

VSK WEEKLY UPDATE

26 February 2026

Celebrating Young Writers Across Kent!

Last October, **VSK launched our cross county writing initiative** for young people in care in **Years 5 to 8**, led by acclaimed poet **Zohab Zee Khan**.

Over several weeks, our young people took part in inspiring creative sessions, working together to craft some truly **wonderful poetry**. Many told us how much they enjoyed the workshops—some were even motivated to **continue writing at home!** One school shared that their pupil *“not only loved the sessions but also found a new way to express their feelings through poetry.”*



We have compiled a book at VSK to celebrate their creativity, including this poem featured below:

*Some people have oceans,
Big ones
That keep people away
Made out of fear and the lack of trust
Some people have rivers,
Small ones
Ones with lily pads to let people through
Made out of loyalty and trust
You never know how much the ocean can hurt You.
And you never know how much those lily pads Heal.*

The Value of Children in Care in Children’s Literature

Children in Care appear often in children’s books and films, usually representing resilience, independence and the search for belonging. Their stories help audiences understand themes such as identity, family and personal growth. Characters without stable families are often shown as brave, resourceful and able to shape their own futures, which is why these stories continue to resonate with readers of all ages.

Common themes include:

- **The Chosen One** – characters with a special destiny, such as Harry Potter.
- **The Self-Made Hero** – children who develop strength and courage without parental support, like Oliver Twist.
- **The Mystery of Origins** – stories centred on discovering the truth about their parents.
- **The Tragic Backstory** – characters driven by loss, like Batman.
- **Freedom to Adventure** – children free to explore new worlds, as seen in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*.

When chosen carefully, stories featuring Children in Care can offer comfort, recognition and a sense of visibility—helping young readers feel understood, valued and empowered.

 **Welcome to Compass Collective!****12 Week Online English Programme (April–July 2026)**

👉 **Sign up form:** [Click Here](#)

Compass Collective is a charity supporting young refugees and asylum seekers through creative projects and English learning.

Find out more about their work here: <https://www.compasscollect.com/>

 **Classes Available**

- Beginners Class
- Improvers Class
- Empowered Class

 **When?**

April – July 2026

Every Thursday, 6–7.30pm

Once you sign up, you will be added to the waiting list.

 **Where?**

Online via **Zoom**

 **About the Course**

- The course lasts **12 weeks**.
- You can continue afterwards if you wish.
- To receive a certificate, you must attend all classes (you may miss **one** for an important appointment).

Open to **young people aged 14–27** only.

 **Why Join?**

The sessions are fun, friendly and a great way to meet other young people. You'll build confidence and improve your English to help with your next steps in the UK.



Learning from Research: Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of care-experienced young people during early adolescence and through transition to secondary school.

The ReThink project team, in collaboration with CoramBAAF, are pleased to invite you to their upcoming free webinar on Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Care-experienced Young People during Early Adolescence and the Transition to Secondary School.

This webinar will be on Thursday 26th February 2026 @ 4 – 5: 30PM. [BOOK NOW](#)

For more information please visit the [CoramBAAF website](#)

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Understand the psychological, social and service factors that shape care-experienced young people's mental health and wellbeing during early adolescence
- Learn what helps and hinders the move to secondary school from young people's own perspectives.
- Identify practical implications for schools, children's services and mental health teams to better support transitions.

Opportunity: Gain Work Experience with the Police

Young people interested in a future career in policing now have two exciting opportunities to explore:

- **Kent Police Work Experience Programme**
For 15–17 year olds.
You can register your interest now for the **2026 programme**.
More information: [Work Experience Programme | Kent Police](#)
- **British Transport Police Work Experience**
For 14–17 year olds.
Applications are **not yet open**, so keep an eye on their website for updates!
More information: [Work Experience - British Transport Police](#)



**Kent
Police**



**THE
ADOPTABLES**





Academic Mentoring for Adoptive Parents and Special Guardians

Adoptive Parents only - Friday 27th February 2026. 10-11.30am.

Online and free to attend for all parents of adopted children.

Special Guardians only - Friday 6th March or Friday 20th March 2026.

10-11.30am.

Online and free to attend for all Special Guardians.

These funded online webinars are designed to help parents and guardians support their children as they prepare for their exams—whether they are end-of-year tests, GCSEs, or post 16 qualifications.

We'll explore simple, practical strategies that parents/guardians can use together with their children, straight away. These include:

- effective revision methods
- useful study habits, and
- practical ways in which parents/guardians can be involved.

Together building their motivation and confidence.

Our aim is to help parents/guardians feel equipped to guide their children through the exam period, working *with* them to feel supported, encouraged, and ready to do their best!

If you have any young people whose parents/guardians may benefit from these webinars, please email VSKAdvisoryTeam@Kent.gov.uk for the flyer which you can then send to them. Please note, each session will be tailored to the specific needs of the cohort (i.e. adoptive parents or special guardians) so therefore must be booked accordingly.

INTRODUCTION TO DJING CLASSES FOR KIDS

These fun, hands-on sessions are aimed at kids and teenagers aged 7-18 who want to learn how to mix!

- ✓ How to use DJ equipment and the different types available
- ✓ Setting up a simple home practice setup
- ✓ An introduction to beat matching and blending tunes
- ✓ Basic music structure and counting beats
- ✓ DJ etiquette and confidence behind the decks

When: Fridays, 4pm-6pm
Where: Preston Community Centre, Mill Lane, Preston CT3 1HA

This guide and toolkit was initially developed by the Virtual School Kent and the Kent Educational Psychology Service. Its aim is to support schools in their understanding of the importance of promoting relational approaches to create a sense of connection, school belonging and with trauma informed practices supporting all vulnerable children, particularly those who may struggle to attend school.

Relational Approaches to support School Belonging and Attendance:

A Guide and Toolkit

Kent County Council
April 2025

[Click here](#)

SAVE THE DATE FOR NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK 2026

2ND – 7TH MARCH 2026

National Careers Week
NCW

SAVE THE DATE FOR #NCW2026

We'd love to hear from you!

How have VSK supported you or your team recently? Please take a moment to let us know by clicking the link below:

[Feedback Form: Share how VSK supported you](#)

Book Your Place Today!

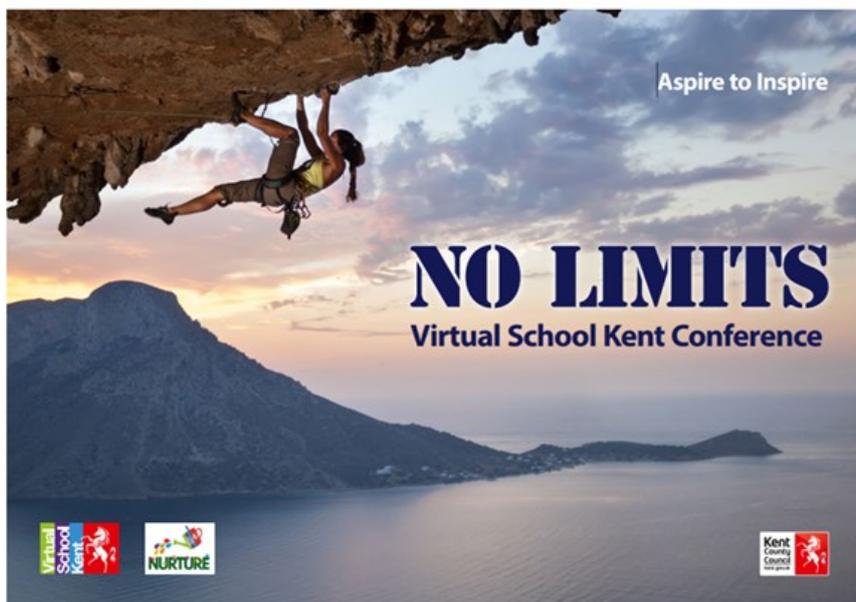
TISCUK Training — Training for Education Settings | Virtual School Kent:

- Senior Leads Training 26th and 27th March OR 18th and 19th June
- Transforming Behaviour Through Trauma-Informed Approaches 31st March
- Diploma in Trauma-Informed Mental Health Schools 11 days starts 16th March

Click. Book. Secure. *Don't miss out.*

11.03.26	North Kent Designated Teacher Update 13:30 @ Riverside Community Centre VSK - Designated Teacher 11th March 2026 Term 4 – Fill in form
12.03.26	West Kent Designated Teacher Update 1pm @ Homewood School VSK WK Designated Teacher Update 12/03/2026 – Fill in form
20.03.26	Kent Designated Teacher Network Update @ Riverside Church, Whitstable Kent Designated Teacher Network Update - Friday 20th March 2026 9.30am - 3.30pm – Fill out form
30.04.26	East Kent Designated Teacher Forum @ Green Banks - Thanet MASH East Kent Designated Teachers Forum - Booking Form 30th April 2026
12.05.26	County Wide Designated Teacher Update 12:30 & 15:45 Online Countywide Virtual Designated Teacher Updates – Fill in form
13.05.26	County Wide Designated Teacher Update 8:00 Online Countywide Virtual Designated Teacher Updates – Fill in form
30.06.26	East Kent Designated Teacher Forum 13:30 @ Whitstable Youth Hub East Kent Designated Teachers Forum - Booking Form 30th June 2026
01.07.26	North Kent Designated Teacher Update 13:30 @ North Team - Virtual DT briefing - 01 July 2026 -Term 6 – Fill in form
02.07.26	West Kent Designated Teacher Induction 13:00 Online Countywide Virtual Designated Teacher Updates – Fill in form
07.07.26	South Kent Designated Teacher Update / Induction 13:30 @ Smile Centre Whitfield Primary South Kent Designated Teachers Forum - Booking Form Tuesday 7th July 2026 – Fill out form





SAVE THE DATE
Wednesday
7th October
2026
10am til 2pm

DETLING SHOWGROUND
GUEST SPEAKER: ALFIE WATTS –
Winner of Race Across the World
This event is for Designated
Teachers, Senior Leadership
Teams and the young people they
support



Join Us at the “No Limits” Virtual School Kent Conference!

We’re excited to announce this year’s **No Limits** Virtual School Kent Conference on **Wednesday 7th October 2026**, from **10am to 2pm**, at **Detling Showground**.

This inspiring event is designed for **Designated Teachers, Senior Leadership Teams, and the young people they support in Years 8 to 13**. Together, we’ll explore ambition, resilience, and what it truly means to aspire without limits.

We’re also thrilled to welcome our guest speaker, **Alfie Watts – Winner of Race Across the World**, who will be sharing his remarkable journey and the lessons he learned along the way.

Please save the date and start planning which young people you’d like to bring—this is an event they won’t want to miss!

Who To Contact



North Kent Assistant Head: Jo Hayes - northvsk@kent.gov.uk

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Out of County Team Lead: Amanda Ormond - virtualsschoolkentocc@kent.gov.uk



Instagram [participation team](#)



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<http://kentcarestown.lea.kent.sch.uk>