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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

Of course, with big changes looming just around the corner for Early Years, it is imperative that we fully prepare for September, both strategically and practically, to make certain that all staff are ready for the revised EYFS. Our 'Practice' section at the end of this bulletin offers some questions to ponder ahead of the new framework.

On a local level we are undertaking a review of the Preschool forum. Your views and the views of families that have worked with the forum really make a difference, so please try to complete our survey in this week's bulletin.

Best wishes.

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Government Updates

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

The guidance has been updated to reflect step 3 of the roadmap out of lockdown. Information has been included on staff wellbeing, clinically extremely vulnerable, safe removal of face coverings, attending more than one setting, visits to setting by external professionals, parent and child groups, organised performances, trips, childminders meeting other childminders.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) local restrictions in education and childcare settings](#)

The guidance has been updated with further information on testing and face covering measures.

Reducing Parental Conflict Programme - Community of Practice Webinar

The DWP have shared details of a webinar on working well to understand how the inter-parental relationship affects young people's mental health.

The event will take place on **Thursday 27th May 2021 4pm - 5.30pm** and will provide an opportunity for participants to hear the evidence of the impact of inter-parental conflict on children and young people, their mental health and emotional well-being, educational experiences and future life outcomes.

Speakers include Professor Gordon Harold who will talk about how the inter-parental relationship affects children and young people and the implications for practice and policy.

"Good inter-parental relationships are another protective factor for children's and young people's mental health, particularly for children living in poverty. Children who are exposed to persistent and unresolved parental conflict are at a greater risk of early emotional and behavioural problems, anti-social behaviour as an adolescent and later mental health problems as they transition into adulthood." [Green Paper on Transforming CYP Mental Health 2017](#)

[More information and book your place on the webinar](#)

Early Years Weekly Attendance Data

Thank you for your ongoing data returns.

The form for the week commencing Monday 10th May is now live:

<https://forms.office.com/r/s73aMudspM>

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 18th May**. Schools with nursery provision should also submit a return for the **nursery/pre-school children** only.

Review of the Pre-School Forum

Worcestershire Children First are reviewing the functions and impact of the Pre-School Forum; the process in which the local authority monitors children with SEND during their preschool education.

We would appreciate all professionals involved in the forum answering the questions in the survey, to aid our review and identify areas of strengths and areas for development. This includes all health and education specialist workers, school based SENCOs and Private, Voluntary and Independent Early Years practitioners/SENCO's.

You can access the survey on this link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hxj0rDe900WeZUfN5I3IW5sURIASJL01Fh_oaGUQpH4tUQVBTMFRFRFROS1ZSRkNGNFNSWUczUlo2Wi4u

A separate survey has been created specifically for parents/carers and we would appreciate professionals disseminating the following link to the survey for any parent carers that have had involvement with the Preschool Forum.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hxj0rDe900WeZUfN5I3IW5sURIASJL01Fh_oaGUQpH4tUMjBCS05TVUM0RVdRTOxaQzJIWU1KTIk2VS4u

Please take this opportunity to let us know how the Pre-School Forum discussions, referrals and decisions impacts or impacted on the children you support.

The responses will be collated, and an action plan issued with a view of implementing any improvements and recommendations in September 2021.

The closing date for comments is Friday 2nd July.

It takes approximately 6 minutes to complete and we urge all interested parties to contribute their thoughts to the review.

Purpose of the Early Years Data Collection

Data about Early Years attendance has been collected by the DfE since April 2020. The DfE use it to monitor the national childcare market as well as any local sufficiency issues that develop due to the pandemic. The data is published and can be viewed here: [Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak, Week 19 2021 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics). Whilst schools were expected to submit their own data, local authorities submitted aggregate data on behalf of the Early Years sector.

Whilst we are collecting this information for the DfE, Worcestershire is also utilising the information to support our Early Years strategy through Covid-19. The information has been used to inform funding decisions, to update the Sufficiency Assessment and to plan support through network meetings and the Early Years Bulletin.

Have your say on a new secondary school for Worcester

We would like to hear your views about a new secondary school for Worcester.

In February this year Worcestershire County Council Cabinet approved the creation of a new 600 place secondary school, in Worcester, to meet the increased demand for school places.

Making sure children across the county have access to good quality education is a long-term priority for the Council and they would like to hear from a range of stakeholders about what matters most in the delivery of a new school.

The location of the site of any new school will consider several factors including reducing pressure from oversubscribed schools and helping parents to fulfil their preference in choice of secondary school for their children.

The school will be delivered by Worcestershire County Council and run by an Academy Sponsor. The process to appoint the Academy Sponsor will run in the Autumn Term of 2021 and will follow the Department for Education (DfE) Free School Presumption Process.

Your responses to the survey will help the Council to shape the school design specification and outline in detail what is expected from an Academy in applying to run this school.

For any education setting in the Worcester area, your help in sharing the details of this survey with your parents / carers would be most appreciated.

The survey runs until 11 June and you can submit your response online at:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/newsecondaryschool.

If you require a paper copy of the questionnaire, please email spp@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Looking Ahead...

Global Outdoor Classroom Day is on 20th May. Find out how to share your love of outdoor learning and play at www.outdoorclassroomday.org.uk and to register your location on the global map.

Children's Art Week is at the end of June; plan ahead for large scale temporary artworks in the garden. Start collecting natural materials or make twig picture frames to display artwork outdoors.

Practice

Having a sound knowledge of [child development](#) enables us as educators to be in tune with our children. We can identify the 'typical' sequence of knowledge and skill development, enabling us to support our children through responsive and reflective planning based on principled assessment practices. This knowledge also enables us to identify early support that some children may need, ensuring no child is missed.

A secure knowledge of child development identifies the best starting points for our children, ensuring that our curriculum, environments, routines, resources and interactions support these sensitive periods of development and offers challenge that is developmentally appropriate for children's range of abilities.

With this in mind...

- Do you feel your team has a consistent understanding of child development?
- Is this used to inform all aspects of reflection regarding your provision and practice?

Can you justify the 'why' you do what you do?

Research into the brain development of young children tells us that the first 7 years are key for developing neurological pathways and connections.

- Do your routines allow for frequent opportunities to apply and revisit learning enabling it to become embedded into long term memory?

Let's not forget the time sensitive nature of some aspect of development, particularly in the Prime Areas. After the age of 5 some skills become much harder to develop, acquire and refine.

- Are your team aware of which aspects are time sensitive and why?

[Well Being and Involvement](#) are key indicators of a child's readiness to learn. The higher the levels being demonstrated the more receptive they will be to learning. We know that these levels can fluctuate depending upon external factors.

- Do you consider them over time and use them to evaluate your provision and practice?

And of course, the [Characteristics of Effective Learning](#) underpin the learning process and enable us as early educators to identify 'how' children learn, helping us to support them in becoming proficient learners.

- Does your planning and provision nurture these characteristics?

Are they valued by your team?

- How confident are you and your colleagues in recognising developmental stages?
- How is a shared understanding of child development across your team achieved?
- What opportunities are there for discussion and moderation?
- How frequent are these opportunities?
- What drives your planning, provision and practice?
- What tools do you use which support you to consider and understand child development?

Best regards,



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