

**Early Years Team**

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## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

We hope you are well and making the most of the sunshine.

It's been lovely to see so many faces at the Summer Term Update Meetings, which have taken place this week. You will find an attached document, 'Summer Term Updates', which highlights the subject areas covered, along with some links you may find useful. If you have any topics that you would like to discuss at the Autumn Term Update Meetings, please let us know via the Early Years Team email address.

As always, if you need any advice or support, please contact the team via [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

### Ready Steady Worcestershire



Please see the attached flyer for the Ready Steady Worcestershire summer activities. Bookings for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme are now open!

Places are free for children in receipt of benefits related Free School Meals (FSM) with over 70 different activity clubs to choose from. Go to [www.haf-it.co.uk](http://www.haf-it.co.uk) to sign up and have FSM status verified - once verified, up to 16 free sessions can be booked.

Limited funding and therefore places are available for non-FSM eligible children and young people who would otherwise be considered vulnerable. For example, children on CP/CiN/EHA, young carers, refugees, Looked after children (Kinship and SGO only.) These places are by request and accepted at the discretion of the providers. Please see [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/rsw](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/rsw) for more information.

Please support the families with registering for places, they only have to do this once, and remember we have specialist SEND places as well as the ability to support SEND children who attend mainstream provision.

### Preparation for Adulthood Survey

As mentioned at the Summer Term Update Meetings, Early Years providers and parents and carers who have children attending Early Years settings are invited to complete a Preparation for Adulthood survey. The term 'Preparation for Adulthood' is referenced in the SEND Code of Practice and focuses on how we can prepare children and young people with SEND to meet their aspirations in the areas of:

- employment
- independent Living
- community Inclusion
- health

To establish how to develop this work, we are seeking the views of all providers in the Early Years sector and also request that you share the parent/carer survey with your families.

Early Years providers: <https://forms.office.com/e/iVcaPAi7sw>

Early Years parents/carers: <https://forms.office.com/e/WVzzn9CtKM>

## Nursery Education Funding

### Provider Agreement 2023 to 2024

The Worcestershire Provider Agreement 2023 to 2024 will be sent to all NEF contacts during the week commencing Monday 3 July, in advance of the NEF Provider Briefings on 5 and 7 July 2023. Please look out for the email and ensure that the accompanying forms are completed and returned by Monday 31 July 2023, if you wish to offer Nursery Education Funding in September.

### Summer Term Adjustment Claims

The Provider Portal is open for Summer Term Adjustment Claims. Adjustments that are submitted by Thursday 29 June will be paid as part of the Summer Term Actual Payment, due the week commencing Monday 10 July 2023. Adjustment Claims submitted after Thursday 29 June will be paid as part of the Summer Term Final Actual Payment, which is due the week commencing Monday 21 August. Please note that the payment due in August is for Adjustment payments only. If you have any questions or need any support regarding the payment, please email:

[EYFunding@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:EYFunding@worcestershire.gov.uk).

## Summer Reading Challenge

Worcestershire libraries are inviting all schools to encourage their pupils aged 4-years-old to 11-years-old to sign up for this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

### About the Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is the UK's biggest free reading for pleasure programme for children. Taking place annually, the Challenge encourages children aged 4-years-old to 11-years-old to keep reading during the summer holidays.

To support all schools to participate, libraries are offering assembly visits, class visits to/from school. Email: [librarieshq@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:librarieshq@worcestershire.gov.uk) to request a visit from our library team. Teachers and practitioners can also access free resources through the Summer Reading Challenge [School Zone](#) and the [Pre-School Zone](#)

The Challenge runs throughout the summer holidays in all Worcestershire libraries from 8 July 2023.

### Location

Children can join via their local library, where they can borrow books, attend events, and collect free incentives and rewards. A full list of Worcestershire Libraries can be found here:

[Find a library | Worcestershire County Council](#)

### Introducing 'Ready, Set, Read!'

This year's Summer Reading Challenge, 'Ready, Set, Read' is themed around the power of play, sport, games, and physical activity. Through activity challenge cards from the Youth Sport Trust, and an exciting, themed book collection, the Summer Reading Challenge aims to keep imaginations moving over the school holiday. By participating in the challenge young people will have the opportunity to explore new reading material, develop skills, and discover new interests.

Please visit: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/summerreadingchallenge](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/summerreadingchallenge) for more information.

## 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

## Early Years Bulletin: National News and Reminders

### Early Years Foundation Stage Consultation

The Department for Education has launched a consultation on the EYFS, proposing to make the framework more practical for different types of EYFS providers. The aim is to:

- offer providers more flexibility
- reduce known burdens
- enable practitioners to provide high-quality Early education
- make it easier for practitioners to join the workforce and progress their careers

A summary of the proposed changes can be found here: [Summary of changes - Early Years foundation stage regulatory changes consultation](#)

Responses to the consultation must be made via the [Citizen Space](#) platform by **Wednesday 26 July**. **Any further questions can be directed to [eyfs.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:eyfs.consultation@education.gov.uk).**

### Universal Credit Childcare Payments

From 28 June 2023, the Department for Work and Pensions will raise the amount that parents in Great Britain can claim back monthly for their childcare costs on Universal Credit, up to £951 for one child and £1,630 for two or more children. This is a rise of 47%.

At the same time, the Government will help eligible parents cover the costs for the first month's childcare when they enter work or significantly increase their hours.

Further information about the changes can be found here: [Massive boost to childcare payments marks first step in largest ever expansion of childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Ofsted Complaints Consultation

Ofsted have launched a consultation regarding post-inspection arrangements and complaints handling. They propose to:

- enhance on-site professional dialogue during inspections to help address any issues before the end of the inspection visit
- introduce a new opportunity for providers to contact Ofsted the day after an inspection if they have any unresolved concerns
- introduce new arrangements for finalising reports and considering formal challenges to inspection outcomes
- replace our current internal review process with a direct escalation to the [Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted \(ICASO\)](#) and add a new periodic review of closed complaints, using external representatives from the sectors we inspect.

For further details and to respond to the consultation, please use the following link: [Ofsted Consultation 2023](#) and submit your response by **Friday 15 September**.

## Apply for support from the DfE Childminder Mentor Programme

The Department for Education (DfE) is offering a programme of support for childminders across England, from May 2023 until July 2024. [The Childminder mentor programme](#) is focused on supporting childminders to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the youngest and most disadvantaged children.

By joining this programme, you will receive support from experienced Early Years practitioners who have at least three years' experience as a childminder or supporting childminders, in the roles of Area Lead and Mentor.

The support is **free** and available across England.

You will also have the opportunity to network with other childminders in your area who are part of the programme and also the Department for education, local authorities and other Early Years providers.

To be eligible to receive support from the DfE Childminder Mentor programme, childminders must **currently** be providing childcare to children aged between 0 to 5 (to at least one child).

### **We are the DfE's delivery and training partner**

[Hempsall's](#) is here to manage the recruitment of Area Leads and Mentors, including the application assessment and interviews, and to match them to childminders to support. We also design and deliver training for childminder Area Leads and Mentors, to help them in their role.

### **How to apply for support**

We are currently looking for childminders who are interested in receiving support from **September 2023** for the autumn term 2023.

If you are interested in receiving support, please complete the form linked [here](#) by **31 July 2023**

You can apply for support as an individual, or with other childminders as part of a small group (of up to 4 people).

Please read the document [here](#) for more information on the programme, including the amount of support on offer and the main aims of the programme.

#### Further information

You will be notified if you have been selected to receive support for the autumn term by **the end of August 2023**.

If you are not selected for the summer term, there may be further opportunities to receive support later in the programme. Any enquiries should be sent to [childminders@hempalls.com](mailto:childminders@hempalls.com)

#### How we will use your data

Your application will be sent to Hemsall's. We may notify your local authority that you have applied for the programme and, with your permission, share the information you have provided with them.

Your data is protected under the [DfE privacy notice](#) for the programme.

## Measles and the MMR Vaccination

Public Health in Worcestershire are encouraging all students and parents to ensure they are up to date with their MMR vaccinations as there has been a recent rise in measles cases. Between 1 January and 20 April this year there have been 49 cases of measles compared to 54 cases for the whole of 2022. Cases have been picked up in areas across the country.

Measles is a very infectious viral illness that is spread by coughs and sneezes. Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms which can include a high temperature, a runny or blocked nose, cough/sneezing, sore red eyes, white spots inside the mouth and a rash.

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective combined vaccine and protects against 3 serious illnesses: Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are needed to get the best protection from measles. The first dose is given at the age of 12 months and the second dose is given at three years and four months, before starting school. Having both doses give long lasting protection.

Parents or guardians of children who are not up to date with their two doses of MMR vaccine should contact their GP practice to book an appointment. It's never too late to catch up.

Adults who have never previously had the MMR vaccine or have only had one dose of it, should contact their GP surgery to arrange to catch up with outstanding doses.

For further information for schools and resources to help promote the uptake of the vaccine, including leaflets and posters for educational settings, please visit the following links:

1. [Measles: information for schools and healthcare centres - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
2. [Immunisations: resources for nurseries and schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

For more information on measles, MMR vaccine and seeking medical advice please visit: [Measles - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

## Be Tick Aware



As we head into spring and summer, we are reminding people to be 'tick aware' as they enjoy the great outdoors.

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures that are found in leafy, grassy areas and feed on the blood of animals and humans.

Ticks can carry infections and while [Lyme disease](#) is more common in the UK there has recently been a [confirmed a case](#) of tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) in England.

To remind people how to stay safe from Ticks this Summer, the UKHSA blog can be shared: [Tick-borne disease in the UK: stay safe this spring and summer - UK Health Security Agency](#)

[blog.gov.uk](http://blog.gov.uk)

## Hot Weather Guidance

The UK Health Security Agency has worked in collaboration with the Met Office and Cabinet Office to produce an updated collection of guidance and advice on [hot weather and health](#). This includes updated [guidance on looking after children and those in early years settings](#) during heatwaves which will enable you to plan for weather events and limit business and importantly education continuity impact.

Please note the system has changed for triggers and a dedicated platform for issuing heat-health alerts and cold-health alerts has also been established. You can receive these alerts by completing this [online form](#).

## Oral Health Guidance for Early Years Practitioners

Nearly a quarter of 5-year-olds in England have tooth decay – but this is largely preventable. [New oral health guidance from the Department for Education](#) is now available on the Help for Early Years Providers website.

The guidance:

- explains the importance of good oral health for Early Years children
- helps practitioners to meet the oral health requirement in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework
- includes practical tips and activities to use in Early Years settings
- links to further reading and resources

For more guidance on supporting children in the Early Years, visit the [Help for Early Years Providers website](#).



## Early Years Bulletin: Early Help and Safeguarding Update

### Keep Me Safe Launch Events

Keep Me Safe.... will launch in Herefordshire and Worcestershire on **Monday, 17 July 2023**.

The [Keep Me Safe Strategy](#) aims to provide consistent and co-ordinated messages to practitioners across Herefordshire and Worcestershire about a particular safeguarding theme to reduce the numbers of children who are seriously injured or die across the two counties.

The first theme is **Keep Me Safe ... When I am Sleeping**. Although Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is now very rare, approximately 200 babies still die every year. The risk of babies dying from SIDS is reduced if the clear messages developed from research are followed. It is important that all practitioners and professionals are delivering the same clear and consistent messages to support families to understand how to avoid the specific risks to their baby.

The NHS Integrated Care Board team will be offering online briefings in the week prior to and week of the Keep Me Safe launch, so that professionals can learn more about the strategy, messages and resources available.

Join the Keep me Safe Launch briefings to learn more. **No need to register – simply mark the date and time in your calendar and join through the links below.**

Keep me Safe Launch briefing dates and Joining Links (MS Teams)

- Monday 10 July, 11am to 11:45am – [Joining Link 10 July](#)
- Tuesday 11 July, 3pm to 3:45pm – [Joining Link 11 July](#)
- Wednesday 12 July, 9am to 9:45am – [Joining Link 12 July](#)
- Thursday 13 July, 12pm to 12:45pm – [Joining Link 13 July](#)
- Friday 14 July, 11am to 11:45am – [Joining Link 14 July](#)
- Tuesday 18 July, 10am to 10:45am – [Joining Link 18 July](#)
- Thursday 20 July, 12pm to 12:45pm – [Joining Link 20 July](#)

### Family Coach in Wyre Forest

Please see the attached flyers for Family Coach, which is available to support families in the Wyre Forest.

### Early Help and Levels of Need Masterclass

WCF Safeguarding Team are offering Early Years providers an opportunity to engage in a [Masterclass](#) with Schools, focusing on the Levels of Need and Early Help. With speakers from St Joseph's Catholic School, Wolverley Sebright Primary Academy and Regency High School, they will share their good practice experiences in supporting families.

Taking place on Thursday 29 June, please see [CPD](#) for more information.

## Early Years Bulletin: News from the Inclusion Team

### Early Years Update

We have been conducting a review to help us to understand how we can better improve our early years offer.

In November 2022 Worcestershire Children First (WCF) invited mainstream and specialist nursery providers to take part in open discussions about the future of Nursery Assessment Units (NAU). At the end of November Worcestershire Children First also sent a questionnaire to providers and parent/carers for their feedback on what was working well and what could be improved. The feedback received through this engagement has provided us with a rich source of information which has been invaluable to inform recommendations for improvement.

The purpose of the review was to:

- re-model existing specialist nursery and nursery assessment provision to better meet the needs of pre-school age children in Worcestershire
- review and redesign the way we are jointly meeting the early education provision for pre-school age children (0 to 5 years) known to Pre-School Forum (PSF), who have been identified by professionals as having the most complex needs
- provide advice and guidance to mainstream Early Years education settings to support pre-school age children 0 to 5 years known to PSF

The review identified:

- a need to consider the sufficiency of places, where children with complex needs, could access their full Nursery Education Funding (NEF) Entitlement
- a need to redesign the PSF operational model

### What does this mean?

We are developing an enhanced provision, delivered by an Early Years provider or school, which will meet the requirements of children whose identified complex needs make it difficult to attend an Early Years setting.

The places for children will be allocated via a termly, multi-agency planning meeting for children with identified complex needs. The needs will have been identified through an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Whilst this Early Years provision is being set up, we will continue the offer of Specialist Outreach support for children in their mainstream provision, or at home, for those children not able to access mainstream provision. WCF are aiming to open enhanced Early Years provision in Worcester City and Wychavon in January 2024, with the provider being awarded the contract in October 2023. WCF will then look at rolling the provision out across Redditch/Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest in the future.

## What's Next?

- we have developed a specification for the enhanced provision and have recently completed market engagement events. Providers will be invited to apply in July 2023
- we are redesigning the operational functions of the Pre-School Forum and will communicate the outcome in September 2023 regarding the new operational model
- if you have previously been informed that your child will be attending a Nursery Assessment Unit you will be directly contacted by a member of the team with an update

## Pre-School Forum

Over recent months Worcester Children First staff along with Stakeholders have been reviewing the functions of the Pre-School Forum (PCF) i.e., the information sharing and advice relating to health and education. We would like to provide assurance that although the virtual PCF meetings are no longer taking place, the functions of the forum are continuing and feedback is being provided for all children that this relates to, which will be in the form of actions and next steps. There has, however, been some delays in the feedback being provided for a number of reasons, for which we apologise.

## If I have any questions, who can I contact?

Please email [eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:eyinclusion@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) should you have any questions. We will also be creating a Frequently Asked Questions Document that will be added to the Local Offer and regularly updated.

## Free Transition Resources

Our Autism/CCN team's website has a range of downloadable (and editable) resources to support transition between settings (Early Years to Primary, Primary to High etc.) and within settings, for autistic learners and others with enhanced transition needs.

Resources include Pupil Passports, Sensory Profiles, School Information Booklets, Calming Strategies and much more. You can find them on our website via the following link under Resource: School Transition.

[Autism and Complex Communication Needs | Worcestershire County Council](#)

## Early Years Bulletin – In the setting

### International Mud Day



Join the fun and get involved on International Mud Day on Thursday 29 June. Children love nothing more than having a **good squelch in the mud**. There are so many benefits for children’s development and the learning opportunities are endless.

Check out the [Muddy Faces](#) website for lots of top tips on developing mud play in your setting, along with reports and research on the benefits of mud play for children.



### Taste Safe Play

Magic Moments Kempsey

Taste safe play gives all children the opportunity to meet their own sensory needs, in a safe way. The recipes in the attached document ‘Taste Safe Play’ work really well for our children with additional needs as they provide sensory feedback.

## Early Years Bulletin: Training news

### NEF Provider Briefing

Specifically for providers offering Nursery Education Funding (NEF), this is an update session to highlight any changes for September 2023 within Worcestershire.

**Cost:** Free

**Dates:**

- Wednesday 5 July, 7pm to 8pm, virtual delivery, Course Code:10375
- Friday 7 July, 10am to 11am, virtual delivery, Course Code:10375

**To book:** via [CPD](#) using the appropriate course code.

*Confirmations are issued immediately and will include the MS Teams please ensure junk / spam folders are checked.*

## Early Help Training

We wanted to remind you that alongside the training courses available via CPD, Early Help specific training courses are also available via: [Early Help training and events | Worcestershire County Council](#)

The training available includes:

- what is Early Help?
- completing an Early Help Assessment
- domestic Abuse training
- reducing Parental Conflict (Harmony at Home)

Booking instructions are included within the course information on the website.

## Introduction to the Role of the DSL

The role of the DSL or Deputy DSL within any Early Years Setting is an important function. We appreciate that those taking on this responsibility will need to develop their own knowledge and understanding to ultimately ensure children are safe in their setting.

To support those who are NEW to the role of DSL or Deputy DSL we have devised a **free** three-hour training course that needs to be completed only once and is the pre-cursor to attending the six-hour DSL course. **If you are already a DSL, then you will not need to undertake this training.**

During the three-hour session delegates will gain:

- an overview of the legislation and statutory guidance relating specifically to the role of the DSL, and to safeguarding and child protection more broadly
- information on different forms of abuse that may be encountered, and their possible signs and causes
- an understanding of information sharing, consent and record keeping
- an introduction to the processes and procedures used within safeguarding and child protection, including the Worcestershire Levels of Need document

**Cost:** Free

**Dates:**

- 20 July 2023, 7pm to 10pm, virtual delivery, Course Code: **10179**
- 2 October 2023, 6:30pm to 9:30pm, virtual delivery, Course Code: **10179**
- 17 January 2024, 7pm to 10pm, virtual delivery, Course Code: **10179**

**To book:** via [CPD](#) using the appropriate course code.

*Confirmations are issued immediately and will include the MS Teams please ensure junk / spam folders are checked.*

## NEF Childminder Briefing

Specifically for childminders who are interested in offering NEF in Worcestershire, this course provides information about the statutory requirements of being a funded provider and details about the Worcestershire processes.

**Cost:** Free

**Date:** Tuesday 11 July, 7pm to 8:30pm, virtual delivery, Course Code: **10105**

**To book:** via [CPD](#) using the appropriate course code.

*Confirmations are issued immediately and will include the MS Teams please ensure junk / spam folders are checked.*

## Confirmations / Joining Instructions in relation to virtual courses

The training team wanted to remind Early Years Settings and Childminders that confirmations from CPD are issued immediately and will include the joining instructions; we recommend checking junk / spam folders and looking for an email from [CAP-DoNotReply@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:CAP-DoNotReply@worcestershire.gov.uk).

As confirmations are immediately issued at the point of booking to the delegate email provided, if they haven't been received within 24 hours then please contact the training team (details below) to get them re-sent.

Alongside this we do advise checking that you have the links to join your course at least 5 days before, and if you cannot find them, please contact the training team (details below) to have them re-sent.

To support virtual courses the course link (found within your confirmation email) should be hyperlinked (blue and underlined) and therefore should allow you to simply click on it and load either MS Teams or Zoom (course dependent).

If not, then please try the following tip:

- copy the URL from the https to the very last letter / number and paste this link into your preferred search engine i.e., google / Microsoft Edge / Safari
- press enter and it should then load either MS Teams or Zoom and then your meeting
- if it doesn't, please ensure there are no extra spaces before the https and after the last letter/number of the link as if there are then this will generate an error message

When attempting to join any virtual course and you encounter an issue that results in you not being able to join the course, if possible, please take a screen shot of the error that you see and share this with the training team.

Training team details – telephone 01905 844 420 / email:  
[workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)