



Headteacher

Dear Parents & families,

Welcome to the April 2024 edition of the newsletter!

This issue is focused on the use of the SCERTS model to support social communication, emotional regulation and transactional support. Our wonderful therapy team have written about the SCERTS model below and provided a wealth of examples of how this programme has been adopted in school.

Each class team provides us with further amazing examples of how the approach is used in school. You will read examples of how SCERTS is used from our youngest learners to young adults in LEAF.

The INSET training (October 2023) provided the schools teaching team with a wealth of knowledge and strategies to support learners. You will read how inspirational Emily's work has been and how embedded the approach is at our school

Emily Rubin, one of the founders of the approach is an international speaker based in America. She is a speech and language therapist who specialises in social and emotional engagement and its relationship with language development, learning and positive outcomes.

I am delighted therefore, that Emily will be in Chesham at school on June 25th in the early evening (6pm -8pm) to discuss the SCERTS model. We have also asked Emily to discuss the impact of technology with regard to social interactions.

I know from meeting with parents that technology has many positive benefits for learners – however it can also lead to challenges both in the home environment and in school. Each class team provides us with further amazing examples of how the approach is used in school. You will read examples of how SCERTS is used from our youngest learners to young adults in LEAF.

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The workshop is open to parents and school staff to share experiences and discuss ways to support learners.

I do hope you can join us in school on Tuesday 25th June at 6pm – I know it will be a very informative meeting and discussion with Emily.





“SC” – Social Communication – We support and promote the development of spontaneous, independent communication, emotional expression, as well as secure and trusting relationships between learners and the Multi-Disciplinary Therapy (MDT) team, education staff, caregivers and peers. The focus is for learners to be able to communicate any message that they want to express by their preferred means. Approaches such as intensive interaction, following learner interests, Colourful Semantics, Lego therapy, and using declarative language, by both speaking and non-speaking means, in natural contexts are used widely across school and training.



School staff are trained to provide this by the Speech and Language Therapists, with further support to implement these strategies given by the Communication Assistants.

“ER” – Emotional Regulation – Learning and enjoyment of life is maximised when learners are emotionally regulated. Our Occupational Therapists can support with identifying causes of dysregulation and finding strategies to support learners to achieve and maintain a calm/alert state on an individual basis. Our MDT assistants support a large number of learners to gain an understanding of activities and strategies that support their regulation and tailor their weekly/fortnightly sessions to the arousal state that the learner presents with. Communication is offered in formats accessible to individual learners to express a range of feelings and advocate for an associated regulation strategy as emotional/sensory regulation allows. The Zones of Regulation framework is used widely across school and ensures the use of consistent visual supports, verbal language, familiar strategies and it can be personalised when required



“TS” – Transactional Support – Indirect, direct, universal and targeted therapy provision ensures that supports are developed and implemented to help everyone respond to learners’ needs and interests, modify and adapt the environment, and provide tools to enhance learning. (For example, visual schedules, now and next boards, red/green boards, paper-based and digital-based Aided Language Display (ALD)/Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) boards, voice output communication aids and sensory supports). Specific plans are also developed to provide educational and emotional support to families, and to foster teamwork among professionals.





Grasshoppers are using timetables to help us understand what is happening throughout the day. We use both symbols and objects of reference. Task boards are used within an activity and usually have 3 symbols on to show the beginning, middle and end of the task.

We also want our learners to understand that we are a source of assistance and help.

We all have a 'help' icon on our lanyards and during our play session some favourite activities are often put into containers and our learners will come and ask for 'help'. They may also ask for 'help' when choosing and will point to the symbols on the ALD board.

Ella, Claire & The Team



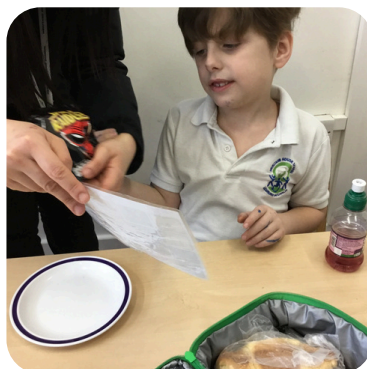
April 2024



Through our daily timetable we integrate the SCERTS model to support the social communication and emotional regulation of the learners in Bumblebee class. For example, as part of our daily routine, Bumblebee gather during the last lesson of the day to participate in a communication session. We start each session with the same song, then introduce transactional support with the 'red and green board' to inform the learners of the structure of the lesson. We begin with 'action songs', followed by 'number songs'. Using ALD boards the learners are offered the choice of motivating objects and toys', finishing the session with a song to mark the end. Using visuals, Makaton signs and speech, each learner is offered the opportunity to communicate their choice while learning to take turns.

Dontay and Dante both like to focus on each song page and point to the illustrations e.g. the frogs in the song 'Five little speckled frogs'. With adult support, Valentino and Yousuf interact to copy the movements during action songs. Kayleigh-Ann and Rio will actively explore the props from the number songs e.g. plastic ducks and frogs, while Arthur and Grace always still to wait in eager anticipation for the interactive toys to start moving.

Incorporating the SCERTS model into our everyday routine enables the Bumblebee learners to access more learning opportunities.



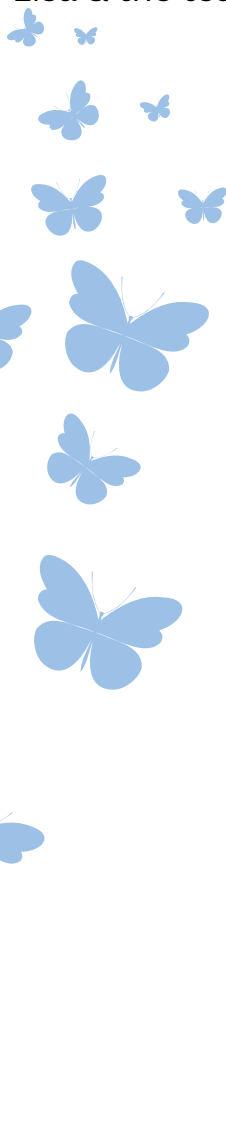


Butterfly class are working at the 'Language Partner Stage' of the SCERTS model. We have been monitoring our emotions on our class display board; we move our photos to the box that illustrates what we are feeling. This helps us to understand our emotions, how they change during the day and what we can do to help ourselves if we are in the blue or red zones.

We find visual timetables really help us to manage our expectations and understand what is going to happen throughout the day. We have a daily board for all the class as well as individual boards to help us understand how long we need to spend on a task and what is happening next.

Throughout the class we have immediate access to communication boards to make requests and also use communication boards to help us communicate what we would like to eat at snack time.

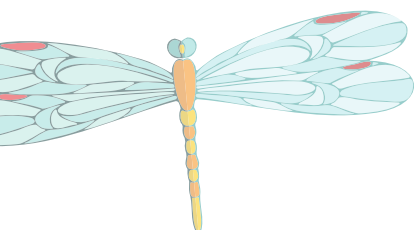
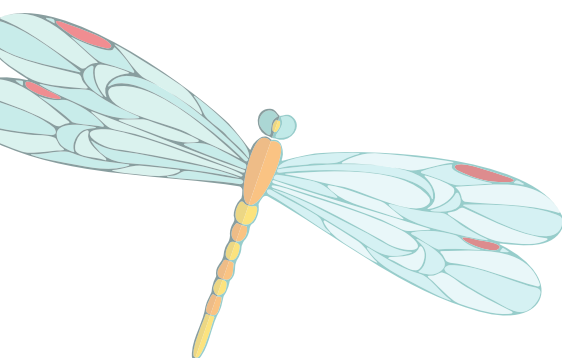
Lisa & the team





Dragonfly class are beginning to use the zones of regulation displays within the classroom to express how they are feeling throughout the day and choose which supports they would like to use to help them to regulate themselves. The learners do this by pulling off the item they would like to use and they will bring it over to a member of staff within the classroom.

Dragonfly class are also using ALD boards within the classroom within sessions to help them communicate and develop their language skills. They are currently working on choosing their likes and dislikes and whether they would like more of a resource within the sessions. The learners also uses these boards to choose between items they would like to use within sessions.





After attending the SCERTS training, we have been focused on developing the learners' social skills.

We began by widening the communication available for social communication, for example by having accessible play visuals and play communication boards on Grid for iPad. Having these in place has supported the learners to develop more spontaneous and functional social communication when engaging with their peers, which in turn has led to increased positive interactions among the learners.

Communication has also been increased across other areas of school learning, for example visuals and communication boards are now regularly used in Construction and Horticulture, which enables the learners to make independent choices and increases engagement and participation.

Buttercup learners have also been working very hard on recognising emotions and developing personal strategies to support regulation. Some learners worked with SALT to develop their own personal emotional regulation boards, which are used regularly throughout the day to check in with how the learners are feeling and encourage them to choose an activity to regulate their emotions and be ready to learn and participate.

We have also introduced a turn taking wheel which is used in various lessons and activities such as when playing games and when working on the big screen during phonics. The learners have responded positively to having a visual reminder when they need to wait their turn.

Karen & the team





To support Social Communication, Sunflower Class learners are building their joint attention by engaging in interactions with others; and initiating and engaging in shared experiences with others. To support this Sunflower Class use many visual and auditory supports during interactions with their peers and adults in class, and also make comments, requests and protests. Also, on the class communication board Sunflower Class use the turn taking wheel to support social interactions and taking turns with peers. Learners also use the VOCA buttons to press to communicate the pre-recorded words/message with the adults and peers, and use these to make requests, during story and sensory sessions, and during our good morning song.

To support Emotional Regulation, Sunflower Class use visual supports such as the class Zones of Regulation display board, where learners are working on placing their photo under the emotion to identify and communicate how they are feeling. Learners also use the strategies to support regulation on the Zones of Regulation display board. Similarly, Sunflower Class use Zones of Regulation lanyards to communicate feelings and strategies for regulation when learning outside the classroom.

Transactional Supports that Sunflower Class adults use to support the learners to participate in social interactions and sessions throughout the school day include using a Green-Red board, objects of reference, ALD boards / core boards during sessions, activities, meal times or tasks to comment and request, and a communication display board to create a sentence strip of "I need...". To show the structure of the day, Sunflower Class has a large Green-Red board on display and can refer to this throughout the day. For breaking down the structure of the day, or task, learners use a smaller A4 sized Green-Red board to support understanding, and can be taken to the next learning environment, along with an object of reference, when required.



Sky & the team





SCERTS for Bramble Class is all about our Social Communication. All of the learners in Bramble Class are non-speaking, however, they all have a LOT to say! Learners are met at the beginning of the day by a familiar member of staff, who will instantly engage with them, before speaking to the adult who has assisted in their transport. Involving the learners in interaction is important for developing their 'sense of self'.

When visitors come to the classroom, they are met by a group of learners who want to engage with them. All of the learner's voices are acknowledged by the staff team, this might be by using intensive interaction, vocal play, and by asking for thoughts and opinions. Learners are always involved in all conversations. We listen for tone of voice (vocalisations), interpret their message and respond accordingly, developing their sense of belonging in Bramble class. All learners are encouraged to make choices and request 'more' of activities throughout the day. We also use tactile cues to help the learners become aware of what is happening next.

Carolyn & the team



April 2024



Chestnut team were inspired by the training provided by Emily Rubin at a recent INSET day and have enjoyed implementing the ideas and skills.



One major part which has supported our learners is using our Emotions and Feeling Board throughout the day. It has shown its importance during our Communication Time first thing in the morning. This allows the learners to show us how they are feeling through symbols as well as words.

On two separate occasions, two learners were able to communicate to us some very important information.

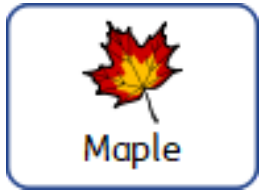
On the first occasion, a learner who visually points to the happy symbol and states he is 'happy', pointed to 'poorly.' When asked 'where are you poorly?' He was able to point and say. His family were informed and he received targeted care.

Another occasion was when we were all looking at different books, one was about London. One non-speaking learner stood up, pointed to the title, then went to his birthday symbol, then back to the title 'London'. As his birthday was that week I asked, 'Are you going to London for your birthday?' He signed back, 'yes'. When he returned after his birthday he brought his train ticket to show. We then used Grid on his iPad to ask and answer questions about where he went in London.



Alistair & the team





The SCERTS model is embedded into Maple class in a variety of ways. Learners love our circle time when they identify how they are feeling and place their own photo on emotions symbols on our wall display. Learners have been encouraged to choose their emotion when they are regulated so we can use this tool to help when they feel anxious & dysregulated. Zones of Regulation symbol boards are clearly displayed in class and adults refer to them throughout the days learning to model requesting regulation strategies to match how they are feeling. A highlight was when learners dressed up, looked in mirrors then identified how they are feeling. They had great fun trying on silly hats.

In Maple, some learners have weekly sessions based on a sensory communication approach, where adults follow the learners' interests and model using AAC symbol core boards to express a range of communicative functions, including preferences, requests and comments, without expecting the learners to copy. Activities have included, paint bubble blowing, painting, ball runs, puppet making and instruments. SCERTS training has been highly valuable for Maple class.

Lindsey & the team



Willow team were inspired by the training provided by Emily Rubin at a recent INSET day. We have enjoyed assessing what we already do and what we would like to initiate.



We enjoy using Grid for iPad, Makaton signing and have been exploring what empathy is as one of our objectives for Summer Term, to support social and emotional communication. Our 'what's in my backpack section' on our Stress Reduction Support (SRS) sheets provides the strategies that a learner finds helpful, to help them regulate. If any Willow learner takes a regulating break, that may include spinning, playdoh, LEGO or other activities. We automatically use transactional supports to encourage all aspects of learning. This could be anything in the curriculum – from Phonics to Physical Development. Our adults patiently encouraging our learners to complete a circuit in PE is an example of this. We have developed relationships with the learners in our class that enable us to support them in the way they find most helpful.

I hope you find Emily Rubin to be as engaging and inspirational as we did in Willow.

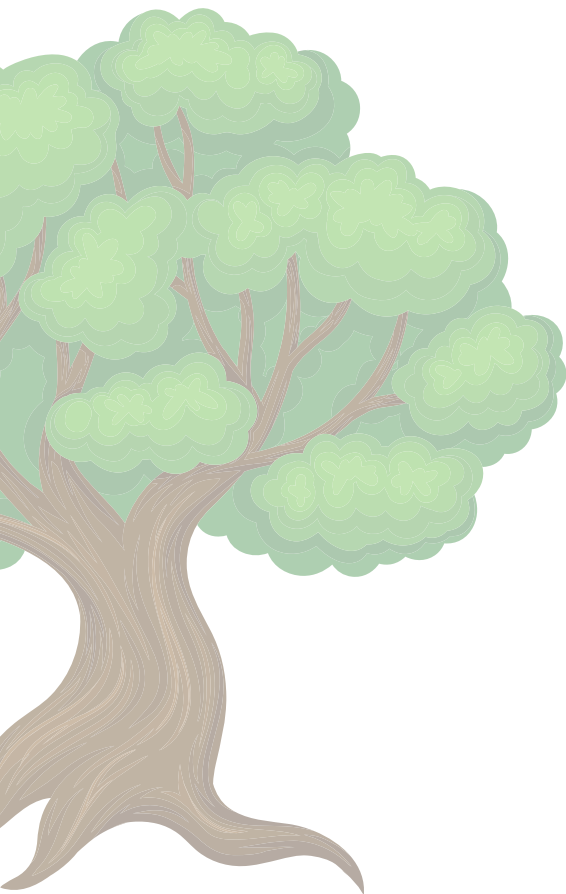
Rachel & the team





Oak class has incorporated the SCERTS model in our learners' daily routine. We have structured learning time to learn about different feelings and the strategies to support those feelings like 'I feel angry' 'I choose outside'. Adults offer and model using visuals and Grid for iPad to communicate the learners' feelings and needs, without expecting them to copy. All adults in class have lanyards with choosing boards to support our learners. Some of the other strategies we use are a visual timetable and social stories.

Anj & the team



Emily Rubin at Heritage House School

Where: Heritage House School

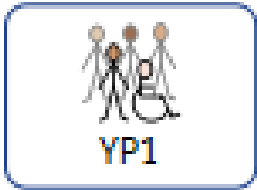
When: June 25th

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Please arrive at 5:45pm at the main school entrance

All families welcome

Please note, we are unable to accommodate any children



The staff in YP1 work with our amazing multi-sensory learners, and we were all inspired by our recent training on SCERTS. We had time to reflect on the good practises we already implement, as well as looking at other ways to support our learners with social communication, emotional regulation and transactional support.

Building secure and trusting relationships with our learners is key, not only in our learning of how to communicate with our young people, but by also offering them every opportunity to build on their communication, whether this is through spontaneous intensive interaction, functional communication, or through emotional expression, subtle noises or facial expression and body language. When working with our learners we give them plenty of time to process information and respond. Learners using their communication skills to express how they are feeling; their needs and their wants, doesn't just stop with us. Our learners are able to use and expand these skills with other adults such as coaches, as well as with learners from other classes as they communicate on the playground, in the library, in the café and throughout the school day.

Each learner has a stress reduction support (SRS) plan which helps us to recognise when a learner is becoming dysregulated, and what we can do to support that learner at that time. Making sure we always have at hand what they need in their 'backpack' is a quick way to support a learner to emotionally regulate. The learners' SRS is a collaborative document and we welcome all input from families, therapists and the learners themselves to make this working document individualised.

We recently had a learning walk across the school, and it was wonderful to see all the individual differences depending on the learner's style of learning, interests and motivations. This individualised approach to teaching and learning helps all our learners to be engaged in meaningful and purposeful activities throughout the day.

Katherine & the team





The team in YP2 were inspired by the excellent training we received from Emily Rubin on SCERTS. SCERTS was already a prominent feature throughout our school and something that we used in class on a daily basis to aid communication and regulation. The learners in YP2 use the feelings and emotions board to explain how they are feeling that day, they can access this board throughout the day to support emotional regulation.

The learners in YP2 regularly use a turn taking wheel during class discussions or for playing games. They can select who is taking part from the photos and turn the arrow to indicate who's turn it is. This has helped the learners to grow in independence as they can then play a game with minimal adult support.

As part of the transactional support section of the SCERTS model, the adults in the class team provide visual supports including words and symbols as a means to support understanding and learning throughout the day. The learners use symbols to help them to follow instructions for a variety of activities. Whilst making bird feeders the learners could independently use the symbols to help them follow the instructions.

Catherine & the team



The charity Wheels for All visited our school last year and many of our learners had a go on their bikes/trikes which are accessible to all levels of ability. It turned out to be one of our most rewarding experiences for all, learners and staff. Very sadly, they have no extra funding this year to come to see us again. BUT there is a new venue where you can find them instead – Kingsbrook School, Aylesbury HP22 7BR.



You do not need any previous cycling experience to access this. Read about it on the flyer and have a go. It is truly a great activity which will brighten your Sundays.

Registration is now open for the Aylesbury sessions and you can book a spot by visiting their website, or directly through the following link: <https://bookwhen.com/wheelsforall>



Table Cricket

Table cricket is very accessible sport which has taken a root in our school. It is fun, doesn't need a lot of space and the rules can be as simple or complex as required. Bucks Cricket started us off with free sessions two years ago and since then we have been on a table cricket journey. Lord Taverner's charity made us very happy when they donated a state of the art kit to us. This helped us to establish two small groups playing regularly during lunch time. Very recently our group from Willow and YP2 classes attended a county competition - Well done cricketers!



If you would like to check what is on your local offer, there are groups in Chesham, High Wycombe and Aylesbury who would welcome new players, then email Samina from Bucks Cricket Board samina.mehrab@bucksch.org





The weather remains stubbornly on the cold side, I wish we could get some form of communication device to explain to the weather gods that we need more warm sunshine! We are concentrating on our activities of seed planting, pricking out and potting on. Our SALT team provide us with communication boards to assist with the various task demands this activity requires, however the beauty of horticulture is that the skills required are simple, pleasurable and transferable. The joy displayed either verbally or non verbally means when a packet of big pumpkin seeds are planted out, or the fine seeds of lettuce are sprinkled over a new tub of compost are clear for all to see. And when a week or so has gone by and patience is rewarded with lovely strong seedlings, the joy returns.



We are lucky to have strong willing learners here who have been helping to replace part of the old raised beds with some pallet collars. So preparations are well underway for the new planting areas to receive all our wonderful vegetables to grow, Dani will be busy in the café this term!



Nicky



At the Potting Shed Café, we have been working hard using the SCERTS model to give our learners a positive learning experience when coming to work. We have been doing this by providing symbols throughout the kitchen and with set plans for learners who need support, which promotes independence and initiative when making drinks, serving food and keeping the café clean and tidy. We aim to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere for learners when they come to work, providing an area where they are able to self-regulate and take the workflow at a pace that is achievable for them. We work closely with class teachers, putting together strategies for learners who may need extra support when working with us.



Dani & Amy



As we continue our journey in the hydro pool, I wanted to share some tips on how our learners regulate themselves effectively in this unique environment:

Our learners develop a keen sense of body awareness by practicing floating and buoyancy exercises. This will enable them to maintain proper body positioning and balance in the hydro pool.

Also pool temperature helps them regulate their comfort levels.



Spare Clothes

Parents/Carers are reminded to provide named spare clothes for learners. If one set of spare clothes could be placed in their normal school bag in case of any accidents or messy play, that would be much appreciated.



Snacks

We provide snacks for learners in school each day either fresh fruit or dry snacks such as bread sticks and rice cakes. This is to support communication and healthy eating choices.

Parking

Please park in the parking bays for HHS or the drive to school when attending meetings. Please be mindful not to park on double yellow lines near to the LEAF car park. If you do park in the area for a short time, please do not leave your car. Please be mindful of your speed when in the school area.

Learner absence

Should your child be absent from school for any number of days, you must inform the school office on the first day of absence, as early as possible as well as Transport. Transport are not obliged to pass messages to the school.

Sickness Diarrhoea/Vomiting

Following the Health Protection Agency advice, if your child is sick with diarrhoea and/or vomiting, please keep them at home for at least 48 hours after the last bout of either.

School Uniform

Please could you ensure all of your child's clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name. All learners must wear a school uniform of a sweat shirt or cardigan with the schools logo.

CHESHAM SCHOOLS CARNIVAL

Save the Date

When: Saturday 8th June 2024

Heritage House Dressing up Theme: The game Guess Who?

Come along in your best disguise!

Grab a hat, wig, pair of crazy glasses, a moustache, a beard –
whatever disguise you want!

We had a wonderful time last year and even won a prize for our
costumes.

Do come along and join the fun!

We will ask at the end of May for confirmation on who will be
attending

Friday 24th of May will be a mufti day
Please donate a plastic bottle of drink to the events tombola stall.
You can send this with your child.
(not water but fizzy drinks please)



absolutely
Together 
Putting Smiles on Faces



SMILES FOR BUCKS

Absolutely Together is supporting families with children with additional needs in Buckinghamshire this spring by providing free access to a wide range of family leisure activities.

ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE INCLUDE-

- Odean Cinema Tickets
- Theatre Tickets (Aylesbury)
- Accessible Karting (Aylesbury or Maidenhead)
- Family Swim Sessions (Amersham)
- Family Tenpin Bowling Sessions (Aylesbury)
- Family Tickets to The Bucks Goat Centre
- Trampoline Park Sessions (Slough)



To book a session, please email

smiles@absolutely-group.co.uk

April 2024



£5 per session



Aylesbury Wheels for All

With our range of adapted cycles from; Trikes, quads, wheelchair carriers, hand bikes, tandem and children's trikes, there is something for everyone!

Aylesbury sessions will run every Sunday from 19th May, between 11am-1pm at The Kingsbrook School, HP22 7BR.

To find out more, and book a space, please visit our website:



SCAN ME
TO SIGN UP

www://aitc.org.uk/wheels-for-all/

Amelia.Evans@aitc.org.uk

April 2024



Aylesbury Wheels for All VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

To enable children and adults with additional/special needs to enjoy the benefits of cycling,
this program relies on volunteers.

Aylesbury sessions will run every Sunday from 19th May, between 11am-1pm at The Kingsbrook School, HP22 7BR.

We have a range of volunteering roles to meet what you can offer. To find out more about volunteering opportunities and how you can support this initiative

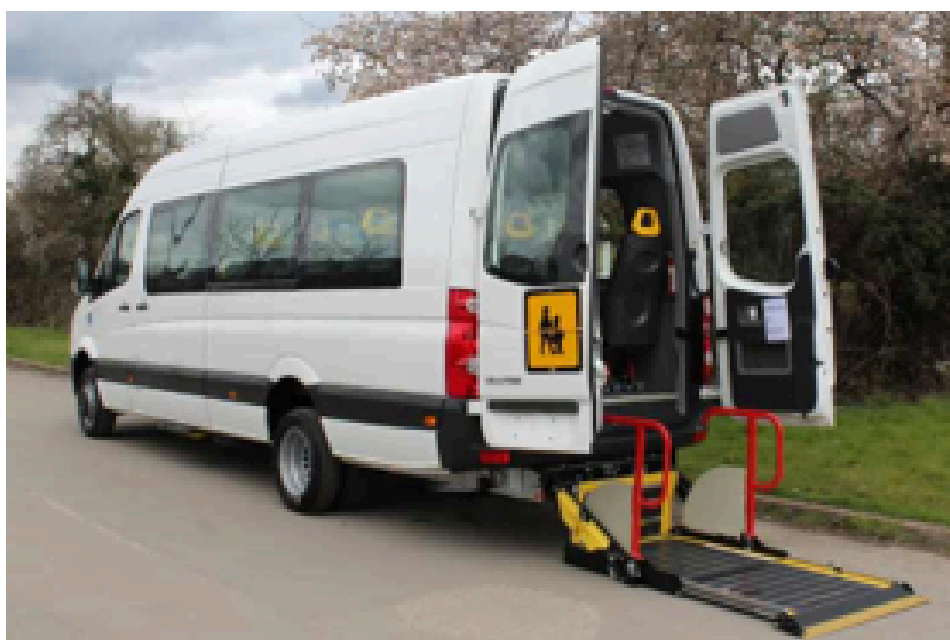
**please contact Amelia.Evans@aitc.org.uk,
07399 748803**





We are delighted to announce that Sam (mum of Arthur who is in Bumblebee Class) has taken up the challenge of running in the Prestwood 5K event on the 12th of May.

Sam has generously chosen to raise funds to go towards the purchasing of a new wheelchair accessible school mini bus for us!



If you would like to support Sam (and us!) please follow the link below, and please feel free to share the link with friends and family.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wheelchair-accessible-minibus-2>

April 2024

Heritage House School has sadly had to retire their trusty wheelchair accessible mini bus. For many years it has provided our wheelchair users and other learners at the school the opportunity to access many events in the community and we are greatly missing this resource.

We are currently working to raise funds to purchase a new accessible mini bus, could you help us?

All donations are greatly appreciated!



We are a special school for learners aged two to nineteen. Priding ourselves on delivering excellence in a dynamic environment, Heritage House puts learners at the centre of all our aims. Our curriculum reflects this - as we thrive to create the opportunities that develop individual learners in all aspects of their education.

Thank you for your support!

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wheelchair-accessible-minibus-2>