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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

It has been wonderful for all of us in the Early Years team to reconnect with some of our colleagues in the sector face to face in the last week. During our conversations it is clear that for many of you, thoughts are turning towards the introduction of the new EYFS in September.

The changes to assessment and especially the recording of children's learning is a significant change to consider. We must remember that the stages of child development do not change. The complex interconnections between the elements of child development and how young children learn are well researched and documented and as such, should be used to underpin our planning and assessment processes. It is crucial that the planning and assessment cycle are driven not by end of year expectations, but instead by the developmental needs of the children, whilst ensuring the breadth of the curriculum is achieved.

With the upcoming changes to the EYFS, now could be a good time to evaluate your approaches to assessment. Some questions you may wish to consider include:

- Do your assessment processes help you and your team to build a holistic picture of each child as a young learner?
- Are the processes you have in place manageable, meaningful and accurate?
- In your setting, is assessment seen as an ongoing cycle which leads to discussion and analysis and informs effective planning?

With best wishes.

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Government Updates

26th April

[Changes to the early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) framework](#)

Explains what the changes to the EYFS framework are, how the changes will affect you, what you need to do before September 2021 and how to access support.

28th April

[Asymptomatic testing: early years staff in different settings](#) How staff in early years settings can access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing.

Early Years Inclusion Team

Childminder SEND Cluster – 13th May 7-9pm

The Early Years inclusion team have arranged for a FREE SEND cluster specifically for childminders which will cover a range of inclusion topics.

Topics include:

- Identification and the EYFS Early Support tracking documents
- Individual paperwork for planning – support plans and individual provision maps
- Inclusion funding
- Information exchange with Preschool Forum
- Implementing a Health Care Plan and Risk Assessment
- Digital resources available to support all Early Years provision

The session will be delivered by Early Years Inclusion Coordinator Becky White and will be delivered via Microsoft teams. If you wish to be added to the delegate list please email Becky on rwhite@worcschidrenfirst.org.uk. A termly Childminder cluster will also be discussed with delegates with future dates to be agreed for the Summer and Autumn term.

SEND Responsibility Framework

Worcestershire Children First (WCF) have worked together with schools and parent carers to agree how we can work together to achieve better outcomes for our children and young people with SEND. The SEND Responsibility Framework describes how settings, parent carers and WCF's SEND casework team can contribute to this shared aim. Over time we will update and add to the framework as we agree the responsibilities of other teams working with families. We welcome improvement suggestions from parent carers and educational settings as we use this Framework to guide our conversations and work together.

Ways that parent carers might use the Responsibility Framework:

- To understand how they can support others to understand their child and achieve better outcomes together
- To understand what they can expect from educational settings and the SEND casework team and how they can give feedback which brings about improvements

Ways that educational settings and the SEND casework team might use the Responsibility Framework:

- To evaluate and make improvements to their approach to working with children with SEND and their parent carers

Early Years settings are advised to download the document and distribute it to staff and parents carers of children with SEND. It should be included within your SEND parent folder and would be a useful resource to discuss clear expectations between parents and practitioners.

[View the SEND Responsibility Framework](#)

Deadline for Inclusion Funding (Summer Term)

Early Years settings who wish to enter new applications for the inclusion supplement top up funding (i.e. GR4 challenge, 0-5 non NEF, holiday and out of school funding, exceptional funding) are required to send in their applications via the Children Services Secure portal by no later than Tuesday 4th May. The team have extended the deadline by a few days in recognition of the bank holiday.

[Download Local Inclusion Funding Application Form](#)

If you are in receipt of exceptional or GR4 funding, please ensure that you complete and return your funding monitoring forms before the Summer term NEF payment run.

Any queries should be directed to Becky White on email at: rwhite@worcschidrenfirst.org.uk or call 01905 843099.

Ready Steady Worcestershire

Ready Steady Worcestershire (RSW) is a cross-county partnership formed to coordinate and join-up food, activity and support provided to children, young people and families during school holiday periods.

RSW is currently chaired, and project managed by Worcestershire Children First on behalf of other partners; Worcestershire County Council, District Councils and the Voluntary Sector.

The Department for Education is funding a national programme of holiday food and activities to be delivered Summer and Christmas holidays 2021, funding is being coordinated via Ready, Steady, Worcestershire for Worcestershire.

The DfE have a delivery model they would like Local Authorities to adopt, which is the provision of activity clubs delivering 4 hours of activities a day, for 4 days per week, including provision of a meal to children in receipt of **Free School Meals (FSM)**. The expectation is for these clubs to be available for 1 week of the Christmas holidays and 4 weeks of summer. There is no expectation to reach all those entitled to FSM.

Existing holiday club providers can apply for funding to pay for places for Free School Meal children at their holiday club, subject to meeting the DfE requirements.

The funding application for the summer holiday will be available early June 2021, we will forward you the link once it is available.

For more information visit: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/rsw>

Tender for Early Years Speech and Language Class Provision

WCF has a duty to ensure sufficient early years provision is available for 3 and 4 year olds. Early years specialist language provision was developed to ensure that pre-school children with a primary Special Educational Need (SEN) of Speech, Language and Communication could have their educational needs met.

A review of provision was conducted in March 2021. This identified a gap in provision in the Wychavon and Malvern Hills district areas and recommended the requirement of a district-based model that was responsive to the countywide need for specialist early years language provision.

A tender for the provision of Early Years Speech and Language Class Provision is currently being advertised on In Tend and is due to close at noon on 3rd June 2021. Further information and guidance relating to the tender can be found at [Worcestershire County Council Electronic Tendering Site](#)

Weekly Attendance Data

Thank you for your ongoing weekly returns; we really appreciate you taking the time to complete the information. The return rate was a little lower than normal for the week commencing 19th April. We appreciate that this is an additional time commitment when you are already stretched, but as the data is provided weekly to the DfE and feeds into national statistics, it's really important that we get a response from all Early Years providers.

The form to complete for the **week commencing Monday 26th April** is now available:
<https://forms.office.com/r/RQ88Xr7dbQ>

It should be completed by **all settings**, including schools, who have Early Years children attending, **excluding** those children attending in Reception. **If you are currently closed**, we still need a return from you; the form will take very little time to complete but will ensure we have an accurate record to submit to the DfE.

Please click on the link, complete the form and submit by **9am on Tuesday 4th May**.

Education Endowment Foundation Research

[Education Endowment Foundation \(EEF\) research](#). This research provides growing evidence of the impact of lockdown on young children's language skills.

Best regards,



Ian Morris
Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

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