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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

The first week of term has again flown by and the Festive period already seems like a distant memory as we compile this week's bulletin. As usual the Early Years team and I continue to be amazed at the quality of service you provide for our youngest children and their families in the face of huge adversity; whether it be COVID itself or the huge demands placed on staffing created by the pandemic.

It was fantastic this week to hear news of two of our providers receiving "outstanding" Ofsted judgements - their reports were wonderful to read.

The bulletin this week contains the very latest DfE guidance as well as an important message from Ofsted.

Our thoughts also turned towards our Early Years Leaders and Managers forum at the end of term. Preparations have already begun to ensure that we are able to invite speakers that will enlighten and inspire you. Bookings are already being taken at what are usually well-attended events.

I would also like to bring your attention to an exciting project that I have been involved in called the Early Years Career Progression Pathway (EYCPP). I have been working with other local authority partners as well as Birmingham City University and Newman University on this project aimed at enhancing the skills base of employees and helping to improve employability within the Early Years sector. Its importance is more relevant than ever in the current climate.

Enjoy your week.

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Important Message from the DfE

The Department for Education (DfE) have provided an update on COVID-19 and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in particular with regards to staff-to-child ratios.

It remains a priority to continue providing face to face education and childcare, but we know that COVID-19 continues to put early years settings under significant pressure, particularly in relation to workforce absence.

Government considers COVID-19 to be an exceptional circumstance in which the staff-to-child ratios set out in the EYFS can temporarily be changed if necessary, for example to respond to COVID-related workforce absences. This relates to paragraph 3.31 in the EYFS.

In some cases, providers may choose to respond to staff and child absences by temporarily mixing age groups of children who would otherwise be educated or cared for separately. Ratios should be guided by all relevant requirements and by the needs of individual children within the group. For the purposes of meeting EYFS ratio and qualification requirements, all staff educating or caring for a mixed age group of children can be considered ‘available to work directly with’ all the children who have been grouped together.

In all circumstances, settings remain responsible for maintaining the quality of care, safety and security of children.

Additional actions for childminders during the COVID-19 pandemic

New guidance has been issued setting out what childminders should do when someone they live with has COVID-19 symptoms, tested positive, or is self-isolating as a close contact.

[Additional actions for childminders during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Early Years Leaders and Managers Update Forum

An update on all the latest news and information from the Early Years sector both locally and nationally. Please ensure you book a place as we only issue a link to those who have formally booked a place via CPD as part of the CPD confirmation.

- 23 March 2022, 3.45pm to 5pm, course code: EY/22/004
- 30 March 2022, 6.45pm to 8pm, course code: EY/22/005

The sessions are free to attend and will be delivered virtually via MS Teams. To book your place please do so via [CPD Online](#) using your CPD Leader login details. If you encounter any issues when booking, please contact the training team by emailing workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

A special offer on our Early Years Inclusion courses

The offer is on our range of early years inclusion courses available in the Spring Term, which include:

- Positive Behaviour Management (currently being rescheduled to January 2022)
- Effective Early Identification of SEND
- Introduction to Speech and Language Difficulties
- Effective Individual Provision Map (IPM) Writing - Introduction to Practice
- Training for New SENCO's - Introduction to Practice
- 'How to write a Support Plan' workshop
- Individual Risk Assessments and Health Care Plans for children with SEND within Early Years settings

The Buy-One-Get-One-Half-Price offer applies for any bookings made from 1st October, on any early years inclusion course so you can have delegates attend two different courses with this 50% offer, and the course must be completed by the end of March 2022.

To take advantage of this offer when booking via the [CPD website](#), using your settings' CPD Leader login details, please quote: **SENCOAutumn**. If you do not quote SENCOAutmn when booking your second course, the training will be charged at full price.

Also please be aware that the majority of the Early Years Inclusion training, detailed above, will be moving to virtual delivery. Please continue to book places as normal and as/when the course is updated on CPD we will issue revised joining instructions.

Inclusion Funding Overview

25 January 2022, 5.30pm to 6.30pm, virtual delivery, £12 + VAT per delegate

Aimed at SENCOs and setting managers.

An overview of how to claim inclusion funding for children with additional needs. The one hour workshop will provide insights into:

- The different levels of funding and the expectation of support and interventions at each stage
- Guidance on when and how to claim the funding
- Explain the funding available for each age group
- How to predict the funding you will receive and plan appropriate spend
- Provide guidance on how to record appropriate spend, and record impact of the funding
- Guidance on discussing the funding with parents/carers

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your specific setting login details. Confirmations will be issued from CPD, please ensure they are forwarded to the delegate. If the training is virtual then confirmations will include a word document which will have the specific joining instructions so please ensure they are shared with the delegate accordingly.

Updates from Training

Effective Individual Provision Map (IPM) Writing

This has been rescheduled to take place on 29 March 2022, 6.30pm to 8.30pm. Any delegates booked on the original course date of 2 February 2022 will be contacted via CPD with updated confirmation and joining instructions.

Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead training

For delegates booked onto any DSL course taking place between January and March please look out for an email from CPD with two specific word documents attached (called Levels of Need and Myths), these will be used during your training. You do not need to print them off just have them available to view. For anyone who books a place on these courses going forward they will be attached to your confirmation along with your joining instructions.

To contact the training team please email workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or call 01905 844 420.

Childminders SEND Network

20 January 2022, 7pm to 9pm, virtual delivery, free to attend

The Early Years Inclusion Team will share relevant news and updates from the SEND sector with Worcestershire's childminders, take questions and will speak about a range of subject matter specific to supporting children with SEND within Worcestershire.

The 20 January 2022 network will have updates specifically from the Worcestershire Continence Nurse and as always other SEND updates.

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your specific setting login details. Confirmations will be issued from CPD, please ensure they are forwarded to the delegate. If the training is virtual then confirmations will include a word document which have the specific joining instructions, please ensure they are shared with the delegate accordingly.

Early Years SENCo Cluster / Forums

Broad aims of the Network:

1. To bring together EYs SENCOs from Worcestershire Early Years Settings to share good practice and discuss common issues in order to continue to improve outcomes for children.
2. To update staff on National and Local Early Years and SEND initiatives to inform further CPD needs.
3. To raise awareness and expectations re Special Needs Education in the Early Years including issues and developments around planning, transition support, assessment and tracking tools, and current developments.
4. To develop a continuing working and supportive partnership between the Early Years SENCOs and Early Years Inclusion personnel.
5. An opportunity to discuss specific issues with your inclusion officer

Virtual delivery via MS Teams and free to attend.

[Malvern Hills: 01 February 2022, 4.15pm to 5.45pm, course code: EY/21/285](#)

[Pershore and Evesham: 08 February 2022, 5pm to 6.30pm, course code: EY/21/284](#)

[Bromsgrove and Redditch: 15 February 2022, 4.15pm to 5.45pm, course code: EY/21/287](#)

[Worcester City and Droitwich: 02 March 2022, 4.30pm to 6pm, course code: EY/21/283](#)

[Wyre Forest: 31 March 2022, 4pm to 6pm, course code: EY/21/286](#)

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your specific setting login details. Confirmations will be issued from CPD, please ensure they are forwarded to the delegate. If the training is virtual then confirmations will include a word document which have the specific joining instructions, please ensure they are shared with the delegate accordingly.

NEF Childminding registration briefing

This is an introduction to Nursery Education Funding (NEF) for registered and prospective Childminders, including information about Statutory requirements and Worcestershire processes.

The session is specifically for Childminders who are interested in offering NEF in Worcestershire.

Cost: Free

9 February 2022, 7.30pm to 9pm, course code: EY/21/100

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your specific setting login details. Joining instructions will be attached to the confirmation email from CPD Online, however if you have not received them 5 days before the course contact the training team via email on workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or call 01905 844 420.

Reducing Parental Conflict (Harmony at home)

Further to our recent article regarding Reducing Parental Conflict (Harmony at Home) we have received feedback that there was not an evening option available to suit Childminders / Nurseries. As such we have taken this on board and organised one evening course to take place in May. If you have already secured a place on a different course date and wish to move, please contact the training so we can transfer your place accordingly.

Virtual delivery: will be via Microsoft teams and joining instructions will be issued along with CPD confirmation.

- 15 March 2022, 3.30pm to 6.30pm, course code: SCH/21/620
- 26 May 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: SCH/21/646 *** NEW DATE RELEASED**
- 15 June 2022, 3.30pm to 6.30pm, course code: SCH/21/621

The training is for DSL/ Deputy DSLs to attend and is being offered free to all Early Years and Childcare Settings within the county.

Aims and objectives:

- What is Parental Conflict?
- The difference between parental conflict and domestic abuse
- Risks and factors
- Child's voice
- What is Harmony at Home?
- Digital Toolkit and resources
- Role of the Practitioner (DSL)
- Practitioner resources

Cost: Free to all PVI Early Years Settings

Virtual delivery: will be via Microsoft teams and joining instructions will be issued along with CPD confirmation

- 15 March 2022, 3.30pm to 6.30pm, course code: SCH/21/620
- 26 May 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: SCH/21/646 *** NEW DATE RELEASED**
- 15 June 2022, 3.30pm to 6.30pm, course code: SCH/21/621

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your CPD leader login details. Confirmation will be issued from CPD which will have the joining instructions and supporting information attached. When forwarding please ensure all attachments are also shared. If you require any support with your booking or to check course availability, it is essential that you contact the training team directly via email at workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Introduction of On-Line forms for Inclusion Supplement 'Top Up' Applications

Many settings apply for additional 'top up' inclusion funding to support children with special needs within their early years' provisions. The 'top up' funding is in addition to the Graduated Response (GR) levels that practitioners can allocate to children in receipt of Nursery Education Funding (NEF) on the Provider Portal.

'Top Up' funding includes:

- GR4 challenge funding - for complex children where there is a requirement for additional staffing to be in place for the majority of the child's time in nursery. [Download challenge funding criteria](#)
- Exceptional funding – for complex children who meet specific criteria. [Download exceptional funding criteria](#)

Inclusion funding is also available for children not in receipt of nursery Education Funding (NEF):

- Children 0-3 and not receiving NEF
- Children who are in receipt of NEF, but who do not stretch funding – holiday funding is available
- Children of school age who attend out of school and/or holiday provision

The WCF Inclusion team are aware of the considerable time constraints experienced by early years SENCOs and childminders, and have created an on-line system for early years provisions to apply for inclusion funding. The aim is to reduce the time taken completing the application forms, and the system will also allow the team to highlight to settings when any relevant monitoring forms need to be completed – with these also being made available online.

The on-line application forms for the Spring Term 2022 are available on the link below and it is a secure system, so children's details can be provided.

[Spring Term 2022 Inclusion Supplement 'Top Up' Applications - Early Years provision form](#)

A new form and link will be sent out each term via the Early Year bulletin and with a direct email to all early years' provisions.

There will be no requirement for settings to upload additional information to support the application (individual planning documents, early support sheets etc). The Early Years inclusion team will contact any settings where they require more information in order to make a decision on the amount of funding to be awarded.

We would appreciate early years settings using the new system to apply for any new children requiring funding, although we will continue to accept applications sent to the team via the Children's Services Portal.

[Download local inclusion funding application form](#)

If you have any queries about using the new system, please do not hesitate to contact Becky White on 01905 845231 or via email to the EY team on eyinclusion@worcesterschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Safeguarding Training

It is essential that all staff and volunteers working with children undertake Safeguarding training suitable to their role.

The DSL and Deputy DSL would be expected to undertake the Early years and childcare designated safeguarding lead (DSL) course on a yearly basis. All other staff including volunteers would be expected to complete the Safeguarding in early years and childcare for practitioners training every 3 years. Details of both courses are below.

Early years and childcare designated safeguarding lead (DSL) training

This training is specifically for the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL or those who are looking to become the DSL / Deputy DSL in early years and childcare settings across Worcestershire.

The training has been devised to support DSLs who are new to the role, experienced and extremely experienced. Content is updated regularly and includes a detailed look at signs and symptoms, legislation, guidance and responsibilities, record keeping, making referrals, multi-agency working, child protection meetings, serious case reviews, and exploring barriers to good practice. The training meets the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership requirements for Designated Safeguarding lead training, includes the role of the DSL and additional content relating to the EYFS and inspection

The DSL and deputy DSL are to refresh this training on a yearly basis from April 2021 onwards.

Virtual delivery via Zoom

Joining instructions will be issued via CPD as part of your confirmation, if you have not received within 5 days of the training please contact the training team on 01905 844 420

Cost: £40 + VAT (£48 inc. VAT)

Childminders specific dates

- 22 January 2022, 9am to 3.30pm (with a break), course code: EY/21/144
- 1 and 8 February 2022, 7pm to 10pm, course code: EY/21/145
- 5 and 12 March 2022, 9.30am to 12.30pm, course code: EY/21/147

Setting specific dates

- 9 and 16 March 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/21/148
- 25 March 2022, 9am to 3.30pm (with a break), course code: EY/21/149

Mixed Settings & Childminder cohort dates

- 12 February 2022, 9am to 3.30pm (with a break), course code: EY/21/146
- 28 and 30 March 2022, 7pm to 10pm, course code: EY/21/150

Safeguarding in early years and childcare for practitioners

This training is aimed at all those working in early years and childcare settings, including practitioners, committee members, auxiliary staff, administrators, and anyone else who would like an introduction to safeguarding and child protection. Content includes understanding what abuse is, signs and symptoms, legislation, and guidance, and what to do if you are concerned. The training meets the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership requirements.

Delegates are expected to refresh training at this level at least every 3 years, and content is updated periodically to reflect new legislation, guidance, and practices.

Virtual delivery via Zoom

Cost: £22 + VAT (£26.40 inc. VAT)

Joining instructions / link will be issued with your CPD confirmation, if you have not received within 5 days of the training please contact the training team on 01905 844 420.

- 17 February 2022, 7pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/21/160
- 11 March 2022, 9.30am to 12pm, course code: EY/21/161
- 22 March 2022, 7pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/21/162

Reminder to childminders

The training team have recently noticed that Childminders are booking training on behalf of each other. This is absolutely fine when done correctly. Please ensure that if you book for another childminder(s) that you use their specific CPD login details.

If you book them using your details, please be aware:

- CPD will assume that they are employed by you
- a duplicate profile for this person now exists meaning training is split across a number of records, which will need to be merged.
- Invoices are incorrectly raised - as they will go to the person who booked the delegates place on the course.
- certificates will only be accessible via the person who booked the course and not the actual childminder who attended

As such it is imperative that childminders book themselves directly or if they prefer then share their login details with another childminder to get them booked onto training. If you choose to share your CPD login details with another childminder then this is at your discretion and we will only be able to re-set login details for the childminder the account belongs to.

By following the above request this ensures invoices are correctly raised and certificates are downloadable by the correct person.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact the training team via email at workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or call 01905 844 420.

Evaluations and Certificates

Evaluations are an important way to help our trainers develop, amend and enhance the training that they deliver. As such we want to actively encourage attendees on training to complete their online evaluation via CPD once asked (this is based upon receiving the register back from the trainer). Until the evaluation is completed, delegates cannot obtain their certificate via CPD, however you have no time limit to complete your evaluation we simply hope that you will do it as soon as possible. In addition, not every course booked via CPD will ask for an evaluation and this can be for a variety of reasons, in those instances your certificate will be available immediately upon receipt of the register from the trainer.

If you encounter any issues when completing an evaluation or downloading a certificate, please contact the training team for support on workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Early Years Career Progression Pathway

Are you interested in FREE tailored Early Years upskilling and training?

The Early Years Careers Progression Pathways Project (EYCPP), part-funded by the European Social Fund, is a newly launched project bringing together expertise from Birmingham City University, Newman University and West Smethwick Enterprise.

This project is designed to deliver an innovative programme of fully-funded skills interventions to residents in Greater Birmingham and Solihull.

The programme will enhance the skills base of employees and help to improve employability within the Early Years Sector.

(Please see attached flyer)

Practice

The team at Famly have put together a series of articles that we think you might find of interest. From putting the little ones in a good mood to building relationships with those around them, singing works like magic. Find out [why singing can help with transitions](#) in your setting - from switching activities to nappy changes.

We all know how important parent partnerships are. Building strong, trusting connections with parents not only helps you understand the children a lot better, but it makes you a little community. With that in mind, we've got [7 different ways](#) you can reach out and develop connections with parents - beyond just chatting at the door.

Early Years Team Contact Details

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Best regards,



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