

21 September 2026

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Bulletin Number 4 – 2026/27 21 September 2026

The weekly School Bulletin is produced by the School Governance & Liaison Service:
schoolbulletin@cheshireeast.gov.uk

1. Strategic Information and Actions

1.1 Free School Meals checks: Autumn Census deadline extended

Content	Audience	Purpose
The operational deadline for completing free school meals (FSM) checks for the autumn census has moved from Thursday 1 October to Monday 2 November 2026. This one-off extension is designed to support successful implementation of the FSM expansion and new checking arrangements. The extension applies to: • <i>rechecks for pupils who were receiving FSM support in the previous academic year</i> • <i>checks for new FSM applications</i> Please note: Some management information systems may have automatically updated the FSM status of pupils who were receiving FSM support in the previous academic year. Schools and local authorities must still complete the required eligibility checks for these pupils following the end of transitional protections. For funding purposes, FSM eligibility checks must be completed and recorded by Monday 2 November 2026. Schools should refer to the updated free school meals guidance for operational information on eligibility checks and the updated school census guidance for information on recording FSM eligibility.	School & Academy Leaders; School Business Managers	For Information & Action

Contact: School Governance: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 0300 1235036

1.2 Invitation to the Cheshire East Headteachers' Education Partnership Event: 15 October

Content	Audience	Purpose
We are delighted to invite you to attend the Cheshire East Headteachers' Education Partnership Event on Thursday 15 October 2026, to be held at Congleton Town Hall. We are keen to work collaboratively with school leaders to explore and address the challenges, opportunities and risks currently facing the education system. This event will provide an opportunity to hear key updates, engage in professional discussion, share best practice, and help shape the future development of the Education Partnership in Cheshire East. To provide flexibility and accommodate as many colleagues as possible, the event will be delivered in two identical sessions: <u>Morning Session</u> 9:15am to 12:00pm (refreshments available from 8:45am) Link to ChESS Hub to book your place: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/310807 <u>Afternoon Session</u> 1:15pm to 4:00pm (refreshments available from 12:45pm) Link to ChESS Hub to book your place: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/310809 The event promises to be an informative and valuable opportunity for collaboration, networking and reflection with fellow school leaders and education colleagues from across the borough. Further details, including the agenda, will be shared in due course. We hope you will be able to join us, and we look forward to welcoming you to Congleton Town Hall on Thursday 15 October. Please book your place via ChESS Hub and confirm your attendance at one of the sessions by Friday 02 October.	Headteachers	For Information & Action

Contact: Olivia McCloskey: Olivia.mccloskey@cheshireeast.gov.uk

1.3 Virtual School Advisor - Secondment Opportunity

Content	Audience	Purpose
With the continued development of Cheshire East Virtual School and our ambition to improve educational outcomes, attendance, participation and achievement for children in care and children with a social worker, there has never been a more exciting time to join our team. We are seeking an experienced education professional to join us on a 6-month secondment in the first instance on a full-time basis as a Virtual School Advisor. This opportunity would be particularly suited to a Designated Teacher, senior leader, SEND practitioner, pastoral leader, or another professional with significant experience of supporting vulnerable children and young people. As a Virtual School Advisor, you will work as part of the Virtual School team to champion the educational progress, attendance, wellbeing and aspirations of children in care and other cohorts supported by the Virtual School. You will work closely with social care, families and partner agencies to ensure children and young people receive the right support, at the right time, enabling them to achieve their full potential. (Please refer to the attached job description for full details of the role.) For more information on applying for a Secondment please see here for more details. How to apply – Expression of interest form If you are interested, please email your expression of interest to David Hemlock - Cheshire East Virtual School Deputy Headteacher david.hemlock@cheshireeast.gov.uk by midday on 05 October. Shortlisted candidates will be notified by 12 October and will be invited to interview thereafter.	All colleagues in Cheshire East Schools with a particular focus on Designated Teachers, DSLs and senior leaders	For Information & Action

Contact: David Hemlock: david.hemlock@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 07721 498931

1.4 Probation Policy

Content	Audience	Purpose
There has been a minor amendment to the Probation Policy to reflect term-time working arrangements. Please ensure you download and refer to the updated version, which is available on ChESS for buy-back schools.	Headteachers and School Business Managers	For information

Contact: Katie Dean: deanhadden@cheshireeast.gov.uk

 07786 686716

1.5 Supporting Vaccination: Children and Young People with SEND

Content	Audience	Purpose
A new guidance leaflet is available for specialist providers and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinators (SENDCOs) in mainstream schools. The resource provides practical advice on supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families to understand the importance of vaccination. The leaflet highlights the benefits of delivering vaccinations in school settings and outlines approaches to make vaccination services accessible, inclusive, and supportive. By helping to address individual needs and removing potential barriers, schools can play an important role in ensuring that all pupils receive the protection they need in a safe and welcoming environment. The leaflet (Product Code: 1265468ZEN001) can be accessed online, and free paper copies can be ordered through the Find Public Health Resources service. Link: https://find-public-health-resources.service.gov.uk/Supporting%20vaccination%20for%20children%20with%20Special%20Educational%20Needs%20and%20Disabilities%20(SEND)/1265468ZEN001 https://live-chesheast.cloud.contensis.com/pdf/schools/bulletins/documents-for-bulletins-2026/september/information-for-send-in-mainstream-schools-leaflet-a5-11-print.pdf	Headteachers	For Information

Contact: Osama Hussein: osama.hussein@cheshireeast.gov.uk

 07514 516438

2. Training and Wider Development Opportunities

2.1 Governor Training on Exclusions & Suspensions: 07 October

Content	Audience	Purpose
Places are available on our 'Pupil Exclusions & Suspensions' training on Wednesday 07 October 2026 at 6:00pm, via MS Teams. In your role as a governor, you may be called upon to consider a pupil's exclusion/suspension and it's important that this involvement is handled correctly. This session aims to expand governors' understanding of their legal responsibilities in the exclusion process and the procedures schools should follow in accordance with the latest DfE requirements. This course is free to schools and academies who have purchased the Governor CPD Training package via ChESS Hub. For non-purchasing schools and academies, the charge is £75 per delegate. To book your place, please go to the 'Training' tab in GovernorHub or email schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Headteachers Chairs of Governors/ Trustees	CPD for Governors

Contact: School Governance: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk

 03001 235036

2.2 Governors' Conference Programme: 16 October 2026

Content	Audience	Purpose
Our annual half-day conference provides governors and trustees with an opportunity to network, whilst receiving updates on both national educational developments and key local authority initiatives. Please see this link for further details and the event programme. Safeguarding remains one of the most important responsibilities for governing boards, and the recent changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026 reflect the Department for Education's strengthened focus on protecting children and young people. However, with children's lives more connected to digital technology than ever before, schools face a rapidly evolving landscape of online risks and harms, many of which are closely linked to wider safeguarding concerns. To help governors and trustees navigate these challenges, we are delighted to welcome Dr Peter Buzzi, Director of Digital Safeguarding UK, as our keynote speaker. The conference will also include a LA update from Helen Wallace, our Director of Education, Skills and Inclusion alongside information on Cheshire East' Best Start in Life Programme, an introduction to Trauma-Informed whole-school practice and building a curriculum that supports children's mental health and wellbeing. Bookings are now open and can be made via Governor Hub or by emailing the School Governance & Liaison at schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk Conference costs: 1 x FREE delegate place per CE school. <i>An additional free delegate place* is available to schools that have purchased the CE Governor CPD Training package for 2026-27. Additional delegate places for non-buy-back schools will be charged at £40 per delegate*. * Subject to availability</i>	Chairs of Governors/ Trustees	CPD for Governors

Contact: School Governance: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 03001 235036

2.3 Supporting Residents from East Timor in Cheshire East

Webinar: 30 September

Content	Audience	Purpose
We are pleased to invite you to attend our upcoming webinar: Supporting Residents from East Timor in Cheshire East • Date: Wednesday 30 September • Time: 12:30pm to 1:30pm • Location: Online via Microsoft Teams This webinar has been co-produced by local partners to increase understanding of the East Timorese community in Cheshire East and support inclusive, culturally competent practice across health, social care and community settings. The session will explore: • The East Timorese • community in Cheshire East. • Cultural factors that • may influence access to services and engagement. • Local support services, • community assets and partnership opportunities. • Practical ways to • improve confidence when supporting East Timorese residents. The webinar is open to professionals, volunteers, community organisations and partner agencies. Book your place here: https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/05e61028-104e-44f0-a090-1e5524f86259@cdb92d10-23cb-4ac1-a9b3-34f4faaa2851 Please find the poster attached. We would be grateful if you could share this invitation and poster with colleagues, teams and networks who may be interested in attending.	All Schools, Academies and MATs	For Information & Action

Contact: Hayley Antipas: hayley.antipas@cheshireeast.gov.uk

 07826 513410

2.4 Autism Training - Making Sense of Neurodivergence: 12 October

Content	Audience	Purpose
The above training will take place at 3:30pm, via MS Teams. The session raises awareness and introduces neurodivergence. You will explore areas of difference and identify some initial reasonable adjustments to be considered when supporting neurodivergent pupils. Link: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/310511	School staff: teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime assistants and office staff.	For Information & CPD

Contact: Clare O'Connor: Theautismteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 01270 685960

2.5 Autism Training on Practical Classroom Adaptations: 20 October

Content	Audience	Purpose
Autism Training 'Practical Classroom Adaptations for Autistic Students (10 Top Tips)'- 20 October This is an online, twilight training session from 3:30pm- 5:00pm, which provides 10 practical and accessible strategies (top tips) to use in the classroom to support the learning and engagement of autistic students. Link: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/310536	Teachers and SENCOs	For Information & CPD

Contact: Clare O'Connor: Theautismteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 01270 685960

2.6 Relational Practice in Schools Project 2026-27: 21 October

Content	Audience	Purpose
Please sign up to this free webinar on the use of Relational Practice in schools. The two-hour webinar acts as an introduction to an exciting project run by the Educational Psychology Service. This project aims to pilot the use/and development of Relational Practice in a Cheshire East secondary school. Dr Matthew Coxon will introduce a model of Relational Practice in Schools and invite expressions of interest from secondary head teachers to pilot relational changes to policy, and direct practice. The selected school will gain free access to up to ten days of EP support to implement this. • Date: 21 October 2026 • Time: 4pm-6pm • Location: MS Teams • ChESS Hub Sign Up: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/309748 Link: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/366307367630123?p=N8NTh0aX6pRhm41WIP	Secondary School Headteachers	For Information

Contact: Dr Matthew Coxon: matthew.coxon@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 07866 075676

2.7 Autism Training - Pathological Demand Avoidance: 10 November

Content	Audience	Purpose
This is a twilight training, 3:30pm - 5:00pm, which takes place via Microsoft Teams. The session will provide an introduction to and understanding of Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome (PDA) and discuss approaches/strategies to help. Link: https://chesshub.co.uk/Event/310537	Class teachers, support staff, SENCOs and Senior Leadership teams	For Information & CPD

Contact: Clare O'Connor: Theautismteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 01270 685960

2.8 Headteacher Workshop: 11 November 2026

Content	Audience	Purpose
We are pleased to confirm that we will be running a Headteacher workshop for our buy-back schools and academies. • Date: Wednesday 11 November 2026 • Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm - refreshments will be served from 8:45am • Location: Middlewich Community Church, Brooks Lane, Middlewich, CW10 0JG • Cost: £35.00 Places are available to book through ChESS. The places are limited to one delegate per school.	Headteachers	For Information

Contact: Katie Dean: deanhadden@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 07786 686716

2.9 New to SENCO and Inclusive Teaching and Learning Training

Content	Audience	Purpose
Due to the success of these courses over the last 4 years, both the 'New to SENCO' 3-day course and 'Inclusive Teaching and Learning' 6-day courses are being delivered again. These are now live for booking on Chess Hub. Both will take place face to face at Holmes Chapel Community Centre. Book your places now as they are limited. Link: https://www.chesshub.co.uk/ https://live-chesheast.cloud.contensis.com/pdf/schools/bulletins/documents-for-bulletins-2026/september/inclusion-support-team-training-2026-27.pdf	SENCOs, Early Career Teachers, TA's and LSA's	CPD

Contact: Andrea Phelps: andrea.phelps-brown@cheshireeast.gov.uk

2.10 Upcoming Health & Safety and First Aid training courses

Content		Audience	Purpose
PLEASE BOOK via ChESS HUB		Headteachers, Site Maintenance Officers, Caretakers and First Aiders	To gain an accredited qualification in Health and Safety / First Aid
Course details	Venue & date 2026		
First Aid at Work Re-qualification (2 day) course £125 per delegate THIS COURSE IS FOR TREATING ADULTS (age 16+)	Municipal Buildings Crewe Tuesday 29 & Wednesday 30 September		
Paediatric First Aid (blended-learning) (6 hours e-learning and 6 hours face-to-face training) £104 per delegate THIS COURSE IS FOR TREATING INFANTS & CHILDREN (ages 0 to 16)	Macclesfield Town Hall Wednesday 7 October Municipal Buildings, Crewe Tuesday 13 October		
Emergency First Aid at Work £63 per delegate THIS COURSE IS FOR TREATING ADULTS (age 16+)	Macclesfield Town Hall Thursday 5 November		
IOSH Managing Safely (3 day) course 09:00 to 17:00 each day £225 per delegate	Municipal Buildings, Crewe Thurs 12, Fri 13 & Fri 20 November		
IOSH Managing Safely Refresher (1 day) course 09:00 to 16:30 £165 per delegate	Macclesfield Town all Monday 16 November		
First Aid at Work (blended-learning) (6 hours e-learning and 12 hours face-to-face training) £137 per delegate THIS COURSE IS FOR TREATING ADULTS (age 16+)	Macclesfield Town Hall Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December		
Course times – 09:30 to 16:30 unless otherwise stated			

Contact: Diane Owen, Corporate Health & Safety Team: dianek.owen@cheshireeast.gov.uk

2.11 English Hubs Northern Network: 18 September Update

Content	Audience	Purpose
Please see link below to the English Hubs Northern Network update, funded by the Department for Education. Link: https://live-chesheast.cloud.contensis.com/pdf/schools/bulletins/documents-for-bulletins-2026/september/english-hub-update.pdf	All	For Information

Contact: Kerri Hall: khall@laceygreen.cheshire.sch.uk

☎ 01625 783335

3. Traded Service Information

There are no items in this area.

4. General Information

4.1 SingFest – Pop Parade

Content	Audience	Purpose
The Love Music Trust is pleased to be running Singfest - Pop Parade, an exciting new singing project for Key Stage 2 pupils across Cheshire. Following the refreshed National Plan for Music Education and its emphasis on the importance of singing in schools, Singfest will give pupils the opportunity to develop their musical skills and experience the excitement of performing as part of a large ensemble. This year's project features two medleys inspired by popular boyband and girl-group hits. Participating schools will receive a comprehensive resource package and take part in four online rehearsals, culminating in a live rehearsal and massed celebration concert at Victoria Hall, Hanley, on Thursday 18 March 2027. Hundreds of young voices will come together for an unforgettable day of music, lights and celebration, featuring feel-good hits, dazzling performances and the electric atmosphere that makes Singfest so special. For further information and details of how your school can take part, please follow the link below: Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfz_XEtyQJuCmp_kqQhbu4GU45STI2Yf9MvPahQBczr6B_U9g/viewform?usp=dialog	Primary Academies and Schools, Secondary KS3	For Information

Contact: John Barber: jbarber@lovemusictrust.com

☎ 01270 766214

4.2 Children's Commissioner: The Big Future Survey

Content	Audience	Purpose
The Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, is currently inviting children to take part in 'The Big Future' survey, with the aim of gathering and listening to their thoughts on what it's like to be a child today – the changes they would like to see in their communities, their biggest concerns, and their hopes for the future. The survey will take children approximately 5 minutes to complete and includes questions about having fun things to do in the local area, online safety, hopes about the future, and other topics. Two extra questions about voting and worries are shown to children aged 12 and older. School pupils are asked questions about school. The survey link will remain live until October half term. The closing date is Friday 23 October 2026. On the website, schools can find a number of resources to share with children and young people, to help them understand how they can have their voices heard and take part in The Big Future survey. The resources can be used in form time, lessons or assemblies, in youth groups, sessions with young people, and at home.	School & Academy Leaders	For Information & Action

Contact: School Governance: schoolgovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk

☎ 0300 1235036