TOGETHER for Children and Young People

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Weekly Bulletin to Schools

16 November 2026

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Cheshire East School Services

Contents

1. Strategic Information and Actions 2

1.1 Winter Weather Requirements 2

1.2 Teachers' Model Pay Policy - 2026 3

1.3 Interim Service Manager - Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) 4

1.4 Inclusion Forum and Inclusion Funding portals 5

1.5 School Exclusion Reform - Call for Evidence 6

1.6 Child's Free School Meal Status and HAF Eligibility 7

2. Training and Wider Development Opportunities 9

2.1 Governor/Trustee Induction Training: Spring 2027 Dates 9

2.2 Headteacher Briefing - Teacher Assessment Moderation and National Test Monitoring Service (TAMNT) 2026/27: 24 November 10

2.3 Early Writing - Building the Foundations for Confident Writers: 18 January 2027 11

2.4 Reception showcase - Literacy and Language: 25 January 2027 12

3. Traded Service Information 13

3.1 Trade Union Recognition Agreement (TURA) 13

4. General Information 13

1. Strategic Information and Actions

1.1 Winter Weather Requirements

Content	Audience	Purpose
During extreme winter weather conditions, the decision to close a school is made by the headteacher in consultation with the Governors/Trustees. Consideration must be given to the welfare of vulnerable children, those with additional needs and those requiring free school meals. Schools would then follow their own closure procedures for alerting parents and students, and for alerting services suppliers, e.g., school meals, school transport, etc. Additionally, in order that correct and consistent information is available to CE residents, **if your school or academy intends to close, please notify** schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk as soon as possible and also follow-up with a further email to advise us when your school re-opens. Please see the link below for further information and guidance regarding possible school closures due to extreme weather conditions. **Link:** https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/asset-library/school-bulletins/Documents-for-bulletins-2026/extreme-weather-letter-2026-27.pdf	All schools	For Information & Action

Contact: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk ☎ 0300 123 5036

1.2 Teachers' Model Pay Policy - 2026

Content	Audience	Purpose
Following the publication of the 2026 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, we have published this year's Model Pay Policy for Teaching Staff in Schools and Academies. Headteachers and Governing Boards are reminded that any changes to the model policy should involve consultation with staff and unions prior to adoption. The Model Pay Policy and guidance note are available through ChESS for schools who buy back Education HR Consultancy.	Headteachers, School Business Managers, Governing Boards	For Information

Contact: Nuala Hadden: deanhadden@cheshireeast.gov.uk ☎ 07885 189279

1.3 Interim Service Manager - Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS)

Content	Audience	Purpose
Due to the upcoming retirement of the current post holder, Debbie Hiom, at Christmas, we are inviting expressions of interest for the role of **Interim Service Manager - Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS).** We are seeking expressions of interest from experienced and highly motivated colleagues to undertake the role of Interim Service Manager for the Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) for the Spring and Summer Terms (or as soon as possible). This is an exciting opportunity to provide leadership to a well-established specialist service that supports children and young people with sensory impairments across Cheshire East and plays a key role in promoting inclusion, access and positive outcomes and is offered as either a secondment or a temporary contract. For more information about the role and details on how to apply, please follow the link.	Senior leaders and SENCOs and specialist teachers	For Information & Action

Contact: Sarah Clough: Sarah.Clough@cheshireeast.gov.uk

1.4 Applications are now being accepted for Inclusion Forum and Inclusion Funding

Content	Audience	Purpose
From Monday 16 November, the portals will be live for all schools and settings wishing to submit a request to either the Inclusion Forum or the Inclusion Funding Panel. The new portals provide a single route for referrals and funding requests, helping to streamline the process and ensure that requests are considered in a timely and consistent manner. Schools and settings are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the process and begin using the portal for all submissions from this date. Further information regarding the Inclusion Forum (which will sit every half term) and the Inclusion Funding panel (which will meet weekly) can be found on the local offer using the following links. • SEND inclusion forum • Inclusion Funding Applications will only be via the appropriate portal. • Inclusion Forum • CEC Inclusion Funding Panel (£) Referral Form All requests will need to be supported by a parent and carer using the referral consent form available via the following link. SEND Referral Consent Form	SENCOs and Headteachers	For Information & Action

Contact: IST@Cheshireeast.gov.uk

1.5 School Exclusion Reform - Call for Evidence

Content	Audience	Purpose
The Department for Education (DfE) is seeking evidence and views on proposed school exclusion reforms, as outlined in the schools white paper, Every child achieving and thriving. This evidence will inform the development of school exclusion reforms relating to the use of internal suspension, reintegration support partnerships following a suspension, and the provision of schoolwork during the first 5 days of suspension and permanent exclusion. Responses should be supported by research, data and practical examples. Responses will inform policy development and the statutory framework that would underpin these reforms. The deadline for responses is 11:59pm on **19 November 2026**. **Links**: Call for evidence on school exclusion reform School Exclusion Reform - Call for Evidence - Department for Education - Citizen Space	All Schools & Academies	For Information & Action

Contact: School Governance: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk ☎ 0300 1235036

1.6 Child's Free School Meal Status and HAF Eligibility

Content	Audience	Purpose
As we prepare for the winter Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, we are seeking support from schools to help ensure that parents and carers have a clear understanding of their child's Free School Meal status and how this relates to HAF eligibility. As Headteachers will be aware, from the start of the 2026/27 academic year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit became entitled to receive Free School Meals. However, within this entitlement there are two categories of Universal Credit based Free School Meals: 1. Targeted Free School Meals 2. Expanded Free School Meals Children assessed as eligible for **Targeted Free School Meals** are **eligible to access, for free, the HAF Programme**. Children who receive **Expanded Free School Meals** are **NOT eligible to access HAF on the basis of this eligibility alone.** We are conscious that many parents and carers may be aware that their child receives Free School Meals but may not know whether they receive Targeted Free School Meals or Expanded Free School Meals. As schools hold this information and have established communication channels with families, we are seeking your support to help ensure parents and carers understand their child's Free School Meal status and how this relates to HAF eligibility. To support this, we would be grateful if schools could share one of the two attached letters to families of children from reception to year 11: one letter is relevant for Targeted Free School Meals and the other for Expanded Free School Meals. This should help provide clarity for families ahead of the Christmas HAF booking period and reduce confusion and upset regarding programme eligibility. Additionally, if you can include information about the changes to Free School Meals and HAF eligibility within your general communications to parents and carers, for example via social	All	For Information & Action

media, your school website, school apps or newsletters, this would also be greatly appreciated. The Cheshire East winter HAF programme goes live for bookings on **30 November 2026 at 4.00pm**.		

Contact: CEHAF@CheshireEast.gov.uk

2. Training and Wider Development Opportunities

2.1 Governor/Trustee Induction Training: Spring 2027 Dates

Content	Audience	Purpose
The Department for Education (DfE) requires boards to provide an induction and development programme for all new governors/trustees. Therefore, to help you get up to speed with the role and responsibilities, we strongly recommend new or recently appointed governors and trustees complete our two induction modules, available next term on the following dates: • *Induction Module 1 - Effective Governance on **Tuesday 19 January 2027**, 6:00pm via Zoom* • *Induction Module 2 - Strategic Leadership on **Tuesday 26 January 2027**, 6:00pm via Zoom* • *Induction Modules 1 and 2 (in-person) – on **Wednesday 08 March 2027**, 9:30am – 3pm at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School* The above courses are free to schools and academies that have purchased the Governor CPD Training package via ChESS Hub. Charges apply for or non-purchasing schools and academies. For further details and/or to book your place, please go to the 'Training' tab in GovernorHub or email schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Headteachers; Chairs of Governors	For Information

Contact: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk ☎ 0300 123 5036

2.2 Headteacher Briefing - Teacher Assessment Moderation and National Test Monitoring Service (TAMNT) 2026/27: 24 November

Content	Audience	Purpose
In preparation the 2026-27 cycle, Cheshire East's Acting Moderation and Monitoring Manager, Mike Thompson, is holding a KS2 Assessment and Moderation ONLINE briefing on **Tuesday 24 November, 9:30am-10:30am**. The briefing is part of the service offered under Teacher Assessment Moderation and National Test Monitoring Service (TAMNT) and will provide key information for leaders around assessment including how KS2 Writing Moderation will be organised. It is important that either you or the relevant leader attends given that there are changes moving forward and this session will clarify certain points. Those new to headship or new to KS2 leadership are strongly advised to attend. Please copy the Teams link below into your diary. There is no charge for this event. *Please note: For Headteachers that attended the Maintained Schools Network on 22 October this is a repeat of those messages. You are, of course, welcome to attend or, alternatively pass to your Year 6 Teacher(s).* **Microsoft Teams meeting** **Join:** https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/3473642179758656?p=sbr9BjYANUzc2PDqt2 Meeting ID: 347 364 217 975 865 6 Passcode: FJ3GG2Vf	Headteachers, KS2 Leaders and Year 6 Teachers	For Information & Action

Contact: Mike Thompson, Acting Moderation and Monitoring Manager for Cheshire East: CEModeration@lancashire.gov.uk

2.3 Early Writing - Building the Foundations for Confident Writers: 18 January 2027

Content	Audience	Purpose
Day 1: Monday 18 January 2027, 9:00am – 4:00pm Designed for educators looking to deepen their understanding of writing progression—from early mark-making through to and beyond the Early Learning Goals (ELGs)—alongside key insights from the DfE Writing Framework. Key Content Covered: • Transcription & Mechanics: Effective approaches to teaching transcription, including the development of handwriting, spelling, and sentence-level skills. • Motivation & Purpose: Practical strategies for inspiring young writers through meaningful, purposeful writing opportunities. • Oracy & Composition: The vital role of speaking and listening in supporting children's composition and confidence. • Progression & Planning: Understanding and planning for progression in early writing, ensuring seamless transition towards and beyond the Early Learning Goals. **Link**: Book Now	EYFS/ Primary	For Information

Contact: Kerri Hall: khall@laceygreen.cheshire.sch.uk ☎ 01625 783335

2.4 Reception showcase - Literacy and Language: 25 January 2027

Content	Audience	Purpose
Monday 25 January 2027, 9:00am – 2:00pm **Venue:** Oldfield Brow Primary School, Taylor Road, Altrincham, WA14 4LE Join us to discover evidence-based strategies that enrich vocabulary, foster communication, and inspire confident early writers—all supported through our fully funded Hub provision. **Link**: Book Now	EYFS/Primary	For Information

Contact: Kerri Hall: khall@laceygreen.cheshire.sch.uk ☎ 01625 783335

3. Traded Service Information

3.1 Trade Union Recognition Agreement (TURA)

Content	Audience	Purpose
Polite Reminder to Academies Please can I remind all academies that have signed up to the Trade Union Recognition Agreement (TURA) that this is a commitment to purchase the Trade Union Package. For academies that have not yet purchased the 2026/27 package, it is still available on the Chess Hub - Chess Hub.	Academies	For Information

Contact: Kathy Oliver: kathy.oliver@cheshireeast.gov.uk

4. General Information

There are no items in this section.