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## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

This term the early years team have been focused on multi agency working and coming together with other professionals to ensure our early years offer is consistent, up to date and relevant. We are therefore excited to re-launch our cluster meetings where we will have a range of speakers from different professions to truly enhance these informative sessions.

We would also like to signpost you to support coming directly from the DfE in response to the Covid pandemic. In addition, there is a useful section on business support during these challenging times.

As more inspectors are now out on the early years circuit, we are seeing more inspections coming through and Sharon Jones shares with us some recent trends coming from these reports. We also hear from the inclusion team who have been busy producing webinars for you to share with your team.

Best regards,

The Early Years Team



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## Early Years Bulletin: DfE Updates

### Support for Early Years settings from the DfE Experts and Mentors programme

The [Experts and Mentors Early Years Covid-19 Recovery Programme](#) from DfE is focused on supporting Early Years practitioners and leaders, to address the impact of the pandemic on the youngest children. The programme will provide a mixture of face-to-face and virtual support to settings. The offer will include leadership support, coaching for leaders, and mentoring for practitioners.

By joining the programme, settings will receive the support of fellow early years professionals, who are passionate about supporting others to improve practice and outcomes for children.

- This support is **free** and available across the country, for eligible settings.
- The Experts and Mentors programme will support **Private Voluntary or Independent (PVI) nursery settings, maintained nursey schools and school-based nurseries**. To submit an application to receive support from the programme, and for further information on eligibility, please visit Pen Green's (DfE's delivery partner) website available [here](#).
- The DfE are currently looking for settings who are interested in receiving support from **January 2023**, for the Spring term (academic year 2022/23).
- To receive support in the spring term, settings must complete the application form by **Friday 11 November 2022**.

[Applying for support from the Early Years Experts and Mentors programme | Pen Green Children's Centre](#)

### Hempsall's

Hempsall's was established in 1999 to form a collection of trainers, consultants and researchers to support everyone to achieve best practice in services for children and families. Last week saw the launch of the hey! conference: **EYFS Reform – one year on**. If you didn't manage to book on please find links below to access content.

- **The conference recording is here!** <https://youtu.be/tmPGU3Wq40A>
- You can also find it at [www.hempsalls.com/hey](http://www.hempsalls.com/hey) along with the slides and our policy paper.

This was a fantastic event, with literally hundreds of attendees, with a massively positive response. Join James and Jan 'in conversation' about our first hey! paper on 10 November 2022 1-2pm, book your place for FREE [here](#).

## Early Years Bulletin: Safeguarding Update

### Early Help Family Support

[Early Help Family Support | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Early Help means providing help and support to a child, young person, or their family as soon as it is identified they need additional help and support. This could be at any point in a child or young person's life, for example in pregnancy right the way through to their eighteenth birthday. This can be help and support on more than one occasion as we know children's needs change as they grow and develop, there are challenges in their communities and their family circumstances and situations can change too.

In Worcestershire we know that by us all working together and helping families access the right help and support at the right time, at the earliest opportunity, we can support children and young people to meet their full potential and try to stop the challenges or difficulties that they are facing from escalating for them and their family.

We are currently developing our Worcestershire Virtual Family Hub which gives children, young people, and their families the opportunities to access help and support from a whole range of different services in different ways. This could be online, via the telephone or face to face.

#### Have you visited the Worcestershire Family Hub?

[The Worcestershire Virtual Family Hub | Worcestershire County Council](#)

It is important that families know where to go and get help. We know that where to start or what to ask for can sometimes be a challenge. We have developed this virtual family hub to give you a range of different types of resources that are available to you online, on the phone or face to face that you can directly access yourself.

We would recommend that you visit the above link to see the range of services and advice that is available to families, including:

- **Parenting Support** – includes information on Family Learning Courses, the Starting Well Partnership, Action for Children parenting support services, and many more useful links and services.
- **Housing and finances**
- **Group and activities** – find activities in your local area.
- **Early Help Family Support Service**
- **Family Learning**
- **Autism Information and Advice**
- **SEND Support and Guidance**

Download the [Early Help Booklet](#) to find out more.

## Early Years DSL Forums

The Early Years Safeguarding DSL forums are suitable for all DSL's and Deputy DSLs, and they will cover the latest updates / information / process and developments regarding Safeguarding in Worcestershire.

In particular the forthcoming, November 2022 dates, will be focusing on the WCF Levels of Needs and provide relevant support / guidance and training on the process.

**Audience:** DSL and Deputy DSL's working in Nurseries, Pre-schools, Out of schools / Holiday Clubs and Childminders.

- 1 November 2022, 6.15pm to 7.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10269 / 81287
- 3 November 2022, 6.15pm to 7.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10269 / 81288
- 7 March 2023, 6.15pm to 7.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10269 / 81289
- 9 March 2023, 6.15pm to 7.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10269 / 81290

### How to book:

Book via [WCF:CPD](#) using your CPD leader login details. Confirmations will be issued at the point of booking to the delegate email supplied. If you do not have access to the new site (you have not received the initial email from DoNotReply@ called CPD course search invitation) then please contact the training team by emailing [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

## Early Years Bulletin: Business Support

### Energy Support Schemes

The government recognises the impact rising energy prices can have on businesses, voluntary sector, or public sector organisations of all sizes, including all Early Years settings. The energy regulator Ofgem and BEIS are in regular contact with business groups and suppliers to understand the challenges they face and to explore ways to protect consumers and businesses.

Owners of Early Years settings (including childminders) can contact the government's Business Support Helpline for free and impartial advice at [enquiries@businesssupporthelpline.org](mailto:enquiries@businesssupporthelpline.org) or 0800 998 1098.

Equally, Citizens Advice offers free independent advice about business energy contracts and consumer rights. Citizens Advice can be reached via phone at 0808 223 1133 or on their website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>.

#### **Domestic v non-domestic energy contract**

Eligibility for financial support schemes is dependent on whether a business, voluntary sector or public sector organisation ("businesses") is on a domestic or non-domestic energy contract. Businesses that have domestic contracts (i.e., household contracts) are covered by the **£400 Energy Bills Support Scheme** in addition to the **Energy Price Guarantee**. Businesses that have non-domestic contracts (i.e., commercial contracts) are covered by the **Energy Bill Relief Scheme**.

If their energy supplier has not reached out to them yet or they have any questions about their contract, businesses are encouraged to contact their energy supplier. Owners of businesses can also contact the government's Business Support Helpline for free and impartial advice. In addition, Citizens Advice offers free independent advice about business energy contracts and rights.

#### **Domestic contracts**

##### Energy Bills Support Scheme

The Energy Bills Support Scheme provides a £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households to help with their energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023. All households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible for the discount.

In Great Britain, domestic consumers will automatically receive the Energy Bills Support Scheme as a discount on your monthly or quarterly bill, totalling £400 from October to March.

##### Energy Price Guarantee

In addition, the Energy Price Guarantee will reduce the unit cost of electricity and gas so that a typical household in Great Britain pays, on average, around £2,500 a year on their energy bill, for the next 2 years, from 1 October 2022.

The consumer saving will be based on usage, but average usage indicates that a household will save £1,000 a year (based on current prices from October). Energy suppliers will be fully compensated by the government for the savings delivered to households.

The most vulnerable UK households will also continue to receive £1,200 of support provided in instalments over the year, through discounts to Council Tax and Cost of Living payments for those in receipt of certain benefits.

Households who are unable to benefit from the full extent of the Energy Bills Support Scheme and/or Energy Price Guarantee scheme (for example, households not on standard gas / electricity contracts) will receive equivalent support. Further details will be announced shortly.

### **Non-domestic contracts**

#### **Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS)**

The EBRS will provide a price reduction to ensure that all businesses and other non-domestic customers are protected from excessively high energy bills over the winter period. Non-domestic customers do not need to take action or apply to the scheme – support will automatically be applied to bills.

The EBRS will be available to all business, voluntary sector and public sector organisations who are:

- on existing fixed price contracts (agreed on or after 1 April 2022 irrespective if the contract has commenced before 1st October 2022)
- signing new fixed price contracts
- on deemed/out of contract or variable tariffs, or
- on flexible purchase (or similar) contracts.

The price reduction will run initially for 6 months, covering energy use from 1st October 2022 until 31st March 2023.

The scheme is only applicable to energy consumption delivered via the gas or electricity grid. If you're not connected to either the gas or electricity grid, equivalent support will also be provided for non-domestic consumers who use heating oil or alternative fuels instead of gas. Further detail on this will be announced shortly.

BEIS will undertake a review of the scheme in 3 months' time with a view to consider how best to offer further support, in particular to customers who are the most vulnerable to energy price increases. These are likely to be those who are least able to adjust, for example by reducing energy usage or increasing energy efficiency. At the end of the initial 6-month support scheme, those who are deemed eligible will continue to receive support without a gap.

DfE will remain in close contact with BEIS on this review, and we will communicate any updates with you in the usual way.

As usual, please let us know if you have any questions by contacting the team either via the entitlements inbox at [EARLYYEARS.ENTITLEMENTS@education.gov.uk](mailto:EARLYYEARS.ENTITLEMENTS@education.gov.uk) or in your routine calls with your Regional Lead.

## Support for Ukrainian Families

Families entering the UK through the Ukraine Family Scheme, or the Homes for Ukraine (sponsorship) Scheme have recourse to public funds. This means that families arriving in England will be able to access the government's existing entitlements and support, if they meet the existing eligibility criteria. Please follow the link for further information.

[Support available for Ukrainian Guests and their Hosts | Worcestershire County Council](#)

## Early Years Bulletin: OFSTED

### Ofsted Update: sharing some inspection trends

As an early years team, we collect and analyse local inspection data to help us identify trends, which we share with you in update meetings and through bulletin articles like this one. By sharing these trends, we hope that it gives you an opportunity to reflect on your own practice in these areas and consider the robustness of your provision.

The two top trends that we are noticing as improvement priorities in inspection are:

#### **Supervision and Continual Professional Development (CPD).**

Ofsted were asking settings to **strengthen their supervision** arrangements for staff to focus more on:

- Improving monitoring of staff to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to support all children's learning and development
- Strengthening the supervision, to include coaching and mentoring of staff to enhance the quality of teaching
- Embedding supervision, training and support for new staff to help raise the quality of teaching
- Implementing effective supervision which recognise staff professional development opportunities and training needs
- Ensuring the monitoring of staff's practice is effective in identifying weaknesses in teaching and provides staff with opportunities to raise the quality of teaching

Ofsted were asking leaders to **strengthen their CPD of staff to focus more on:**

- Targeting professional development opportunities to help staff improve their practice and raise the quality of teaching
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the training staff attend to raise the quality of teaching to an even higher level
- Improving staff's knowledge of children's learning and development
- Using incisive staff development opportunities when supporting new staff to help maintain good practice and raise the quality of teaching



**If you are due inspection**, you may be interested to find out more about our excellent training course specifically designed for settings and Childminders **Preparing for Inspection (is this the correct title)**, it is delivered by Gill Owen who **previously trained as an Early Years Regulatory Inspector**.

There is high demand for this course, therefore if you would like to find out more regarding dates / times and locations and book then please visit [WCF:CPD](#) and search “preparing” in the keyword search. If you encounter issues when booking, please contact the training team by emailing [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

Previous leaders who have attending the training have rated it excellent, saying that the trainer was extremely knowledgeable, they came away with lots of useful tips to prepare for their next inspection and feel much more confident in the process.

You may also find it useful to review the Early Years Inspection Handbook which contains further information about how Ofsted will inspect your setting.

[Early years inspection handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Ofsted Strategy 2022-2027

Ofsted aims to improve lives by raising standards in education and children’s social care. They inspect and regulate thousands of organisations and individuals providing education, training and care – from childminders to training providers, schools to local authorities. As we navigate the complex landscape of early years and education Ofsted lay out their strategy for the next 5 years.

[Ofsted strategy 2022–27 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

## A focus on Personal, Social and Emotional development

Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is one of three prime areas within the EYFS, but it connects the whole curriculum. According to the EYFS, ‘children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development’. Please find below a very useful handbook to support PSED in the early years.

[psed-for-early-years-handbook.pdf \(annafreud.org\)](#)

## Early Years Bulletin: News from the Inclusion team

### Early Years Inclusion Webinars

Early Years Inclusion are currently creating new EY SEND Webinar training courses which are being uploaded to our [YouTube page](#).

Please continue to look out for new training webinars as they get uploaded over the next 6 weeks.

The latest Webinar to be launched is 'Visual support in the early years' which provides practical advice and training to support practitioners to use visuals for all children within their continuous provision.

### SENCo forum / clusters

Due to team capacity within the Early Years Inclusion team, we have taken the decision to run only one cluster for Autumn and Spring, they will be open to anyone in the county.

- 19 October 2022, 4.15pm to 5.45pm, course code: 10160 / 81112
- 1 March 2023, 6pm to 7.30pm, course code: 10160 / 81113

The previous dates we had advertised 18 October and 28 February have been cancelled and the Training Team have notified delegates asking them to contact them if they wish to transfer to one of the dates above instead. The training team have not assumed delegates will wish to transfer due to date and time variations. They can be contacted on [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) in relation to transfer.

If you haven't yet booked onto the SENCo Forum cluster, then please book via [WCF:CPD](#). CPD leaders will have received their access to the new site. If anyone encounters issues when booking, please contact the training team by emailing [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

### Early Years Inclusion - Please check your CSP Secure Portal

We are asking all settings to regularly check your Chs Secure Portal (CSP) for messages from our team. All confidential messages relating to a child will be sent via the chs Secure Portal (CSP). For all children who are known and discussed at Preschool Forum (PSF), where the Early Years Inclusion Team have been nominated to feedback, we will be sending you the feedback messages in writing via the Chs Secure Portal (CSP). It is the responsibility of the setting receiving the written feedback, to share this feedback with parents.

All children who had been originally offered a place within the Nursery Assessment Units (NAU's), with a view to start this September 2022, but were unable to access these, are being supported by various teams within their mainstream setting. This group of children will automatically receive Exceptional Early Years Inclusion Funding.

Settings DO NOT need to apply; however, Settings **DO NEED TO COMPLETE A TERMLY MONITORING FORM OR FUNDING WILL BE WITHHELD.**

Monitoring forms are available online ([Online inclusion funding application process - Worcestershire Children First Education Services](#)).

The deadline date will be sent to the setting via the Chs Secure Portal (CSP). It is therefore important that settings have access to the Chs Secure Portal (CSP) and regularly check.

If you are unable to access the Chs Secure Portal (CSP) then please contact [eycsystems@wocrschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:eycsystems@wocrschildrenfirst.org.uk).

## Early Years Bulletin: Training news

### New Training System

The new [WCF:CPD](#) booking system for training and conferences launched on 16 September. If you have not received the invite to be able to log into the site, then please contact the training team by emailing [workforcesupport@Wocrschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@Wocrschildrenfirst.org.uk).

Just to remind settings that individual members of staff will not have access to the site, same as it was before, the access will be granted to whoever the CPD leader has been determined to be within your staff team. Childminders this will automatically be yourself.

There is also an [FAQ page](#) on our main WCF website which will answer the main questions the training team get asked to help support everyone.

### Early Years Update Meetings - Save the date

You will shortly receive an invite to attend the Autumn Term Early Years Update meetings; please look out for an email with booking details.

The Update Meetings will be held virtually and are **free** to attend.

Dates:

- **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November**, 10am: Early Years Update Meeting – Group Settings
- **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November**, 6:30pm: Early Years Update Meeting – Group Settings
- **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November**, 7pm: Early Years Update Meeting – Childminders
- **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November**, 10am: Early Years Update Meeting – Out of School Settings

## Safeguarding Training

### **New Early Years and Childcare Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Introduction to the role**

The Introduction to the role of the Early Years & Childcare Designated Safeguarding Lead is a NEW course specifically for DSL and Deputy DSL's who are new to the role or have taken on this responsibility within the last 12 months and may / may not have completed the six-hour DSL course.

### **This is a FREE course to support new DSL and Deputy DSLs**

During the three-hour session delegates will gain:

- An overview of the legislation and statutory guidance relating specifically to the role of the DSL, and to safeguarding and child protection more broadly.
- Information on different forms of abuse that may be encountered, and their possible signs and causes.
- An understanding of information sharing, consent and record keeping.
- An introduction to the processes and procedures used within safeguarding and child protection, including the Worcestershire Levels of Need document.

Cost: **FREE**

- 15 December 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10179 / 81140
- 20 March 2023, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10179 / 81141

Any queries regarding this course or to book a place please contact training by emailing: [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

## Communication Champion Training

Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy are pleased to be offering free training for all Early year's settings in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wychavon districts. Training will be delivered by the Worcestershire NHS Speech and Language Therapy team. The training will focus on a new speech and language topic each term, offering practical strategies and activities to support children's speech, language and communication needs.

Please email [WHCNHS.SLTBromsgrove@nhs.net](mailto:WHCNHS.SLTBromsgrove@nhs.net) to register.

## University of Worcester

We would like to share with you a wonderful opportunity to upskill, through the University of Worcester's short course program.

**What is a short course?** A short course is a course that doesn't take long to complete! Our short courses run over 12 weeks and are a great way to gain skills and knowledge quickly without having to commit to a full degree programme. Our short courses are all credit bearing. This means you will be awarded a certificate of academic credit on passing the course which could potentially be used towards degree study in the future. Each course is worth 30 credits at Level 4, Level 5 or L6. To put this in perspective; a total of 360 credits would be needed for a full honour's degree (120 credits at L4, 120 credits at L5 and 120 credits at L6). Our short courses have all been designed with employers to ensure that they provide the knowledge and skills needed in the education, early years and children's services sector.

**Who are short courses for?** Anyone aged 18 or over; there is no upper age limit. Education short courses are particularly suitable for those employed in education settings such as schools, further education colleges and early years settings; and children's services such as family support and youth services. Short courses can help you to upskill in a new area or refresh knowledge and skills you have not used for some time. If you are already a qualified professional such as a teacher, short courses offer continuing professional development opportunities to help you build your portfolio and progress in your career. The courses are also suitable for those considering a change of vocation or a totally new career. Perhaps you are part of the wider school community; a parent or a childminder and would like to work within the education sector. Maybe you intended to stop studying at L3 but are now tempted to 'dip your toe into the water' of higher education. Short courses allow you to try out a new subject without having to commit to a full degree.

Information about the courses on offer is included within the attached booklet.