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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

It's a very busy time of the year and this is reflected in this week's bulletin. I am pleased to say that we have had a number of expressions in joining the Early Years consultation group, but vacancies are still available so if you are interested, please get in touch.

The pre-school forum review also continues to be open and your responses to the survey are extremely valuable.

Also, in the bulletin this week you will find information about upcoming training from the Inclusion Team and the Early Years team as well as briefings from the NEF and finance teams which we hope you will find useful.

Best wishes.

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Early Years Consultation Group

The Early Years Consultation Group is a collection of Early Years providers and members from the Early Years team and Worcestershire Children First.

The group meet monthly to discuss the service delivered by Education Services on behalf of Worcestershire Children First; available training and the Nursery Education Funding, plus any other business related to running early years provision.

We do, however, have a number of vacancies so if you would like to become involved please contact Ian Morris at imorris@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

- Wychavon; sessional and childminder vacancies
- Wyre Forest; full day care/ sessional/ childminder/ school vacancies
- Worcester; full day care/ sessional/ childminder/ school vacancies
- Redditch; sessional/ childminder vacancies
- Malvern; full day care/ sessional vacancies
- Bromsgrove; sessional/school vacancies

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.

It has come to our attention that settings are experiencing issues when trying to log onto the PSF survey. We have remedied this issue – please follow this link to contribute your thoughts to the survey: [Access the survey for professionals](#)

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.

[Access the survey for parents and carers](#)

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 2 July.

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

Application for Summer Holiday Activity and Food funding now open!

The link to information about the programme and the funding application can be found here: [Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\) Programme in Worcestershire](#)

Fantastic news! The DfE has granted funding to Worcestershire for the provision of holiday activities and food (HAF) for free school meal children for summer and Christmas 2021. The DfE recognise:

- School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes
- Some children are more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health
- Some children from lower-income families are less likely to access fun activities
- Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue. They can work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch

Ready, Steady, Worcestershire co-ordinate holiday provision across the county and **would like to ensure a high volume of schools/settings are able to access the HAF funding to support and enhance existing holiday playschemes to include Free School Meal Children or to create new holiday schemes.** Funding is to support programmes which provide healthy food, enriching activities, physical activities and nutritional education. These holiday clubs can be used as a transitions strategy to prepare FSM children for the move to their next school. Schools are also encouraged to link to existing providers to work together collectively. The ideal model of provision is 4 hours a week, for 4 hours a day for 4 weeks of summer and 1 week of Christmas – although there can be some flexibility around this.

If you have any questions please contact Helen Hey at hhey@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or Louise Butler lbutler@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Early Years Weekly Attendance Data

After a break for half-term, the DfE are continuing to collect Early Years attendance data.

The form to complete for the **week commencing Monday 7th June** is now available: <https://forms.office.com/r/3KtsiWxaFe>

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 15th June**.

If you have any difficulties completing the form, please contact NEF@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Inclusion Team Training

The Inclusion team have created packages of free inclusion training (to be delivered virtually) in the common topics that the SSA would normally support SENCO's with. The workshops are between 30 mins to an hour and will be bitesize events for you to dip into.

These workshops will be considered part of your inclusion package of support available, so please take advantage of the workshops, even as a refresher. They will be aimed at:

- Key person/s
- Room Leader/s
- SENCO/s

Each setting is welcome to attend multiple workshops and can request up to five free places (five separate email addresses) per workshop, allowing all relevant staff to attend.

Each delegate will receive a link to the workshop from me directly, on the morning of delivery. The workshop will be run virtually via Microsoft teams. The delivery of these workshops is part of the core support you will be receiving from your SSA.

Workshops available are:

Top tips for promoting positive behaviour

- o Wednesday 9th June 3.30-4.30pm
- o Tuesday 6th July 4.30-5.30pm

Using the EYFS Early Support tracking

- o Monday 14th June 4-5pm
- o Monday 5th July 4.30-5.30pm

Completing a Support Plan

- o Tuesday 25th May 4-5pm
- o Thursday 24th June 4-5pm

Applying for challenge funding and how to complete the monitoring forms (Deadline for Autumn term applications is the 1st October)

- o Thursday 10th June 10.30-11am
- o Tuesday 13th July 4-5pm

If you would be interested in attending any of the workshops, please email Kelly Molnar at KMolnar@wortschildrenfirst.org.uk with:

- the name of each delegate
- the email address for the delegate
- the preferred workshop and which date for each delegate

NEF Provider Briefings

We are hosting **virtual** NEF Provider Briefings this term to communicate key messages and reminders regarding Nursery Education Funding. Representatives from the NEF Team, The Financial Operating Services Team and the Schools Finance Team will be in attendance. If you are interested in joining, please book your **free** place via CPD Online:

Date	Time	Course Code
Wednesday 23 rd June	7pm-8pm	EY/21/101
Thursday 24 th June	7:30pm-8:30pm	EY/21/102
Friday 25 th June	10am-11am	EY/21/2013

NEF Childminder Registration Briefing

Any childminder who is interested in offering Nursery Education Funding (NEF) is encouraged to attend a free NEF Childminder Registration Briefing. The free virtual session provides information about the Statutory requirements and the Worcestershire processes for funding.

The next briefing is on Wednesday 30th June at 7:30-9pm and can be booked via CPD Online using course code EY/21/098.

Wraparound and Holiday Provision Survey

To enable us to establish what provision will be available for school aged children during the summer holidays and going forward, we are conducting an online survey. If you are intending to offer holiday provision and/or if you intend to offer wraparound provision from September, please use the following link and complete the questionnaire: <https://forms.office.com/r/b82QYubR1q>

We will use the information provided to update our records about your setting; for those that have given consent to be advertised, this will also update the information given to parents/carers via our website. The data will also be used to inform service planning within the Early Years Team.

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework Training

The Early Years team have recorded a session to help support all Early Years practitioners and leaders with their implementation of the new Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

[Watch video session on YouTube](#)

A further session on the new non-statutory Development Matters document will be released next week.

Integrated Two-Year Check

Worcestershire Health visiting Services and Worcestershire Children First have reviewed the effectiveness of the integrated check and are in the process of assessing a pilot project that is in progress within a number of settings in Redditch. The main changes to the process includes:

- An '[All About Me @ 2](#)' leaflet which is aimed at parents.
- This can be included within your settings parent folders, and also passed to parents when you arrange their child's two-year check. It provides information on the check from both the health visitors and the Early Years settings.
- The Health visiting service now have an account with the Worcestershire Secure Children's Portal.
- Early Years settings are being asked to send information on children who you have identified as having delays during your checks (with parents' permission) via the portal so they can include this information when they assess the child. There is currently no requirement to share information with the health visiting team if the children are meeting all of their developmental milestones.
- Health visitors will also send information via the portal to the nursery settings when they have identified issues.

A step by step guide will soon be available to download from our [Early Years website](#)

There is also comprehensive information available on the [Starting Well Partnership website](#)

Best regards,



Ian Morris
Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

