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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

This week's bulletin again reflects the busy nature of this time of year. For the first time in a little while we are having to publish the latest advice and guidance from Public Health England reminding us to remain cautious.

Elsewhere, there is information on currently available training from the Early Years, Inclusion and Funding teams which we hope you will find useful as well as reminders about the Early Years consultation group and the Pre-school forum review.

We are also planning a Q&A event on the new EYFS framework and Development Matters in July; save the dates in your diaries but please *do not* attempt to book just yet; further information will follow soon.

Best wishes.

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COVID Support Line

A reminder that the COVID Support Line operated by the Public Health Nursing Team has now closed. The email address remains in operation and will be checked twice daily.

You can contact the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Team at: whcnhs.phncovidsupport@nhs.net

COVID Vaccination

On behalf of Public Health can you please share this message with your staff.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19. This means as well as protecting yourself, you will be helping to protect your family and anyone you regularly come in to contact with.

Anyone aged 18 and over can now get the vaccine. You will need 2 doses to get the best protection. The first dose takes three to four weeks to give good protection. So, the sooner you have the jab, the sooner you will be protected. You can book both appointments at the same time and get the 2nd dose 8 to 12 weeks after getting your 1st dose.

To get book your vaccination use the national booking system www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or telephone 119.

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.

[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

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 Tuesday 6th July 4.30-5.30pm

Using the EYFS Early Support tracking

o Monday 5th July 4.30-5.30pm

Completing a Support Plan

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 Tuesday 13th July 4-5pm

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

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

Weekly Attendance Data

Thank you for your returns last week.

The form to complete for the **week commencing Monday 14th June** is now available:

<https://forms.office.com/r/57scNg8RuG>

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 22nd June**.

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

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.

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 include:

- An [‘All About Me @ 2’ leaflet](#) which is aimed at parents and can be downloaded from the following link:
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 [website](#).

There is also comprehensive information on the [Health visitor’s website](#).

Save the Date: Early Years Network Events

As a follow-up to our recently recorded training sessions on the new EYFS and Development Matters, the Early Years team will be hosting Question and Answer events on Tuesday 6th July and Monday 12th July at 7.00pm. Details as to how to register for the events will be released soon.

If you have any questions related to the new EYFS or Development Matters that you would like discussed at the events, we would be grateful if you could send them to us in advance via the usual email address: eycc@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

COVID-19 - Learning from cases

Please ensure that when symptomatic children have a PCR test, that the nursery ensures that they do not return to the setting until they have completed their 10 full days self-isolation or they have a confirmed negative result. Children must not return to nursery whilst awaiting a PCR test result. Please ensure that you are aware of test results prior to allowing children back.

LFD testing

Staff should still be undertaking twice weekly LFD tests.

Latest COVID-19 Public Health advice

The Delta variant is significantly more transmissible than previous variants. Case numbers are now greatest in the younger cohorts of the population.

The system of COVID-19 controls has not fundamentally changed so **do not alter or weaken** your system of controls, including:

- bubble sizes must not be increased
- (age appropriate) social distancing maintained
- hand and respiratory hygiene continue and
- enhanced cleaning remains in place.

Learning from recent situations where significant numbers of children and other staff have needed to self-isolate, includes:

- Reducing the number of staff moving between bubbles and where this is necessary, ensure the number of bubbles that staff move between is limited.
- Avoid staff moving between bubbles in a limited timeframe (eg the same day or two days).
- Replace cloth hand towels with paper hand towels.
- Be clear about which classes/Key Stages are bubbled and reduce bubble mixing, separate play areas outside if playing outside at the same time as other bubbles and consistent staff supervising the bubbles at these times.

[Read latest guidance on actions for early years and childcare providers during coronavirus](#)

Development Matters Training

The Early Years team have recorded a session to help support all Early Years practitioners and leaders with their implementation of the new non-statutory Development Matters document. A link can be found here: <https://youtu.be/NlFban7Vcjk>

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information, Advice & Support Service - SENDIASS

[SENDIASS](#) provide free, impartial, confidential and accessible information advice and support on all matters relating to children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Attached is a PDF version of the [SENDIASS Service Leaflet](#). If you would like hard copies of this leaflet to distribute to families in preparation for the new academic year, or to display in your setting, please email sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk Please state in your email how many leaflets you require, and SENDIASS will arrange for them to be delivered to you.

Worcestershire Children First recommend that the SENDIASS leaflets are added to settings parent folders and information boards.

Best regards,



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Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

