From: Cambridgeshire County Council
To: Cambs Schools News
Subject: Cambridgeshire Schools Newsletter issue 42 - Wednesday 11 November 2026
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Cambridgeshire Schools Newsletter

Christmas HAF Programme

Christmas HAF Programme runs 21 to 31 December 2026, offering eligible children up to 16 hours of funded holiday activities and family experiences. Participants have opportunities to enjoy enriching activities and experiences and food each session.

Children receiving Targeted Free School Meals (FSM) are automatically eligible. Bookings opened 9 November 2026, with eligibility vouchers sent to parents/carers by email and text.

Families experiencing financial hardship may also qualify through a professional referral. Professional referrals can be submitted via **Professional Code Request Form** (school staff only).

Christmas HAF poster

Please contact the HAF Team for further information: **HAF@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

New NHS Mental Health Crisis Text Service for people of all ages

NHS Central East has asked us to share the following information with you. If you wish to share the information, you will be able to simply copy the following text:

Mental health support is now one message away
If you're feeling anxious, overwhelmed, stressed or low, a new service can help. The new East of England Mental Health Crisis Text Service offers free, confidential support from trained mental health professionals, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can message about anything that's on your mind. You don't need a referral, and you

don’t need to give your name to start. The service is open to people of all ages across Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex.

How to get support:
- Text **SOS** to **80899**
- WhatsApp **0800 884 0655**
- Webchat: **NXG Thrive Crisis Text Service**

NHS mental health crisis text service poster
NHS mental health crisis Can't Stop Thinking poster

The service is commissioned by the NHS and delivered by NXG Thrive.

RE Resources from the Woolf Institute



Living in Harmony explores artistic, intellectual, and cultural sharing between Jews, Muslims, and Christians. The resources include units on: Music and Interfaith Encounter; Architecture and Interfaith Encounter; and Science and Interfaith Encounter.

Teachers can pick and choose video and written content and activities to create their own lessons or use the Institute's fully prepared lesson plans and slides for hour-long lesson periods.

Please contact the Woolf Institute by emailing **publicengagement@woolf.cam.ac.uk** if you are interested in accessing the free resources. Alternatively, scholars and staff from the Woolf Institute can come to your school to deliver a single session or a series.

Addenbrooke's charity initiatives - Festive Sock Day 2026!



Festive Sock Day is coming up on **Friday 4 December 2026**, and we’d love your school to ‘Join our Docs in Festive Socks’ in support of Addenbrookes Charity.

Pull on a pair, donate, and show you care!
It’s a simple, joyful way to celebrate the season, teach pupils about giving back to their community, and support your local hospital that cares for so many across our region.

Every pound raised helps fund life-changing projects. From Giggle Doctors and therapeutic play for young patients to groundbreaking research and treatment.

Save the date: Friday 4 December 2026 or you can choose a date that works for your school.

Scan the QR code below or sign up here: **Festive Sock Day**

Bike Rescue Project supports sustainable travel

The Bike Rescue project helps give unwanted and abandoned bicycles a new lease of life through repair and refurbishment. By returning bicycles to use, the scheme supports sustainable travel, reduces waste, and helps improve access to affordable transport options for local residents. The project forms part of Cambridgeshire County Council's wider work to encourage active travel across the county.

Further information about the scheme, and the form for bike donations can be found here: **Bike rescue, refurbishment and donation scheme form** and you can find out more about referral routes and how to get involved by emailing **Active Travel**

The Laurel Trust - funding for innovative school-based projects

Grants are available for collaborations of schools in all phases including early years and special schools/settings. The proposed research must focus on improving the life chances for children and young people from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Details of how to apply is on the **Laurel Trust website**, and the application round will close on **28 February 2026**. Online briefings will be held to support schools which are thinking of making an application.
Further information is available on this **Laurel Trust school-based projects information sheet**
and accompanying **Laurel Trust guidance on applying for funding for school-based projects**

Stay warm and well with Be Winter Wise

Be Winter Wise and Olly the Owl are back to help Cambridgeshire residents keep warm, safe and healthy this winter.

The campaign shares practical advice, useful information and local support to help throughout the colder months ahead – from tips on looking after your health and wellbeing and information on where to get support with the cost of living, to updates on gritting across the county.

Keep an eye out for Olly the Owl, our campaign mascot, who will be helping you to Be Winter Wise this winter.

For more information visit **www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/be-winter-wise** and follow along on social media using #BeWinterWise.

Cambridgeshire County Council’s Communications team has developed a digital toolkit containing a range of key messages and assets for your own channels. Your support will help us reach more residents, especially those who may need some extra help this winter. To request a copy of the toolkit, please contact **campaigns@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**.

Message from the Beth Shalom Reform

Synagogue (Cambridge) - Mitzvah Day Project

We would like to invite our local schools to join us in celebrating Mitzvah Day—the UK's largest faith-led day of social action. Founded in 2005 by Laura Marks CBE, Mitzvah Day has since grown into a powerful international movement with tens of thousands of volunteers taking part across the UK and globally each November. Rooted in the Jewish values of repairing the world (Tikkun Olam) and acts of loving-kindness, it brings people of all faiths and backgrounds together to give their time and care to those in need, and to partner with and support local charities.

Beth Shalom's core aim this year is to strengthen Mitzvah Day's presence across Cambridgeshire, using hands-on social action to invigorate grassroots interfaith activities and build lasting social cohesion. We are especially honored to be supported this year by the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire, Francis Burkitt, who holds the honorary patronage for our regional initiatives.

There are two ways for schools to get involved: you can either register your own independent social action project on the official Mitzvah Day website, or join us directly for our Cambridge event on **22 November**. This year, our primary focus is supporting the incredible local charity Emmaus by collecting vital goods—including good quality clothing, non-perishable food items, and toiletries—alongside fundraising. To cap off our day of giving back, we will also host a vibrant celebration featuring interfaith singing, dancing, and an open microphone session. We would love for your students and staff to be part of this inspiring day of unity and community impact.

If you are interested in joining Mitzvah Day and registering your school/community project, please go to:
Registration Information - Mitzvah Day
If you are interested in attending Beth Shalom Mitzvah Day event, please contact:
aviya.cahn@gmail.com

Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue Mitzvah Day Project Coordinator

Cambridge Festival of Islamic Arts

This is open to all students and teachers across Cambridgeshire along with an exhibition at the Central Mosque in Cambridge. Discounts are available and you should contact **admin@cfia.co.uk**

• Tuesday 24 November: Experience the spiritual and artistic heritage of the Mevlevi (Whirling Dervish) tradition with classical Turkish Sufi music and the sacred Sema ceremony, a practice recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge. (**Book via Eventbrite**)

• Wednesday 25 November: The Al Firdaus Ensemble draw on centuries of cultural exchange to inspire the heart, celebrate cultural diversity, and build bridges of peace and understanding through music and poetry—featuring influences from across the Mediterranean and beyond. West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge. (**Book via Eventbrite**)

• Saturday 28 November at Cambridge Corn Exchange: Encounter aural traditions of praise, poetry and spirituality from across Türkiye, the Balkans and the wider Muslim world, with Mesut Kurtis, a world-leading performer of Islamic devotional music.

Programme and tickets — The Cambridge Festival of Islamic Arts

Local Early Education Partnership (LEEP) Meetings



Cambridgeshire Early Years, Childcare and School Readiness Service is launching new kind of meeting. Replacing existing forums, networks and briefings, Local Early Education Partnership's (LEEP) will support smoother transitions into Reception and help improve Good Level of Development outcomes for children.

Meetings will be available across five localities: Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire, with both face-to-face and online options.

A short **webinar** explains how LEEPs support the Best Start in Life initiative. Attendance is free and they are being held in these next two weeks. Book your place at the **Local Early Education Partnership webpage**.

Small Schools Early Years cluster group

This term the Early Years team are planning their first meeting of the 'Small Schools cluster group' for practitioners working in single-form Reception classes within schools with a PAN of 30 or fewer pupils. We recognise that working in a smaller school can bring unique opportunities and challenges, and that you may be the only EYFS specialist in your setting.

This cluster will provide a supportive and safe space to connect with colleagues in similar contexts, share experiences, discuss challenges, and learn from one another. If you are interested, please complete the following questionnaire and we will get in touch with you: **Reception classes in smaller schools questionnaire**

Royal Ballet and Opera design CPD



Royal Ballet and Opera is bringing free teacher CPD, classroom resources and Live Design Lessons with no prior design experience needed. This programme, which is being held on **Tuesday 23 March 2027**, will help teachers and pupils explore the story, character and mood through visual design, inspired by productions such as `Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and `The Magic Flute'. Find out more here: **RBO Design CPD**

This half-day session is open to teachers of all key stages and SEND, as well as those facilitating Design in education in any way.

To register your interest, contact **Anna Day**, Creative Learning and Engagement Coordinator, The Arts Theatre

Cambridge University seeks families to help with research into supporting young children after difficult or frightening experiences

Researchers at the University of Cambridge are seeking your support in finding families who are able to help with this project. They are looking for families with children aged 3-8 years who have experienced a frightening or distressing event and may be showing signs such as increased worries, fears, nightmares, avoiding reminders of what happened, or difficulty coping with everyday activities.

The study aims to understand which types of support and interventions may be most helpful for young children and families following difficult experiences.

QR code and guidance for enrolment

To find out more, please contact Alicja Podgorski at **alicja.podgorski@mrc-cbu.cam.ac**.uk or 01223 355294.

Inclusion Week 2026 at Grafham Water Centre: 23 - 27 November

Grafham Water Centre is delighted to announce the launch of Inclusion Week 2026, taking place from **23-27 November 2026**.

The week will showcase a commitment to making outdoor learning and activities more accessible, inclusive and welcoming for all. It will bring together schools, community organisations, activity providers and inclusion specialists to share knowledge, develop skills and celebrate new opportunities for participation.

Inclusion Week Programme
Monday 23 November Equal Adventure Module 1 Training A professional development course delivered at Grafham Water Centre, open to the public and outdoor practitioners interested in developing their inclusive delivery skills.

Tuesday 24 November Inclusion Summit Hosted by Grafham Water Centre in partnership with Cambridgeshire Outdoors, Living Better and the Activity Alliance. The summit will bring together over 40 organisations from across Cambridge and Peterborough, including outdoor activity providers, National Governing Bodies and community organisations, to explore ways of increasing access to outdoor activities for all.

Throughout the week the centre will be sharing updates, highlights, photographs and key outcomes across its social media channels and wider communications network, and asks for your help in spreading the word by sharing content and celebrating the importance of inclusion in outdoor education. The centre looks forward to showcasing these exciting developments, and working together to create more opportunities for everyone to access and enjoy the outdoors.

Inclusion Week at Grafham Water Centre poster

The Enrichment Framework - you cannot celebrate what you cannot see



We are excited to share details of a free to attend online seminar about The Enrichment Framework.

The session will help schools understand and share ideas about responding strategically to the new DfE Enrichment Framework. Participants will explore how to make extra-curricular provision more purposeful, equitable and accessible, while embedding enrichment within whole-school improvement.

This workshop will not advocate for offering more activities, but rather encourage schools to think strategically about why enrichment matters, who it is for, and how its wider impact can be captured.

Details:

Monday 7 December, 3.45 to 5pm
Free to Cambridgeshire LA schools (Academies - £20)

Booking is essential – Please book **here** (in the PE section)

Enrichment Framework Recipe Book poster

If you have any questions about any aspect of the enrichment framework, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ian Roberts

MPCT Cambridge: Supporting young people into future careers

MPCT Cambridge supports young people aged 16–18 and learners aged 19+ to develop the skills, confidence and qualifications needed for their future. Based at the Army Reserve Centre, Coldhams Lane, Cambridge, the college offers qualifications in Uniformed Public Services, Preparation for Military Service, Maths and English Functional Skills, and GCSE resits.

Delivered by experienced military veterans, the programme combines practical learning, physical training and personal development, building resilience, teamwork, leadership and discipline. Bursaries may be available to eligible learners.

For further information, contact MPCT on **0303 003 3677** or email **enquiries@mpct.co.uk**, or visit **www.mpct.co.uk**.

Cambridgeshire Music CPD Conference - Cultivating Musical Excellence. From curriculum to culture: building exceptional musical experiences for all

A one-day conference for music specialists and non-specialists, focused on achieving musical excellence through curriculum design and a strong musical culture. Includes keynote speakers, tailored workshops for primary, secondary and SEND settings, and discussion of the forthcoming changes to the National Curriculum.

The conference will take place on **Tuesday 29 June 2027** between 9.30 and 3.30 at Cambridgeshire Music, New School Rd, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9LL.
Early bird tickets now on sale for £75 per attendee. For more information on how to book a

ticket, please visit **CPD Conference 2027 / Cambridgeshire Music**

Physical Education and Outdoor Learning Conference 2027

We are excited to launch details of this year's PE and Outdoor Learning Conference

Save the Date

23 February 2027 at Grafham Water Centre

Information about the conference programme, early-bird opportunities, and booking details will be shared with schools and settings shortly If you have any questions about any aspect of PE then please do not hesitate to contact me. We should be your first port of call

Physical Education and Outdoor Learning Conference 2027 poster

Ian Roberts – **pe.adviser@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

Training and events

Training provider: CCC

SIS – Unpicking the End of KS2 teacher assessment framework for writing – English tab
For Year 6 teachers and English subject leaders. Session 3 of 4 – Focus on register. Monday 16 November 2026 3.45pm until 5.15pm online. £65 per school for LA schools and £75 per school for Cambridgeshire academies, out of county schools or independent schools.

SIS – Developing Practice in English for ECTs – English tab
For ECTs in KS1 and KS2. Session 2 of 4 – Focus on promoting spoken language. Tuesday 17 November 2026. 3.30pm until 5.30pm. £55 per school for LA schools and £65 per school for Cambridgeshire academies, out of county schools or independent schools.

SIS – Developing Practice in maths for ECTs – Maths tab
For ECTs in KS1 and KS2. Session 1 of 4 – Focus on meeting the needs of lower and higher attaining pupils. Tuesday 24 November 2026. 3.30pm until 5.30pm. £55 per school for LA schools and £65 per school for Cambridgeshire academies, out of county schools or independent schools.

Supporting Physical Education for TAs and adults supporting learning
Audience-This course is ideal for Primary, Special and Secondary School teachers who teach Physical Education.
24 November 2026 – 1.30pm-3.30pm, online
£60 for Cambs maintained schools, £54 for Cambs Academies and non-Cambs schools

Inspiring leadership in PE programme
Audience: This package is ideal for Primary, and Special School teachers who lead Physical Education
02/12/26,27/01/27, 24/02/27, 41/03/27 & 05/05/27. All online - 1.30pm-3.30pm.
£54 for Cambs maintained schools, £60 for Cambs Academies and all non-Cambs schools (£270 (LA) or £300 Non-LA) if booked 'en bloc'

Teaching RSE in Primary & Special Schools
17th November 2026, 1.30pm-3.30pm OR 6th May 2027, 3.30pm-5pm. Online.
£40 for subscribing schools/licence holders of the Primary Personal Development Programme, £55 for non-licence holders.
Audience: New to teaching RSE

Understanding Childhood Anxiety & EEBSA
24th November 2026 1.30pm-3pm OR 9th February 3.45pm - 5pm Online
Cambridgeshire Schools can attend for free. Schools from Peterborough and other counties may also attend. Cost: £40 for licence holders of the Primary Personal Development Programme, £55 for non-licence holders
Audience: Primary, Special & Secondary Leaders, PSHE Leaders, classroom teachers, support staff or governors

Healthy Lunchtimes for Midday Supervisors
24th November 2026, 1.45pm - 2.45pm. Online
Cambridgeshire Schools can attend for free. Schools from Peterborough and other counties may also attend. Cost £40 for Licence holders of the Primary Personal Development Programme, £55 for non-licence holders
Audience: Midday supervisors and any staff supporting children at lunchtimes

Quick links

SEND Information Hub (Local Offer)
SEND OAP toolkits - Learn Together
Cambridgeshire Learn Together
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Teaching School Hub
Early Years, Childcare, and School Readiness Service
Knowledge Hub
Cambridgeshire Schools Newsletter – Learn Togethe r
Grafham Water Centre
Burwell House

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