

Early Years Settings Referrals to Pre-school Forum

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Step 1- identifying children

An early years setting identifies a child with significant SEND needs who meets criteria for the Pre-school Forum (PSF):

- Potentially require a space at a Specialist Nursery Assessment Unit in preschool year
- Potentially requires a space at a Specialist Language Unit in their preschool year
- Potentially require an Education Health Care Plan or 'Enhanced' Support on entry into school

For full criteria please [download from the following webpage \(opens in new window\)](#)

Step 2 – liaison with parents

Early years setting discusses area of need/delay with parents/carers and gathers information on any additional specialist or health services involved with the child. They must discuss the role of the Pre-school Forum with parents/carers and share the Pre-school forum – Information for parents leaflet with them.

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/WCFEducationServices/download/downloads/id/69/pre-school-forums-%E2%80%93-information-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

Step 3 - liaison with specialist services

If additional specialist or health services are involved with the child the early years key person and/or SENCO should ask the parent/carers for permission for them to liaise with these services to discuss a referral to the Pre-school Forum.

The professional with the most up to date knowledge of the child should be completing the preschool notification (PSN).

If a health service is involved with the child and they agree to make the referral themselves, they will ask for information from you, such as secure Early Support Levels and the level of inclusion funding you are accessing. Health Services have a statutory responsibility to refer children to the local authority if the child meets the criteria for the Pre-school Forum

If the health professional agrees that a referral should be made, but the consensus is that the early years setting should make the referral as they have more up to date information, then the health professional can email the setting stating that they agree to the referral and are counter-signing the PSN. You should then attach the email to the Preschool Notification, and this will be taken as proof that health are countersigning and agreeing to the referral.

Step 4 – gathering evidence from specialists

If the professional does not agree to refer the child to the Pre-school Forum, the early years setting is to record this outcome as evidence.

Step 5 – discussion with the inclusion team

If professionals do not agree to refer or there are no services involved, then the early years setting (with parental permission) should contact the **Inclusion Team helpline: (01905) 843099** to:

- Provide an overview of child's needs
- Discuss the services involved and reasons for non-referral etc.

Step 6 – advice received from inclusion team

The early years inclusion team will record the conversation and provide suggestions on:

- Strategies to employ within individual planning documents
- Agree any additional funding required to provide interventions based on suggested strategies
- Indicate whether the child potentially meets criteria for a referral to the Pre-school Forum
- Discuss the Information for Professionals which includes the [criteria for referrals to the Pre-school Forum \(opens in new window\)](#)

This will be confirmed in an email to the setting from the inclusion team officer.

Step 7 – evidence gathering within graduated approach

The early years setting is to initiate the cycle of the **GRADUATED APPROACH** over a 6-week period in order to provide evidence on:

- the child's specific area/areas of need
- the specific help and support that have used to support the holistic development of the child
- the progress or lack of progress made

Early Support Tracking documents are to be used in all areas of delay – detailing baseline skills, and any progress over the 6 weeks.

Individual provision maps to be used to detail the support and help put in place. The record of interventions details any progress and provide opportunity for parent/carer to include their thoughts. Please also provide evidence of discussions with outside agencies who are choosing not to refer.

All [recommended documents can be found here \(opens in new window\)](#)

The Graduated Response in Educational settings [can be downloaded here \(opens in new window\)](#)

Step 8 – providing evidence

After the six-week intervention period, gathered evidence is sent to the early years inclusion team via Children Services Secure Portal (CSP), along with a draft Pre-School Notification completed by the

setting and including the signed parental consent. [This can be downloaded from this page \(opens in new window\)](#) and the Pre-School Notification is included in the resources section.

Step 9 – agreeing evidence and next steps for early years setting

The inclusion team contact the setting to discuss the evidence provided. If the evidence provided does not indicate a requirement for the child to be known the Pre-school Forum, the inclusion team will ask the setting to repeat step 7 (to gather evidence over a 6-week period).

If the inclusion team agrees that the evidence provided indicates a requirement for child to be known to Pre-School Forum, they will ask the setting to:

- 1) confirm they have discussed the Pre-School Notification with the parent/carers and gathered and included their thoughts.
- 2) to refer to the Guidance for Professionals (link provided in step 6)
- 3) confirm they have provided the parent/carers with the parent information leaflet on the Pre-School Forum and Worcestershire SEND Local Offer.

Step 10 – sending evidence via the Children Services Secure Portal (CSP)

Early Years setting sends Preschool Notification to the early years inclusion team via the [CSP \(opens in new window\)](#)

Step 11 –counter signing PSN based on evidence provided

If the form is completed to the satisfaction of the early years team, and the supporting evidence supports a referral, the inclusion team officer will countersign the form and send onto the SEND team for inclusion at the next Pre-School Forum meeting.

If the inclusion team officer feels an observation of the child is required, then they will set up a visit for the team to:

- Observe the child in the early years setting
- Review the information included within the Pre-School Notification
- To sign off THE FINAL VERSION of the PSN on behalf of the Pre-School Forum.
- Request that the setting send the final and signed copy of the PSN to the SEND team on the Children Services Secure Portal.

Please note: if the observation of the child indicates a higher level of development than the information stated in the PSN – the inclusion officer may decide that the child does not meet criteria for the Pre-School forum. The key person and/or SENCO must make this clear to parents during initial discussions.

Step 12 – child discussed at Pre-School Forum

The child will be discussed at next Pre-School Forum and specialist support agencies will be referred to if appropriate.

Specialist professionals supporting the child will feed in information about their support and any progress made. If the child and settings is to be supported by the early years inclusion team, they will contact the setting prior to the discussions for up-to-date information from the settings, and any information provided by parents to the early years setting.

Where a child is attending a school run provision where the child is considered a pupil of the school, the school SENCO and early years teacher are expected to lead on the support for the child and to feed in information from the setting and parents into the Pre-School Forum.