



Stress Awareness Month 2023

It goes without saying that professionals working in the education sector go above and beyond daily, with some colleagues finding the level of responsibility and workload leading to feelings of stress. April 2023 is national Stress Awareness Month, organised by the non-profit organisation the Stress Management Society*.

Stress for staff in an educational setting can be brought on by the multiple and complex demands of working in a fast paced, high stakes environment. In addition, students are also known to experience feelings of stress due to the pressure to succeed, relationships and social interactions and a wide range of pastoral issues, to list but a few examples.

Connex Education Partnership recognise the demands on all school stakeholders and are committed to providing useful training to support school leaders to better equip their community with tools to cope with feelings of stress. Through Connex Education Academy, schools can access a breadth of online courses providing specific knowledge and understanding of issues surrounding mental health.

Courses targeting issues of wellbeing include **Awareness of Learner Wellbeing**, **Awareness of Mental Health**, the **Certificate in the Fundamentals of Wellbeing** and the **Senior Mental Health Lead Programme (SMHL)**.

This Newsletter will cover some of the hot topics being discussed in school's this January, including:

- **Stress Awareness Month 2023**
- **Levelling out the Playing Field through Tuition**
- **Excellence in Languages**
- **Backing for School Sports**
- **Quick Search Eligibility for EEF Programmes**
- **Artificial Intelligence in Education**
- **The Coronation of King Charles III**
- **Post 16 Funding Withdrawal for Overlap with T Levels**
- **Water Safety and Swimming Resources**
- **Earth Day 2023**
- **Fancy a Brew?**
- **Magic Breakfast Fundraising**

Our SMHL course is approved by the Department for Education who can provide £1200 of grant funding for schools and colleges wishing to engage in the training.

[See Senior Mental Health Lead Program](#) >>



Levelling out the Playing Field through Tuition

Data from The Sutton Trust* published in their report '**Tutoring – The New Landscape**' in March 2023, suggests that in-school tuition delivered through the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) has had a positive impact on levelling out the playing field for students from a disadvantaged background. It was found that in 2021-22, the proportion of students engaging in any form of tutoring was almost equal between young people from the most and least deprived backgrounds. Whilst some parents in the most privileged areas choose to invest in private tuition for their children, the impact of large-scale school-based personalised tuition for deprived students, has been a game changer. The delivery of the NTP's catch up programme enables school to offer top quality tuition to the students most in need of intervention, at a subsidised cost.

Connex Education Partnership has been the largest provider of the DfE's National Tutoring Programme since it launched in November 2020. In this time, we've delivered high quality subsidised tutoring for over 70,000 disadvantaged pupils and employ over 2,000 qualified teachers as tutors. Our nationwide network means we can deliver tuition irrespective of a pupil's postcode.

If you have students who you feel would benefit from some intensive intervention in the run up to the end of the school year, **get in touch** to find out how we can help.



Excellence in Languages

According to statistics gleaned by The British Council*, French remains the most commonly taught modern foreign language in schools nationwide. German and Spanish are also frequently delivered in both primary and secondary schools. But have you ever thought about expanding your language offer?

The Centre for Latin Excellence* and the Mandarin Excellence Programme* are both looking to recruit new schools to deliver their curriculums.

Supported by the Department for Education, the Latin Excellence Programme will provide a fully resourced Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum, delivered via regional support hubs. The Mandarin Excellence Programme is designed for a minimum of 20 students in Year 7.

More information about each of the programmes can be found here:

<https://latinexcellence.org/the-programme>
<https://ci.ioe.ac.uk/mandarin-excellence-programme/join/>



Backing for School Sports

On International Women's Day 2023, the Government announced new standards designed to ensure a fair and equitable offer of sports in schools for girls and boys. Following the continued success of the England Lioness football team, the new standards aim to enable girls to access the same sports as boys as part of both curriculum and extracurricular time. A large financial boost has also been ringfenced to support the continued levelling out of the playing field between girls and boys.

The #LetGirlsPlay* campaign has had significant impact on both the interest and uptake of girls playing football. Schools which successfully deliver equal opportunities for their girls and boys can receive recognition through the School Games Mark*. The window for the 2022/23 School Games Mark application process is now open and will close on Wednesday 26th July 2023. Schools deemed to be fulfilling the criteria for accreditation will receive a wooden award badge to display in school, plus the School Games Mark logo for use on publications and letterheads. Information about the accolade and how to apply can be found [here](#).

News of the cash boost and further commitment to delivery of high quality, equitable games in schools have been met with praise from sport leaders including the Youth Sport Trust's* CEO, Ali Oliver MBE.



The confirmation of this funding is absolutely vital to the growth and development of a vibrant school sport culture which, in turn, is fundamentally important to children's health and wellbeing. Schools in England will be relieved they now have the certainty needed to plan PE, sport and physical activity provision for the next two academic years.

"Our vision is that every child, regardless of gender, affluence or ethnicity, can access the benefits that come from play and sport. Active children are not only healthier and happier, but they also perform better in the classroom"

Ali Oliver MBE

Read more about the Government's announcement and commitment to school sports [here](#).

Quick Search Eligibility for EEF Programmes

The Education Endowment Foundation* (EEF) support education providers to make best use of evidence and research to improve teaching and learning. They are committed to the widespread sharing of tools and projects intended to have positive impact on student attainment. Their quick search facility allows you to find out which of their projects and programmes your school is eligible for at the touch of a button. Enter your school's name [here](#) to explore opportunities.

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An example of one of the EEF's recently updated evidence informed tools is their **'Supporting independence through questioning'** tool. Designed to help teachers to plan their subject specific questioning to support students with their metacognitive development and self-reflection, the editable tool is free to download. This is just one of the many fantastic resources available for educators to employ as part of their classroom delivery.

Artificial Intelligence in Education

School staff are no strangers to technological innovation, development, and change. From the shift from paper to electronic record keeping, the introduction of personal technologies such as iPads in the classroom or even the delivery of coding in lessons, educators are well versed in technological change.

The latest advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) is another example of the need to reflect upon and refine school based practice to better align education to available technologies. Described by Education Secretary (Gillian Keegan MP) as a 'game changer', AI is heading our way and requires us to be well informed to make the most of the opportunities, whilst being ready to react to the challenges. On the one hand, the development of large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT or Google Bard could have positive impact on reducing staff workload. Conversely, the challenges around potential student plagiarism and the impact on learning cannot be underestimated.

To this end, the JCQ* (Joint Council for Qualifications) have published guidance for schools. You can download the 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications' PDF from [this page](#).



The Department for Education has also shared a statement in response to the development of AI and the potential implications for education settings which can be read [here](#).

AI was one of the main focus areas in Gillian Keegan (MP)'s recent address to the BETT Show Ed Tech event. Her full address can be read [here](#).

The Coronation of King Charles III

On Saturday 6th May 2023, King Charles III will officially ascend to the throne as the next Monarch of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth. The colourful celebration of his Coronation will be marked with street parties, hours of live television coverage from London and of course, the additional Bank Holiday on Monday 8th May.

Schools who wish to commemorate the event have access to a range of materials and resources designed to support making the event special for all involved. A selection of which have been summarised on the next page.



- **Consider hosting a Coronation Big Lunch* event**
- **Provide opportunities to try out volunteering as part of The Big Help Out* scheme:**
- **Teaching resources from the Royal Collection Trust***
- **Teaching resources from Historic Royal Palaces***
- **Teaching resources from Twinkl***

A full overview of the official plans can be found **here**. We wish you a royally good time!



Water Safety and Swimming Resources

As we head towards the higher temperatures, longer evenings, and extended school holidays that the summer brings, schools will be turning their attention to the delivery of key messages around water safety and swimming. Soaring temperatures last summer tragically saw the loss of several young people's lives as they chose to enter unsafe outdoor water bodies.

To support primary schools in the delivery of a swimming and water safety curriculum, Swim England* have shared a resource pack giving specialist information to teachers relating to the topic. The resource pack can be downloaded **here**.



Post 16 Funding Withdrawal for Overlap with T Levels

Providers of Post 16 education will be aware of the impact that the introduction of T Levels will have to their curriculum offer. It is important to note that funding for some existing courses will be withdrawn in 2024 owing to their overlap with T Levels. This important change will have impact on schools and colleges curriculum planning for 2023/24 and as such, we recommend the updated list of withdrawn courses is checked regularly. The list can be found **here**.



Earth Day 2023

This year's global Earth Day* was held on 22nd April. First launched in 1970, the event aims to 'diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide.' (www.earthday.org/about-us).

Schools wishing to promote and celebrate Earth Day can find inspiration and activities to engage with on the official **Earth Day website**. This may be of particular interest to Geography and Science Departments, School Student Councils or Environmental / Eco Groups.

As part of your Earth Day celebrations, check out our partnership with Our Classroom Climate which aims to deliver the biggest ever climate change education programme undertaken in the UK!

- Working together with schools across the UK we will measure and improve air quality in every classroom.
- Together we will use space station science to capture carbon directly from the classroom.
- Together we will capture the imagination of the next generation of scientists by providing a package of digital lessons, teacher resources and experiments for primary schools.
- A holistic and scientific curricula that meets the agenda of sustainability, clean air, levelling up, health, wellbeing, and environment.

[Find out more](#)



Fancy a Brew?

Whether you can't get the day started without one, head straight to the staffroom at the end of a full teaching day to grab one or can't wait to have a good chat over one... tea is an integral part of many of our days!

But have you ever thought about tea's origins, production or impact? The United Nation's Generally Assembly* has designated 21st May 2023 as International Tea Day, and hopes it will provide an opportunity for us to reflect on tea's links with international development, climate change and food security worldwide. Why not host a staff room event to encourage staff to share a mug of Fair Trade Tea to mark this year's International Tea Day.

More information can be found [here](#).



Magic Breakfast Fundraising

Connex Education Partnership aims to provide 1 Million Breakfasts for the charity Magic Breakfast, which delivers free breakfasts to children facing hunger every day.

We believe that every child deserves a nutritious breakfast to start their day, and we are committed to making this a reality for as many children as possible. We hope that our partnership will inspire others to join us in this mission to end child hunger in the UK. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of children and young people who need our support the most.



Our very own Connex Liverpool and Manchester Directors, Hannah McDaid and Gail Andrews, are taking part in charity events this month to raise money for Magic Breakfast. Any donations made would be greatly appreciated!

To donate, click the links below

[Donate to Hannah's climb](#)

[Donate to Gail's marathon](#)

**Connex Education Partnership does not have any professional affiliations with organisations referenced throughout this newsletter. We share information that we believe will be of use and interest to schools in good faith, and in the spirit of sharing good practice for the benefit of all.*

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on TikTok**

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