

## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of 2025, we'd like to thank you for all of your hard work and dedication over the last year. We hope you find time to relax over the Christmas break. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



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

Regards,

The Early Years Team

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## Early Years Bulletin: Worcestershire News and Reminders

### Nursery Education Funding

#### Publishing Charges for Additional Services

As per the [Statutory Guidance](#) and the [Worcestershire Provider Agreement 2025/26](#), from January 2026, all providers are expected to publish the costs of any chargeable extras, as well as any restrictions or limitations placed on the funded hours. This is to ensure that parents/carers can make an informed choice of provider.

It is recommended that the DfE's [Chargeable Extras template](#) is used and made easily accessible on websites and social media pages; it should also be included in registration packs. If an alternative format to the DfE's template is used, the information must be clear and transparent and include:

- What is available for free (hours and times the free hours are available)
- Cost of additional hours/sessions
- Charge/s for food
- Charge/s for consumables
- Charge/s for additional services/activities
- Charge/s for trip/celebrations/ad hoc events

If we are contacted by a parent/carer querying their fees or the funding offer, we will look for a copy of this information to support the parental conversation. For providers that do not have a website or social media presence, the information must still be provided in a clear and transparent format and be as accessible as possible to ensure parents/carers have the information in advance of their child accessing a place.

The information will also be looked at during an NEF Audit, as it will form a significant part of the information available for parents/carers.

### Enhanced Early Years Provision Tender

The tender for Enhanced Early Years Provision in Redditch/Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest, Evesham/Pershore and Malvern will be published before Christmas.

The intention is to deliver:

- enhanced provision for children whose identified complex needs make it difficult to attend mainstream early year provision(s) for their full NEF entitlement.
- enhanced provision that can support dual attendance enabling children to also access appropriate support within their local community.

For more information, please visit: [Enhanced Early Years Provisions | Worcestershire County Council](#). Information about the tender will be included on this webpage once the tender is opened.

## Early Years Initial Teacher Training

Worcester University are offering DfE fully funded places on their 'Early Years Initial Teacher Training with Early Years Teacher Status' course starting in September 2026.

This post graduate qualification can be accessed via a graduate employment-based route, that includes a £7000 incentive payment for employers to cover the cost of releasing the staff member during their studies.

For further information, please visit: [Early Years Initial Teacher Training PGCert | University of Worcester](#)

## Early Years Conference

Working in partnership across Early Years, School Improvement and Public Health, we are planning an Early Years Conference in the Summer Term 2026 to support the Best Start in Life agenda.

We are hoping the day will feature:

- Engaging workshops focused on key themes in early years education
- A vibrant marketplace showcasing outstanding local and national providers
- Inspiring talks from international early years experts

However, we would appreciate your feedback to ensure the day is as relevant and valuable as possible: [NewZapp EY's Conference Feedback Form](#)

## 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](mailto: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

### Maths Champions Training

Maths Champions is an online professional development programme with 12 months access. The aim of this innovative programme is to improve children's maths outcomes by providing access to a range of bespoke online training, evaluative tools and resources which can all be used to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence of practitioners working in your setting. The programme consists of nine steps which can be completed flexibly around your schedule.

The NDNA, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the DfE, are delivering the fully funded course to eligible providers in England. To find out more information and to apply for free access to the training, please visit:

<https://ndna.org.uk/champions-programmes/maths-champions-early-years-maths-training/>

### Childcare Works' Toolkits

The Childcare Works' toolkits bring together everything you need to set up, grow and sustain childcare provision.

The toolkits contain information specific to operating childcare provision, plus general information for businesses, childminders and charities, including expert marketing, HR and leadership and management, partnership working and more.

[Access the Wraparound Toolkit](#)

[Access the Early Years Toolkit](#)

### Reminder: UK Childhood Immunisations

With an aim of improving the uptake of immunisations in the Early Years, the NHS are continuing to offer free training for Early Years practitioners to highlight the importance of routine childhood immunisations and the significant role Early Years providers play in support the UK's routine vaccination programme.

For more information and to book onto a training session, please see the [Childhood Immunisations Programme flyer](#).

## Winter Health Resources

UKHSA are seeing increasing numbers of calls from childcare & educational settings from across the West Midlands, reporting respiratory infection outbreaks and diarrhoea & vomiting outbreaks.

Please see the following West Midlands Health Protection Team [Guidance for diarrhoea & vomiting outbreaks](#) - this includes infection prevention and control measures a setting needs to take to manage an outbreak.

- [Respiratory infections outbreak - action card](#)
- [Winter illnesses leaflet](#) that settings could share with parents and staff - advising on common winter infections and what action to take.
- [Stop Norovirus spreading poster](#)

UKHSA have also made a few changes in how nurseries and education settings should report outbreaks.

Reporting of outbreaks from childcare & educational settings to West Midlands Health Protection Team (HPT):

- UKHSA will no longer be asking settings to complete an outbreak notification form to report an outbreak.
- All settings should be advised in the first instance to check the national guidance [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK](#) which includes [managing specific infectious diseases: A-Z](#). Advice and information is available on the website.
- If further advice is still required, the setting can call UKHSA on 0344 225 3560 option 2 or email [westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk) to report the outbreak.

## Early Years Bulletin: Support for Families

### Tiny Happy People

[CBeebies Parenting](#) has lots of free festive inspiration; from support on financial costs and sensory overload to navigating the “Chrimbo limbo” days between Christmas and New Year, there’s something for everyone.

Resources include:

[Top tips for dealing with sensory overload at Christmas](#)  
[15 creative ways to have fun with cardboard and wrapping paper](#)  
[Festive games](#)

CBeebies Parenting are also offering Champions Training for professionals, explaining what’s available via the website and how the resources can be shared with families: [Champions Training for Professionals](#)

## Early Years Bulletin: Safeguarding

### NSPCC Safeguarding Children Over the Christmas Period

This time of year provides additional challenges for schools and education providers, when it comes to monitoring the wellbeing of children. December always sees a spike in safeguarding issues and every year the NSPCC report increasing numbers of children calling them for help, with a large number exposed to domestic and substance abuse. The festive period is also a common time for children to be abused by a relative, other children or close family friends who visit during over Christmas and New Year.

Safeguarding children over the festive period can pose particular challenges for several reasons.

#### What can schools and settings do?

**Promote awareness:** Educate parents and carers about the signs of abuse or neglect. Encourage open discussions about safeguarding children and provide information on available support services.

**Encourage safe celebrations:** Promote safe and responsible celebration practices. Offer guidance on child supervision, responsible alcohol consumption, and safe handling of fireworks or other potentially hazardous items.

**Strengthen family support network:** Encourage families to reach out to support networks such as relatives, neighbours, or community organisations for assistance if needed. Foster a sense of community support and collaboration.

**Encourage reporting:** Continue to promote a culture of reporting concerns about child safety.

**Promote online safety:** Encourage parents and carers to set up parental and safety settings on new devices, monitor online activity and be vigilant about children's online activities, especially during the holidays when they may have more unsupervised time. Remind children about online safety and potential risks. The [Safer Internet Centre](#) has some excellent advice in their Parents' Guide to Technology and includes device-specific settings for different models.

**Poverty-proof:** It's important to have an awareness that the school experience can be a costly one for some families. The report published by the Child Poverty Action Group – [UK Cost of the School Day \(CoSD\) final evaluation](#), includes some great ideas for changes that could be implemented in schools.

**Signpost to support agencies:** Share information about support services and helplines that are accessible for families and children who may need assistance.

By implementing these strategies and fostering a collective commitment to safeguarding children, communities can work together to create a safer environment for children during the festive period.

## Lifelines and Support Networks

- The NSPCC are here to help 24/7 and children can call their [Childline](#) number on 0800 1111
- [ThinkUKnow](#) – links to various sites
- [Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Shout](#) is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text 85258
- Anna Freud Crisis Messenger – If you need support, you can text **AFC** to **85258**. A free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is feeling overwhelmed or is struggling to cope.
- [Educateagainsthate](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
- [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment.
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) – Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.
- [Social care](#): If you think a child or young person is at risk or being abused or neglected, contact the children's social care team at their local council. If you do not know where they live, contact your local council's team, the [NSPCC](#) or the Police for advice.
- [Find a food bank](#)

## Early Years Bulletin: Inclusion

### Mental Health and Wellbeing Education Board

We are re-establishing the Mental Health and Well-being in Education board and would like an Early Years representative to sit on this. The commitment is a quarterly meeting, 1-2 weeks prior to the CYP Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Partnership Board.

Meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

If you are interested in representing the EYs Sector in this area, please email Louise Oland: [loland@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:loland@worcestershire.gov.uk)

### Early Years Inclusion Process Working Group

Do you want to help shape how the Worcestershire Early Years Inclusion Process works? Following the workshop where we reviewed the Early Years Notification Process, we would like to set up a working group represented by a range of providers to explore how the processes and paperwork works from your perspective.

If you would like to be part of this work, please email: [loland@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:loland@worcestershire.gov.uk) by 5th January 2026.

### Worcestershire Children's Therapy Services – Autumn update

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust are excited to share the first Children's Therapy Services quarterly newsletter, providing updates from Children's Community Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and Specialist Play Services across Worcestershire.

This edition introduces The Balanced System<sup>®</sup>, a proven approach that strengthens collaboration with schools and early years settings to improve support for children and families. The newsletter also includes practical updates and resources to help families and enhance access to services.

The newsletter is available as an interactive PDF and easy-read version on their website: [Children's Therapy newsletter - Autumn 2025](#)

You'll also be able to pick up a printed copy at one of their outpatient clinics.

They welcome your feedback to help ensure future editions work for our patients, their families and colleagues across Worcestershire. To give feedback, visit: [Worcestershire Children's Therapy Newsletter Feedback](#)

## FREE SEND Workshops and Webinars

[SENDIASS](#) provide **FREE SEND Training Workshops and Webinars** for parent carers and professionals/ practitioners. These workshops can help build knowledge and skills for families with a child or young person with SEND and any professionals that support them.

**They have released new dates for the Spring Term.**

Workshops currently available for **Parent Carers**:

- [Autism and Me \(developed by autistic young people\)- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [What does a good Education Health & Care Plan \(EHCP\) look like? – HW SENDIASS](#)
- [How to check a draft Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)-HW SENDIASS ONLINE WORKSHOP](#)
- [What you need to know if your child has an additional need/ disability- HW SENDIASS ONLINE WORKSHOP](#)
- [Supporting your child to cope with change \(Transitions\) | HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Understanding Dyslexia | HW SENDIASS](#)

Workshops currently available for **Professionals**:

- [Autism & Me \(Developed by Autistic Young People\) Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Special Educational Needs \(SEN\) Support and The Graduated Response Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [What Does a Good Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\) look like? Workshop for Professionals- HW SENDIASS](#)
- [Engaging with Parent Carers \(Worcestershire\) | HW SENDIASS Training](#)

All sessions are interactive, enabling participants to ask questions.

Please direct your families to these opportunities. for use in your newsletters or on social media can be downloaded from our [Google Drive](#).

If you would like SENDIASS to host a FREE session at your setting, please complete the [SENDIASS Training Request Form](#) or contact [SENDIASSTraining@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:SENDIASSTraining@worcestershire.gov.uk) for more information. [SENDIASS Training delivered at your venue | Worcestershire County Council](#)

## New free SEND Webinars for parent carers

As part of the Worcestershire Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project, [SENDIASS](#) will be delivering [three brand new FREE webinars](#) for ALL local parent carers. The new webinar topics requested by Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum include:

- A Guide to SEND
- How to have an effective meeting
- Introduction to dyslexia

These webinars will run throughout January and February 2026 and will include a daytime and evening session for each. Places are already available to book here: [Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools \(PINS\) | SENDIASS](#)

## SENDIASS Christmas Tree in Worcester Cathedral Festival

The SENDIASS 'All About Me Tree' is now available to view at Worcester Cathedral's Christmas Tree Festival! The tree stands as a celebration of difference and individuality and showcases the voices of local children and young people with SEND.

SENDIASS have worked with the children and young people of [Voices United Worcestershire](#) and several local schools and settings to create this year's tree.

The young people felt strongly that the tree should be accessible to everyone. The decorations include different communication methods such as text, pictures and braille and the tree includes different textures so that everyone can touch it, explore it, and read it in their own way. The young people created decorations that explain what is important to them or describe who they are.

You can visit the SENDIASS tree (and all the others) now until 6th January 2026.

## Coming Soon: Communication and Interaction Support

The CCN team will be launching a package of support in the new year to help settings meet the needs of children who may not yet be using any language, and who may demonstrate distressed behaviours in relation to this. This support will include webinars to download on a range of areas including early communication, objects of reference, developing positive relationships and using the SCERTs approach (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support). Each web cast is designed to be short, so that it can be used as part of staff development. All the resources to support each one will also be available within the package, alongside a written advice sheet to help embed the technique for staff.

This package will be launched at the Early Years Inclusion Team SENCo cluster meeting on 3rd February 2026 and will be available by signing up through the CPD portal after that. This package is free and aims to provide practical strategies to support complex children within their mainstream setting.

## Early Years Inclusion Funding

Do you know what funding to apply for with your SEND children?

Inclusion supplement applications are required for:

- 0 to 5 non-NEF – for children who are not yet accessing their NEF due to their age
- Challenge to GR4 – where a child is in receipt of GR4 but the provider wishes to request a 'top up' based on the child's needs and one to one staffing requirements throughout the majority of the sessions.
- Exceptional Early Years Funding - for complex children who meet specific criteria:

Exceptional funding can be accessed for a child once they have progressed through the EHCNA assessment stage (and the SEN Team have agreed to assess), when they have an EHCP in place or when the Early Years Inclusion Team or Physical Disabilities Outreach Team identifies an exceptional level of need.

If you believe a child may be eligible, please contact the Early Years Inclusion Team to discuss this and complete the Exceptional Funding application form at the start of each academic year.

Email: [eyinclusion@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:eyinclusion@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## 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](mailto:workforcesupport@worcestershire.gov.uk).

### Early Years Update Meetings – Spring Term 2026

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 February 2026, 7pm to 8:30pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10273

#### **Out of School Providers**

- 10 February 2026, 7pm to 8:30pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10274

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

- 12 February 2026, 6.30pm to 8pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10272
- 13 February 2026, 10am to 11.30am virtual delivery, course code: 10272

**Cost:** Free

Book your place 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.

### Virtual School - TIAAS Level 1 webcasts

Did you know the virtual school have four free webcasts which Early Years Settings can access and can be watched individually or withing a staff meeting. The following webcasts can be accessed for free; book via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

#### **Emotion Coaching and Pace: webcast**

This webcast delivered by our Education Psychology team will allow participants to consider how to use emotion coaching and PACE in their settings. PACE stands for Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy; which is a flexible approach developed by Dan Hughes to help adults to form safe, trusting and meaningful relationships with young people who have experienced trauma.

The course is aimed at anyone who lives, works or cares for young people, as the application of both emotion coaching and PACE are applicable across the age range and across settings. The training is an introduction to these principles, and an opportunity to practice these skills, as well as share practice. It will allow time to share good practice with other participants, and practice the approaches shared.

**Course Code:** 10489

### **The Neuroscience that underpins Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's): webcast**

This engaging webcast course aims to equip professionals with an understanding of what is meant by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and how they can affect a child or young person. We will look at what is going on in the brain when children have experienced toxic stress and we will consider how this can affect ongoing development and challenges associated with a school/learning environment.

**Course Code:** 10490

### **Language Matters and Words have power - from a trauma perspective: webcast**

In this insightful webcast you'll delve deep into the psychology of language and its formative role in shaping children and young people's realities. Provide an opportunity to think about how you communicate with children and about the young lives you impact daily; a chance to equip yourself with the tools to inspire resilience, healing, and post-traumatic growth through the power of conscientious language.

**Course Code:** 10620

### **How do we engage families through trauma informed practices? Webcast**

During this 45-minute webcast we will explore meaningful family engagement through the lens of trauma-informed practices. Participants will learn how to effectively engage families and foster investment in their child's success using a trauma-sensitive approach.

The webcast will also include exploration of frameworks created to provide a trauma-informed approach, practical real-world strategies to support and discussions around our own biases as practitioners.

**Course Code:** 10657

Book your place via [CPD](#) using your setting CPD leader login details and course code.

## Date Change: Early Years DSL Forums: Spring 2025

An opportunity to share good practice and to keep DSL's up to date with national and local statutory requirements.

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

- 10 March 2026, 6:15pm to 7.30pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10400
- 12 March, 9:30am to 10:45pm, virtual delivery, course code: 10400 (Date change from 13 March)

**Cost:** Free

Book your place 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.