



**Early Years Team**

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## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

We hope you managed to find some time to relax over Easter and are now ready to tackle the Summer Term.

As I'm sure you're aware, the Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Children First websites have recently been updated. We're now in the process of updating our content to ensure the Early Years pages are as informative as possible. If there is anything that you think is missing, please let us know so that we can continue to make improvements.

As always, if you need any advice or support, please contact the team via email at: [EYCC@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:EYCC@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

Best regards,

The Early Years Team

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## Early Years Bulletin: Worcestershire News and Reminders

### Nursery Assessment/Specialist Nursery Review

Following an in-depth review with parents, mainstream and specialist providers and health stakeholders, we are intending to establish a model of support for pre-school children with complex SEND that require a dedicated environment to meet their needs.

Operating in local areas, we are looking for providers who are interested in delivering a SEND Early Years Hub model using either their own accommodation or accommodation provided in the appropriate location. Starting with Early Years Hubs in Worcester City and Wychavon from January 2024, with the provider being awarded the contract in October 2023, we will then develop further phases as necessary.

There will be two market engagement events for providers to come along to hear about the proposals and help shape what the provision can offer, as well as to express their interest in delivering the places before submitting a bid to the LA to be the provider of the new service.

#### Market Engagement Events are on the dates below:

**May 10<sup>th</sup> 2023** - face to face session at County Hall, 5pm – 6:30pm

**May 15<sup>th</sup> 2023** - virtual session, 5pm – 6:30pm (link given once registered)

To register to attend, please contact [SPP@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:SPP@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

### Nursery Education Funding - Summer Term Actual Claim

#### Deadline

The [Online Provider Portal](#) is currently open for you to submit your Summer Term Actual Claim for two, three and four-year-old funding. The deadline for submissions is **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023**.

#### Headcount Reminder

Summer Term Headcount Week is Monday 1<sup>st</sup> – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May; families who are looking to move funding after this date must have handed in their notice by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May. For families who are wishing to move their child's funding after Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May, please direct them to the Family Information Service at their local [Family Hub](#) for support: 01905 520032.

#### 30 Hour Codes

To be eligible for 30 hours during the Summer Term, the child's 30 Hour Code must have been applied for prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and must still be valid on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. If a family have difficulties with their Code, or the application process, please ask them to contact Childcare Choices for support; we are unable to access their Childcare account and therefore cannot provide any support for parents/carers experiencing issues.

## Group/Partnership Support

Are you working in partnership with other providers in your community? If so, do you meet regularly? Would you like to reach out to more providers and grow your community?

Or, would you like to develop a group/partnership in your local area?

Please reach out to the Early Years Team if you would like support to develop or expand peer to peer support, via [EYCC@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:EYCC@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

## Worcestershire Apprenticeship Account (WA Account) and Bursary

Residents in Worcestershire are set to receive a £500 incentive to sign up to an apprenticeship, thanks to the launch of a new scheme spearheaded by Worcestershire County Council. The County Council, alongside Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) have launched the Worcestershire Apprenticeship Account (WA Account) and Bursary.

It offers residents, aged 16-24 the opportunity to receive free funding to use on clothing, travel, tools, and equipment needed to complete their apprenticeship. The bursary, backed by open4business is exclusively available to people living in Worcestershire who apply and obtain their apprenticeship through the new WA Account.

The WA Account is designed to ease the process of apprenticeship application, making it simpler for residents to register their interest, apply, and directly contact apprenticeship providers so they can obtain the right apprenticeship for them, all in one place.

This is a fantastic scheme that can make a huge difference to residents right across the county. With the WA Account, you can sign up, choose the apprenticeship they're interested in, submit an expression of interest and once they secure and confirm it, they'll get £250 upfront to spend on their apprenticeship. They can then use the remaining £250 to be reimbursed for other apprenticeship expenses.

Apprenticeships offer people a great employability pathway, and for local employers they are vital in future-proofing a workforce. With the WA Account and Bursary, we can really invest in and support Worcestershire school leavers, young adults, residents, and in turn its businesses, by giving apprentices a real helping hand. Thanks to this funding boost, we will be able to help up to 1,000 young people kickstart their apprenticeship journey!

For more details on the scheme, and to sign up for a WA Account, please visit the [Worcestershire Apprenticeship](#) website.

Watch [a digital-short video](#) explaining the WA Account

[Download](#) Worcestershire Apprenticeship Account and Bursary Flyer

## Wychavon Family Hub Young People Survey

If you live or access services in Wychavon, please take a few minutes to complete the following surveys, which will be used to shape the family hub support within Wychavon. Please also share with the families you work with.

Survey for families: [\(Ref B1\) Family Hub Consultation with Families, Children and Young People - Wychavon \(office.com\)](#)

Survey for young people: [Wychavon Family Hub Young People Survey \(office.com\)](#)

## Recruitment Reminder

Please don't forget that we can include any staff vacancies you are currently advertising via the WCF Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Please email [comms@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:comms@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) with the following information if you wish to make use of this service:

- Job title
- Location
- Hours
- Brief description of role
- Link to your setting for more information and/or details of how to apply
- Closing date

## Clean Hands, Safe Hands – We would like your feedback!

Public Health in Worcestershire launched the 'Clean Hands, Safe Hands' campaign in October 2022. As part of this campaign, a tool kit for schools and early years as well as other resources have been Developed.

We would be grateful if you could provide your feedback on the tool kits and resources and whether you found them useful. This will help us plan and develop further information for education settings.

Please could you complete the very short survey via the following link, it should take no longer than 5 minutes: [Handwashing Campaign- Schools and Early Years \(office.com\)](#)

## Early Years Bulletin: National News and Reminders

### National Emergency Alert

On Sunday 23 April at 3pm the UK Government is testing an emergency alert service that will alert all mobile phones with a message and an alarm sound. The alerts are designed to warn residents about emergencies such as fires, flooding or extreme weather. As many of you are in contact with vulnerable people in our communities, we ask for your support in ensuring that they are aware of the test that will be taking place. You can find more information on the [Emergency Alert](#) page of the gov.uk website.

### Budget 2023

The Department for Education have published a summary of the [childcare announcements](#) made during the Budget 2023. Details on the announcements, including the proposed increase to NEF rates for September 2023, will be communicated as soon as we receive further information.

### Ofsted: How staff-to-child ratios work

Following the announcement that ratios for two year olds will change from September 2023, the [Ofsted: Early Years](#) blog has published some Frequently Asked Questions regarding ratios: [How staff-to-child ratios work – Ofsted: early years \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

### Local School Nature Grants Programme Reopens for 2023

Learning Through Landscapes is offering outdoor learning training sessions and nature equipment for nurseries, schools, and other early-learning providers to promote outdoor learning for children.

The Local School Nature Grants Scheme will provide a two-hour outdoor learning training session, along with an assortment of equipment up to the value of £500.

Priority will be given to applicants that include children in the decision-making process, such as through student councils or eco-committees. Projects that incorporate and benefit the local community, such as through volunteer opportunities or visual improvements to the local environment, are encouraged.

**The programme is open to nurseries and pre-school settings who have their own dedicated building and employ more than five members of staff.**

There are four funding rounds in 2023. The next deadline for applications is 28 April 2023.

For more information please visit the [Learning through Nature website](#).

## National Literacy Trust

The National Literacy Trust have developed some free, downloadable early years resources aimed at parents and carers. The free [Walk and Talk Trail](#) is a set of cards designed to support the quality and frequency of interactions between parents/carers and their child/ren.

The free resources are available in a range of [languages](#), and also include a guide for [Early Years practitioners](#).

## Early Years Bulletin: Early Help and Safeguarding Update

### Bruising on Babies

This [short video](#) provides advice to practitioners about seeking an explanation from the babies' carers, as well as what action to take if no explanation is provided or an unlikely or inadequate explanation is given.

The NSPCC has a leaflet providing further information: [Bruises on children \(CORE-INFO leaflet\) \(nspcc.org.uk\)](#)

### Early Years Operation Encompass

We've had a really positive response to the launch of Early Years Operation Encompass but there are still providers who are not signed up to receive the Early Years notifications. If you need a copy of the Early Years Operation Encompass Welcome Pack or any other support regarding Operation Encompass, please contact Nicky Truby via [ntruby@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:ntruby@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).

## Early Years Bulletin: News from the Inclusion Team

### Early Years Inclusion Team Co-ordinator

As many of you will already know, Becky White is now on family leave. We are really pleased to announce that Kelly Potts will oversee the strategic leadership of the Early Years Inclusion Team in Becky's absence. She will be working in close collaboration with Amy Rowley who will take the lead for the Area SENCo Team during this time. Their contact emails are:

Kelly Potts [kpotts1@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:kpotts1@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Amy Rowley [arowley@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:arowley@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

### Reminder

If you are a provider who requires support to meet the needs of your children with SEND, remember that we have an Early Years Inclusion Team. We are aware that there may be a number of children waiting for a Preschool discussion to take place, so please utilise our **free** webinars, website resources, Inclusion Funding and helpline.

Inclusion team helpline: 01905 843 099

Team email: [eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Resources:

[Early Years Webinars](#)

[Inclusion Funding Application Process](#)

[Early Years Inclusion Website](#)

### Early Years Inclusion Funding – Summer Term Applications

If you wish to request top up (GR4 challenge, exceptional, non NEF or holiday and out of school) inclusion funding for new children who will be attending in the Summer Term, please do so by **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April** on the Summer Term 2023 on-line application which can be accessed here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Sgx5xYFgYx>

Remember if you have accessed GR4 challenge or exceptional we will send you a link to the monitoring forms which will extend the funding into the new term.



## Webinars for Parents/Carers

Autism West Midlands are running webinars for parents/carers during the Summer Term.

- Autism and Behaviour – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May
- Autism and Anxiety – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June

For more information, please download the posters from [Google Drive](#).

## Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

Before making a referral to SaLT, you must have signed parental consent. Referrals forms can be downloaded here: <https://hacw.nhs.uk/childreSSLT/>

The [Talking Point Progress Checker](#) can be used to identify a child's support needs. Parents/carers can be directed to the [Toddler Talk](#) website for support.

To contact your local team:

**East Team** (Wyre Forest, Worcester and Malvern)

01562 714700

[WHCNHS.SLTWyreforest@nhs.net](mailto:WHCNHS.SLTWyreforest@nhs.net)

**West Team** (Bromsgrove, Redditch, Droitwich, Evesham and Pershore)

01527 488326

[WHCNHS.SLTBromsgrove@nhs.net](mailto:WHCNHS.SLTBromsgrove@nhs.net)

## Early Years Bulletin – In the setting

### Implementing Sensory Diets and Evaluating the Impact

#### Fairfield Day Nursery – Emma Walkey, SENCo

A sensory diet is an individualised timetable or plan, made up of activities that enable a child's sensory processing needs to be met. The sensory based activities are specific to each child's individualised needs and are designed with varying frequencies and intensities throughout a child's session. The types of activities chosen are based on the child's interests, enjoyment and address their specific sensory system needs.

A summary of a sensory diet timetable could be:

8:00 – 8:30am: Breakfast and exploratory play

8:30 – 9:00am: Physical stimulation outdoors with pans and sticks/music wall (Tactile)(Auditory)

9:00 – 9:10am: Calming/regulation time, pressure cuddles and foot massage (Proprioception)

9:10 – 9.30am: Intensive/shared interactions, see IPM/motivated by bubbles (Visual)

9:30 – 9:40am: Calming/regulation time, tickles with feathers/vibration cushion (Tactile)

9:40 – 10:00am: Sensory room, sit in spinning top/dancing/jumping (Vestibular)

10:00 – 10:15am: Snack time, ensure object of reference is used.

10:15 – 10:20am: Nappy time, ensure object of reference is used.

The above sequence is then repeated and adapted according to the child's needs. The timetable is adaptable and incorporates the daily care routines too. As a setting it was clear that for the implementation of a successful sensory diet, the child required 1:1 support or a minimum of a 1:2 ratio. The practitioner's knowledge of the child is fundamental in the sequencing and selection of activities to enable sensory regulation. As a team we discussed the identified child's play cues, dysregulation cues, identifiable schemas, next steps and their levels, according to the early support materials. These greatly influenced the routine and activities.

We also felt it was important to have a calming/regulation activity immediately following a big, loud, physical or highly stimulating activity. This enables a child's sensory system to regulate more effectively. When evaluating the impact, it was clear that the activities needed to be meaningful to the child, practical and address their specific needs. We have now implemented a sensory diet timetable with two of our children who have specific sensory needs; so far, we have seen an improvement in their ability to self-regulate throughout their sessions and they are beginning to engage and participate in interactive activities with a familiar adult.

Although using sensory diets as a strategy at Fairfield is in its early stages, we are excited about the impact and progress we have seen so far. We also found [www.sensominds.com](http://www.sensominds.com) a useful tool when exploring activity options, as they have an activities calculator for specific sensory processing difficulties or needs.

A copy of our basic sensory diet timetable is available from the inclusion team or directly from us, please email [info@fairfielddaynursery.co.uk](mailto:info@fairfielddaynursery.co.uk).

## Early Years Bulletin: Training news

### Payment of invoices

The training team have become aware that not all payment options stated on invoices are actually available to customers of WCF. We apologise for the error and are updating all relevant documents and terms & conditions to ensure they reflect the below.

On receipt of an invoice WCF Customers **are able to make payment** via on-line banking, BACS or sending in the remittance advice with a cheque. Further details of how to do this will be on the invoice.

Payment via the Internet Payment Facility or the Automated Telephone Payment Lines **are not available** to WCF customers.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

### Domestic Abuse Training

Facilitated by Sarah Wigley Associates, this training seeks to raise awareness and increase understanding of the dynamics of abuse, including coercive control. The training supports professionals to better identify, signpost and support victims as well as considering safe ways of responding to perpetrators.

The training is delivered virtually over 3 modules:

**Module 1:** Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse

**Module 2:** Working with Domestic Abuse within the context of Multi-Agency Working – promoting critically reflective practice

**Module 3:** Understanding and Working with Perpetrators

**Cost:** Free

**Date:** various

**To book:** email [bookings@sarahwigleyassociates.co.uk](mailto:bookings@sarahwigleyassociates.co.uk)

For more information, please download the flyer from [Google Drive](#).

## All you need to know about Tax-Free Childcare

Funded by HMRC and free to attend, this webinar continues our work to raise awareness of Tax-Free Childcare (TFC). Our aim is to increase early education and childcare providers' understanding of TFC. The content has been developed in direct response to the questions raised at our first webinar held in February 2023.

Delivered by Hemsalls, this webinar will be useful for early education and childcare settings, out of school and activity club providers across the UK. The session will:

- Provide a step-by-step guide to Tax-Free Childcare.
- Consider the opportunities for all types of providers – linking to the current economic climate and childcare market to increase take-up.
- Consider TFC from a providers' perspective.
- Highlight activities we can all do to ensure families and childcare providers benefit from TFC.
- Signpost you to toolkits and assets that can be used to promote TFC.

Cost: Free

Date: Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 5:30-8pm

To book: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/tfc-a-back-to-basics-webinar-for-all-activity-and-childcare-providers-tickets-603713843357>

For more information, please download flyer from [Google Drive](#).

## Access to CPD

Back in September 2022 the booking system used to access training and conferences offered by various teams within WCF had to change due to the previous supplier going into liquidation, we wanted to thank you those who activated their accounts to the new site and have been busy booking training and conferences.

For schools / settings that still have not activated their access to CPD then please be aware that over the Easter break the training team have re-sent the welcome email. The email will come from [CAP-DoNotReply@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:CAP-DoNotReply@worcestershire.gov.uk) and will be entitled "Welcome to CPD Course Search". It may go into junk / spam folders so please check. We ask that you activate the account on receipt of this email

[Our support guide \(opens in new window\)](#) will help answer any questions you may have around the new system and if the question / query is not listed then please contact the training team via our details below.

If for any reason you still have not received access to the new booking system, please contact the training team by emailing [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk).