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## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

With the challenges we all face at the moment it's almost easy to forget that the end of September is fast approaching, and Autumn is well on the way. What I love about this time of year is to enjoy all the rich learning opportunities nature provides. Whether you are exploring the changing landscape and its wildlife, or wrapping up warm to build dens, it's a wonderful time of the year to investigate the world around us.

Once again, I wish to highlight the Annual Early Years Safeguarding Audit. After I mentioned it in last week's bulletin many more of you have accessed it and the feedback we have received has been very positive. Please try to ensure you have a look; it provides an excellent framework for reflecting on your safeguarding practice. We are pleased to have our EY DSL updates finalised too; they should be in the bulletin next week along with our Leaders and Managers Update Meetings.

Finally, I must talk again about the Early Years Conference. As each week goes by the excitement is building for two fantastic days of high quality CPD suitable for everyone in the Worcestershire Early Years community. That's not to mention the many exhibitors who shall be present or the networking opportunities that we have all missed. This week we have had colleagues from other local authorities book their places so if you haven't done so yet, please make sure you do so soon.

Enjoy your week.

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## Annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment for Early Years Settings and Childminders

Over the term we have consulted with the sector and worked with some DSL's from across the County and have now developed a self-assessment audit tool (Annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment for Early Years Settings and Childminders). Schools for some years have been completing a similar assessment known as the section 175 which legally has to be completed by all schools.

In Early Years the toolkit is **not** mandatory, however WCF believe this will support you in your setting to assess the effectiveness of safeguarding over the past 12 months. The survey will be available yearly and can be completed [online](#) by **31<sup>st</sup> October 2021**.

The results will be shared with Denise Hannibal, Early Years and Education Safeguarding Lead and will support developing training needs for Worcestershire Early Years DSL's and all Practitioners, as well as supporting you in your setting to identify any priorities to ensure safeguarding is effective.

## Healthy Start

Healthy Start is a Government Scheme that provides weekly vouchers to eligible parents and can help parent/carers who are pregnant or have a young child under four. These vouchers can be spent on milk, fruit and vegetables and infant formula milk at local shops and supermarkets, as well as offering coupons for free vitamins too.

**Early Years settings should be promoting this scheme to parent/carers in their settings.**

For more information about the scheme, visit [Healthy Start website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### **Qualifying criteria for the Healthy Start programme**

Parent/carers will qualify for the Healthy Start scheme if they are at least 10 weeks pregnant or if they have at least one child that's under 4. In addition, they must be receiving any of the following:

- Child Tax Credit (only if the family's annual income is £16,190 or less)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (which includes the child addition)
- Universal Credit (only if the family's take-home pay is £408 or less per month from employment)

Additional criteria for Healthy Start:

- If the parent/carer is under 18 and pregnant, even if they are not claiming any benefits
- If the parent/carer claims income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and are over 10 weeks pregnant
- If they or their partner get Working Tax Credit run-on only. (Working Tax Credit run-on is the Working Tax Credit they receive in the 4 weeks immediately after they have stopped working for 16 hours or more per week)

To find out if they earn £408 or less per month from employment whilst claiming Universal Credit, please advise them to look at their 'take-home pay for this period' on their monthly Universal Credit award notice.

### **Advice on how to apply:**

Please see the [How to apply page on the Healthy Start website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### **Where can parent/carers get Healthy Start vitamins from?**

To find where parent/carers can use their Healthy Start vitamins vouchers choose the relevant district below:

- [Bromsgrove](#)
- [Malvern Hills](#)
- [Redditch](#)
- [Worcester City](#)
- [Wychavon](#)
- [Wyre Forest](#)

## Save the Date - Early Years Conference

We are pleased to announce the return of our popular Early Years conference.

Titled “New Beginnings”, it will take place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October at Worcester Racecourse. The Early Years team are inviting you to a full day of inspirational and motivational keynotes and workshops exploring the most talked about and current topics in Early Years. The workshops are rich, diverse, thought provoking and inspirational.

### **Sensory storytelling and language acquisition- Katrice Horsley**

During the workshop Katrice will share simple techniques to enable children to develop their language as well as create and remember stories. She will also provide tips on how to engage parents in developing their children's language skills. The workshop will be participatory, and we may be working on the floor so make sure you have comfy clothing.

### **Metacognition and self-regulation – The Characteristics of Effective Learning in action- Neil Farmer**

This session will focus on underlying purpose of the EYFS, how to develop Independence, resilience, and autonomy within the children. To give children the thrill, the will and the skill.

### **Practical ideas for supporting children’s wellbeing – Sonia Mainstone-Cotton**

This will be a practical workshop offering ideas and tools everyone can use in their setting to support children’s wellbeing.

### **SchemaPlay - Dr John Siraj-Blatchford and Lynnette Brock**

John and Lynnette share video case studies of SchemaPlay practice, provoking discussions and practical experiences to take back to your setting and put into action!

Booking is now live via [CPD online](#) and be advised that places are limited.

The codes are:

- Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October -CON/21/433
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October-CON/21/434

## Resource for Aiding Interaction and Developing Shared Attention

The Inclusion Team has produced an information leaflet listing a selection of resources, toys and ideas that may be useful to support children with interaction, shared attention, turn taking and early communication.

The resources should be utilised by parent/carers and practitioners for developing shared attention with an adult in the first instance. When children are confident in this skill, adults should then introduce another child to the activities to develop interactions and shared attention with the child's friendship and peer group.

The resources are particularly useful for children with complex communication needs and/or autism.

Please email the Inclusion Team on [eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) to request the 'Aiding Interaction and Developing Shared Attention' information leaflet or call the Inclusion Helpline on 01905 843099.

### **Inclusion Courses – Buy one get one half price**

A special offer is available for early years inclusion courses. Quote the following code on CPD online to get 50% off the second course you book onto:

**Code: SENCOAutumn**

For a full list of inclusion courses available please visit the WCF Early Years Training webpage and book on via [CPD online](#).

## EYFS Early Support Tracking Documents

The new draft version of the Early Support Tracking documents is now available on the Inclusion Team website A-Z of resources or following the link below. They have been updated in line with the new Department for Education Development Matters and the Department for Education Birth to Five Matters - Non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are very similar to the previous documents.

Please continue to track children on the original documents if you already have those in progress. Use the new documents to start tracking new children.

[Early years inclusion A to Z of resources - Worcestershire Children First Education Services](#)

## Progress check at age two – EYFS 2021

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners must review their progress, and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. This progress check must identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and/or carers and other professionals (for example, the provider's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate.

Beyond the prime areas, it is for practitioners to decide what the written summary should include, reflecting the development level and needs of the individual child. The summary must highlight: areas in which a child is progressing well; areas in which some additional support might be needed; and focus particularly on any areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate a special educational need or disability). It must describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or expected that the progress check would usually be undertaken by the setting where the child has spent most time. Practitioners must discuss with parents and/or carers how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home.

Practitioners should encourage parents and/or carers to share information from the progress check with other relevant professionals, including their health visitor and the staff of any new provision the child may transfer to. Practitioners must agree with parents and/or carers when will be the most useful point to provide a summary. Where possible, the progress check and the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two (when health visitors gather information on a child's health and development) should inform each other and support integrated working. This will allow health and education professionals to identify strengths as well as any developmental delay and any particular support from which they think the child/family might benefit. Providers must have the consent of parents and/or carers to share information directly with other relevant professionals.

The Worcestershire Early Years team have been working alongside Health Visitors and some Worcestershire Providers to develop a more integrated approach to sharing information from the check. All Early Years providers can now use the portal for sharing information where concerns for 2 year olds and their development have been raised. Below are the links to the process, which is currently in the pilot stage, but would welcome all providers to follow this process if referrals are needed.

[Integrated 2 Year Check - Worcestershire Children First Education Services](#)

## Paediatric First Aid Course

This Early Years Paediatric First Aid training course is aimed at all Early Years practitioners who are looking to obtain a current paediatric first aid qualification.

The course is 12 hours and delivered over 3 sessions: 2 x 3hr live sessions via Zoom and a 6 hour session face-to-face.

Session Times: 18th October & 20th October 6-9pm (Zoom). 23rd October 9am-3pm (Face to face).  
Location: Little Squirrels at Shrawley, School House, Shrawley, Worcestershire WR6 6TT  
Cost: £77 per person.

For more information and details how to book, please visit:

[Early Years Paediatric First Aid Training Zoom & Face to Face \(3 Sessions\) - MBK Group](#)

## New Autumn 2021 Family Learning Courses

A reminder that there is a new range of family learning courses for parents and carers in Worcestershire has been launched for Autumn 2021.

Parents can attend a number of courses **FREE** if they are unemployed and on benefits or they earn less than £17,000 per year. Parents can also attend for **FREE** if their child receives a Free School Meal or is known to their school SENCo.

Professionals can also support parents in need by booking them directly onto the course on their behalf or parents can ring our team directly for support on 01905 728537.

All Family Learning courses can be found at [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/courses](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/courses).

Please note that parents need to book their places ASAP in order to enrol with time to start any of the 8-week courses at the start of October.

Please see attached booklet.

## What to expect in the EYFS

DfE has published a new guide for parents, produced by Sheringham Nursery School and Children's Centre. ['What to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage'](#) (formerly 'What to expect when') guides parents through what to expect with their child's development. It aligns with the new Development Matters to help practitioners engage with parents about their child's development.

## A Celebratory Approach to Working with Children with SEND

DfE has also published a new guide produced by Pen Green Children's Centre, ['A Celebratory Approach to Working with Children with SEND – Giving additional support in the Early Years'](#) (formerly 'A Celebratory Approach to SEND assessment in the Early Years') to help practitioners who may be supporting children who require additional help or children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Best regards,



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