

Our annual [Deputies' Conference](#) this year will be addressing the staff recruitment and retention challenges that school leaders are facing as well as the disconnect between some families and school.

The day will be led by Rachel Macfarlane, author of the book 'Making School Unmissable', who will argue that for staff and parents to see school as relevant, engaging and non-negotiable they need to experience 5 key senses:

- A sense of Purpose
- A sense of Belonging
- A sense of Success
- A sense of Empowerment
- A sense of Adventure.

She will take each sense in turn, examine why it is so important and how it can be created, leading to a culture of strong parental partnerships and high levels of staff satisfaction as well as discretionary effort.

This conference will be interactive, containing lots of practical examples, case studies and ideas to inspire leaders with next steps for adoption or adaption in their schools!

Training objectives

- To examine the evidence that shows school is not currently seen as unmissable by some staff and some parents/families
- To examine the reasons for this in greater depth
- To explore ways to strengthen the connection and engagement with school and the sense of fulfilment that staff and parents/families feel in order to create cultures of high performance for all learners
- To consider and plan for the next steps.

Delegates will leave with an enhanced sense of what is required to make school unmissable for staff and families. They will also explore how to create the conditions in which all learners want to attend, enjoy, and feel they fit in at school – feeling empowered, successful, and thriving in their education.

Audience: Deputy Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, SLTs

Date: Thursday 15 October 2026

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Venue: Roundwood, [44 Ringland Road, Taverham](#), Norwich, NR8 6HY

Price: One place is included in your VNET membership!

Read more and book: [The Deputies' Conference](#)