

Welcome to the Early Years and SEND team newsletter,

Spring half-term is nearly upon you and I am sure you are all very much looking forward to the break.

We do hope you find the information in the newsletter helpful.

Thank you for the amazing work you do for our children of Medway.

Deborah Allcorn

Head of Early Years

Department for Education (DfE) updates

Nutrition content for early years providers

The Department for Education in collaboration with the London Early Years Foundation (LEYF) and Anaphylaxis UK have developed new nutrition content on the Help for Early Years providers platform.

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework there is a requirement that states: 'Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious.'

Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is important for long-term health. As early years practitioners you can help set solid foundations for children's future health by providing them with nutritious food in your settings.

Help for Early Years Providers has added new nutrition content including videos to help you fulfil the requirement to provide healthy, balanced and nutritious food for the children in your care.

The content:

- explains the importance of introducing good food habits from birth
- includes information on the dietary requirements of babies and young children and how to plan a balanced menu
- provides recipe cards for tasty, cost effective, nutritious recipes you can use in your settings
- gives tips on how to introduce solid foods safely to babies
- provides information on food safety
- links to further reading and resources

For more guidance on supporting children in the early years, visit the Help for Early Years Providers website.

[New content launched on Early years child development training and Help for Early Years Providers](#)

We are excited to let you know that a new module covering **effective curriculum and assessment** has been added to the DfE's Early years child development training.

[Early Years Foundation Stage consultations launched](#)

On 22 April, the Department for Education launched a consultation on safeguarding requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.

The proposals in the consultation aim to ensure the safeguarding requirements are as comprehensive as possible for providers and are suitably robust to keep children safe.

The consultation proposals include:

- Amendments to promote safer recruitment including new requirements to obtain references and requiring safeguarding policies to include procedures to follow to help ensure recruitment of suitable individuals.
- Creation of new requirements for following up if a child is absent for a prolonged period of time and amendments to ensure providers hold additional emergency contact details.
- Creation of new requirements to ensure safer eating.
- Creation of a safeguarding training criteria annex and a requirement for safeguarding policies to include details of how safeguarding training is delivered and how practitioners are supported to put it into place.
- Amendments to clarify that early years students and trainees are required to have paediatric first aid (PFA) training.
- Amendments to ensure that children's privacy when changing nappies and toileting is considered and balanced with safeguarding need.
- A small number of other minor changes to the structure and wording of the safeguarding requirements to improve clarity.

You can respond to the consultation here: [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) safeguarding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

The consultation will be live for 8 weeks and will be closing **17 of June**.

Training

Intermediate Safeguarding and Child Protection Level 3

This course is appropriate for early years practitioners working in The Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, pre-school, nursery and childminding.

Learning objectives during this session, delegates will:

- Consider the competencies for Level 3 of MSCP Competency Framework
- identify relevant safeguarding legislation and policy.
- Explore how to respond appropriately when concerned about the welfare of a child or behaviour of an adult
- Look at professional roles and responsibilities and how they work effectively together.
- Consider the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Date and Time: Thursday 11th July 2024 10 am to 4.30 pm

Venue: Crest Infant and Nursery School Fleet Road Rochester ME1 2QA

Intermediate Safeguarding and Child Protection Level 3

For Medway Early Years Ltd (MEY Ltd) Partners, this course is available to book on BookWhen.

If you are not an MEY Ltd Partner, please email: sam@medwayearlyyears.co.uk for details of how to book a place.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please email: sam@medwayearlyyears.co.uk

DSL training

A course will be running in September, so if you wish to book a space, please email sam@medwayearlyyears.co.uk

Early Years SEND Team updates

EY SEN Forms

All Early Years SEN forms can be found on e-Learning.

Please download the new parental consent form from e-Learning, as this needs to be completed and signed before children can be discussed with EY SEN Officers.

A reminder that the new transition forms and guidance are also on e-Learning. This transition document is to be used for all children starting school. When you send the forms on to the receiving schools, please ensure headteachers are copied in on the email message.

To access the Early Years SEN forms, please go to the homepage <https://www.e-learningatlast.org.uk/>, click on Early Years Information and Guidance, click on Referral forms for Practitioners. It will ask you to log in but if you don't have log in details, you can just click on 'Log in as Guest' and you should be able to access all the forms there.

If you have any problems using the E-Learning site or locating forms, please contact Tina Newman using the following email - tina.newman@medway.gov.uk

Thank you to everyone who attended our first Early Years SENCO forum online. It was brilliant to see so many of you there and to have the opportunity to discuss lots of important issues.

Just a reminder from our discussions with the Health Team that the deadline for referrals to Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy for those children going into school this September has now passed.

For any other children in your settings, the age at which they can be referred to these services remains 2.5 years old. If you have concerns relating to possible social communication difficulties, please make a referral to the Health Visiting team. All forms for these referrals are available on the Medway Community Healthcare website (MCH).

Reminders

15- & 30-hours free childcare for eligible working families

From April 2024, eligible two-year-old children of working families can receive up to 15 hours free childcare. Applications for two-year-old working families is the same process as three- and four-year-old working family applications.

Eligible three- and four-year-old children of working families can receive up to 30 hours free childcare. Codes must be applied for by **31 August 2024** to ensure they can take up or continue their place from April. Working family codes for two-, three- or four-year-old children are a combination of 11 numbers and applications should be made [here](#) – www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

15 hours free childcare for two-year-old families receiving some additional forms of government support

Two-year-old children will not be eligible for funding unless they have a valid Medway Council code. Applications should be made [here](#) or www.medway.gov.uk/onlineadmissions selecting 'Medway two-year-old applications' and then choosing the relevant application site link.

If found to be eligible, codes are issued immediately. This code will work on the provider portal, if it does not, please check with the funding team on two@medway.gov.uk.

Funded childcare applications for parents of 9-month-olds opens on 12 May 2024.

Reminders

Please can all settings check that First Aid training and Food safety is up to date.

