



Westfield School's Early Help Offer

Once a child commences their educational journey at Westfield, they are supported academically, emotionally, physically and socially, to develop skills and strategies through our broad, specialist extended curriculum, including therapeutic and pastoral support. However, your child's journey also involves you.

Families of children who attend Westfield School may already be aware of a wide range of services and agencies available to support your child's development, having undertaken the full EHCP assessment process. However, our school mission statement starts with:

“A family atmosphere in which every member of the school community is valued in their uniqueness.”

We regard each individual family member as part of our school community, and understand that challenges and achievements can easily become intertwined. Small class sizes, and close teams of staff, lead to consistent and clear communication pathways for any issues, concerns or difficulties to be shared quickly. The use of Multi-me for home school communication, enables secure transfer of confidential issues, and the implementation of swift remedial strategies able to be supported by our school team.

‘We recognise the importance of good relationships with parents and carers of children in our care and attempt to preserve these whenever possible... Good child protection practice and outcome rely on positive, open, honest working partnership with parents and carers. We will ensure that all parents are treated with respect, courtesy and dignity...’

Westfield School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024

We are committed to supporting families at the earliest opportunity. Our family support adviser, Kate Newby, has many years of relevant experience, and can provide a safe, comfortable environment in which family members feel safe to share and offload. She can spend time with you; there is always time for a chat and, if you are nearby, the dedicated Family Support room has a kettle that is always warm. Kate's background at Westfield, in public service, and as a listening volunteer, has allowed her to assist children and their families throughout her working life.

Some recent examples include support with paperwork, liaising with the Children with Disabilities Team, connecting families, referrals to social care and health, advocacy during multi agency meetings, DLA and PIP queries, but most importantly having the time to listen. What might feel like an enormous problem undoubtedly has a solution and there is no such thing as a silly question. By removing some of the anxieties for parents, carers and the children in their care, the child's experience here at Westfield can flourish. For anyone wishing to 'study' in an informal relaxed setting, we are able to offer a course for Westfield parents and carers with a qualified facilitator, 'The Solihull Approach; Understanding your child's behaviour.' The course which runs over several weeks here at school is very accessible, insightful and is a place to learn, listen, to be, share and form friendships. Being the parent of a child with Special Educational Needs may sometimes feel overwhelming and lonely, the group for parents has provided a safe and fun opportunity to meet others.

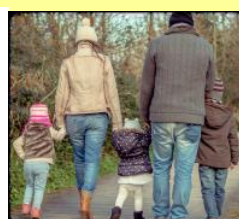
We also organise regular coffee and cake events, (other beverages and snacks are available 😊) for parents and carers, attended by colleagues from a number of core agencies. Throughout the school year there are numerous opportunities for you to meet visiting speakers from agencies who may support your child during their Westfield journey; eg Speech and Language, Physiotherapy, School Nurse, Bladder and Bowel Nurse. We always welcome suggestions from you too, and will try and arrange for a specific to come in.

If we are unable to support in-house, we can support referrals to other services, as described in the following pages.

Further help and support available in Herefordshire for Families

We recognise that at times families may need some extra help, signposting or support, often this can be from friends, family or someone in the community but sometimes more may be required. Below are some of the places you might be able to find out more about the right support for your child and family.

Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT). CHAT



Often families can solve their own problems, at times they may need support. If you need any advice or support for your child or your family, we recommend you share your worry with a professional you feel comfortable talking to or call CHAT (Children's Help and Advice Team within Early Help) if that works better for you and speak to an advisor.

A CHAT advisor can give advice over the phone, send you out information and signposting, or if needed, arrange a package of support through an Early Help Assessment to access a family support worker if required. This could include support from Children's Centre Services (for families with children aged 5 or under) or Early Help Family Support (for families with children 0-18, or up to 25 years with SEND)

We have information on a wide range of needs

Parenting support

Bullying

Family relationships

Online safety

Attendance

Behaviour worries

Mental health

Finances

And more

If you would like to seek help, advice and guidance for your family please contact our CHAT team to speak with an experienced CHAT advisor

Wellbeing and Mental Health – Children

- CAMHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire [Herefordshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | Herefordshire and Worcestershire CAMHS \(hacw.nhs.uk\)](https://www.herefordshirechildandadolescentmentalhealthservices.nhs.uk/)
- Kooth [Home - Kooth](https://www.kooth.com/)

Wellbeing and Mental Health – Adults

- Healthy Minds – Now We're talking [Welcome to NHS Talking Therapies | Talking Therapies \(hwhct.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hwhct.nhs.uk/)
- Herefordshire Mind [Herefordshire Mind - Herefordshire's Local Mental Health Charity \(herefordshire-mind.org.uk\)](https://www.herefordshire-mind.org.uk/)
- The Cartshed [Woodland wellbeing Herefordshire | The Cart Shed | England](https://www.woodlandwellbeing.org.uk/)

Other support

- Turning Point [Herefordshire Recovery Service | Turning Point \(turning-point.co.uk\)](https://www.turning-point.co.uk/)
- Women's Aid [West Mercia Women's Aid | WMWA is a full member of the Women's Aid Federation of England. \(westmerciawomensaid.org\)](https://www.westmerciawomensaid.org/)
- WRASAC [Home - WMRASAC](https://www.wmrasc.org.uk/)
- Herefordshire Directory of Early Help [Herefordshire Directory of Early Help Services](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/early-help-services/)
- Virtual Family Hub – TC Directory – [Virtual Family Hub - Talk Community Directory](https://www.virtualfamilyhub.org.uk/)
- Parenting Courses [Parenting groups and courses – Herefordshire Council](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/parenting-groups-and-courses/)