

DfE updates and changes – September to November

Child Poverty Taskforce kicks off urgent work to publish strategy in spring – Press release

1. Urgent work on tackling one of Britain's biggest social injustices begun yesterday [Wednesday 14 August] as the Government's Child Poverty Taskforce met for the first time [Child Poverty Taskforce kicks off urgent work to publish strategy in spring - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
Published 15/08/24
2. Wiltshire's position: A pre-meeting briefing will be held prior to this committee to share Wiltshire's Affordable Schools Strategy.

Elective home education - Guidance

3. Guidance for local authorities and schools about children educated at home. Updated 'Elective home education: guidance for local authorities' with 2 new sets of attendance regulations that came into force on 19 August 2024 [Elective home education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) updated 19/08/24
4. Wiltshire's position: Our elective home education policy already provides full coverage of expectations from this guidance and minor changes (i.e. wording) have not affected the policy.

Children missing education – Statutory guidance

5. Statutory guidance for local authorities and advice for other groups on helping children who are missing education get back into it. Updated to bring the guidance in line with the Working together to improve attendance statutory guidance and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 [Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) updated 19/08/24
6. Wiltshire's position: Our children missing education policy already provides full coverage of expectations from this guidance as this update relates to Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Minor changes to policy are in process within the Education Welfare Service.

High needs provision capital allocations – Guidance

7. Local authority funding to support the provision of new places and improve existing provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision. Updated 'High needs provision capital allocations: 2023 to 2025' with new local authority information and changed its title to 'High needs provision capital allocations: 2021 to 2025 [High needs provision capital allocations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) updated 20/08/24
8. Wiltshire's position: Wiltshire Council was awarded £6,373,219 of additional high needs capital grant for 2023/24 and a further £2,591,776 capital grant for 2024/25. In addition, Wiltshire Council was awarded £5,700,100 Safety Valve capital grant towards a new special school

provision in a separate capital allocation in September 2024. These funds will be used to deliver additional capacity in primary and secondary resource bases, special school provision and alternative provision accommodation solutions.

Government funded childcare offer to kick in from next week – Press release

9. Hundreds of thousands of parents of children from nine months old take up new 15 government funded hours of early education from Monday [Government funded childcare offer to kick in from next week - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) published 30/08/24
10. Wiltshire's position: Some new expanded places are available for children aged two and under. 91.8% (963) of two year codes have been validated and 89.91%(2467) of under two codes. The national averages are 86.15% and 86.45% respectively.

Single headline Ofsted grades scrapped in landmark school reform – Press release

11. The government announced that it will stop single headline grades for schools with immediate effect as they fail to provide a fair and accurate assessment of overall school performance across a range of areas [Single headline Ofsted grades scrapped in landmark school reform - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) published 02/09/24
12. Wiltshire's position: We welcome the move from single headlines to a more balanced reflection of a school's performance, strengths and areas for development through the reporting of grades across 5 areas.

These areas are:

- a. Quality of Education
- b. Leadership and Management
- c. Behaviour and Attitudes
- d. Personal Development
- e. Early Years and Sixth Form

Grading in this manner will be in place across this academic year with a move to using a School Report Card in September 2025. Our school effectiveness team continue to support all maintained schools and self-evaluation work with school leaders reflects the focus on the areas outlined here.

School food standards: resources for schools – Guidance

13. Resources to help schools plan and provide healthy food in schools. Added a link to the Schools Allergy Code in 'Allergy guidance for schools' [School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) updated 19/09/24
14. Wiltshire's position: The School Food Standards and related resources are highlighted to all schools through the Wiltshire Healthy Schools Programme and related webpages and CPD events. In order to gain accreditation, Wiltshire Healthy Schools are required to provide evidence that they are: meeting the National School Food Standards, providing healthy food, promoting

healthy eating, providing opportunities to develop cookery skills and have implemented a whole school approach to food.

123 schools are currently part of the Wiltshire Healthy Schools Programme, with 83 schools holding Wiltshire Healthy Schools accreditation.

Breakfast clubs' early adopters scheme - Guidance

15. Information on the breakfast clubs early adopters scheme for schools [Breakfast clubs early adopters scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) published 23/09/24
16. Wiltshire's position: During September, Wiltshire schools were encouraged to join the breakfast clubs early adopters scheme. Early adopter schools will be confirmed by early 2025 and the scheme will launch in the summer term (April 2025).

Eligible Wiltshire schools have also been encouraged to access the National School Breakfast Programme, which has been extended and is now running until July 2025.

Teaching relationships education to prevent sexual abuse – Research and analysis

17. A rapid evidence assessment of the academic and grey literature on teaching relationships education to prevent sexual abuse [Teaching relationships education to prevent sexual abuse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) published 27/09/24
18. Wiltshire's position: This new research was highlighted to Wiltshire schools during October in online news articles, newsletters and during CPD for PSHE subject leaders. The new recommendations support previous guidance on good practice for relationships education.

Teaching about healthy relationships has been a focus of recent partnership work and support for Wiltshire schools including from the NSPCC at Healthy Schools network meetings. Free interactive, creative media workshops and assemblies on healthy relationships have been offered to schools as part of the public health approach to breaking the cycle of domestic abuse, funded by Wiltshire Council.

Cost of school uniforms survey 2023 – Research and analysis

19. This research provides an understanding of the costs of school uniform in England and updates previous research completed in 2007 and 2015 [Cost of school uniforms survey 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) published 27/09/24
20. Wiltshire's position: A pre-meeting briefing will be held prior to this committee to share Wiltshire's Affordable Schools Strategy.

Thousands of pupils receive support to boost school attendance – Press release

21. Government makes significant expansion to size of attendance mentoring to get thousands more persistently absent pupils back in school [Thousands of pupils receive support to boost school attendance - GOV.UK](#) published 11/10/24

22. Wiltshire's position: The funding for this programme is being distributed to 10 areas with the poorest attendance in England. Wiltshire's overall attendance for 2023-2024 was not significantly lower than national average overall attendance (0.6%). Therefore, Wiltshire is not eligible for this support. Wiltshire services remain committed to supporting pupils to achieve excellent attendance and have robust processes in place to reflect the requirements of new statutory guidance and regulations.

School-based nurseries plan kicks off with £15 million funding – Press release

23. First round of funding launches for up to 300 school-based nurseries – part of government's Opportunity Mission to give every child the best start in life [School-based nurseries plan kicks off with £15 million funding - GOV.UK](#) published 17/10/24
24. Wiltshire's position: Commissioning have mapped all provision on school site, whether run by the school or not. Officers have liaised with School Places Planning over under capacity school in areas of low birth rate. Officers are speaking with schools about the opportunity and supporting applications where appropriate.

Early years places and workforce need – Transparency data

25. Analysis of the need to create places and recruit workers due to the entitlement expansion [Early years places and workforce need - GOV.UK](#) published 17/10/24
26. Wiltshire's position: There are 10,208 registered early years places, due to a lack of appropriately qualified staff only 9,073 places are currently available to children. Officers regularly attend Job Centre venues and careers fairs to raise the profile of early years as a career option so that more places can be offered.

Managing asbestos in your school or college - Guidance

27. Guidance for school leaders, governors, local authorities and academy trusts about managing asbestos in schools and colleges [Managing asbestos in your school or college - GOV.UK](#) published 31/10/24
28. Wiltshire's position: This updated guidance aims to help schools and colleges understand their duties in relation to asbestos management. It provides further clarity on the role of duty holders and employers, practical information about what duty holders are required to do to manage asbestos effectively and an updated section on what to do if things go wrong. The guidance has been circulated to all schools. The LA undertakes routine asbestos surveys of all maintained schools.

Ofsted opens registrations for new childcare provider type – News story

29. Ofsted has today begun accepting applications for a new category of childcare provider, as part of a series of changes the Department for Education has introduced to give the early years sector more flexibility [Ofsted opens registrations for new childcare provider type - GOV.UK](#) published 01/11/24

30. Wiltshire's position: The Department for Education has introduced new flexibilities for childminders from 1 November to help more childminders join and stay in the profession. The new flexibilities will:

- Create a new category of childminder (childminder without domestic premises) who work entirely from non-domestic premises
- Increase, from 3 to 4, the total number of people that can work together under a childminder's registration (including the childminder)
- Give childminders and providers of childcare on domestic premises (CODPs) more flexibility, allowing them to spend more time operating outside of domestic premises, such as a community hall or school
- Increase the number of people needed for CODPs to operate from 4 or more, to 5 or more people providing care. Note: CODPs that were registered, or applied to register, before 1 November can continue operating with 4 or more people.

The Early Years teams are seeing this as a positive step in enabling more childminders to enter the profession and this will support the LA to meet its sufficiency duties. The Early Years Team will be supporting both current and new childminders to understand the changes and ensure they are operating under the correct registration.