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Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

The end of term is fast approaching and with it the final Early Years bulletin of the academic year.

We began the year looking over our shoulders at Covid and wondering what the future might hold, and we end it in much the same way as cases rise across the country. Thankfully, we are much better able to deal with the virus now. However, we are all aware of the many difficulties it can pose from a staffing perspective. Despite this you remain open and continue to provide an incredible service, welcoming children with a warm smile at the door or even as they enter the building with their family.

It's often a bittersweet time of year as we reflect on another cohort of children leaving us for their next adventures, marvelling at the progress they have made since we first knew them, how their personalities have grown, and valuing the connections we have made with their families. However, the time for reflection doesn't last long before plans are already being made for next year.

For some of our settings, it is especially sad as they will be closing their doors for the final time. This summer, we shall say goodbye to some long-established providers who have served Worcestershire children and families well for many years. We wish them all well in whatever they choose to do next- for some a well-earned retirement.

We also bid farewell to two members of our Early Years Inclusion team- Deb Carter and Claire Lowden. Both are highly regarded and respected by their colleagues and by all in the sector alike, and I know I speak for us all when I say they will be greatly missed.

However, a new year brings new opportunities and much to look forward to so enjoy the summer and take the opportunity to recharge if you can...September will soon be just around the corner.

Enjoy your summer.

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Early Years Recruitment and Retention

We are very much aware of the difficulties encountered by many Early Years providers in their attempts to recruit new members of staff.

To support the sector we are making our social media accounts available to providers to share any vacancies you are struggling to recruit.

If you wish to advertise a post, simply email comms@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk with the following information:

- Job title
- Location
- Hours
- Brief description of role

- Link to your setting for more information and/or details how to apply
- Closing date

Your post will then be advertised on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

Worcestershire County Council adds Early Years Traineeships to its offer to help support the recruiting crisis.

Are you an Early Years provider with challenges in recruiting staff, looking for ways to grow people into your organisation? Traineeships can help...

Worcestershire County Council is proud to announce the new Traineeship program. This is a chance for young people to gain experience and broaden their skillset before heading into an apprenticeship or workplace and at the same time supporting our early years sector to a wider pool of young people to recruit from.

What is a Traineeship?

A Traineeship is a course that includes a work experience placement and helps young people prepare for employment or an apprenticeship. They are a great option if young people are hoping to join an apprenticeship but want to gain more confidence and/or skills first. Our Traineeships usually last one year and give young people a great range of practical skills and knowledge in subjects that will help them step into their chosen career. Work Experience is a large part of a Traineeship, and we need supportive employers who want to train young people for their industry to meet recruitment shortages now and in the future.

A Traineeship can also help employers recruiting by accessing young people who wouldn't be eligible for apprenticeships but following a traineeship can then move to working in early years.

How can you help?

Our Traineeships for Early Years Foundation Stage & Childcare cover a range of opportunities to meet your needs and interests. Placements could include options such as:

- Childminding
- Pre-School Settings
- School-Based Nurseries
- Day Nurseries

Do the young people gain any qualifications?

As part of the Traineeship, we offer the City & Guilds Level 2 Award in Support Work in Schools qualification. This is a knowledge-based qualification which prepares young people for working in an early years and school setting giving them a range of career options.

The qualification covers areas such as:

- Child and young person development
- Safeguarding the welfare of children and young people
- Communication and professional relationships with children, young people and adults
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion in work with children and young people
- Schools as organisations

This can lead onto working in an Early Years setting and undertaking an apprenticeship and therefore support more young people entering the early years sector.

Can you help? If you are interested in learning more about the Traineeship program and helping young people take first steps into early years, please contact the team for a discussion youngadultlearning@worcestershire.gov.uk or Kelly Champion - Young Adult Contract Manager on Kchampion@worcestershire.gov.uk 01905 845519

Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook Update

The Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook has been updated with effect from 1st September 2022. It includes a section on applying the EIF in different contexts, which may be of particular interest to childminders.

[Early years inspection handbook for Ofsted-registered provision for September 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107141/early-years-inspection-handbook-for-ofsted-registered-provision-for-september-2022.pdf)

Significant events to notify Ofsted about

Useful guidance for childcare providers, published March 2022

[Childcare: significant events to notify Ofsted about - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107141/childcare-significant-events-to-notify-ofsted-about.pdf)

DfE Consultation- Childcare Futures

The Department for Education is seeking views to help reach well-informed and fair decisions on proposed regulatory changes to childcare in England.

[Drive to reduce the cost of childcare for parents](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/drive-to-reduce-the-cost-of-childcare-for-parents)- Package of measures will increase childcare support for parents, boost the number of childminders and drive take up of childcare offers, to address rising costs.

Consultation description

This consultation seeks views on proposals to:

- change the current statutory minimum staff:child ratios in England for 2-year-olds from 1:4 to 1:5

- change the early years foundation stage statutory framework (the EYFS) to be explicit that childminders can care for more than the specified maximum of three children under the age of 5 if they are caring for siblings of children they already care for, or if the childminder is caring for their own baby or child
- make the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS) explicit that ‘adequate supervision’ while children are eating means that children must be in sight and hearing of an adult

[View the consultation](#)

Worcestershire Provider Agreement – Reminder

The deadline for returning the 2022/23 Provider Agreement was Monday 11th July. There are still more than 150 providers who have not yet returned the requested paperwork. If you wish to offer Nursery Education Funding in September, please ensure that the Provider Declaration Form 2022/23 and the Contact Details Form are completed in full and returned as soon as possible to NEFWPA@worcestershire.gov.uk.

DfE Funding Formula Consultation

The DfE are currently consulting on the **national** funding formulae for 2, 3 & 4 year old funding and are seeking views on the data they use to generate the rates passed onto local authorities. The [consultation](#) is looking at how the national early years allocation is distributed between local authorities and not the total spend, which was agreed during the Spending Review 2021. The consultation is open until Friday 16th September.

Worcestershire Childcare Search

When did you last check your details on the [Worcestershire Childcare Search](#)? Are the details still accurate or do they need updating?

If you can't find your setting on a search in your locality, we don't currently have consent to advertise you.

To update your details and to give consent for us to provide them to parents and carers:

- Log onto the [Provider Portal](#)
- Click on *Modules* (top left of the screen) and select *Childcare / Service Provider*
- Click on *Forms* and select *Update your details v.2*
- Check and amend all **three** pages, before clicking *Submit Form*
- Once the changes have been approved, you will receive an email to confirm that your details have been updated.

If you have forgotten your log-in details for the Provider Portal, please email EYCSystems@worcestershire.gov.uk for support.

Financial support for childcare

With the summer holidays approaching, it is more important than ever that parents and carers are able to access the financial support they qualify for. It can reduce their costs, help them to stay in work, or help them work more hours if they wish to.

To help childcare providers to offer this support, the DfE has produced a new toolkit which will help you to raise awareness of existing government schemes of financial support for childcare. This could in turn help you boost your business.

Over a million families in the UK are entitled to some form of government childcare support, but many are missing out because childcare providers in their area haven't signed up to accept the various offers.

Childcare Choices have updated their [Communications Toolkit](#) for providers, which can be used to support parents and carers to access support paying for childcare including:

- Nursery Education Funding
- Tax-Free Childcare
- Universal Credit
- Tax Credits

The toolkit contains a step-by-step guide to ensure that you have all the elements in place for your services to be accessible to families who use government childcare support. It also includes resources to raise awareness of the different offers available amongst families in your networks, whilst advertising that you are one of the providers equipped to accept the different types.

Take-up of Tax Free Childcare has increased following HMRC's recent campaign, but there are still over 600,000 families missing out.

To further support families to understand what they are entitled to, the [Help for Households](#) website provides additional information about the financial support that may be available.

Ofsted strategy 2022 - 2027

In April Ofsted published their [strategy for 2022 – 2027](#), setting out their priorities for the next five years.

This includes a stronger focus on their work in early years, ensuring children get the best start in life. A child's early education lasts a lifetime, and Ofsted are committed to helping make sure every child's earliest experience of education is as good as it can be - particularly important given what our youngest children have missed out on over the last two years.

Upon publication, Amanda Spielman, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HCMI) commented:

'Our strategy takes account of the impact of the pandemic and raises still further our ambitions for children and learners. We recognise the outstanding work early years providers have done to help children recover what they missed, and this strategy aims to increase our support for a workforce

that is so deeply devoted to what it does.'

Looking after children during heatwaves

With the recent warm weather, it might be a good time to remind yourself of the [DfE guidance on looking after children in early years settings during heatwaves](#).

This guidance, produced for teachers and professionals, reminds us of the health risks from heat, the actions you can take to protect children suffering from heat illness and information on developing a sun protection policy.

Practice

Early relationships as a foundation for early education

Sally Hogg, Deputy Chief Executive of the Parent-Infant Foundation, looks at the [science behind early trauma](#) and how practitioners can support children.

Source: Nursery World

National Week of Play - Saving the planet through stories

To mark their [National Week of Play](#), the Early Years Alliance published a [series of blogs](#) on the theme of 'protecting the planet through play'. Check out [this blog](#) on how stories can open a child's mind and encourage them to imagine.

Source: Early Years Alliance

Sensory food education

Sensory food education is a fantastic way of helping children build a positive relationship with food and eating. This [article from TastEd](#) shows how you can easily incorporate it into your early years setting.

Source: TastEd/Help for Early Years Providers

Public perceptions of early childhood development

On 16 June, the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood unveiled the [findings of new research into early childhood development](#).

Key findings from the research, conducted by Ipsos UK, include:

- Nine in ten agree the early years are important in shaping a person's future life. However, less than a fifth recognise the unique importance of the 0-5 period.
- Seven in ten think the early years should be more of a priority for society
- Majority of public recognise that a person's future mental health and wellbeing most likely part to be affected by their early childhood
- Community support networks found to be a crucial for parents

- Parents are more likely to seek support for child's physical wellbeing than social and emotional development.

Try a 10-minute shake-up

Looking to inspire parents and educators with a few physical activity ideas? Check out the [NHS' 10-minute shake-up](#) page. Plenty of exercise plus a few characters you might recognise!

Source:Family

A guide to share with parents

[Support your parents with home learning with this free guide](#). Ruth Swailes shares ideas for parents to nurture physical development of babies and children under five.

Source:Family

Improve your occupancy

Our guide to boosting occupancy, with tips and tricks for how you can take your setting's promotional efforts to the next level.

[Download the guide](#)

Source:Family

Best regards,



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