

Mrs McConnell Smith – Assistant Head – Inclusion

Links in the wider community – November 2019

The changes within SEND have been many and varied over the last few years. We believe it is really important for a school to be aware of and involved in developments as they are happening to secure the best possible future for all our children and families with SEND.

The InCo works across both Whitehill and Highbury Schools dividing her time equally but flexibly when needed.

The INCo currently chairs the local SEN cluster group representing half the schools and pre-schools in Hitchin and the surrounding villages, supporting them in their consideration of “exceptionality” of SEND across the district.

She is the panel rep for DSPL 1 (North Herts) and meets termly with 8 other colleagues from across the county as well as those working for Herts County Council.

She co-chairs the Hitchin SENCo focus group (SOS or Save Our SENCos) which includes all our Hitchin primary and secondary schools and works on a self-supporting and educating model.

The local termly North Herts DSPL “SENCO forum” allows her to stay in touch with current thinking and developments.

She has trained and delivered in many things such as mental health and wellbeing (MHFA), attachment and trauma, crisis and sad events, autism (AET level 3 training and train the trainer) speech and language (ELKLAN) and is a level 5 SpLd trained tutor.

She is a member of the local PATOSS committee. (Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties) and plans CPD training for specialist teachers locally.

THE InCo has been asked to support other schools in the area with their SEN provision and understanding with visits and INSET and was seconded to cover for another school who were without a SenCo.

She has also been invited to contribute to and comment on some of the work being done around SEN by the local authority such as around autism provision, the EP service, changes to Exceptional Needs Funding (ENF) and the school offer, allowing her to play an active part in future developments.