



Happy New Year! The autumn term is always a hard one so we hope that you were able to rest and recuperate over the festive break.

The Virtual School have lots of FREE training opportunities for you this term which can be found on our website and also in the 'What's On' box on this page. If you haven't visited our website, our address is:

[Wokinghamvirtualschool.co.uk](http://Wokinghamvirtualschool.co.uk)



Whilst we appreciate the end of term was very busy for all settings please can we remind you to ensure that attendance and academic data is filled out on PEPs for the autumn term. Thank you to the DTs who have done this already .

We love getting feedback and we hope that the new format of the PEP has made the document more user friendly. We also hope that 'STAR' is something that the children we care for are embracing. Ultimately we want all children to be successful, thriving, achieving and resilient.



 HM Government

### Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children

December 2023

You will have all seen that the government has published the revised version of Working Together to Safeguard Children following the consultation.

#### Key points are:

- ⇒ No statutory roles or functions have been removed
- ⇒ Increased emphasis on multi-agency working
- ⇒ Changes to the law included, eg: Domestic Violence Act 2021
- ⇒ Greater emphasis on extra-familial harms and exploitation

## Whats On

- ★ Monday 15 January 2024 Primary/Junior School Application Deadline
- ★ Tuesday 16 January 2024 - 15:30 - 16:30 ePEP Refresher Training
- ★ Tuesday 30 January 2024 Emotional Based School Avoidance training (Shute End)
- ★ Monday 12 February 2024 - Friday 16 February 2024 Half Term (WBC)
- ★ Thursday 22 February 2024 - 15:00 - 16:30 Wokingham DSL Meeting (Virtual)
- ★ Friday 1 March 2024 National Places Offer Day (Secondary)
- ★ Monday 11 March 2024 PP+ Deadline
- ★ Monday 18 March 2024 PEP Deadline
- ★ Friday 29 March 2024 - Sunday 14 April 2024 Easter



## Championing Kinship Care

The National Kinship Care Strategy

December 2023

### Key Points:

- ⇒ The DfE has announced the expansion of the Virtual School's role which means that all **carers of children** under a Special Guardianship Order will be entitled to **information and advice** from the Virtual School, not just those who were previously in care. NAVHS welcome this announcement as it ends some of the inequality that currently exists
- ⇒ The Virtual School's **strategic responsibilities** for children with a social worker will be expanded to include children in all kinship arrangements.
- ⇒ **£3.8 million** in additional funding has been announced to support this expansion
- ⇒ These expanded duties come into effect from **September 2024**
- ⇒ This guidance does not change the eligibility criteria for the **pupil premium plus grant** or the **admissions code of practice** in relation to priority admission categories. (I've included this as it is likely to be one of the FAQs arising)

# MENTAL HEALTH

IS...	ISN'T...
A part of everyone	A sign of weakness
Something to look after	All in your head
Real and complex	Something you can just snap out of
Really important	Always a negative thing
Something you can change	Something to be ashamed of

January is usually a pretty bleak month so we just wanted to feature our mental health and wellbeing resources page on our website:

<https://www.wokinghamvirtualschool.co.uk/page/category/mental-health-and-wellbeing>

We are here if you ever need to talk about any of the cases you deal with on a daily basis. Supervision isn't always prioritised in schools but we are here.



Last year we had a fabulous conference and we are pleased to announce that we will be holding this year's conference at the same venue. It is a wonderful opportunity to network with other DTs & DLs in the local authority and for those out of authority we hope to make the event virtual too.

The conference will take place on: Tuesday 2nd July 2024

The Venue : Crowne Plaza Reading East

Address: Wharfedale Road, Winnersh Triangle. RG41 5TS

How do you book your place?

To reserve your place at the conference please click [here](#) or scan the QR code:



Don't forget the virtual school are here to assist you should you require any support. You can email us at the following addresses and we promise we will respond within 24 hours.

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Here's how to  
**CONTACT US!**



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