



**Ian Morris**

**Early Years and Childcare Strategic Manager**

Email: [imorris@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:imorris@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Tel: 01905 844721

Our Ref: EYB139

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

Last weekend there was a definite feel of Spring in the air and we hope that you are all beginning to enjoy the brighter, lighter days.

In recent weeks, there has been much discussion about the impact of the pandemic on children's learning and with the fast-approaching changes to the EYFS, now is a good time to evaluate your assessment systems and tools, and ask:

- Are they centered around child development, valuing where children are and what they need to do next, however diverse their recent experiences have been?
- Will they be fit for purpose with the new EYFS framework from September 2021?

To help you reflect on these questions and plan the way forward, we have been planning our training programme for the summer term and beyond and we believe there is much to look forward to. Supporting you and your work remains very close to our hearts - and we are always just a phone call or email away.

With best wishes.

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## Government updates

[Rapid lateral flow testing for households and bubbles of school pupils and staff \(opens in new window\)](#) Created 27 February - Find out who is eligible for twice-weekly testing and how to get tested if you do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). This guidance is for people without symptoms. Updated 01 March to reflect link to find your nearest home kit collection point has been re-inserted.

[Safe working in education, childcare and children’s social care \(opens in new window\)](#) - updated on 1 March 2021 to include changes to the system of controls in line with other guidance. Some formatting changes to headings have also been applied.

[Ofsted: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rolling update \(opens in new window\)](#) on 2 March 2021, updated ‘Our phased return to inspection’ section: we are currently discussing the form and timing of inspections in the summer term and beyond with government and stakeholders.

[COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing \(opens in new window\)](#) Updated on 3 March 2021 - amended weblinks under Guidance for parents and carers.

## Financial support for people required to self-isolate: Self-isolation Service Hub

The Self-Isolation Service Hub will fill the gap for those in financial hardship who haven't/can't get a Test & Trace ID to claim a £500 Test and Trace Support Payment **if eligible**. This financial support is only available where people have been formally advised to self-isolate by NHS Test & Trace, this is triggered by employers engaging with the Hub and providing lists of close contacts when they have a positive case in their setting.

Further details about who is eligible for the payment can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme-claiming-financial-support/claiming-financial-support-under-the-test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme>

This is a telephone line for employers, please call 020 3743 6715 as soon as you have had a positive case because all contacts identified are then formally logged with NHS Test & Trace. This allows those contacts, who are eligible, to receive a self-isolation support payment from their Local Authority. Without the NHS Test & Trace reference, they cannot receive financial support.

You will need the CTAS ID of the person who is the positive case, in order to be able to record the close contacts please ask the person who tested positive to provide this to you as soon as they receive it, so that you can call the hub to be able to support your staff and visitors.

## Training Team availability changing from 1 April 2021

Due to Rachael Oakley, our Training Coordinator, going on maternity leave in April, the training team's availability will vary. Whilst we aim to continue to provide a high level of support, there will inevitably be some disruption, and as such you should be aware of the changes for April 2021 onwards.

- The training team will be available to speak to directly on Tuesday and Wednesday 8.30am to 4pm and Thursday 8.30am to 2pm;
- If your query is **not urgent** (does not relate to a course in the next 24 hour period) email [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk), and we aim to respond as soon as possible;
- Any calls made to the team number 01905 844420 will be returned on Tuesday and Wednesday 8.30am to 4pm and Thursday 8.30am to 2pm;
- If for any reason you require replacement joining instructions, to a particular course, then contact the team immediately by emailing [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) and quote the name of the course (and/or course code) to get them re-sent;
- We do recommend checking that joining instructions have been received a minimum of 5 days before the training course is due to take place and contacting the team if you need them to be re-sent;
- We do encourage and recommend downloading the CPD user guide (from the CPD home page) to provide support on CPD in relation to bookings, cancellations, accessing certificates and completing evaluations;
- All calls and emails received will be dealt with based on date and time of enquiry;
- If you have an **urgent matter** (relating to a course that day) that has not been dealt with for any reason then please contact Mark Ballett, Traded Services Manager, directly on 01905 843828.

## Safeguarding refresher training

If you are looking for DSL refresher training, then we currently have the following courses with availability before the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021,

- 13 March 2021, 9.30am to 12pm, course code: EY/20/294
- 29 March 2021, 7pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/20/295

Please be aware the 13<sup>th</sup> March is specifically for Childminders, whilst the 29<sup>th</sup> March course is open to all DSL's who need to refresh and are at the two-year point. The training is virtually delivered and joining instructions will be attached to your confirmation email received from CPD.

Bookings are to be made via [CPD \(opens in new window\)](#), using your settings CPD leader login details

## Support for developing speech, language, and communication

The current covid pandemic has made face to face Speech and Language Therapy support more difficult to achieve, although the service has continued to work throughout the last year offering telephone consultations and online therapy for all children referred to them, with face to face sessions when allowed.

They have also made many more resources available online and these can be used at home or in a setting and offer ideas to identify difficulties and to develop language skills and include contact details for the service. [They can be accessed on our NHS website \(opens in new window\)](#)

## Early Years Weekly Attendance Data

Thank you for your ongoing data returns.

[The form for the week commencing Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March is now live \(opens in new window\)](#)

Please be aware that you need to use the new link every week – you will **not be able to access the Form** via last week's link.

The form should be submitted by **9am on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March**. Please note that schools with nursery provision should also be submitting a return, for the nursery children only.

## Help us to support you: responding to bereavement

Worcestershire Children First are working collaboratively with St Richards Hospice, KEMP Hospice and Primrose Hospice to create training for educational and childcare providers.

The general focus is on supporting professionals within education settings in responding to bereavement, specifically in the immediate days and months following a significant death in the school community.

We are keen to tailor the training to the needs of educational and childcare providers in Worcestershire

Please could you [complete the survey \(opens in new window\)](#) to support us in developing this training.

## Wychavon District Council – Communication Champion Training

Based upon our successful Communication TA training we are pleased to offer a free training schedule for all early years settings in Wychavon 2020-2021. Training will be delivered by the Worcestershire NHS Speech and Language Therapy team across all three Wychavon districts. The training will focus on a new speech and language topic each term. All training will involve a service update followed by practical strategies, activities, and resources to support children's speech, language, and communication needs.

All practitioners working in early years settings across Wychavon are welcome to join our Communication Champion training. They are on 16th or 18<sup>th</sup> March, 4pm to 6pm. Please email [sarah.morris49@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.morris49@nhs.net) or [amy.green16@nhs.net](mailto:amy.green16@nhs.net) to register your named Communication Champion if you haven't already done this. A zoom link will then be sent to the given email address before the training takes place.

Best regards,



Ian Morris  
Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

