 – Breaking the Association Between Sport and Junk Food**
- **Attendance Matters**
- **Twilight Toolkit Autumn Workshop Schedule**
- **Connex Education Academy's Course Catalogue**
- **Free Eye Tests in Special Schools**
- **Child Poverty in Your Area**
- **School Sport and Activity Plan Updates**



Improving your School's Wifi Connection

If your school is located in an 'education investment area' (see the list [here](#)), you may be eligible for support to improve your onsite internet speed. Schools should have been contacted if they have been identified as being priority for the Connect the Classroom initiative* which runs until 2025. More information can be found [here](#), including how to contact the DfE if you feel you are eligible but have not yet been contacted.



Increasing Number of EHC and SEND Plans in English Schools

The number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in English schools has risen by 7% from the same time last year. Over 4,000 new plans have been instated for those children and young people in need of additional and specific care in their educational setting. In addition, pupils entitled to SEN support without an EHCP has increased by 4.7% from 2022. The headline facts and figures for SEND statistics can be viewed [here](#).

If your school has seen an increase in the number of pupils with EHCPs or other SEND related requirements, one to one or small group tuition through the National Tutoring Programme may be a cost effective and appropriate measure to support their development.

With tutors specialising in both primary and secondary education across a range of core subjects, Connex Education Partnership would be pleased to support you offer the best provision for your pupils. Find out more about our [Quality Assured Professional Tutors](#) and get in touch to find out more about availability in your local area.

50% Subsidy for Tuition through the NTP and Connex Education Partnership

Connex Education Partnership are proud to be the largest approved tuition partner to the National Tutoring Programme, delivering subsidised interventions to over 60,000 pupils each year. For academic year 2023/24, schools will be entitled to a 50% subsidy for tuition with the intention of narrowing the attainment gap and improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

If you'd like to understand more about how to maximise your NTP subsidy with us, take a look at our [Tuition Budget Calculator](#).

Our Subsidy Guarantee

Connex Education is committed to delivering high quality tuition to schools in England irrespective of post code. We know that budgets are tight so once your NTP budget has been spent with us we will personally **guarantee to subsidise any further tuition for the remainder of the academic year**. Get in touch today to find out more about this incredible promise.



Youth Unemployment Improved by Extra-Curricular Engagement

In a recent report published by Demos* in association with Scouts*, youth unemployment in the UK was noted as being a significant concern both socially and economically.



According to their research, 'the UK is facing a significant youth unemployment challenge that is detrimental to the economy, society and the lives of young people. In the first quarter of 2023, the youth unemployment rate was 10.8%, considerably higher than the rate for all UK adults at 3.7%. The cost of youth unemployment to the UK economy over the next decade has been estimated at £28 billion. The costs to young people themselves are just as dire - exposure to youth unemployment can have a life-long impact on an individual's earnings and mental health.'

A double whammy lack of both technical and transferrable skills is cited as being one of the main concerns of employers who are finding it difficult to recruit appropriately skilled young people into the workforce. Transferable skills such as leadership, teamwork and communication are noted as being of particular interest given that these are often not taught explicitly through the formal curriculum.

Key recommendations from the report centre around the need for a wide breadth of extra-curricular opportunities for children and young people at all ages. The Scouts are mentioned as being a strong example of ways for pupils to expand their horizons and develop skills vital for a successful adulthood. Why not contact your local group to see if there are opportunities to collaborate for the benefit of your pupils? www.scouts.org.uk

Many secondary schools already successfully deliver The Duke of Edinburgh's Award* which incorporates the four key areas of helping the community/environment, becoming fitter, developing new skills and planning, training for and completing an expedition. If you have pupils in Year 9 and above and would like to know more about facilitating the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, check out www.dofe.org/run.

Many teachers and support staff have unknown passions and interests that they are keen to share with children and young people. You may like to consider auditing your staff body to see if there are untapped stores of exciting skills and talents that could be used to enrich your extra-curricular offering. Who knows what you might find!

The full Demos and Scouts report, entitled 'The Employability Badge: Skills for life, work and a stronger society' can be found [here](#).



Bite Back 2030 – Breaking the Association Between Sport and Junk Food

Bite Back 2030* are a charity raising awareness of how food and drink companies are targeting young people with adverts for unhealthy consumables through sports, particularly football. Their 2022 research found that young people associated brands such as Lucozade, Pepsi, Walkers and McDonald's with football. They found that sports-based marketing had a significant impact on the target audience. Bite Back 2030 are backing a movement for change, empowering young people to understand the facts and make them aware of the marketing ploys enlisted to target them.



The School Food Champions programme for Key Stage 3 is a particularly interesting initiative designed to bolster schools' existing approaches to promoting health and wellbeing. Whilst applications for the 2023/24 cohort are now closed, it will be worth keeping an eye out for the next cohort applications. Their website also contains useful ideas and ways that you and your school can support the contain. Check it out and share with relevant colleagues!
<https://www.biteback2030.com/school-food-champions-sign-now>

Attendance Matters

Alarming statistics published last month suggest that persistent absence rates (those pupils missing more than 10% of school) is currently 22.3%. With absenteeism being worse in secondary schools (28.3%) than primary schools (17.2%). It is well reported that schools have struggled to improve pupil attendance to pre-pandemic level, and a combination of factors in the 2022–23 academic year made supporting the improvement of attendance particularly challenging for many education settings.



Whilst there is no 'one size fits all' approach to tackling school absence, you may find Dr Pooky Knightsmith's* article recently published in SecEd* thought-provoking as you plan for how to positively engage with those families who are often hard to reach. Access the article [here](#).

In addition, the NHS' ['Is my child too ill for school'](#) website may be useful to signpost to families who have concerns about whether or not to send their child to school. With many parents citing the Covid-19 pandemic as a cause of increased anxiety around keeping their children safe and healthy in school, this official guidance from the NHS* may provide some 'black and white' facts.

You may find a joint [open letter from Professor Chris Whitty*](#) and his colleagues to school leaders a useful read, especially as we approach cold and flu season.

Twilight Toolkit Autumn Workshop Schedule

Connex Education Academy are delighted to share with you our Autumn 2023 Workshop Schedule which is jam packed with free online workshops hosted by sector experts.

Upcoming workshops include:

- Equality Diversity and Inclusion (race, disability and LGBTQ+)
- Mental health & wellbeing in education series: Lost between passion and expectations
- Teaching Apprenticeships 2023 - QTS with PGCE Training Webinar
- How schools can support children who self-harm and suicidal ideation

Upcoming workshops and links to register for your free space can be found [here](#).



Connex Education Academy's Course Catalogue

Connex Education Academy have a wide range of online learning to meet your school community's professional development needs. Our inspiring set of 119 courses are divided into the following categories, with something to suit everyone:

- Safeguarding and Pastoral Care
- Health & Safety and Compliance
- Leadership and Coaching
- Teaching, Learning and Pedagogy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- International



Take a moment to browse which courses would support professional development in your school on our latest [course matrix](#).

Free Eye Tests in Special Schools

Pupils enrolled in special schools will be eligible for a free NHS eye test from April 2024 under new government plans. It is expected that 165,000 children will be entitled to the test which will be supported with an optical voucher if glasses are required. Children with learning disabilities are 28 times more likely to experience sight problems according to charity SeeAbility*.

The full press release regarding the roll out of free eye tests in special schools can be viewed [here](#).



Child Poverty in Your Area

The group End Child Poverty* published its 2023 annual report in June, with headline figures showing that over 1 in 4 children across England live in poverty. We understand that schools in different areas will see childhood poverty present itself in different ways, with some being more challenged by it than others.



As you are planning for what measures you will implement this year to support members of your community who are experiencing poverty, you may find End Child Poverty's interactive tools useful or interesting. The map and associated statistics can be manipulated to show give data from your locality. Whilst you and your colleagues know your local community better than anyone else can, having a sense of specific data to support your planning may be helpful.

Access the interactive map here:
<https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty/>

We are now
on TikTok

Follow us to stay
up to date!

@connexeducation



School Sport and Activity Plan Updates

Just before the summer break, the government published its updated **School Sport and Activity Action Plan** in which it outlines priority areas related to physical activity in schools. This document supersedes the 2019 version. Be sure to share it with your school leaders and those involved in the delivery of physical activity and sport.

**Connex Education Partnership does not have any professional affiliations with organisations referenced throughout this newsletter. We share information that we believe will be of use and interest to schools in good faith, and in the spirit of sharing good practice for the benefit of all.*

Our New Courses

How to Be an Amazing Teaching Assistant

The overall aim of this course is to give you some tips, advice and insight into research that will help you to build upon your teaching assistant skills.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

How to Develop Oracy in the Maths Classroom – Giving Your Learners Their Voice

This course aims to develop your understanding of the importance of literacy, not only across the curriculum but also specifically in maths education.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Mentoring and Coaching in Schools

This course is an introduction to mentoring and coaching in schools. It will not qualify you to be a mentor or coach but we hope it may inspire you either to seek accreditation or to encourage your school to build a sustained programme of mentoring and coaching.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Early Career Teachers – Creating Independent Learners

By the end of this session, you will take away some practical tips to start using immediately in your classroom.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Primary Maths: Variation to Deepen Mathematical Understanding

In this course we will look at variation theory and its relevance to teaching and learning in mathematics.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Educators 7 Habits of Being Successful: Keeping Your Tank Full

We share some thinking and ideas around keeping your tank full. Whether you are a teacher, TA, or school leader, making sure you keep your tank full is important.

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Our New Courses

Developing Formative Assessment in Mathematics

The aim of this session is to develop your understanding of how to effectively use formative assessment in mathematics classrooms. It is applicable to educators in any setting, regardless of learner age or phase

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Awareness and Support for Students With Dyslexia

The aim of this course is to develop your awareness of dyslexia and how it impacts the lives of learners inside and outside the classroom.

[VIEW COURSE](#)



Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2023 Changes

This webinar training session is designed to provide schools and staff with support in ensuring that children that we look after are kept safe and supported. It will cover the latest updates and changes for Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance which were published on the 6th of June

[VIEW COURSE](#)

Awareness for Students with ADHD

The purpose of this course is to support education professionals who wish to gain more insight into Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, including reference to the causes.

[VIEW COURSE](#)



To see all of the courses we offer, [click here.](#)