

Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

With only one more bulletin to go before the end of the year, it's hard to know where 2025 has gone. Before you move onto Christmas however, we have a number of free training opportunities available for Early Years practitioners, including Playwork, Child Sexual Abuse and modules from KCA. Places will be offered on a first come, first served basis so please book your places quickly if you are interested in any of the courses listed.

As Ofsted start inspecting under the new framework, please get in touch with your Early Years Improvement Adviser if you are prepared to share your experience or alternatively, send in an article for the bulletin to share across Worcestershire settings.

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

Regards,

The Early Years Team

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Early Years Bulletin: Worcestershire News and Reminders

Nursery Education Funding

Autumn Term Adjustment Claims

The Provider Portal opens for Adjustment Claims on **Monday 3rd November**. Adjustment Claims that are submitted by Friday 28th November will be included on the Actual Payment at the beginning of December, claims made later will be paid at the end of December/early January.

Please remember that Working Family Eligibility Codes must have a start date on or before 31st August to be valid for the Autumn Term.

Spring Term Working Family Eligibility Codes

Please ensure that you ask for the Eligibility Code for any children due to start accessing funding from January 2026 and confirm its validity via the Eligibility Checker; this should be done before you submit your Estimate Claim at the end of the Autumn Term. To date, only 23% of new Codes have been checked.

Eligibility Codes for January must have a start date on or before 31st December 2025 to be valid for the Spring Term.

Early Years Pupil Premium

- Are you confident claiming Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)?
- Do you talk to your parents to check if they understand the criteria and the benefits of claiming?
- Do you always remember to tick the 'EYPP Consent' box on the Provider Portal?
- If you're a school, does your percentage of EYPP align with your school FSM percentage?
- Do you know how to effectively spend EYPP to improve outcomes?

If you need support claiming EYPP, please email EYFunding@worcestershire.gov.uk.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) have a guide to EYPP, to support high quality, impactful provision: [Early Years Pupil Premium | EEF](#). If you'd like more bespoke support with EYPP, please email your Early Years Improvement Advisor or EYCC@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Early years curriculum development

How do you feel about your current early years' curriculum?

With the new [early years inspection toolkit](#) launched and a specific judgement area on 'Curriculum and teaching' there may be no better time to reflect and consider if your curriculum is well designed and delivered.

A good curriculum should:

- ✓ reflect your settings intentions, values and priorities
- ✓ be high quality and ambitious
- ✓ include the educational programmes of the EYFS
- ✓ be coherent and sequential 'building on what children know and can do'
- ✓ be responsive, meeting the needs of all children's ages and stages of development
- ✓ be accessible to all especially disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face barriers to their learning and/or well-being.

I am currently offering free support to help design an early years' curriculum to be proud of.

Together, we'll explore:

- What matters most to you, your team and families
- How your values can guide curriculum decisions
- How everyday experiences build confident, curious learners
- How we stay rooted in the EYFS while celebrating your individuality

Please email Zoe Corfield if you'd like some support: ZCorfield1@worcestershire.gov.uk

Reminder: Public Health 0-5 Workforce Survey

Following the launch of the national Best Start strategy, we are committed to working collaboratively across the system to advance a series of work programmes aimed at achieving the best possible outcomes for families during pregnancy and the early years.

Our local workforce plays a vital role in supporting families during this formative period. Their expertise is essential in identifying and addressing the health, wellbeing, and developmental needs of both parents and young children.

To help us better understand current levels of confidence and identify areas where further support may be beneficial, we kindly invite all professionals working with families—across any setting—to complete a brief survey. This will enable us to build a clearer picture of where staff feel equipped to support and signpost families, and where there may be gaps in knowledge or confidence.

The survey should take no more than five minutes to complete and will be open until Friday 21st November. Your input is greatly appreciated and will directly inform local workforce development initiatives. Please find link below.

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

Vacancy: Provision Planning Officer

Salary: £37,036 - £29,513 per annum

Location: Worcester and Pershore with hybrid working

Fixed Term for Two Years

The Education Sufficiency and Place Planning team, within the Education Directorate of Worcestershire County Council, are looking for a senior officer to lead on the sufficiency of early years and childcare and provision planning.

In this role, you'll analyse data to forecast school place needs, support long-term education planning across the county, and work with colleagues and partners to deliver effective, strategic solutions.

You will work in conjunction with colleagues in Worcestershire County Council Early Years and Childcare Team, School Improvement Service, Property services, Strategic Planning, Commercial and Change, and All Age Disability 0-25 Service.

Find out more and apply at: [Provision Planning Officer job with Worcestershire County Council | 247762](#)

Recruitment Reminder

Don't forget, we can include any staff vacancies you are currently advertising on the WCC Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Ensure the information is written in a way that is suitable for social media – we can't use PDF attachments or include long lists of information. If you wish to make use of this service, please email ChSComms@worcestershire.gov.uk with the following information:

- **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

The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood

The Princess of Wales founded [The Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood](#) in 2021 with a vision for a healthier, happier, more nurturing society, transformed by a collective approach to early childhood. The Foundation has three strands which are framed around research, collaboration, and campaigns.



The Foundation has developed the '[Shaping Us Framework](#)', which is designed to provide accessible ways of focusing on social and emotional skills which can inform and inspire action across society. The website has informative and helpful resources for both parents and practitioners to develop skills, support and transform a collective approach to early childhood.

[The Explainer Series](#) for practitioners
[Help and Resources](#)

National Road Safety Week: 16th to 22nd November 2025

National Road Safety Week is an annual campaign organised by the road safety charity [Brake](#), to raise awareness and promote safer roads.

Download your Beep Beep! Day action pack, full of ideas and activities to help the children you care for learn about road safety.

[Beep Beep! Day action pack | Brake](#)

HEART Midlands Stronger Practice Hub – Inspiration Network



Along with [resources](#) including blogs and publications and a range of [network meetings](#) to support practitioners and leaders, [HEART Midlands Stronger Practice Hub](#) also hosts the Inspiration Network. The Inspiration Network provides an opportunity to join other practitioners and focus on pedagogy, practice and purpose.

2nd December 2025: [Starting from the Child? with Professor Julie Fisher](#)

13th January 2026: [Unique Child, Unique Curriculum with Ruth Swailes](#)

25th February 2026: [Greg Bottrill on 'Koselig' – The Warmth of Time Together](#)

[Join our Hub | Stronger Practice Hubs](#)

Early Years Bulletin: Out of School Provision

Reminder: Wraparound Funding

If you would like to expand your wraparound provision or open wraparound care in an area where there isn't any, there is funding to support your costs. Provision needs to be open **at least** 8am – 5:30pm to qualify, for a minimum of 3 days per week, with the intention of increasing to 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, as demand grows. The funding enables you to expand or create provision without financial risk.

To apply for funding: <https://forms.office.com/e/6BmKiNF4BW>

To request support or further information, please email Sharon Jones or Nicky Burford via wraparound@worcestershire.gov.uk.

'Have Your Say on Play' Resource

The [Have your Say on Play](#) resource from [Play Scotland](#) is a great way of consulting with children and young people and giving them the opportunity to have their say on play in your setting, school or within their community.

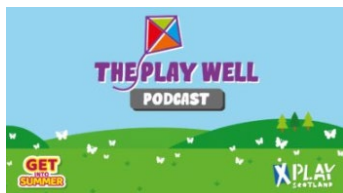
Along with asking children, do you observe...

- Where children like to play in your setting?
- What types of play do they enjoy engaging in?
- What do they like to play with?
- Who do they like to play with?

Asking these questions regularly, consulting with children about their play spaces and co-creating them together will ensure you are getting it right for them.

[Have your say on play - Play Scotland](#)

The Play well Podcast



Have you heard of Play Scotland's **Play Well Podcast** series?

Each month, the podcast explores play through different themes by talking to play experts, play champions and practitioners who are passionate about play.

Join in to learn about the importance of play for child development, play as a human right, and the different ways play can be used to tackle social issues.

For more information and to access previous episodes [The Play Well Podcast - Play Scotland](#)

Pathway to Playwork Bootcamp

Totally **free** Transition to Playwork 60 Guided Learning hours (taught online via Teams) and homework/assignments in own time.

2 pathways for one setting

Non Accredited pathway

For staff not qualified to level 3 in education or childcare they can do the non-accredited route, with playwork skills that complement their existing experience – they gain a CPD certificate and letter of achievement once completed.

Accredited Pathway

For staff already qualified to level 3 in education or childcare, they can do the accredited route and gain a Level 3 Transition into Playwork qualification once completed.

All staff on both pathways (taught at the same time) will:

- Understand the Playwork Principles and the theories underpinning playwork practice.
- Learn how to apply playwork principles to support and enable children's play and development.
- Reflect on their own professional practice and explore how it aligns with playwork values.
- Develop knowledge of the play cycle, play types, and intervention styles.
- Gain insight into risk-benefit assessment and reflective practice in playwork.
- Explore the role of the playworker in creating play spaces and building relationships with children.
- Examine playwork in practice across different settings and contexts.
- Understand the wider context of playwork, including legislation, policies, and professional standards.

This course can be:

- Delivered to your whole setting staff in your venue (one computer, all staff in one room) or to your whole setting staff in their own homes (each on their own computer)
- Shared with another setting, as we need a minimum of 10 delegates
- Delivered as an intense set of weeks i.e. a 5-day course with 4 hour sessions per day with 3 week blocks in total = 60 glhs. (with a week block "break" in-between to write assignments)
- Delivered as a whole day or two whole days a week course (could be 6 hours a day x 10 days for example)
- Bespoke – you tell us the days / times that suit (must be 60 GLHs and completed by 30th March 26)

If you are interested in accessing the course individually, or would like to arrange in-house for your setting, please email Wraparound@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Early Years Bulletin: Early Help

Togetherness

Worcestershire County Council and the local Health and Care Trust jointly fund **Togetherness** (formerly *inourplace.co.uk*) to ensure that all parents and carers across Worcestershire can access free, NHS-endorsed online courses and wellbeing resources.

What is Togetherness?

Togetherness is a digital learning platform developed by psychologists and health professionals. It offers a wide range of accessible, evidence-based courses designed to support:

- **Emotional wellbeing** for parents, carers, and children
- **Child development** from pregnancy through to the teenage years
- **Positive family relationships** and behaviour management

These resources are proven to improve mental health, strengthen family bonds, and empower parents and carers with practical tools and insights.

Why share Togetherness?

By promoting Togetherness, you're helping families access trusted support that can make a real difference in their everyday lives. The platform is:

- Free to use for anyone in Worcestershire
- Available 24/7 online
- Available in many languages
- Easy to use and provides an immediate response when a parent or carer reaches out for support and advice
- Endorsed by the NHS and aligned with local public health priorities



You can explore the platform here: [LEARN - Togetherness](#)

Best Start in Life: Parent Newsletter

Providing the latest updates, news and announcements about the Government support available for parents and carers, parents/carers can sign-up to receive the Parent Newsletter as well as a personalised email tailored to their child's age.

[Homepage | Best Start in Life](#)

Early Years Bulletin: Safeguarding

Levels of Need Threshold Guidance

The joint [Herefordshire and Worcestershire Levels of Need Guidance](#) was updated September 2025 and supports practitioners at all levels working in statutory, public, voluntary and independent sectors in Herefordshire and Worcestershire to understand the most appropriate response for a child and family, depending on their level of need.

The document is intended to enable practitioners:

- to make decisions about how best to respond to the needs of children and young people and families;
- to give families access to the right help at the right time;
- to provide children and families with access to the most appropriate services for their needs

[Levels of Need \(Thresholds\) - Worcestershire Safeguarding Boards](#)

7 minutes of Safeguarding

7 Minutes of Safeguarding is simply that, webcasts based on a specific safeguarding topic which give you information, shares research and highlights the relevance to your role and responsibilities, in a manageable 7 minutes!

3 new webcasts have been added to the collection and can be found on the links below:

[7 Minutes of Safeguarding - County Lines](#)

[7 Minutes of Safeguarding - Prevent](#)

[7 Minutes of Safeguarding - Promoting British Values](#)

All other webcasts can be found on the safeguarding pages of our [website](#).

Early Years DSL Meeting

As promised at the recent Early Years Update meetings, please download a copy of the slides:

- [Early Years DSL Forum slides](#)

Child Sexual Abuse Training and Resources

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed a comprehensive resource hub on **Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)** - designed to support professionals across health, education, social care, policing, and community services.

The page provides links to:

- Free e-learning videos and slide presentations – that can be viewed individually or presented in your setting
- The West Midlands Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway – with detailed information about what to do if you are concerned for a child
- Key contacts if you are concerned about a child

The free videos from the Centre for Expertise are available online for **6-months only**, and cover the following topics:

- An introduction to intra-familial child sexual abuse – taking a multi-agency approach
- Spotting the signs and indicators of child sexual abuse
- Communicating with children about child sexual abuse
- Supporting parents/carers when their child has been sexually abused

[Child Sexual Abuse - Worcestershire Safeguarding Boards](#)

Early Years Bulletin: Inclusion

Physiotherapy Drop-Ins

If a parent/carer has concerns about their 0-5 year old child's gross motor skills, they can access a free physiotherapy drop-in clinic. Please see the [flyer](#) for more information.

SEND Review Summary Document

We continue to wait for the updated white paper which will set out the Government reforms to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system. This is now expected in early 2026.

In the meantime, the '[Special Education Needs: Support in England](#)' research paper was published on Thursday 25th September 2025, along with the '[SEND Review Summary](#)' document, which provide context to the planned SEND reform.

Early Years Inclusion Supplement Consultation

Following feedback from the Early Years sector on the increasing costs of meeting the needs of complex children, as well as an increase in the number of children with SEND that are unable to access their full NEF entitlement, the LA is consulting on a new Early Years Inclusion Supplement model. The revised model aims to better support the financial costs of meeting the needs of complex children whilst also maintaining the overall spend by the Local Authority.

[Early Years Inclusion Funding Consultation](#)

The consultation is open until 5pm on Monday 1st December.

Early Years Inclusion Funding

Our criteria for applying for GR funding has recently been updated. Please follow the link to find out more: [Funding criteria, deadline dates and monitoring forms | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Inclusion Funding Deadlines

- Spring Term 2026 (known children): 21 November 2025
- Spring Term 2026 (new joiners): 20 January 2026
- Monitoring Form Returns: 1–15 November 2025

Apply online: [Funding application process | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Reminder: EHCP Annual Review

A reminder – if you have a child with an EHCP in your Early years setting, children under five need their plan reviewing every 6 months as a minimum. You can find help and guidance on the following page:

[EHCP Annual Reviews | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Self-Evaluation Toolkit for Inclusion

We are currently reviewing our Self Evaluation Toolkit for Inclusion in the Early Years to ensure it covers all the aspects that link to the new Ofsted Inspection Framework and toolkit. If you are using the Worcestershire inclusion tool kit, ensure you are cross checking against the Ofsted EY inspection toolkit until we have completed our review.

[Self-Evaluation Tool for Inclusion in Early Years | Worcestershire County Council](#)

[Early years inspection toolkit](#)

Sensory Activities

Do you have a child who likes to explore different textures by mouth? Take a look at these sensory activities with edible resources. Edible Alternatives – see ideas below

These are best for younger children or situations where ingestion is a concern, a reminder that supervision is still necessary.



Crushed Cereal: Blend plain cereal (like Cheerios) or crackers to a sand-like consistency.

Moon Sand: Mix flour or cornflour with cooking oil, adding food colouring for effect. This can be moulded and doesn't dry out. [Moon Sand Recipes](#)



Oats: Larger grains than sand, oats are safe if tasted and can still be scooped and poured. Why not colour them for added interest?

Edible Dirt: Cocoa powder, flour and oil. Dry crumble mixture can be used in sensory trays inside and outside. Can be especially useful for children who like to explore mud! [Edible Dirt - Raising Wild Things Sensory](#)



For more ideas: [Edible Sensory Play Activities - Early Years Resources](#)

SENDIASS – Free SEND Workshops for Parents/Carers

[The SEND Information, Advice and Support Service \(SENDIASS\)](#) provide **FREE SEND Training Workshops and Webinars** for parent carers of children with Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities (SEND).



**Information, Advice and Support Service
Herefordshire & Worcestershire**

The workshop What you need to know if your child has an additional need/ disability- HW SENDIASS ONLINE WORKSHOP may be of particular interest to your families at the start of their SEND journey.

This free workshop provides parents and carers with essential knowledge about SEND processes, education and community support, and how to navigate services effectively. Parents/carers also have the opportunity to ask questions.

The next available workshop takes place on 21 January 2026.

Find out more here: [What you need to know if your child has an additional need or disability | HW SENDIASS](#)

Early Years Bulletin: Training

If you encounter any issues when booking courses via CPD, please contact the Training & Conference Team directly via 01905 844420/844030 or workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Worcestershire Virtual School – Early Years Training

Through this training, you'll:

- Explore your role in supporting healthy brain development.
- Learn how to promote trauma recovery in early childhood.
- Use emotion coaching to build resilience in your setting.

Audience: all early years practitioners, including those working in Reception

Core Modules:

Five to Thrive & the Importance of Connected Relationships

18th November 2025, 4pm – 6pm

Understanding Toxic Stress, Trauma & Promoting Recovery in Time of Collective Adversity

27th January 2026, 4pm – 6pm

Optional Modules:

For those who've attended core or KCA training in the past 2 years

Choose your words with care: Narrative, Shame and Identity

11th March 2026, 4pm- 6pm

Transitions and Vulnerability

14th April 2026, 4pm – 6pm

Emotion Coaching

7th May 2026, 4pm – 6pm

Please see the [flyer](#) for further information.

Cost: Free

To book: [KCA: Reg form: Worcestershire VS Early Years Training Programme 2025-2026](#)

Supporting Children's Emotional Development

Best Start, part of Worcestershire County Council's Public Health, are offering free online training for all staff working with children and families in settings and schools across Worcestershire. These flexible, expert-led courses are designed to help practitioners better understand and respond to children's emotions and behaviour—especially those who may have experienced early adversity or trauma.

Why this training matters:

- Deepen your understanding of children's behaviour as communication
- Strengthen relationships with children and families
- Build confidence in supporting children who are upset, withdrawn, or struggling
- Create emotionally safe and nurturing learning environments
- Support whole-school and setting approaches to wellbeing and resilience

Each course available will take up to 4 hours and can be undertaken individually or as a team.

- **Understanding Trauma** – This concise CPD equips you to effectively recognise and understand the different types of trauma and look at how early experiences shape behaviour and how to support recovery
- **Understanding Brain Development** – Provides a deeper understanding of brain development from before birth, throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood, looking at how the brain grows and why it matters
- **Understanding Attachment** – Equips delegates to effectively recognise and understand attachment styles and its significance in relationships including why secure relationships help children feel safe and thrive.

Cost: Free

To book:

- Complete the Professional Registration form here - [Online Learning](#)
- Include the Access code: **PARENTSROCK_PRF**

Find out more by visiting: [Pathways library - Togetherness](#)

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.

Audience: Specifically for practitioners working with primary school age children in wraparound provision. Open to both schools and settings, including childminders, 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: Various, virtual delivery, course code: 10583

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.

Transition in the Early Years

An overview of the issues impacting autistic children as they transition to Reception. This 60-minute delivery covers:

- Key issues for transition.
- The importance of transition planning.
- Strategies to support the 5 elements of a good transition plan.
- Resources such as the Transition Plan Template and the EY Transition Pack
- Each delegate will develop the confidence to implement a robust transition.

Audience: Early years settings including childminders, nurseries, pre-schools and out of school providers.

Date: 11 December 2025, 4pm – 5pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10168

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.