SEND News Bulletin

Issue: March 2024

Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Worcestershire SEND News Bulletin.

What a short but intense Spring term it has been, we hope that it has been a smooth one for you and your school community.

In this bulletin you will find information and updates from a range of national and local service providers and support teams.

We encourage you to read and share with relevant colleagues within your school. We hope that you find the information useful and, as always, would welcome any feedback you may have.

Thank you again for your continued hard work, we wish you all a restful and enjoyable Easter break.

Helen Harris

Learning & Teaching Adviser, SEND/Inclusion

Melanie Barnett

Director for All Age Disability (0-25)

WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST

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NATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

JCQ Access Arrangements Guidance

The Joint Council for Qualifications has recently published an information sheet for schools and colleges to share with parents to help their understanding of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Download the information sheet

Ofqual want to understand more about SENCOs' experience of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments made for students taking exams and assessments. If you are a SENCO who would like to take part in an online, hour-long focus group during the week commencing 15 April 2024, please contact Ofqual by Thursday 21 March 2024 to express your interest - strategicrelationshipsgq@ofqual.gov.uk

Kooth Update

Kooth offer **24/7 instant access** to anonymous and personalised mental health support to your patients, including those who do not meet thresholds or are on a waiting list for CAMHS and NHS Talking Therapies.

A recent survey conducted amongst young people using Kooth showed that:

- 78% said they would be concerned or very concerned if Kooth was no longer available in their area
- 96% said it was important that they could access Kooth after school or work
- 97% said it was important that they did not need a referral to access Kooth
- 62% demonstrated a severe level of psychological distress
- 96% would recommend Kooth to a friend
- 88% said if they needed support in the future, they were likely to use Kooth

In April, Kooth are running webinars specifically to **help parents and carers with children sitting exams**. Please let your families know about this support available, especially if they are worried about their child's anxiety.

Link to share with parents' newsletters, emails, SMS or on your school website:
Mon 22 Apr. 1-2pm
Thu 25 Apr. 6-7pm

Helpful Resources:

- **Support guides for young people:** Share our 6 new support guides for young people, which offer helpful advice and information on social anxiety, eating difficulties, self-injury, suicidal thoughts, and safety plans, in addition to a young person's experience on Kooth.
- **New social media assets:** Check out our brand-new digital posters and video assets, as well as our suggested tweets and templates, which you can share on your website and social media channels.

Did you miss any of our KoothTalks webinars? Click on this link to our Vimeo account to check out our bank of past webinars from this year.

Senior Mental Health Lead Training Grant

The latest data for the take-up of the DfE's senior mental health lead training grant has now been published and over 15,000 schools and colleges across the country have already benefitted from the offer.

The latest figures show take-up across Worcestershire is 74%, compared to 70% across the Midlands, and approximately 67% of state-funded schools and colleges nationally.

The DfE are keen to encourage further take up of the grant across the country, as having a trained senior mental health lead in a setting plays an important role in the whole school/college approach benefitting the mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people. This is a great opportunity for schools and colleges to access funded training which offers full flexibility to meet the needs of the individual setting.

If you haven't already taken up this opportunity, we encourage you to do so.

Download Senior Mental Health Lead Training Grant Flyer

Full details of the grant and how to apply can also be found on the DfE website at:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training

LOCAL NEWS & UPDATES

Worcestershire SENCo Network

It was great to see so many SENCos attend the recent face-to-face Network Locality meetings, we know how much you value the opportunity to meet and talk with other SENCos and hope you found the sessions informative and supportive.

The proposed date for the Summer Term **"Inclusion Conference" is Tuesday 18th June 2024** so please pop this date in your diary! This will be the only SENCo Network event that will have a cost attached - further details will be shared after the Easter break.

The Summer Term virtual briefing session will be recorded and made available to SENCos who have **booked a place** but are not able to attend the live session.

Course title	Overview	Date	Time	Location	Cost	CPD codes
SENCo Network Briefing	National and local SEND updates to ensure SENCos are aware of latest information to support delivery of high quality of SEND provision.	7 May 2024	3.30pm to 5pm	Virtual	Free	CPD code: 10178 / 83867

Book directly via WCF:CPD using your specific school login details. Confirmations are emailed directly to the delegate and will provide all venue / virtual joining instruction information.

If you encounter issues when booking, please contact the training team directly on 01905 844 420 or email workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events!

SEND and AP Change Programme - New Draft EHCP template

Currently Worcestershire are involved in a regional SEND Change Programme where we are being asked to trial a new EHCP template issued by the DfE. The aim is to improve the quality of plans and thus better supporting children and young people to enjoy maximum possible independence in adulthood. It will also make it easier for partners and professionals to work in consistent ways with shared language, especially those who work across different local areas.

As part of this programme, we will be issuing 80 plans in March/April on the new template. By trialing the new template this does not mean that any of our legal duties change, they remain the same.

We will also be seeking feedback from schools, parents/carers, young people and professionals.

More information about the Change Programme can be found on our Local Offer website at:
SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Change Programme | Worcestershire County Council

Attendance and CME Resources and Information

The Attendance and CME web pages continue to be updated with new features and resources for parents, schools and other professionals: Attendance and CME | Worcestershire County Council If you have identified attendance information or resources that would be useful for you and are not already included, please let us know by emailing: edinvservice@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Attendance Helpline - Worcestershire Children First's school attendance helpline is open from 9-12.30 and 1-4.30 every day during term time. Please do give us a call on **01905 844 440** if we can assist with any attendance queries or questions you may have.

Early Years Inclusion Process

The Early Years Inclusion Process and the system to submit Early Years Inclusion Notifications launched on 1 November 2023. Since then we have received 139 new notifications for children under 5 in Worcestershire. Out of those 139 children the outcomes so far are:

- 75 children are being supported by the Early Years Inclusion Team (EYIT)
- 20 children are being supported by the Complex Communication Team (CCN)
- 15 children are being supported by an Early Years Language Class (EYLC)
- 29 children continue to have their needs met and are supported by their early years' provider. No further action is therefore required from the Early Years Inclusion Process.

We are continually reviewing our processes and welcome feedback from parents and professionals. If you have received support from WCF Inclusion Support Services since the 1 November 2023, we would love to hear from you!

How do I give feedback on the process?

Parents and carers are encouraged to give feedback on the Early Years Inclusion Process via the parent/carer online form. Providers are encouraged to give feedback on the Early Years Inclusion Process via the provider online form.

Frequently Asked Questions

We have a Frequently asked question document, which we update following any feedback. This can be found on our Early Years Inclusion website

How do I submit a new notification to the Early Years Inclusion Process?

New notifications must be submitted via the Liquidlogic portal. Any notifications submitted by other methods of communication will not be accepted.

Do you have a question?

If you have any questions regarding the Early Years Inclusion Process, please email us at: eynotification@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk. Please email us your name, email address and telephone number along with your query and we will get back to you.

Paediatric Occupational Therapy

We have a revised criteria and referral form on our website - Make a referral into one of our children's therapy services | Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (hacw.nhs.uk)

There is lots of information available on our website, Facebook page and YouTube Channel - Paediatric Therapy - Information, advice and resources | Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (hacw.nhs.uk)

We also have an advice line available on Wednesdays from 9am -12pm and Thursdays from 1pm – 4pm.

OT advice line: 07562 436633

WCF Dyspraxia Pathway

The Learning Support Team are pleased to announce that the updated Dyspraxia Pathway is now available to download from the WCF Inclusion website.

We have worked closely with the Children's Occupational Therapy Service to ensure that pupils with motor coordination difficulties are identified and assessed in a timely manner and that appropriate help and support is put in place. Using the Graduated Response, schools can continue to gather evidence so that if a further referral to OT is required, evidence of the strategies already used can be provided. The OT referral form now asks for details of what has already been tried in school:

Make a referral into one of our children's therapy services | Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (hacw.nhs.uk)

As part of the pathway process information is gathered from the young person and from parents to gain a full picture of how difficulties are impacting on everyday life.

A workshop session on using the Dyspraxia Pathway to identify and support pupils with movement difficulties will be available at the Inclusion Conference in June.

Herefordshire & Worcestershire SENDIASS

Training Videos

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Special Educational Needs/Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) have released their Online Information Session as a Training Video. This video explains the SENDIASS service and how the team can support families of children and young people with SEND in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

You can watch the video here: An Introduction to Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS

The video is also available on the HW SENDIASS How we can help webpage

SENDIASS have also released the first of their Meet the Professionals videos. These videos will give parent carers the opportunity to hear from professionals that they or their child/ young person may come into contact with. The first video explains the role of the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) for SEND. There will be more videos to follow shortly.

Free Training for Parents/Carers & Professionals

HW SENDIASS also offer a range of other training workshops for parent carers and professionals. They have published new workshop dates for the summer term and would appreciate your help in informing the families that you support about the following opportunities. Please download the SENDIASS training flyer for you to distribute to families or share in your newsletters.

Workshops currently available for **Parent Carers:**

- Autism and Me (developed by autistic young people)- HW SENDIASS
- What does a good Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) look like? – HW SENDIASS
- How to check a draft Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)-HW SENDIASS ONLINE WORKSHOP
- What you need to know if your child has an additional need/ disability- HW SENDIASS ONLINE WORKSHOP
- Who are SENDIASS and how can they support me? - HW SENDIASS Online Information Session

Workshops currently available for **Professionals:**

- Autism & Me (Developed by Autistic Young People) Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS Online Information Session for Professionals
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and The Graduated Response in Schools Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS
- What Does a Good Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) look like? Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS

All sessions are interactive, enabling participants to ask questions.

If you have any questions about the workshops or would like to host a session at your setting, please contact SENDIASSTraining@worcestershire.gov.uk **for more information.**

Contact SENDIASS

For free, impartial information, advice and support on matters relating to children and young people who have or may have SEND, contact SENDIASS on 01905 768153 Monday-Friday 8.30am-4pm or email sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk

For regular Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND) updates, sign up to the SENDIASS mailing list by clicking the sign-up link on their SENDIASS Contact page or follow them on social media:

- Facebook-HWSENDIASS
- X-HWSENDIASS
- Instagram-HWSENDIASS

Cross LA SEND processes and health referrals

A reminder to SENCos and Inclusion Leaders that all EHCNA requests should be made to the Local Authority within which the pupil resides. For example, should a child or young person attend a Worcestershire school but live in a neighbouring authority, then an EHCNA request should be submitted to the LA linked to the child or young person's home address.

The same applies for some health referral pathways (e.g. ADHD Pathway) so please be sure to check this with the specific referral team and Healthcare Trust.

This is particularly pertinent to schools close to the LA border where it may be necessary to engage with up to 3 different Local Authorities and healthcare Trusts.

Where it is known that a proportion of your school's pupils reside in neighbouring authorities, it is good practice to include links to each authority's 'SEND Local Offer' within the SEND information published on your school website.

Dyslexia Support: Tutoring Opportunities

Hereford and Worcester Dyslexia Association (HWDA) would like to support final year student teachers gain experience with teaching children with specific learning difficulties.

Please share the Tutoring Opportunities flyer with any interested colleagues.

If you any primary or secondary final year teaching students would like to support and tutor at one of their wonderful child-friendly teaching workshops, please get in touch.

For more information or to arrange an informal chat, please contact Katrina Kear-Wood at president@hwda.org.uk or contact any of the Senior Tutors listed in the Tutoring Opportunities flyer.

Hereford and Worcester Dyslexia Association (HWDA)

Last year the Hereford and Worcester Dyslexia Association (HWDA) updated their website and most recently, have been adding video content to reach a wider audience, become more inclusive and to provide support for families of children with specific learning difficulties and for professionals involved with teaching them. Videos include: See Dyslexia Differently, Definition of Dyslexia, Understanding Dyslexia and Dyslexic Thinking.

The HWDA proudly celebrates Dyslexic Thinking Skills and the Parents' area of their website has a user friendly guide - The Strengths Dyslexic Thinking brings to Individuals. The Children's area celebrates Amazing Dyslexic Storytellers and What makes you Xtraordinary? There is a lot of other content, including a quiz and jokes which might appeal.

On their Facebook page you will find videos from their visit to The Dyslexia Show 2024. They attended a seminar and spoke with Dr Susie Nyman on the multisensory approach needed for children with dyslexia. They interviewed the Dyscalculia Network, Flexitables and attended a very informative seminar on Dyscalculia Inclusive Maths Intervention. Other videos include Nasen teaching units to share with schools, moving barriers to learning. A discussion about Executive Functioning with Connection in Mind and Left n Write. Further information and useful websites, plus training and resources will be added to their website.

The HWDA tutor children with specific learning difficulties, including Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia during term time through 'Workshops' in Bromsgrove on Fridays after school and in Worcester on Saturday mornings with a mid-week workshop opening soon. In addition, Hereford Workshop tutors on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Through their specialist teaching they teach children the way they learn using multisensory techniques. They tutor individually and in groups from ages 6-18, including Study Skills, English and Maths.

The HWDA is a charity, which has been established for nearly 50 years and aims to support as many students who need their help, finances not seen as a barrier. For that reason they offer bursaries to families that need them. As a Charity they aim to raise funds to allow them to provide this support. They are always looking for willing volunteers to help organise events or make contact with companies to share their work. If you have the willingness and a little spare time, they would love to hear from you.

Further details can be found on our website and Facebook page.

https://hwda.org.uk/
https://www.facebook.com/hwdyslexia

Download HWDA Easter 2024 newsletter

Dyslexia Support Tutoring Opportunities

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If you any primary or secondary final year teaching students would like to support and tutor at one of their wonderful child-friendly teaching workshops, please get in touch.

For more information or to arrange an informal chat, please contact Katrina Kear-Wood at president@hwda.org.uk or contact any of the Senior Tutors listed in the Tutoring Opportunities flyer.

Dyslexia Support Tutors Required

Are you passionate about teaching children with dyslexia? Would you like to support and tutor at one of HWDA's wonderful, child-friendly teaching workshops? If so, they have the following vacancies and would love to hear from you:

Experienced Primary and Secondary Specialist Tutors

Bromsgrove Workshop at The Wendron Centre, Bromsgrove, B60 2BQ.
Fridays after school weekly in term-time 4:30pm – 6:45pm
Sally Arblaster: seniortutorbromsgrove@hwda.org.uk

Worcester Workshop at Woodland Room, Worcester Woods Countryside Park, WR5 2LG
Saturday mornings weekly in term-time 9:00am – 12:30pm
Margaret Comerford: seniortutorworcester@hwda.org.uk

For more information please contact the Workshop's Senior Tutor or contact Katrina Kear-Wood, President HWDA: president@hwda.org.uk

Please share the following Bromsgrove and Worcester tutor vacancies advert with your colleagues.

Bromsgrove and Worcester Tutor Advert (PDF)
Bromsgrove and Worcester Tutor Advert (PNG)

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NASEN SEND CPD Units

NASEN have launched four more online SEND CPD units in partnership with Real Group Training.

Funded by the Department for Education as part of the Universal SEND Services programme, the new units explore the following themes:

- Understanding executive function
- Memory for learning
- Developing Maths skills
- Person centred working

They enhance the existing portfolio of 13 units which addresses aspects of Safety and Belonging, Language and Communication, SEMH, Sensory Processing and Physical Needs. The earlier releases have since been accessed by almost 12,000 professionals, with consistently positive feedback.

Life for everyone in schools and colleges is busier than ever, so NASEN have made these units as easy to access as possible by working with a range of leading specialists from the sector, condensing many years of experience and understanding into these bite-sized modules.

- Each unit takes just 20 minutes to complete
- Units give clear guidance on adaptations to teaching to help meet the needs of all learners
- There's no need to complete units in order - you can pick a choose to suit your needs
- Partially completed units can be saved, so there's no fear of 'losing' work

For anyone wanting to contextualise their learning further, NASEN offer live online discussions in the shape of our Specialist Spotlights. These often involve the specialists involved in the development of the units and are a great space in which to build on learning, to share experiences and seek advice.

EXPLORE THE NEW UNITS

LEARN MORE ABOUT SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHTS

EXPLORE UNIVERSAL SEND SERVICES

WCF Autism Training

The Autism training for October 2023 to July 2024 is now available for schools to book and includes several NEW and FREE courses for this academic year. If you would like to find out more either visit CPD (opens in new window) or download the Schools Training Directory from our Training Website (opens in new window)

- An introduction to Emotional Regulation for Autistic Learners
- Autism and Puberty
- Autism with Demand Avoidance caused by Anxiety
- Girls and Autism
- How to make scripts to help in social situations
- Masking and autism – **NEW AND FREE**
- Primary Schools: Creating an autism-friendly classroom - **Free**
- Secondary Schools: Creating an autism-friendly classroom – **Free**
- Understanding and Supporting Sensory Processing Differences in the Classroom **NEW AND FREE**
- Using visual tools to reflect on social situations

Supporting children's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in the classroom

This course is aimed at teachers and teaching assistants, in helping to support children who are experiencing difficulties accessing the school day. There is an increase in children who are struggling with their emotional wellbeing, which is impacting them and all those around them.

During the 90 minutes, we will be looking at everyday practical strategies, that can be easily implemented and used, to help not only those children who dysregulate, but all children in the classroom. The strategies will help adults to support those children who require a different approach, in order to make their school day more successful and a positive experience.

It is important that children are emotionally regulated and understand their emotions, which in turn will not only positively impact their educational experience but will also help support a productive classroom environment.

Cost: £27.50 + VAT

23 April 2024, 4pm to 5:30pm, Worcester

Course code: 10350 / 81579 (please note this date is re-arranged and was originally due to take place in March 2023)

Effective deployment of Teaching Assistants

This is a practical, 2-part course designed for Teaching Assistants to enhance their inclusive practices within the classroom and beyond. The aims of the course are to:

- Understanding the role of the TA using evidence informed approach.
- Exploring ways of working effectively in and beyond the classroom to maximise support for all pupils.
- Exploring ways to promote independence in children's learning.
- Providing opportunities for self-reflection and auditing skill set - Promoting collaboration and sharing practice, what works well?

Cost: £100 + VAT

8 and 22 May 2024, 9am to 12pm, Worcester

Course code: SCH 10406 / 83747 (please note this is the re-arranged date and was originally taking place in March 2023)

On-Line Workshops - Understanding Your Teen's Behaviour

On behalf of the Starting Well Partnership, they would appreciate your support in sharing the following free one-off session which is available to parents and carers with children aged 10-19 years old.

Understanding your Teen's Behaviour is a two-hour online workshop which will provide you with the tools and tips to live a calmer life with your teenagers.

Monday 15 April 2024, 9:30-11:30am
Wednesday 1 May 2024, 6-8pm

For more information or to book onto a course, please visit:
https://www.trybooking.com/uk/eventlist/startingwellpartnership

Download Understand Your Teen's Behaviour poster for display and sharing

Educational Psychology training available during the summer term 2024

An introduction to ADHD and strategies that might be beneficial to children and young people with ADHD

- Cost: £28 + VAT
- 19 June 2024, 3.30pm to 5pm, virtual delivery, course code 10360 / 84690

Managing change and transitions:

This course aims to describe some of the reasons transitions and change can be difficult for CYP; explore how we can support CYP with change and transitions in school and the theory that underpins this and finally apply learning to think about what your setting already does to support transitions for CYP and what you might do moving forward

- Cost: £20 + VAT
- 21 May 2024, 3.30pm to 4.30pm, virtual delivery, course code 10466 / 84689

Coming Autumn Term 2024:

- ELSA: Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, September 2024, Course code: 10351
- On Wednesdays we wear pink: October 2024: Course code 10357.
- Using Solution-Focused approaches with children and young people: November 2024: Course code 10358

Coming Spring Term 2025:

- Person Centred approached and planning: February 2025, Course code: 10467
- An Introduction to the Zones of Regulation curriculum and framework: February 2025, Course code 10288

Book your place on any of the above training via WCF:CPD using your school CPD leader login details. Confirmations are issued at the point of booking and go to the delegate email provided. If your school requires support when booking, please contact the training team via email at: workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or call on 01905 844 420

RESOURCES

SEND Podcast

The SENDcast is a weekly podcast focusing on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). It is an effective way to keep up to date with policy changes, best practice and to improve your knowledge around SEN. The weekly podcast features a different guest or guests talking about a specific topic related to Special Educational Needs. Listen to SENDcast

NASEN - SEND Teacher Handbook

On 22nd January 2024, nasen published an updated version of the SEND Teacher Handbook which is available for free download. This handbook has been developed as a resource for teachers to use over time as they embed inclusive practice in their classrooms: it is not intended that it is read cover-to-cover. It has been written for both primary, secondary and specialist colleagues: teaching assistants, teachers, senior leaders and headteachers. The handbook includes whole-school and whole-class approaches as well as subject-specific and condition-specific guidance.

It brings together practical examples of high-quality teaching - placing focus on removing barriers to learning, getting to know and understand individual learners, and bringing to life the graduated approach. With three completely new subject-specific chapters for History, Geography and Religious Education, it offers a wealth of ideas and information about the following key areas:

- Planning inclusive lessons
- Creating including environments
- Curriculum considerations for KS3 and 4
- Strategies to scaffold learning
- Vocabulary retentions
- Supporting learners who need additional conceptual understanding

Download the Teacher Handbook | Nasen

SHINE A LIGHT - SHARING EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Worcestershire Autism Mentor (WAM) 2024 Conference Highlights

In February, WCF held its first Worcestershire Autism Mentor (WAM) Conference. A big "thank you" to everyone who participated to make the day a success – and we mean everyone! WAM's especially, as without them, there would be no conference and a gap in what Worcestershire schools provide for autistic pupils.

The conference opened with parent, Hazel, sharing insights into what was helpful and what was unhelpful for her, and her son, as they journeyed through the education system, from Reception to University. This provoked thoughtful discussion, and feedback has highlighted changes that WAM's intend to make in their practice and offer in school. Mentors had sessions on the use of games to promote social interaction and connection, and the use of energy meters as practical emotional regulation strategies. There was a presentation on psychological theory around autism and how interpretation of this has evolved over the years.

The day closed with highlights of what is happening in settings where there is a WAM. The creation of WAM displays, hubs, resources submitted by WAM's, and case studies were spotlighted to show how WAM's are taking the initiative and developing their role. Information around enhancing and extending the programme was shared. WAMs were also introduced to the upcoming 'Me' resource, which will be shared with WAM's for children who do not have a diagnosis of autism but have similar Complex Communication Needs.

For more information about the WAM programme please visit our website.

If you are interested in having a WAM (mentor) in your setting, contact the autism team at autism@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

If you would like to share effective inclusive practice and 'shine a light' on what is working well, please email Helen Harris at: hharris@worcestershire.gov.uk. We know that SENCos find this peer support extremely valuable so please get in touch to share your positive experiences, case studies or effective strategies or resources that have proven successful in improving the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

CONTACTS

SENCo Contact Details

Please ensure that we have the current email address (school/work based) for your school's SENCo/Inclusion Leader or SEND Team to enable them to receive ongoing communications including updates, information, Bulletins, and training opportunities.

If your SENCo/Inclusion Leader has a change of email address, please email sread2@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk to ensure your school's details are updated. Thank you.