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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

As we move towards the end of term, the challenges of continuing to manage the pandemic within your settings against looking forward to the new term and the new opportunities it brings, is a difficult balance to strike. Once more, I am in awe of all in Early Years as you continue to show the high levels of commitment and dedication required to make sure you continue to provide the very best for your children and families.

The bulletin this week provides a final opportunity to engage with the Pre-school forum review. Thank you to all those that have taken part so far.

In addition, it is also your last opportunity to engage with CPD before the summer with the Inclusion team.

The Early Years team are hosting their first Q&A session on the new EYFS next Tuesday and would be delighted to see as many of you come along as possible. It would be really helpful if you were able to submit possible questions in advance via the usual email address.

Best wishes.

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

The closing date for comments is Friday 2 July.

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

Worcestershire's SLCN Pathway has moved to The Balanced System® Pathway

The pathway builds on the Balanced System® outcomes framework for meeting speech, language and communication needs which is included in the Public Health England guidance for SLCN published in October 2020. The pathway tool navigates the provisions available for parents, carers and professionals to help all children and young people develop their speech, language and communication as well as for those with identified speech, language and communication needs.

Chosen provisions and resources are presented as a personalised journey for the user, whether parent, carer or professional. Users follow a series of questions leading to relevant information and resources. As they choose which are most useful, they can 'add' to create their own pathway which can be saved and added to at a later date.

Visit the pathway to start your journey and find information about local services, practical guidance and tools to help you to support children and young people with speech, language and communication needs. <https://www.thebalancedsystem.org/>

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

- Tuesday 6th July 4.30-5.30pm

Using the EYFS Early Support tracking

- Monday 5th July 4.30-5.30pm

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

- Tuesday 13th July 4-5pm

If you would be interested in attending any of the workshops, please email Kelly Molnar; 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

Further Bereavement Guidance for Early Years



Support for bereaved children and their families in Worcestershire

Footsteps is a small, local charity supporting bereaved children, young people and their families across South Worcestershire. The charity is well established in the area and was set up almost 10 years ago in response to a real need for professional bereavement support for children and young people in the area - it offers a completely free service for those in need, aged 5 – 21 years. Four professionally qualified and experienced bereavement practitioners provide specialist one-to-one bereavement support in safe educational environments and remotely. When resources allow, they can also provide training and inputs for school and college staff. In addition, they offer advice to parents, carers and professionals, informing and raising awareness about bereavement in the community.

Their service is delivered on an outreach basis, with practitioners travelling to support young people in schools, colleges, universities and other agreed settings. Support is tailored to meet the child's / young person's specific needs and the number of sessions delivered is flexible and needs based.

Each year Footsteps also endeavours to organise and offer a number of family activity days, inviting bereaved families they have worked with to meet with other bereaved families; to come together to share their feelings, to help stop them feeling isolated and to help them to have fun again without feeling guilt. Again, these events are provided completely free of charge.

The referral process is very simple and straightforward and referrals for support are taken from school staff, from other professionals, from families and from older young person's themselves. To make a referral call Helen Dolton on either telephone number given here : 0845 4676065 / 07460 793596 or email info@footsteps.co.uk.

There is also a service called Touchstones providing a bereavement service in the Redditch and Bromsgrove area, though on a smaller scale.

Weekly Attendance Data

Thank you to everyone who submitted a return last week. We have however seen a decline in returns over the last few weeks and would really appreciate it if everyone could prioritise this exercise for the last few weeks of term.

The form to complete for the **week commencing Monday 28th June** is now available:

<https://forms.office.com/r/7iD6ksdVQK>

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 6th July**.

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

NEF Provider Briefings

Thank you to everyone who attended one of the NEF Provider Briefings last week. As promised, a copy of the slides are attached for your reference.

For those providers who were not able to join us, please contact NEF@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or EYFunding@worcestershires.gov.uk if you have any queries about the content of the presentation.

Worcestershire Provider Agreement

The Worcestershire Provider Agreement 2021/22 was sent out to all providers on Wednesday. For providers who wish to offer funded places from September, the Provider Declaration Form must be returned by Friday 30th July. If you have not received a copy of the Agreement, please email NEF@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk and request a copy of the email.

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.

New EYFS and Development Matters Training

The Early Years team have recorded training sessions to help support all Early Years practitioners and leaders with their implementation of the new EYFS and non-statutory Development Matters documents.

[Watch EYFS Training Session](#)

[Watch Development Matters Training Session](#)

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. Bookings are now being taken; please be advised we can accept no more than two representatives per setting.

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

Nasen: Meeting the Needs of Every Child

This DfE funded webinar is FREE to access and will provide Early Years Practitioners with a thorough understanding of inclusive practice for SEND in Early Years settings.

[Register for 29th July 13:00 - 15:00](#)

[Register for 12th August 18:00 - 20:00](#)

Free webinar for Early Childhood Professionals

[Ready and Resilient! Promoting the Resilience of Children and Adults, by Dr. Nefertiti B. Poyner - Early Childhood Webinars](#)

Ofsted updates to the early years inspection handbook

Ofsted has made some updates to the early years inspection handbook, with changes due to come into force in September.

[View Early Years Inspection Handbook](#)

Best regards,



Ian Morris
Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

