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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

Whilst half term might seem like a distant memory, at least the weekend saw a welcome arrival of some Spring sunshine to help take our minds off the troubling events going on in the world at the moment.

I am thrilled this week to announce the launch of our free interactive storytelling training. I am so happy that we have been able to secure the funding for this inspirational training to ensure that you and your colleagues can access it for free. Please ensure that you take advantage of this offer, and for more information come along to the Early Years Leaders and Managers update when Helen from Animateys will be able to tell you more.

This week's bulletin is full of the latest training offers, Early Years updates and best practice advice.

Enjoy your week.

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Covid Guidance

The Department for Education has [announced](#) that from 21 February 2022, early years settings are no longer required to notify Ofsted, or the childminder agency with which they are registered, of any COVID-19 cases in the setting, whether that is of a child or staff member. They also do not have to submit notifications for any cases that have happened in the last 14 days.

It remains a legal requirement under the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework to report cases of serious illness. You should notify Ofsted as soon as practical, and in any case within 14 days of a notifiable event happening.

For information about what is classed as a notifiable event or serious incident and what to tell Ofsted, please refer to their [guidance on reporting a serious childcare incident](#).

The guidance has also been updated to reflect that from 21 February twice-weekly testing in settings will no longer be required and on 24 February, the guidance on tracing close contacts and self-isolation will be replaced by UKHSA guidance.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

The guidance has been further updated to reflect new public health guidance tracing close contacts, isolation and when someone has symptoms or a positive test.

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

The guidance for holiday and after-school providers has been updated to reflect the end of the asymptomatic testing programme. Reference made to UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance on contact tracing and isolation which comes into effect from Thursday 24 February 2022.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

What childminders should do when someone they live with has COVID-19 symptoms, tested positive, or is self-isolating as a close contact. The guidance has been updated to reflect new public health guidance on tracing close contacts, isolation and when someone has symptoms or a positive test.

[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 email workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Early Years Safeguarding Leads Forum (DSL Forums)

An update of the latest in Early Years safeguarding information from our Safeguarding team. Suitable for all Early Years Designated Safeguarding Leads and Childminders in our Early Years PVI sector. If you are a DSL in a school, please speak to Denise Hannibal's Safeguarding Education Team for information on specific school DSL forums.

- 8 March 2022, 6.30pm to 7.45pm, course code: EY/22/015, virtual delivery
- 10 March 2022, 6.30pm to 7.45pm, course code: EY/22/016, virtual delivery

Book your place via [CPD Online](#) using your CPD Leader login details. Confirmations will be issued from CPD with joining instructions attached.

Preparing for Inspection

This course is designed specifically for Leaders and Managers of PVI Nurseries, Pre-Schools and Out of School Clubs to ensure that you are fully prepared for your Ofsted inspection visit. It includes important information about the inspection framework and inspection activities and practical activities to ensure that you achieve the positive outcome you deserve.

If you are a Childminder please register your interest with Ian Morris directly via email at IMorris4@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk, a bespoke session will then be planned to take place during the Summer Term.

Cost: £35 + VAT

Face to face delivery

- 15 March 2022, 9am to 12pm, Worcester, course code: EY/22/029
- 25 March 2022, 9am to 12pm, Worcester, course code: EY/22/030

Virtual delivery

- 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
- 31 March 2022, 9am to 12pm, course code: EY/22/031

Book via [CPD Online](#) using your CPD Leader login details. Confirmations are issued to the email on CPD at the point of booking, please ensure spam / junk folders are checked. Any issues when booking please email the training team at workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk.

Free Storytelling Training Has Arrived!

Your Animateys Active Storytelling Training is now available to all Early Years settings and schools in the county.

To access the training you will need to:

- Go to the [checkout page](#) on the Animateys website.
- Create an account for your school/setting (or log in if you already have one)
- Enter the coupon code for your district at checkout

NOTE: You will not need to add any payment details.

Please find your codes below:

- *Bromsgrove: storybr
- *Malvern Hills: storymh
- *Redditch: storyred
- *Worcester: storywo
- *Wychavon: storywyc
- *Wyre Forest: storywf

These codes are for the use of all schools and settings across Worcestershire. They may not be shared with anyone outside of the county. Codes are all lower case.

For a reminder of what this training is all about, [please click to watch a short video](#).

We urge you all to take up this wonderful opportunity.

SEND Childminder Cluster

Specifically for Childminders, 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.

3rd May 2022, 7pm to 9pm, course code: EY/22/037

Cost: Free

Please book via [CPD Online](#) using your settings CPD leader login details. Confirmations will be issued via CPD, please ensure junk / spam folders are checked and forwarded to the delegate accordingly.

Inclusion Funding Overview

Due to direct interest and demand we have organised an evening Inclusion Funding Overview workshop to take place on the 5th April 2022.

- 5 April 2022, 5.30pm to 6.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY/22/035
- 5 April 2022, 7.30pm to 8.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY/22/104 ** NEW DATE ADDED**

Aimed at SENCO's, Childminders 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

Cost: £12 + VAT per delegate

- 05 April 2022, 5.30pm to 6.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY/22/035
- 05 April 2022, 7.30pm to 8.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY/22/104

Please book via [CPD Online](#) using your settings CPD leader login details. Confirmations will be issued via CPD, please ensure junk / spam folders are checked and forwarded to the delegate accordingly.

Early Years Inclusion Funding Webinar for parents, carers, SENCOs and Childminders

The Early Years Inclusion team have recorded a 30 minute webinar providing an overview of the Early Years Inclusion Funding that is available to support Worcestershire's Early Years children. The webinar can be viewed on the WCF YouTube Early Years pages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMdDipyxexg>

The webinar is an introduction to the funding, and includes:

- An overview of what the Local Inclusion Fund is
- How Early Years practitioners can include parent carers in the process of applying for additional funding
- An overview of the funding levels that are available
- How the Local Authority monitors the use of the funding.

It also links to a range of other resources that explain the inclusion funding in more depth, such as:

[Overview of Graduated Response levels](#)

[The Graduated Response in Worcestershire Educational Settings](#)

[Information for Parent carers on the Preschool Forum](#)

More in depth training on how early years settings apply for the inclusion funding can be purchased via the WCF CPD on-line, and the next 1 hour Inclusion funding workshop is set to run on the 5th April 2022:

[Training Information - Worcestershire Children First Education Services](#)

We would advise settings ask parents to view the funding webinar whenever they are claiming additional funding to support their children's holistic development.

On-Line Inclusion Funding Application Form - Summer Term 2022 Funding

In the Spring term the Early Years Inclusion Team trialled an on-line funding form. The feedback from settings was that the on-line form was much quicker and easier to complete.

We have now created an on-line funding form for the Summer Term which can be accessed below:

[Access online funding form](#)

If you wish to apply for inclusion funding for the following reasons, we would ask you to use the new on-line system:

- New applications for GR4 challenge funding
- New applications for exceptional early years funding
- New applications for 0-3 non-NEF children
- Requests for continued funding for children who have received 0-3 non-NEF in the Spring term
- New applications for holiday or out of school funding for school aged children
- Requests for continued funding for school aged children who have received holiday or out of school funding in the Spring Term

Please ensure that you have discussed the funding you will access with the child's parents and have received signed consent to do so. Consent to access inclusion funding forms can be found within the paper funding application on page 3 on this link:

[Download consent to access inclusion funding forms](#)

Paper applications will be considered if received securely via the [Children's Services Portal](#), however we urge early years practitioners to apply via the on-line form as it is a much quicker system.

The deadline for Summer Term applications are as follows:

- Meeting 1 - deadline is 4th March (meeting to be held on 10th March)
- Meeting 2 - deadline is 29th April (meeting to be held on 5th May)

Please note if you are allocated a Graduated Response level 1,2,3 or 4 for children in receipt of NEF, then you can do this without completing an application via the Provider Portal when you enter the children's NEF actuals.

Early Years Inclusion Training April 2022 to March 2023

The Early Years Inclusion team are currently finalising their training offer for April 2022 to March 2023, and the following courses are now available to book via [CPD Online](#):

- SENCo Forum Clusters - North and South
- SEND Childminder Cluster
- Inclusion Funding Workshop
- Effective Individual Provision Mapping (IPM) Writing
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Management
- Training for New SENCO's

Over the forthcoming weeks the following courses will be finalised, therefore please look out for updates within the Early Years Bulletin and on our Early Years Facebook page (@WCFEarlyYears)

- How to Write a Support Plan training
- Effective Early Identification for SEND
- Individual risk assessments and health care plans for children with SEND within early years settings

Safeguarding Training for April 2022 to March 2023

We are pleased to confirm that the Safeguarding Training offer for April 2022 to March 2023 is now available on CPD to book, we've included the April to July 2022 dates below for both the Practitioners and DSL / Deputy DSL's. If you are looking for courses later on in 2022 / early 2023 then please check [CPD Online](#).

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: £25 + VAT (£30 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

- 11 March 2022, 9.30am to 12pm, course code: EY/21/161
- 5 May 2022, 7pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/22/050
- 24 May 2022, 6.30pm to 9pm, course code: EY/22/051
- 10 June 2022, 9.30am to 12pm, course code: EY/21/052

Courses for Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 terms are available, please check CPD for dates.

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 DSL's 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: £45 + VAT (£54 inc. VAT)

Childminders specific dates

- 7 May 2022, 9am to 3.30pm, course code: EY/22/062
- 12 and 19 May 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/22/064
- 14 and 21 June 2022, 7pm to 10pm, course code: EY/22/067
- 4 and 11 July 2022, 7pm to 10pm, course code: EY/22/069

Setting specific dates

- 29 April and 6 May 2022, 9.30am to 12.30pm, course code: EY/22/061
- 10 and 17 May 2022, 7pm to 10pm, course code: EY/22/063
- 29 June and 6 July 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/22/068

Mixed Settings & Childminder cohort dates

- 21 May 2022, 9am to 3.30pm, course code: EY/22/065
- 9 and 16 June 2022, 6.30pm to 9.30pm, course code: EY/22/066
- 9 July 2022, 9am to 3.30pm, course code: EY/22/070

Courses for Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 terms are available, please check CPD for dates.

Please book via [CPD Online](#) using your settings CPD leader login details. Confirmations will be issued via CPD, please ensure junk / spam folders are checked and forwarded to the delegate accordingly.

FREE WEBINAR for Worcestershire Nursery practitioners and Childminders

What is Starting Well? Find out more about what FREE services are available to families living in Worcestershire. This free webinar will:

- Provide you with Information about FREE accredited groups for parents and carers to attend- Incredible Years, Understanding your child ASD, PEEP and many more
- Provide you with information and advice about free childcare, supporting your child with additional needs, holiday activities and other services which could be of interest to families
- Provide information about volunteering for Action for Children
- Explain where Family Hubs are and what services they provide
- Provide an opportunity to ask questions and tell us what challenges parents often face

Come and find out more by joining our FREE Microsoft Teams webinar on Tuesday 29th March at 6:15pm - 7:15pm.

(Please see attached flyer for more information)

Communication Champion Training

Based upon our successful Communication TA training we are pleased to offer a free training schedule for all early year's settings in Wychavon 2021-2022! Training will be delivered by the Worcestershire NHS Speech and Language Therapy team across all three Wychavon districts (Droitwich, Pershore & Evesham). The training will focus on a new speech and language topic each term. All training will involve a service update followed by practical strategies, activities and resources to support children's speech, language and communication needs.

(Please see attached flyer for details)

Tax-Free Childcare

HMRC and Hemsall's are currently working together to try and increase the take-up of Tax-Free Childcare across the country as around 1 million families are currently missing out on this benefit.

If you provide paid for childcare services for children aged 0-11 years (up to 17 years if disabled), you are able to offer families the option of paying via their Tax-Free Childcare account. The scheme is similar to Childcare Vouchers, providing working parents with a saving of up to £2000 per year. If you are not registered to offer Tax-Free Childcare, you can do so here: [Sign up to Tax-Free Childcare if you're a childcare provider - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-to-tax-free-childcare)

To find out more about Tax-Free Childcare and how it can benefit families within your school or childcare setting, Hemsall's are running a webinar:

A FREE Tax-Free Childcare webinar for all types of childcare and out of school providers.

- Book your place [here](#) - 15 March 2022, 1.30pm - 3.00pm
- Book your place [here](#) - 16 March 2022, 6.30pm - 8.00pm

The following links will provide further information:

- [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Free Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs](#)
- [Help paying for childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Tax-Free Childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

British Science Week

British Science Week is taking place between 11th and 20th March 2022 and the theme is 'Growth', with lots of ideas of how to get involved on the website: [British Science Week](#)

[Science week booklist for early years](#)

Mindfulness Activities for Early Years Children

Free session plans from the National Literacy Trust using Happy: A Children's Book of Mindfulness by Nicola Edwards, illustrated by Katie Hickey to introduce early years children to the concept of mindfulness.

[Mindfulness activities for early years children](#)

Dual Language Booklist

The National Literacy Trust have put together a poster showing favourite dual language books which can be used to support children's language development. Accessed via a free account.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/dual-language-booklist/>

Essential but Undervalued: Early Years Childcare & Education during COVID-19

The final report from the Childcare during COVID project has been published: 'Essential but undervalued: early years care and education during COVID-19'. This project was funded by the ESRC as part of the UK Research & Innovation's rapid response to COVID-19.

<https://childcare-during-covid.org/final-report-essential-but-undervalued-early-years-care-education-during-covid-19/>

Apply for a role in the early years COVID-19 recovery experts and mentor programme

How to apply to become a mentor, expert or area lead for the early years COVID-19 recovery programme.

[Apply for a role in the early years COVID-19 recovery experts and mentors programme](#)

Talking about tough topics

When children ask about war, or death, or any other difficult topic, it can be really hard to know what to say. It's even harder when we're processing emotions about those things ourselves, too. However, asking about hard things is a display of faith and trust from a child, which we can acknowledge with empathy and honesty.

This week, the team at Family have collected some resources to support you with the difficult conversations that might be happening in your setting. The temptation as adults can be to avoid difficult topics with children, but Sue Asquith explains how to [sensitively talk to children about challenging events](#), like grief or illness. The key is being honest and working alongside parents.

There is also a video [interview with Mine Conkbayir](#) about the importance of wellbeing, co-regulation, trauma-informed practice, and supportive behaviour management.

In addition, we have collected these resources from children's charities, such as this article from the NSPCC, about [talking to children about difficult topics](#). Save the Children have produced this excellent article about [how to talk to children about the conflict in Ukraine](#) and Barnardos have created this PDF about [talking to children about war](#)

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Morris". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ian Morris
Early Years and Childcare Strategy Manager

