



Early Years and Childcare Bulletin

January 2015
Issue 5

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Happy New Year and Welcome

From Alex Gamby, Head of Early Years and Childcare

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Welcome to the fifth issue of the Early Years and Childcare Bulletin and a slightly belated Happy New Year to all early years and childcare providers. I hope you had an enjoyable time over the Christmas period and some well-deserved rest and relaxation.

Local Authority Pre-Ofsted Health Check

As providers are aware, the current Early Years and Childcare Statutory Framework requires local authorities to work with early years and childcare settings in a different way to previously. Integral to this is that we may not now have the universal, consistent contact with all providers that we have had in the past, especially where your last Ofsted inspection judged you to be good or outstanding. Many good and outstanding settings are in receipt of our services, for example those:

- registered to offer Free for 2 places
- purchasing the Improvement Service Offer
- accessing support from the Equality and Inclusion Team
- in a collaboration
- making referrals to the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service via LIFT and/or to Early Help and/or to the Safeguarding Team.

In this context for settings not accessing any of the services mentioned here, commencing with those with the oldest inspections, we will be contacting you soon to offer a non-chargeable two hour health check. The purpose of this visit is to explore and understand the setting's approach to the monitoring of the quality of provision and its place within the self-evaluation and setting improvement planning processes to further support your continuous improvement journey. We trust that you will embrace this opportunity and look forward to working with you.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) 2015 - Although with effect from September 2015 the EYFS Profile will no longer be statutory, we are strongly encouraging schools and early years setting to still engage with this, in order for us to be able to track and monitor progress of children and the narrowing of achievement gaps. We are still awaiting information from the DfE about the new Baseline and will make this available as soon as possible.

Please note that the updated Profile document for 2015 is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook>

2 Safeguarding

Important Reminder:

New central contact number for LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) service:

One Central Number 03000 410 888

Safeguarding Children

There have been several important changes introduced recently into safeguarding arrangements that early years practitioners need to be aware of as they impact on day to day practice. Further information and access to specific good practice guidance can be accessed on the Kent Education and Young People's Services web-page under Safeguarding. This information is updated on a regular basis and includes contact details for the Education Safeguarding Team that provides a consultation service to designated staff in schools and early years settings. Additional support services including bespoke training can also be commissioned by settings as appropriate.

Statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2013 helps to inform the multi-agency arrangements for partnership working with parents and professionals in other agencies, whilst the Kent Safeguarding Children Board procedures (which also provide supplementary guidance) can be accessed online at <http://kscb.org.uk>.

The revised version of the Kent and Medway Threshold Criteria for Children in Need is also available on line. This helps to determine thresholds for intervention when considering a referral to Children's Social Services or the Early Help Team (Common Assessment Framework (CAF) being replaced by the Notification process).

Early Years settings will be well aware of the EYFS which helps inform practice as evaluated by Ofsted. This now expects settings to have supervision arrangements in place for all staff (learning from serious case reviews). Supervision guidelines have been published and these are available on the web-page. Training has also been rolled out across the county and further sessions are planned if the level of need is maintained.

Safer Recruitment training for schools is mandatory but this can also be accessed via CPD on-line by settings in addition to training for designated staff and basic awareness-raising sessions delivered across the county by the Education Safeguarding Team.

Home Office Consultation – 'Prevent' Duty

On 18 December 2014, the Home Office published for consultation, draft guidance on the *Prevent* duty. This duty is part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill, which will apply to a wide range of bodies supporting children and young people, including all local authorities, schools, sixth form colleges, registered childcare providers and providers of children's social care. Education, childcare and children's social care providers are already responsible for keeping children safe, including from the risks of extremism and radicalisation, and for promoting the welfare of children in their care. The *Prevent* duty will reinforce these existing duties by spreading understanding of the risks and current good practice across the country.

Continued from page 2

The government is keen that providers across the early years and childcare sector have the opportunity to engage with this draft guidance and to offer views direct to the Home Office as part of this consultation. The draft guidance and details of the six week consultation, including how to respond are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/prevent-duty>.

3 Early Years and Childcare Service: Improvement and Standards Team

Threads of Success: Improvement Service Offer

Our aim is to deliver high quality support, advice and training through a professional, knowledgeable and flexible service. Over the coming months Improvement and Standards Advisers will be making contact with early years and childcare providers that we have not yet reached, to discuss our Improvement Service offer. We have developed a comprehensive range of training programmes and have received excellent feedback from those who have engaged with the service so far. Evidence of significant impact has been highlighted following attendance on our Maths training programme through settings' data following attendance on the programme. Similarly, the 'Ofsted Readiness' support visits have had noticeable impact, in particular in supporting settings to build confidence in preparation for their impending Ofsted inspection and this being followed by a 'Good' Ofsted judgement.

We will be offering a free one hour consultation visit on a 'one off' basis. This will give us an opportunity to share our comprehensive offer, which ranges from strategic improvement visits to a variety of training and development programmes and to discuss your individual requirements. We will be able to expand on details such as the range of workshops covered in the 'Supporting and Meeting the Needs of Two Year Olds' offer and 'Are you ready for Ofsted?'. We will also be able to discuss with you how our services can be accessed through our payment plan options.

If you have any questions in the meantime or would like to book a visit then please email directly: EYCIImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

Strategic Improvement Visits

We are very pleased with the increased uptake of providers buying into the Improvement Service for strategic improvement visits. We know you are aware that we cannot duplicate the Setting Improvement Partner role, where advisors made a judgement on your quality. However, we can continue to support your improvement agenda and act as a critical friend with the offer of regular structured visits.

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“Our adviser was very knowledgeable about the subject we wanted help with and gave us great support in understanding this more. She was very friendly, professional and supportive, making us feel comfortable and relaxed. The day plan was effective and all went well within our time allocation.” (Choochoos Day Nursery)

“The visit was incredibly beneficial and met all of the desired outcomes. The adviser was fully prepared with hand-outs, a list of roles and responsibilities and was able to offer lots of advice about different ideas” (Rough Common Pre-School)

You have informed us that you value the continuity of a named adviser who knows your provision well and understands the bespoke issues that you face on a day to day basis. We have considered your feedback and developed a comprehensive range of packages that we believe will continue to meet your needs as you strive to maintain and improve your provision to improve outcomes for all children.

Within the strategic improvement visit there is a range of tools we can offer, such as:

- Mentoring and coaching for the leadership team
 - Workforce: Building internal capacity – Training needs analysis (TNA)/Training and development plan
 - Action planning
 - Monitoring systems
 - Policies and procedures
 - Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (SAW) audit
 - ITERs/ECERs, Peer Observation etc. Audits
- Note: We will be extending our offer to include the new audit on Sustained Shared Thinking
- In-house training – a range of training to support your improvement plan and to support building of staff’s competencies and confidence

New: Evaluation audits:

- a) The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years
- b) Meeting the needs of the range of children who attend
- c) The contribution of the early years provision to children’s well-being
- d) Ofsted Readiness – Evaluation if provision is/not yet demonstrating the characteristics of the ‘Good’ grade descriptors within the Ofsted Evaluation Schedule.

Together we can design a package which is tailored to your individual provision’s needs. A three day package through a Service Level agreement will cost just under £100 a month.



Ofsted Updates

Inspection reports are going to be '...shorter and punchier' from January 2015, Ofsted's early years chief said. Standard text, such as information about what the different types of judgement mean, will be removed, and reports will be written 'in a more concise manner'. Ofsted has been working with Tribal and Prospects so the format can be introduced from January 2015. Reports will continue to give an overall rating and individual grades for different aspects of the provision. The reports will still provide a summary of the judgments made and the key findings. This will be followed by a section on what the early years provider needs to do to improve.

New Ofsted website

On 15th December the Ofsted website moved to GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

If you receive alerts about Ofsted publications and news and want these to continue you will need to subscribe to alerts from GOV.UK.

If you are signed up to receive alerts about inspection reports you need take no action for these to continue.

Report analysis

Analysis of the most recent Ofsted actions and recommendations across the county include:

- Monitoring of and strengthening observation, planning and assessment so that children's next steps are used to plan and support their progress
- Enabling children to be more independent
- Strengthening setting self-evaluation.

ALERT

Improvement Service training to support these actions and recommendations coming to CPDOnline, the following courses will be available for individual practitioners to book on to in the spring term via CPDOnline, <http://cpdonline.kentcpdonline.org.uk>

- Observation, Assessment and Planning
- Leadership and Management
- Wellbeing and Involvement

Ofsted changes to new registration visits

In our last bulletin we highlighted the changes to the inspection timescales for new registrations, which will now take place within 30 months of opening, previously it was seven months. Ofsted have given us some further information to clarify this.

Previously the Ofsted registration process enabled inspectors to grant registrations with conditions, or to set actions before a registration could be approved. Actions or conditions would be set if any concerns or issues were raised at the registration visit. To ensure these conditions or actions had been met Ofsted would carry out an inspection soon after registration.

Ofsted has since stopped setting conditions or actions and will make the judgement at the registration visit whether the setting is ready to take children or not. If not ready, their registration will be either withdrawn or refused.

The extended timescale for post-registration inspections allows for more proportionate inspection activity, giving settings the opportunity to embed strong practice and demonstrate their commitment to effective self-evaluation procedures amongst other things. Therefore, each new setting will receive their first inspection within 30 months of registration.

The Improvement Service's Ofsted Readiness package supports early years managers and practitioners, in both new and established early years settings, in understanding the current Ofsted inspection framework. Using the Ofsted documentation it explores the main elements of the inspection process and provides managers and practitioners with the opportunity to reflect on their current practice and develop their confidence in preparation for inspection.

To request this support please contact us via our mailbox:

EYCIImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

OFSTED Notifications – Reminder

3.8 Registered providers must inform Ofsted or their childminder agency of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Registered providers must also notify Ofsted or their childminder agency of the action taken in respect of the allegations. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2014)

Leadership & Management Three Day Training Programme

The delivery of the revised three day Leadership & Management Programme is proving highly successful. Previously a five day course, this popular programme aims to develop candidates' self-awareness and competencies as leaders and managers, to enable them to evaluate and demonstrate the key skills for leading and influencing practice, to understand the principles of effectively managing change by building team capacity whilst encouraging an ethos of reflective practice.

The programme content underpins the key qualities identified by Ofsted as requirements for strong leadership leading to outstanding judgements

“Strong and effective leadership makes a setting good or outstanding. It drives up the quality of a setting’s work and ensures that all children are helped to reach their potential.”

(Ofsted – Getting it Right First Time, July 2013).

This programme is suitable for owners, managers, deputy managers, supervisors, room leaders / managers and those within an early years setting with a leadership role.

Delegates who recently completed the course commented on the increased confidence in their roles as leaders and managers the programme gave them, and how it strengthened their own understanding of their roles and responsibilities as leaders.

“My confidence has increased dramatically. I feel I have a greater understanding of strategies and approaches.”

(Course attendee, December 2014)

As a result of completing this course delegates reported their intention to lead with confidence, delegate more effectively and manage their time more appropriately in order to build their whole team’s capacity. All of which will have a positive impact on the outcomes for the children in their settings.

Another course attendee commented on how she has been supported to *“...lead and manage a team to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and staff.”*

If you are interested in booking this popular course for your collaboration please contact us:

EYCImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

A county wide programme for individual practitioners in a leadership role will be available via CPDOnline from spring 2015.

“Strong and effective leadership makes a setting good or outstanding. It drives up the quality of a setting’s work and ensures that all children are helped to reach their potential”

Ofsted July 2013

“My confidence has increased dramatically. I feel I have a greater understanding of strategies and approaches”

Course attendee
December 2014

Treasure Chest Resource Centre update

Visit us

We have recently had an increase in the number of settings visiting the Centre to view our extensive range of resources. Visiting us gives you the opportunity to see the display area and consider how the resources could be used in your setting. A tour of the Resource Centre is beneficial as it demonstrates the extent of the resources we can offer and therefore enables you to effectively plan your learning environment.



One setting reported *“Thank You so much! It really helped us out and gave us great learning intentions!”*

In 2015, we intend to open for visitors every month. If you would like to arrange to visit the Centre, please email us at treasurechest@kent.gov.uk to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Furniture to support Improvement Service training

Treasure Chest now stock six adult tables and 30 chairs which can be loaned to support your training events purchased through the Improvement and Standards Threads of Success. Equipment can be loaned via your Treasure Chest membership.



4 Out of School

Out of School Conference – 13th June 2015 – ‘Save the date’

We will be hosting a conference dedicated to Out of School providers (registered and non-registered) with inspirational guest speakers and a range of workshops. Further details will follow in the next bulletin.

Collaborations

In the spring we will be writing to all Out of School providers to discuss plans for developing Out of School Collaborations.

Briefing and Networking Sessions

We will be shortly publishing dates for our dedicated Briefing and Networking Sessions for the out of school sector. These will run twice yearly across four areas in October 2015 and March 2016.

Treasure Chest

We have seen an increase in the number of Out of School providers taking up Treasure Chest membership and, as you know from the last bulletin, we have had some very positive feedback from them. We now have a comprehensive range of excellent equipment and resources which are all inclusive and range from age 2-11 years. Here are just a few examples:

- Community Playthings Sand & Water Centre
- Community Playthings Push Me-Pull Me
- KCS Mini Kick Football Table
- KCS Dark Den and accessories
- Asco Moov Educational Class Set
- TTS Large Two-wheeler Bike
- TTS Stomper Frame

If you would like to see photos of some of the items, you can either view them on the supplier websites or contact us at treasurechest@kent.gov.uk. Look out for the new items appearing on the web application as they are being catalogued during the next few weeks.

Thinking of setting up an Out of School provision?

The Improvement Service is currently expanding its range of advice and support and for those wishing to set up Out of School provision. Look out for more information in the next bulletin.

If you require support or training for your existing provision email:
EYCImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

5 Early Years and Childcare Service: Sufficiency and Sustainability Team

Free For 2 Networking Event

Please look out for your invitation to the next round of Free For 2 Networking Events which will be taking place between 2nd and 5th February 2015. Can we urge you to book your choice of date and time as these events are always popular and over-subscribed.



FF2 News

Online application process for parents

In November, an online application process for parents wishing to apply for a FF2 place went live on kent.gov.uk. It was an immediate success which resulted in an additional 179 children accessing a FF2 place in the autumn term. If a parent visits your setting or children's centre and wants to apply for a FF2 place, please do use this facility rather than complete a paper application as it is so much quicker and easier. It can be found by following this link:

www.kent.gov.uk/freefor2

Participation Funding

With effect from April 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) will fund local authorities for two year olds according to the actual number of two year olds places they are funding locally, instead of the current system based on estimated numbers.

This means that the annual allocation to local authorities will be calculated using a standard hourly rate set by the DfE multiplied by the actual number of free hours they are funding for eligible children. This is called participation funding and as many of you may already know, this system is already used to allocate funding for all three and four year olds.

Under participation funding, allocations will be based on the January census every year using the Early Years Census for private, voluntary and independent providers. In January 2015, this date was Thursday 15th so the relevant paperwork would need to have been submitted by this date in order for the FF2 children at your provision to have been included in the census. This does not mean that children cannot take up their free 2 year old place after this date but it does mean that they will not be included in the census figures.



Continued from page 10**Funding rules for children that change provision after the start of term**

From January 2015, KCC will no longer fund two year old children who move between childcare providers after the start of the term.

It is the responsibility of the provider to ask a parent if they have already claimed their full hours at another provision for the current term. Funding will be based on the first claim received and will not be transferred if a child moves from one setting to another. Parents do have a right of appeal and should contact the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) at kentcfis@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 41 23 23.

Families can still choose to place their children at a maximum of two childcare providers registered with KCC to offer Free Early Education but their hours must not exceed the total entitlement of 570 hours per year.

To ensure that a parent/carer understands the terms of the 2 year old funding, it is essential that they complete and sign a Parental Declaration Form when their child accepts a place with an early years provider. The FF2 team has devised a sheet of 'Questions to ask parents applying for a FF2 place' which was sent to all providers on Tuesday 16 December. This should help to ensure that no family place their child with another childcare provider after funding has already been paid for that term.

Funding rate for 2 year olds for 2015/16

This has been confirmed as £4.94 per child per hour.

Growth Voucher Website

<http://www.greatbusiness.gov.uk/growthvouchers>

Growth Vouchers are a chance for small businesses to receive match funding of up to £2,000 to help grow their business in the following areas:

- raising finance and managing cash flow
- recruiting and developing your staff
- improving management and leadership skills
- marketing, attracting and keeping customers
- making the most of digital technology.

Small businesses accessing these Growth Vouchers are required to use the registered suppliers listed on the site.

<https://marketplace.enterprisenation.com/criteria-for-growth-voucher-advisers>

6 Early Years and Childcare Service: Equality and Inclusion Team

Early Years Pupil Premium

The Department for Education (DfE) is introducing an Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) in April 2015. This is an exciting initiative which has the potential to make a big difference to the attainment of disadvantaged children. Additional funding will be available for settings with 3 and 4 year old funded children who meet particular eligibility criteria. Providers will need to discuss with parents if their child would be eligible for the EYPP and encourage them to complete an on-line application form. In particular providers should speak to parents who were eligible for the Free for 2 funding as many of the criteria are the same.

The Early Years and Childcare Service Equality and Inclusion Team will be delivering briefing sessions in February and March to support the introduction of this additional funding. The sessions will include sharing national and local best practice examples to enable a considered approach to deciding how to spend the money and how to monitor the impact of the interventions used.

The sessions will be delivered across the county and will be advertised on CPDOnline in due course.

Management Information (MI) will be writing to all providers to advise them of the full list of eligibility criteria and the process for parents/carers to submit their application and the payment process for this additional funding.

Kent Progress Tracker

The Kent Progress Tracker Tool has been reviewed, updated and trialed and is now available to use. We have received excellent feedback from the settings who have piloted the tool and we are sure you will find the new additions extremely beneficial. Access this tool via the 'Including All Children' page on the KELSI website where you will also find detailed instructions for its use. Please print these off and use as you become familiar with the updated tracker.

Should you have any queries please email the Equality and Inclusion Team (EYInclusion@kent.gov.uk)



Best Practice Guidance

By now you should have received your copy of Best Practice Guidance which is also available on KELSI should you wish to make additional copies. Please share with the setting SENCO and signpost all staff to the importance of using this document both as a source of support and advice and as part of the referral process to the EY LIFT.

The checklists that accompany this resource are available on the 'Including All Children' page of KELSI.

We are planning further workshops with colleagues in the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service to support the use of Best Practice Guidance and completion of the LIFT documentation. These will be advertised on CPDOnline in due course.

Continued from page 12Equality and Inclusion Team Questionnaire

There have been a number of changes in accessing support for vulnerable pre-school children. We are very keen to target our work to meet your current need so with this in mind we will shortly be sending out a Referral Procedures Survey to ascertain where to target our training and what additional communication is required to meet individual need.

Please watch out for this and complete and return it so we can ensure we are providing the support you need.

SEND Conference - 24th November 2014

The Equality and Inclusion Team were delighted at the success of the SEND conference on 24th November. Two hundred delegates joined with colleagues from KCC and other multi-agency colleagues to consider the importance of developing children's communication, speech and language skills. The evaluations expressed how much the delegates appreciated Jean Gross the Keynote speaker and the various workshops and information on offer. We are now looking forward to hearing about how the information received is having an impact back in the settings.



7 Collaborative Working in Kent

The number of settings joining a collaboration continues to increase – we now have 355 settings working collaboratively to narrow achievement gaps and drive further improvement within 47 collaborations. We continue to support a further 82 settings across the county to either lead or join a collaboration. On 4th February we will be hosting our third Collaboration Leaders' Event where all collaboration leaders are invited to share in this valuable networking and CPD opportunity.

There are many benefits to being part of a collaboration, for example, the ability to purchase training collectively (thereby reducing costs), sharing good practice across settings and taking a shared approach to improving outcomes for children within a locality. Collaborations are also able to access the closed pages on the Foundation Stage Forum to network and advertise their available training places.

If you are interested in joining a collaboration or need further information please contact EYCollaborations@kent.gov.uk

8 Kent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) – here to help

How can CFIS help you?

We can:

- Advertise your settings details online, via email or through our advice line to families looking for childcare in your area
- Advertise an event your childcare setting is holding through our Facebook page
- Advertise any childcare job vacancies that you may have through the Kent County Council website
- Support all childcare providers no matter what the enquiry and happy to offer advice, information and assistance whenever needed

If you need to contact us about any of the above please call 03000 41 23 23 or email us at kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

9 Briefing and Networking Sessions

Do not miss the opportunity to attend one of our Briefing and Networking Sessions which are **free** events open to all early years and childcare providers from the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors. We have taken note of your feedback from our first sessions in the autumn and will be providing increased opportunities for networking. We look forward to welcoming you to the next events in February 2015. To book a place on one of these events, please access via CPDOnline: <http://cpdonline.kentcpdonline.org.uk>

05/02/15	Ashford/Shepway	EYC 15/038	Great Chart Primary School
10/02/15	Sevenoaks/Tunbridge Wells	EYC 15/039	High Firs Primary School
12/02/15	Maidstone/Tonbridge and Malling	EYC 15/040	Hadlow Manor Hotel
24/02/15	Dartford/Gravesham	EYC 15/041	Inn on the Lake
25/02/15	Thanet/Dover	EYC 15/042	St Augustine's Westgate
26/02/15	Canterbury/Swale	EYC 15/043	Best Western Abbots Barton Hotel

Agenda: The next sessions will include:

- Information and key updates from the Early Years and Childcare Service on Threads of Success, Equality and Inclusion, Sufficiency and Sustainability and collaborations as appropriate and necessary
- Information from the Safeguarding Team
- Information on the Early Years Pupil Premium
- Information on the introduction of the Early Years Baseline Assessment
- An opportunity to become involved in the consultation on Kent's new Transition Framework.

10 Newsflash!

The Food Information for Consumers Regulation law changed on the 13th December, with implications for childcare providers. Any childcare business serving food must be able to detail and prove what ingredients are in every single food dish they serve.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf>

Consultation on Kent's new Transition Framework:

Please note that you will shortly be given the opportunity to comment on Kent's draft transition framework through an online questionnaire, as well as through attendance at the February Briefing and Networking Sessions.

11 Note from the Editor:

We are in the process of reviewing how early years and childcare providers feel about engaging with the Early Help services. If you would like to provide feedback on this, could you please email Beverley.johnston@kent.gov.uk to share your views.

To access the Schools e-bulletin latest news please follow the link below:

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/working_in_education/news.aspx

Sandi Mortimer

Early Years and Childcare Manager – Partnership and Integration

12 Coming in the next edition...

- Update from Health
- Briefing and Networking Sessions June 2015
- Update on the Enhancing Families' Involvement in their Children's Learning (EFICL) Pathway
- Information on the Integrated Health and Education Review

13 Contact Us

**Sufficiency and Sustainability
Improvement and Standards
Equality and Inclusion
Collaborations**

Treasure Chest

KELSI:

Sufficiencyandsustainability@kent.gov.uk

EYImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

EYInclusion@kent.gov.uk

EYCollaborations@kent.gov.uk

Treasurechest@kent.gov.uk

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/curriculum_and_pupil_learning/early_years_and_childcare/including_all_children.aspx

The Early Years and Childcare Bulletin is compiled and edited by Kent County Council's Early Years and Childcare Service. The next issue will be published in Term 4.