

Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

It's hard to believe that we're already into the Summer Funding Term, with Easter just around the corner. It's been both a very long and very quick Spring Term and we hope everyone manages to get some rest and relaxation over the Easter break.

The Summer Term Update Meetings for group-based providers and for childminders will be taking place in early June; booking information can be found in the Training section in this bulletin. If there are any specific items you would like to include on the agenda, please email the Early Years Team.

There are also exciting opportunities for out of school providers over the Summer, with a Playwork conference, Playwork training and an Out of School Update Meeting that is being hosted by Evesham Adventure Playground; information about all of these events can be found in this bulletin.

If you need any advice or support, please email the team on EYCC@worcestershire.gov.uk or submit a request via our [website](#).

Regards,

The Early Years Team

Contents

Early Years Bulletin: Worcestershire News and Reminders	3
Nursery Education Funding.....	3
Building Bridges: Empowering Dads & Expanding Male Role Models in Early Years	4
Worcestershire Early Years Community Hub: Summer Term	5
Recruitment Reminder.....	5
Early Years Bulletin: National News and Reminders	6
Check an Early Years Qualification (CEYQ) Service	6
Reminder: Ofsted Inspection Consultation.....	6
Early Years Bulletin: Out of School Provision	7
Playwork Conference – The Power of Play	7
Early Years Bulletin: Early Help	8
Worcestershire Family Hubs	8
Toilet Training: Posters and Handouts.....	8
inourplace	8
Early Years Bulletin: Inclusion	9
Parental Monitoring Funding Feedback 2025	9
South Worcestershire Dingley’s Promise.....	9
Early Years Annual Reviews - Reviews of EHC plans for children aged 0 to 5	10
Deferred & Delayed Entry Guide	10
Transition Support	11
Early Years Inclusion Surgery Slots with the Area SENCO team	12
Top Ten Tips For Creating A Physical Disability Friendly Environment:	12
Early Years Bulletin: Training	13
Play Matters: The 8 Principles of Playwork.....	13
Early Years Update Meetings: Summer 2025	14
NEF Briefing: Summer 2025	14
Early Years SENCo Cluster Meeting: Summer 2025.....	15
Early Years Inclusion Training	15
Rising to the Challenge.....	15

Early Years Bulletin: Worcestershire News and Reminders

Nursery Education Funding

Summer Term Actual Claims

The Online Provider Portal is currently open for Summer Term Actual Claim. **The deadline for submission is Friday 2nd May.**

Eligibility Code Checks

If you have not yet completed your Summer Term Actual Claim, we recommend that you check that all Eligibility Codes are valid for the Summer Term as soon as possible to confirm that funding is available for this term.

Reminder: To access funding in the Summer Funding Term, which started on 1st April, children must have turned the appropriate age for funding by Monday 31st March:

Children who turn 9 months, two years or three years between:	Funding can commence from:
1 st April and 31 st August	Autumn Funding Term – 1 st September
1 st September and 31 st December	Spring Funding Term – 1 st January
1 st January and 31 st March	Summer Funding Term – 1 st April

In addition to confirming the date of birth, please note that Eligibility Codes:

1. Must have a start date of Monday 31st March or before.
2. Must have an end date of Tuesday 1st April or later.

Working Family Eligibility Criteria

Childcare Choices have clear information about the eligibility criteria for Working Family funding, which you may find useful to share with your families: [Eligibility | Childcare Choices](#). The webpage includes information about when parents need to return to work by in each term, as well as when they should apply for an Eligibility Code.

Statutory Guidance Changes

Following the recent changes to the [NEF Statutory Guidance](#), we are continuing to offer 1:1 support sessions to discuss your plans and answer any questions you may have. Additional dates are being offered across the Summer Term: [NEF Support Sessions](#)

Building Bridges: Empowering Dads & Expanding Male Role Models in Early Years

'Our thriving Dads' group, born from the genuine need for male connection, has proven the power of peer support. Led by our dedicated male practitioner (and dad!), the monthly sessions around the fire at our Outdoor Kindergarten site have become a vital space for dads to connect, share, and engage in practical activities.

We're now expanding this initiative to create a network of male specialists (practitioners, healthcare workers, and passionate dads) who can facilitate similar groups across our community. Our vision is to empower dads and enhance male representation in Early Years settings.

Join Us!

We're seeking individuals who:

- Are passionate about supporting dads.
- Have experience in Early Years, healthcare, or community work.
- Are eager to develop and lead dad-focused groups.

Partnerships & Impact:

We're also inviting businesses to partner with us, offering bespoke sessions (talking/walking groups or on-site activities) to support their employees. We'll provide training, resources, and marketing support, and work together to demonstrate the positive impact on dads' well-being to Public Health.

Future Plans:

Our goal is to create a sustainable model that empowers dads, fosters community, and increases male involvement in Early Years, ultimately benefiting children and families.

Contact Us: kate@nurturekindergarten.com

If you're interested in joining our team or partnering with us, please see the [Dads in the Garden flyer](#) and come along to one of our groups and let's start a conversation.

"Let's build a stronger future together."

Worcestershire Early Years Community Hub: Summer Term

Book your place now!

Worcestershire Early Years Community Hub is a networking and peer support session for early years leaders, childminders, practitioners, and EY teacher's working with children within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It's a collaboration between University Worcester colleagues enhancing practice for UW students, WCC early years team and **YOU** our Early Years providers.

Meetings are held termly, and we ensure providers drive the agenda, covering topics that you want to talk about. We aim to create a collaborative, supportive and inclusive space for our early years community to come together to network. We draw on the wealth of expertise across our community allowing colleagues to share knowledge and effective practice which will benefit us all.

So, if you are missing social contact and fed up with virtual meetings, this is the space for you! If you have an interest in learning from other settings and becoming part of a network to share knowledge and effective practice with a range of early years educators, then we would love you to join our tribe!

Come along to our next meeting taking place on **Thursday 26th June 18:30-20:30** at the University of Worcester, St John's Campus, Henwick Grove, St John's, Worcester.WR2 6AJ.

By request, our discussion for the evening will focus on **working towards cultural humility in early years settings**. Cultural humility is a practice of self-reflection combined with an openness to understanding other cultures.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Book via [CPD](#) online, Course Code **10529**

Recruitment Reminder

Please don't forget that we can include any staff vacancies you are currently advertising via the WCF Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Can you please ensure the information is written in a way that is suitable for social media – we can't use PDF attachments of job descriptions, or long lists of information. Please email ChSComms@worcestershire.gov.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

Check an Early Years Qualification (CEYQ) Service

The DfE announced in January that they were developing a digital tool to help Early Years (EY) managers check whether staff qualifications meet ratio requirements in England. Following final testing, we are pleased to announce that the **Check an Early Years Qualification (CEYQ) service** has now launched: [Start - Check an Early Years qualification](#)

By entering details such as the qualification name, awarding organisation, and course start date, managers will receive a clear outcome that can be printed for records.

CEYQ is for EY managers only and currently covers UK qualification. Other users should continue using the [Early Years Qualifications List \(EYQL\)](#) to check their qualifications or seek guidance from [Ecctis](#).

Reminder: Ofsted Inspection Consultation

Following feedback from the Big Listen, Ofsted are now consulting on the way it inspects education settings, including Early Years providers and schools. The consultation includes the way in which Ofsted reports on completed inspections, as well as the way in which the inspection itself is carried out.

[‘Improving the way Ofsted inspects education: consultation document’](#) outlines the consultation intentions; responses can be made until Monday 28th April. To respond to the consultation and to access all of the supporting information, please visit: [Improving the way Ofsted inspects education - GOV.UK](#).

Early Years Bulletin: Out of School Provision

Playwork Conference – The Power of Play

Don't miss out, limited places now available due to high demand! Book now to avoid disappointment.

We are excited to bring you confirmation of fabulous line up of speakers for our **Playwork conference** on **Thursday 8th May 2025 10:00-2pm**.

For our Keynote **"The Power of Play"** we will be welcoming **Thérèse Hoyle** founder of the Positive Playtime Programme and **Kate Collier** from Play Worcester.

Description:

Discover the transformative role of play in children's lives at our keynote session, "The Power of Play." This engaging presentation will explore the barriers to children's play and highlight how play fosters children's well-being, creativity, and development. Join us to explore innovative play practices and celebrate the joy and importance of play in out-of-school and holiday club settings. Perfect for Playworkers, Practitioners, TAs, and Childminders, this keynote is a must-attend for anyone dedicated to enriching children's play experiences.

Workshops

You will get to attend all three of our fabulous workshops designed to be both playful and thought provoking.

- **Thérèse Hoyle: An introduction to Positive Play-Times: practical, fun and playful ideas to inspire you!**
- **Evesham Adventure Playground: *'Not a box!'* - Using loose parts in play**
- **Kate Collier Play Worcester: The place of play in our society: advocating for the rights of children**

Details about the speakers can be found here: [Speaker Bio's](#)

Audience: Our Playwork conference is aimed at Playworkers, practitioners, childminders and TA's working with school aged children in out of school settings, such as breakfast, after school and holiday clubs.

Its FREE to attend, funded through the National Wraparound Programme, limited to 2 places per setting.

Come and join us in celebrating the Power and importance of Play!

Book via [CPD](#) online

Venue: Bromsgrove Hotel and Spa

[Courses Search](#) : course code 10566

Early Years Bulletin: Early Help

Worcestershire Family Hubs

The way 0-19 Public Health services are commissioned in Worcestershire is changing. As a result, Family Hub services will be contracted separately to health, and the Starting Well Partnership brand and website will be retired.

From 1st April 2025, Worcestershire County Council will commission Family Hubs to provide help, support and signposting to families including expectant parents and those with children aged 0-19 years. WCC will also host information, advice and services to support families in pregnancy and through the early years on the [Best Start Worcestershire website](#), as well as the [Virtual Family Hub](#) for families with older children.

For information on NHS services, including Public Health Nursing, Health Visiting, School Health Nursing, and Smoke-Free Homes, visit the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust website: [Worcestershire Public Health Nursing Service | Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust](#).

Webinars are taking place in the coming weeks where professionals can access a FREE live update of these changes including how to refer to Family Hubs. Please use the QR to find out more information and to book a space.



Toilet Training: Posters and Handouts

Available from [Foundation Years](#), these downloadable posters and handouts aim to help parents with toilet training and help educators prepare children for using the toilet. The resources include:

- [A child checklist for using the toilet](#)
- [A 'toilet story for school'](#)
- [A handout for parents](#)

inourplace

Please see the attached flyers for information about training available through [inourplace](#):

- [Understanding your child: from toddler to teenager](#)
- [Supporting emotional health and wellbeing from 0-19+](#)

Residents of Worcestershire can access these courses for free by entering the Worcestershire Access Code: **PARENTSROCK**

Early Years Bulletin: Inclusion

Parental Monitoring Funding Feedback 2025

We want to share this wonderful feedback! Well done! Please share this link with your parents [Further information for parents and carers | Worcestershire County Council](#)

The setting has been fantastic, they always have the professionally set targets in mind and work to achieve them. X has an amazing key worker; he has been able to develop and improve and is truly cared for. All opportunities for learning are adapted to meet X's interests. The setting understands his sensory needs and take time to learn.

Setting X have been more than accommodating when it comes to her additional needs. We feel as parents that we cannot fault the setting she attends as we feel it's very beneficial to her and her needs. The staff are fantastic and are very communicative and transparent with us throughout and suggestive of any alternatives that may be beneficial towards X's progress.

We are just so grateful to have a nursery so helpful and understanding with X's needs they have great communication with us we often have meeting to discuss X's progress and targets, having this funding means X has access to nursery the same as other children with the support in place.

The Nursery team have been fantastic in every way possible, the communication has been great along with trying to meet X needs in every way possible. He has been able to have his additional support which is able to always keep him safe whilst attending the setting but also makes sure X has the opportunity to explore and learn the best way he can with his additional needs.

Fantastic communication on the impact of X's funding. X is making great strides and achieving small strides in all areas although he is still behind his peers with all of his development. I do not believe he would have come so far along had he not had additional support to meet his needs so well.

Setting X have always kept me up to date with X's progress and set goals and review them often to make sure they are on track with his learning and if X is making progress. I always receive a copy, so I am aware what they are working on.

South Worcestershire Dingley's Promise

Enhanced provision referrals to Dingley's Promise Worcester or Droitwich are made via the lead professional for the child. The referral will be discussed at the next Early Years Enhanced Provision Panel and the outcome will be fed back to the family/referrer. Families can also self-refer to Dingley's Promise Family support offer which may include home visits, walk and talk, information sessions, stay and play sessions or 1:1 support with Family Support Worker by visiting the [Dingley's Promise website](#).

The Worcester DP centre was due to open in February 2025, but during planned work, there were bigger issues found with the building, including problems with the roof. These must be fixed before Dingley's can move in and since the building is on a school site, the repairs can only be done during the summer holidays. A temporary building has been found in Worcester and we are working through the standard legal processes, to enable this to be opened as soon as possible.

Early Years Annual Reviews - Reviews of EHC plans for children aged 0 to 5

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/schools-education-and-learning/send-local-offer/ehcp-annual-reviews>

We should review an EHC Plan for a child under five at least every three to six months to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate, please contact the named case worker or SEND services for more specific information about individual cases. Call the helpline: 01905 845579 or email: sen@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parent must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC Plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

Children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in the Early Years.

All children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who receive Nursery Education Funding (NEF), and access an Early Years Provision, are able to claim Inclusion Supplement from the Early Years Inclusion Team. Providers **MUST** apply via the application forms available here: [Early Years Inclusion Supplement Funding | Worcestershire County Council](#)

All children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will receive **Exceptional Early Years Inclusion Supplement Funding only**. This payment is not automatic, and providers **MUST** apply. Summer term funding applications are available now. The last deadline date for any Summer Term applications is **24th April 2025**.

Do you have a question regarding Inclusion funding, please contact eyinclusion@worcestershire.gov.uk

Deferred & Delayed Entry Guide

The DfE guidance clearly states that only children who are summer born are eligible for delay & deferrals into school, see guidance here: [JN2425.222 Deferred and Delayed Entry Guide 2025](#)

The NEF entitlement finishes when the child is five and statutory school age. The EHCNA process should enable children to attend a provision in line with their chronological age. When the assessment is complete, and if an EHC Plan is written, any deferral requests are discussed at the weekly placement panel.

Dingley's Promise Worcester and Droitwich are not commissioned to support children who have delayed/deferred their entry to school.

Transition Support

SENDIASS - Tips for Transition

With Primary School Offer Day approaching, do you have children in your setting due to transition to Reception in September? Do your families have questions around how best to support their child through this transition? You can signpost your families to the [SENDIASS Tips for Transition](#) webpage where they will find practical advice to help them prepare their child for their move in to school.

The Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) provides **FREE, impartial and confidential** information, advice and support to families and professionals, on all matters relating to children and young people (**0-25**) who have or may have SEND.

Contact:

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 4:00pm

Call: 01905 768153 (24 hour answering machine service is available)

Email: SENDIASS@worcestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.hwsendiass.co.uk

Early Years Transition toolkit

[Transition Toolkit \(Early Years\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Smooth transitions within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) depend on a commitment from all professionals involved to develop positive communication links. In order to promote continuity for all children experiencing transitions between settings, it is important that there is a shared approach between all those professionals involved. The information and resources within this approach is designed to be used by all partners involved in transition to help create continuity and consistency. This guidance is designed to help settings adopt an inclusive approach to supporting children and families in the journey of transition from an Early Years setting to a school age setting. We have also included Individual Transition Templates for children with additional needs, early years providers will plan more activities to make the unfamiliar familiar.

SCERTS emotional support for transition tips!

How many of these are you doing in your inclusive environment for all?

- Use visual support (objects of reference) to signal transitions between activities, both before and during.
- Structure activities so that the beginning and ending are clearly defined.
- Use visual support to define the steps within an activity.
- Structure activities so that the beginning and ending are clearly defined for the child, e.g., by laying out the materials in a clear sequence.
- Use timers or countdown strips to define the time needed for completion of natural activities.
- Use predictable visual cues to enhance the child's understanding of expectations and directions.

Early Years Inclusion Surgery Slots with the Area SENCO team

A reminder that we hold regular Inclusion Surgery Slots with the Area SENCO team. Booking is essential as places are limited. Next date is 24th June for **all providers** and 25th June specifically for **childminders**. You can book on using the following link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cWhuv7MJiQbV_gkskUGxfRnIADU7M7iPwhZT-SQv4sE/edit?tab=t.0

These are dedicated telephone surgeries for Early Years SENCO's/providers giving the opportunity for a 20–30-minute meeting via telephone call. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss more complex inclusion issues with the Area SENCO of your district.

Top Ten Tips for Creating A Physical Disability Friendly Environment:

1. Be inclusive from the first visit – welcome families and children and see solutions rather than difficulties, sometimes solutions are very inexpensive e.g. provision of a grab rail – if works need to be done, plan for them, consult owners – they will benefit a wide range of children who may attend the setting in the future.
2. Involve professionals and gain as much information on the child and their needs as you can and ensure support and paperwork is in place prior to the child starting – work as a team – as many relevant staff as possible should know about the individual needs of the child with physical disability – good practitioners regularly evaluate their practice, training must be started before the child starts and be on-going as the child's needs change.
3. Parents/carers are the experts as is the child themselves, often they will have worked out a solution before you – consult them.
4. Be creative with your environment, creating routes and clearing clutter to make space for a child with a disability to get about can be hugely beneficial for all children in early years, not just children with physical disabilities.
5. Look at all areas of the curriculum and nursery – if it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments e.g. there are stairs/the environment cannot be adapted, what alternatives can be offered?
6. Simple solutions for inclusive practice often work best, e.g. move more mobile children to the area the child with physical disability is playing rather than moving the child with a disability, make sure any equipment the child needs is in place and used as recommended as soon as possible e.g., a bath step.
7. No child learns well unless they can access their environment safely and comfortably – think of the best equipment to use for each activity – specialist chair/wheelchair/bench/standing frame/walker – all can be used creatively.
8. Do not sit the child with physical disability on their own, even if they are in separate seating e.g., they cannot sit on the carpet – make sure they have a friend.
9. Children with physical disabilities may have individual targets such as regular physio routines – incorporate these into your planning in a fun and creative way – physical activities can be incorporated into movement sessions which will benefit all children.
10. Children are very adaptable; they learn from each other and even young children quickly give time and space to a child with disabilities – communicate sensitively and set high expectations - most importantly have fun and enjoy every moment!

Early Years Bulletin: Training

If you encounter any issues when booking courses via CPD, please contact the Training Team directly via 01905 844420 or workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Play Matters: The 8 Principles of Playwork

During the course delegates will explore what Wraparound Care is, understand the value of play, unpick and dissect the 8 Principles of Playwork and how to implement them into their setting to ensure play matters. During the course delegates will be able to:

- List the 8 Principles of Playwork.
- Describe & explain why the 8 Principles of Playwork are important in Play
- Participate in activities that empower your own understanding of why play matters
- Identify & explain how the Playwork Principles will be used in your setting.

For further details, please download the [Play Matters flyer](#).

Audience: Specifically for practitioners working with primary school age children in wraparound provision. Open to both schools / settings who offer wrap around provision (before/after school or holiday clubs)

Cost: Free - the training is fully funded via the National Wraparound Programme.

Non-attendance charge: *When delegates do not attend, do not cancel in line with terms & conditions, and / or do not contact the training team on the day to explain their non-attendance, a charge of £30 + VAT per delegate will be applied.*

Dates:

Cohort 4:

- 30 April, 7 May, 14 May, 21 May and 4 June
- All sessions 7pm to 9pm
- CPD code: 10583 / session code: 91599

Cohort 5:

- 1, 8, 15, 22 May and 5 June
- All sessions 9.30am to 11.30am
- CPD code: 10583 / session code: 91600

Cohort 6:

- 11, 18, 25 June and 2, 9 July
- All sessions 7pm to 9pm
- CPD code: 10583 / session code: 91601

Cohort 7:

- 11, 18, 25 June and 2, 9 July
- All sessions 12.45pm to 2.45pm
- CPD code: 10583 / session code: 91602

To book: via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

Confirmations will go to the delegate email provided and include the relevant MS teams joining information.

Early Years Update Meetings: Summer 2025

An opportunity to hear the latest Early Years news on policy, Ofsted and best practice.

Childminders: The childminder sessions also include the SENCo Cluster meeting.

- 11 June 2025, 7pm to 8.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10273

Out of School Providers

- 10 June 2025, 7pm to 8:30pm, Evesham Adventure Playground, WR11 1XH, course code: EY 10274

Group Settings (All group-based provision including school nurseries)

- 12 June 2025, 6.30pm to 8pm, virtual delivery, course code: EY 10272
- 13 June 2025, 10am to 11.30am virtual delivery, course code: EY 10272

Cost: Free

To book: via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

Confirmations will go to the delegate email provided and include the relevant MS teams joining information.

NEF Briefing: Summer 2025

Specifically for providers offering Nursery Education Funding (NEF), this is an update session to highlight any changes for September, including the 2024/25 Worcestershire Provider Agreement and the expanded Early Years entitlements from September 2025.

Suitable for all Early Years settings, including day nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and schools, who offer NEF in Worcestershire.

Dates:

- 05 June 2025, 6:30pm – 8pm, virtual delivery, course code EY 10375
- 06 June 2025, 10am – 11:30am, virtual delivery, course code EY 10375

Cost: Free

To book: via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

Confirmations will go to the delegate email provided and include the relevant MS teams joining information.

Early Years SENCo Cluster Meeting: Summer 2025

This is where you will hear about important updates and there is a CPD slot. We have a number of guest speakers including a representative from pre-school CAMHS.

We are always looking for practitioners to share best practice with us too, so if you have anything you would like to share please contact your Area SENCo and we will book you a slot!

Date: 10 June 2025, 6pm – 7:30pm, virtual delivery: EY 10160

Cost: Free

To book: via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

Confirmations will go to the delegate email provided and include the relevant MS teams joining information.

Early Years Inclusion Training

The Early Years Inclusion Team are offering all of their training during 2024/25 for free. The following courses are all available to book:

Course Title	Code	Date
Training for NEW SENCO's <i>An essential course for all named SENCo's, new SENCo's, Managers and Room Supervisors.</i>	EY 10166	7/05/2025
Annual Reviews of EHCPs	EY 10496	13/05/2025

Further details of each course can be found in the [Early Years training directory](#) or alternatively via [CPD – Courses Search](#) using the course code.

To book: via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

Confirmations will go to the delegate email provided and include the relevant MS teams joining information.

Rising to the Challenge

Delivered by Autism West Midlands, parents, carers and professionals are able to access a six-week Understanding Autism training programme.

For further information, please visit: [Rising to the Challenge - Online | Autism West Midlands](#)

Date: Six weeks starting on Tuesday 3rd June 2025.

Cost: Free

To book: [Rising to the Challenge online - WebinarNinja](#)