

Early Years and Childcare Bulletin

March 2016 Issue 12

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From Alex Gamby, Head of Early Years and Childcare

Welcome to this edition of the Early Years and Childcare Bulletin

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Threads of Success

In May 2016 we will be launching our new 'Threads of Success' framework. The refreshed, new look 'Threads' will support Early Years and Childcare providers (including schools) to achieve excellence through the provision of a wide range of services and products, some of which will continue to be centrally funded and some of which will be chargeable. The dates of the launches are as follows:

- Launch One West 21/5/16
- Launch Two North 23/5/16
- Launch Three East 24/5/16
- Launch Four South 25/5/16

There will be a period of transition between 1 April and 31 July as we move from our current process to the system for accessing the new Threads of Success offer. Further details and booking information can be found on page 10 of this Bulletin.

School Readiness

Thank you to those of you who attended our annual Early Years Conference on 25 February, which this year focused on the subject of School Readiness. We hope that you found it a useful and informative day with excellent speakers and workshops. An integral part of the day was the launch of our refreshed Kent definition of School Readiness. We agree with and support UNICEF's description of 'School Readiness' which states that the following three elements together bolster children's likelihood of success:

- Children's readiness for school affects their learning and development
- Early Years settings and schools' readiness for children ensures learning environments are child friendly and adapt to the diverse needs of young learners and their families
- Families' readiness for school promotes a positive and supportive approach to education, their children's learning and the transition from home to school.

It is our belief that these three aspects maximise each child's likelihood of success as they progress through their time in school.

Please find attached a link to the full School Readiness document.

1 Safeguarding

Kent Threshold Criteria

The Kent Threshold Criteria for Children and Young People provides guidance for professionals and service users, to clarify the circumstances in which to refer a child to a specific agency to address an individual need, to request Early Help support or refer to Specialist Children's Services in Kent. This document is available on the Kent Safeguarding Children Board website.

Sudden Infant Death Seminar

The number of sudden infant deaths has risen in Kent and has been identified by KSCB's Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) as a priority safeguarding issue.

A **FREE** multi-agency Safer Sleeping Seminar has been organised for all practitioners working with parents and carers of babies under one year old to enable them to understand the issues and the importance of promoting a safer sleeping message in Kent.

Delegates will have the opportunity to learn about:

- Kent's multi-agency child death processes
- KSCB's new electronic CDOP system
- News from the Lullaby Trust
- The Police perspective
- The benefits of breastfeeding

The seminar will take place during National Safe Sleeping Week on Tuesday 15th March, 0930 to 1300 at Sessions House in Maidstone. Booking is via CPD Online.

2 Early Years and Childcare Service Improvement and Standards Team

Annual Conversations

Those of you who attended the recent Briefing and Networking Sessions will be aware that the Early Years and Childcare Service will be contacting you in due course to make arrangements for an Annual Conversation.

The aim of the Annual Conversation visit is to assess and reduce the risk of providers falling below a 'good' inspection judgement. The visit would explore the setting's approach to monitoring the quality of provision, the safeguarding and welfare arrangements and the self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. The adviser's role is to support settings to evidence: how good is the quality of teaching and learning, how well does the observation, planning and assessment address the full range of learners' needs and interests and how effective is the care for children's personal development, behaviour and welfare?

It would be an opportunity for you to review progress from the last inspection and evidence of the impact of the priorities and actions in the improvement plan.

Early Years Ofsted Update



The common recommendations following recent Ofsted inspections

Analysis of the most recent Early Years provider inspection reports has identified that:

- Observations, planning, assessment, tracking of children and cohort tracking to identify gaps is often not robust
- Self-evaluation, monitoring systems including identifying strengths and areas for development including the environment are not always effective
- Quality of teaching, in particular sustained shared thinking by asking open questions to challenge children's thinking needs to be improved
- Informing Ofsted of changes to manager, committee, including providing information on suitability is not always undertaken
- Safeguarding, including training, understanding roles and responsibilities, policy and procedures, disqualification arrangements, mobile phones and safer recruitment needs to be more robust.

Please review how your Early Years provision is meeting these key requirements. The Early Years and Childcare Service has a range of support packages that can assist you in addressing these, including:

- Leadership and Management Supports leaders and managers in their processes to develop a rigorous monitoring, reviewing and evaluating system that drives continuous improvement
- Observation, Assessment and Planning Provides Early Years practitioners with the
 opportunity to explore the cycle of observation, assessment and planning. To ensure they
 fully understand how to make accurate and effective observations and assessment, to
 inform planning that meets the needs of individual children and addresses gaps in
 learning
- Are you ready for your inspection? This course supports Early Years managers in understanding the current Ofsted inspection framework. Using the Ofsted documentation it explores the main elements of the inspection process and provides practitioners with the opportunity to reflect on their current practice and provision in preparation for inspection
- Strategic Improvement visits Advisers will act as a critical friend through regular structured visits to support you in identifying key areas for improvement
- Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement Audit Advisers will complete a robust and rigorous audit to support you in identifying key areas for improvement in preparation for the Common Inspection Framework.



NOW AVAILABLE Den Building







Introducing an exciting and interactive workshop

The aim of this practical, hands-on workshop is to explore the benefits of den building to nurture young children's creativity and imagination.

Practitioners will:

- Reflect on the potential of den making in promoting children's creativity and imagination
- Identify the links with effective learning and explore the holistic learning potential
- Experience, develop ideas, be creative and practice skills in den building
- Identify the role of the practitioner to support children creating and using dens.

This popular 3 hour workshop has received excellent feedback due to the nature of its practical delivery and hands-on involvement from practitioners.





Photos shared with kind permission from Johnson Garden Day Nursery

To express your interest in this workshop please contact us via our email address: <u>EYCImprovementservices@kent.gov.uk</u>

3 Out of School

Analysis of the most recent Out of School provider inspection reports has identified that:

- Self-evaluation and monitoring systems including identifying strengths and areas for development including the environment is often not robust
- There is a need to develop the environment including the range of resources on offer, their accessibility and to ensure they are challenging
- Planning activities and learning experiences that are informed by and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children and are purposeful and challenging need improving
- Independence including snack-time and making choices from resources needs to be improved.

Please review how your Out of School provision is meeting these key requirements. The Early Years and Childcare Service has a range of support packages that can assist you in addressing these, including:

Planning, monitoring and evaluation of play opportunities in Out of School settings - This course supports Out of School managers and practitioners in understanding the importance of planning for play and the benefits of monitoring, reviewing and evaluating taking into account the child's voice

Strategic Improvement visits – Advisers will act as a critical friend through regular structured visits to support you in identifying key areas for improvement

SACCERS Audit – Advisers will complete a robust and rigorous audit to support you in identifying key areas for improvement in the environment and interactions.

To discuss your training and support requirements please email EYCImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

Out of School Briefing and Networking Sessions

The next round of Briefing and Networking Sessions specifically for Out of School provision is now available for booking via CPD Online. Dates are as detailed below. An agenda will be available on the KELSI website at least one week before the sessions take place. Why not come along to hear the most recent updates and to have an opportunity to network with other settings? We look forward to seeing you there.

Early Years Out of School Briefing and Networking Session (East)	EYC 16/078	04/05/2016	10:00 – 12:00	Howfield Manor Hotel - Canterbury
Early Years Out of School Briefing and Networking Session (North)	EYC 16/079	11/05/2016	19:30 – 21:30	Riverside Community Resource Trust
Early Years Out of School Briefing and Networking Session (South)	EYC 16/080	16/05/2016	19:30 – 21:30	Holiday Inn – Ashford Central
Early Years Out of School Briefing and Networking Session (West)	EYC 16/081	18/05/2016	10:00 – 12:00	Hadlow Manor Hotel

4 Early Years and Childcare Service Sufficiency and Sustainability Team

Business Support

- 1) Are you charging enough for your service?
- 2) Do you have bad debts?
- 3) Are your prices and payment terms clear and transparent?
- 4) Do you know how to set up a cash flow forecast to monitor your income and expenditure?

For help on the topics above and many others please contact your district Childcare Sufficiency Officer (CSO) or email: sufficiencyandsustainability@kent.gov.uk

Rate Relief

Some properties are eligible for discounts on their business rates. The following rate relief could be available for your small business:

- 1) Small business rate relief
- 2) Rural rate relief
- 3) Charitable rate relief

For more information please go to https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief

Committee News

Ofsted Registration Changes for Organisations

A new **Early Years and Childcare Registration Handbook** which contains significant changes for those registered as an organisation with Ofsted came into effect from 1st January 2016. The handbook now states that:

- Where the registered person is an organisation, it must appoint a 'nominated individual' to be responsible for matters relating to registration and who acts on behalf of the organisation with Ofsted
- NEW The nominated individual **must** be a member of the organisation's governing body
- <u>NEW</u> The person cannot be the appointed manager, unless the manager is also a member of the governing body.

Details of this can be found in section 46, page 12 of the document

Section 47 of the document explains the three categories of the registered person: Individual, Organisations whose sole or main purpose is provision of childcare and Organisations whose sole or main purpose is not the provision of childcare. You will be able to identify yourselves as one of these.

Section 48 states examples of 'organisations' which include formal or informal partnerships, a body corporate such as a limited company or an unincorporated association, such as a registered charity or a school governing body.

If you identify yourself as being registered as an organisation, you are urged to check you meet the new guidance and if not consider how this may be done. If you would like to discuss your options or would like further information, advice and guidance please contact your Childcare Sufficiency Officer or email sufficiencyandsustainability@kent.gov.uk

Important information for all Free for Two registered childcare providers

Checking appropriate documentation to confirm a child's date of birth

The Free for Two (FF2) team has received a number of applications where the date of birth of the child has been incorrect. When an on-line application has been completed, we are not able to verify the date of birth and, therefore, eligibility is always confirmed subject to you seeing evidence of this.

For all applications, please ensure that appropriate documentation (passport, birth certificate, etc.) is seen and that the child's date of birth is within the eligible date range for participation in the FF2 scheme.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee payment if section 5.1 on page 6 of the Provider Agreement is not complied with. This states that 'a child's date of birth must be within the published eligible date ranges for the academic term (Spring, Summer or Autumn)' and 'providers must see proof of the legal names and date of birth of the child from either the birth certificate or passport to ensure eligibility'.

The role of the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS)

Can we also take this opportunity to remind you that parents who have queries which you are unable to answer should be directed to CFIS on 03000 412323 or email kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

Compliance Update

Publishing pattern of free delivery and charges for additional services

Recent compliance visits have highlighted a number of providers who are not publishing their pattern of delivery for Free Early Education. Page 4 of the Kent Provider Agreement clearly sets out KCC's expectations in this regard:

"Free Early Education for two, three and four year olds is based on a Core Offer of 570 hours a year over no fewer than 38 weeks. Providers must publish their pattern of delivery of this core offer ..."

If you are offering a stretched pattern of 12 hours per week over 48 weeks please ensure that you are also offering a 38 week pattern.

We have recently received a number of parental complaints about charges for wrap-around care where parents believe they are being charged for services they have not accessed. Can you please ensure that all charges outside of Free Early Education are clearly stated in your Fee Structure and that parents are aware of any charges for additional services before they take up their free place. Further details about charging can be found on page 6 of the Provider Agreement

5 Early Years and Childcare Service Equality and Inclusion Team

Severe, Complex and Resources Funding (SCARF)

Message from Zenia Ford - Early Years Lead, Specialist Teaching and Learning Service

The Severe, Complex and Resources Funding has undergone some streamlining, making it easier to request funding using the Personalised Plan and a new SCARF Costings Form (found on KELSI). All settings will have had the opportunity to attend training ready for implementation in term 5. Old paperwork will not be accepted after term 4 and any funding agreed will be at a fixed rate. Further information is available from colleagues in the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and the Early Years Equality and Inclusion Team.

Council for Disabled Children Briefing

What do the SEND reforms mean for Early Years settings?

This briefing summarises SEN and disability responsibilities in the Early Years and can be used by settings to review their progress in implementing the reforms. To read the briefing, please visit the Council for Disabled Children website.



Early Talk Boost

The first deliveries of the Early Talk Boost intervention training have been very well received. Further opportunities to access this training can be found on CPD Online or if you would like training in your setting or for your collaboration please ask for further details through the Equality and Inclusion email address. This is an excellent use of your Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) money.

'Been waiting a long time for training like this to close the gap for our children before they go to school'

'A new intervention which will help many of my little ones as speech, communication and language is a very high priority area of development in my setting'

6 Early Years and Childcare Service Partnership and Integration Team

Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning (EFICL)

Further rounds of EFICL launches are available for booking via CPD Online. These will take place on 16th, 18th and 23rd March, with further specific Saturday events for childminders. Delegates will receive a free toolkit which contains:

- EFICL Audit and reflection tools (for Early Years settings as well as a separate tool for Children's Centres)
- An A1 EFICL wall planner for settings, A3 EFICL wall planner for childminders sharing
 14 strategies to engage families together with an accompanying booklet
- An 8 minute DVD introducing The Power of Schemas, which can be shared with staff and parents to support their understanding of how children learn
- The Power of Schemas booklet aimed at families exploring the most frequently observed schemas and offering ideas to carry out at home
- An EFICL guide to support practitioner visits to family homes
- Details of a 10 week EFICL programme for parents and carers called Learning Links, which supports families in understanding their child's development.

Some copies of a full length Power of Schemas DVD are also available. The DVD would be useful for staff development or for loaning to parents to enable them to further their understanding of child development. If you are interested in purchasing a copy please contact eycollaborations@kent.gov.uk.

New SmarterPlay App



KCC is delighted to announce the soft launch of our **new**, **free app for families** 'SmarterPlay' (available to download on iOS 7 or above and Android).

We are currently seeking feedback from users to ready us for our National launch in March, so please, download, explore and enjoy! We value your feedback, so if you have any thoughts on the app, please send these to Kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

The App provides:

- A 'moments' learning journey feature where families can take photos or videos of their children and diarise activity to show what the children are doing and learning
- Top Tips (age related suggestions for families to be more involved in children's learning, based around the Development Matters statements)
- A geo-location feature showing local nurseries, pre-schools, childminders, Children's Centres, libraries, parks, farms, zoos and more
- Advice for families on what to look for when choosing quality childcare
- Useful web-links taking them to the Local Offer, school admissions information, free childcare forms, and more
- An interactive quiz on child development
- Detailed information and supporting links on a range of topics such as attachment, the importance
 of physical play, rest and routine, schemas, exploratory play etc.
- A newsflash section where we will share important up to date and relevant information with families on a range of topics
- An audio feature for those preferring this to the written text within the app.

Note to all settings: If you would like us to advertise your Early Years setting on the app's geolocation feature, you will need to update your information on the CFIS online updating facility to ensure you have given us permission to share your information. Whilst accessing this facility, please take the opportunity to update the rest of your details (including your website address) so that the CFIS hold up to date and accurate information about your service. For information as to how to use this facility please email Kentcfis@kent.gov.uk.

New Threads of Success Offer

Our new Threads of Success offer is being launched in May 2016 and it will give you the opportunity to access all Early Years and Childcare products and services in one place. The whole offer will focus on supporting settings on a journey to excellence and to ensure the needs of children and families are met. The offer and launches will be open to all Early Years and Childcare providers including schools.

We will be delighted to share the new offer with you at one of our eight launch events, taking place during the period 21 - 25 May. These will be spread across the County and will take place at different times of the day, including early evening, evening and weekend sessions. These launches are now available to book on CPD Online:

Event Name	Code	Date	Times	Venue
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (East Kent)	16/101	24/05/2016	12noon-2pm	Aylesham Community Project
	EYC		9.30am-	
Threads of Success launch event (East Kent)	16/102	24/05/2016	11.30am	Aylesham Community Project
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (North Kent)	16/095	23/05/2016	4.30pm-6.30pm	Inn on the Lake
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (North Kent)	16/096	23/05/2016	7pm-9pm	Inn on the Lake
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (South Kent)	16/097	25/05/2016	1pm-3pm	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (South Kent)	16/098	25/05/2016	3.30pm-5.30pm	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (West Kent)	16/099	21/05/2016	10.30-12.30pm	Oakwood House Hotel
	EYC			
Threads of Success launch event (West Kent)	16/100	21/05/2016	1pm-3pm	Oakwood House Hotel

We will still offer a range of centrally funded courses and, naturally, our statutory duty to support settings who receive an 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' Ofsted judgment remains **centrally funded**. However, in order for us to develop an even wider suite of training and products to help you reach your full potential, a proportion of our courses will now be chargeable at competitive market rates.

In order to make the transition between the various current processes and new Threads 'credits' process, we will be working to the following:

- Any courses purchased up until 30th April and delivered before 31st July will be booked under the current frameworks
- Any courses purchased after the 30th April will be accessed under the new Threads 'credits' process
- Existing SLAs which are due to expire after 31st July will be converted into the equivalent amount of Threads credits from the end of July.

Emporium Plus (formerly Treasure Chest)

You may recall from the last Bulletin that Kent's Resource Loan Service is undergoing new developments which include rebranding. The service is now using its new name Emporium Plus. You can expect a new website, a smarter ordering and payment process and new membership fees to reflect individual needs in due course.

Those of you already familiar with the service may also like to promote membership to parents and carers at your settings. Buying membership to Emporium Plus could be like giving an all year round present with children being able to order what they would like several times a year. New resources have also been ordered to support those settings who have claimed for SCARF Funding.

If you join before 31 March 2016 current fees will be honoured until March 2017.

Early Years Collaborations

Those of you who attended the recent round of Briefing and Networking Sessions will know that the refreshed Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2016 – 2019, due to be launched in May, aims to embed a system wide approach to continuous improvement in early education and childcare provision that includes more collaborative networks of providers. We therefore continue to encourage providers to join a collaboration.

At the recent Collaboration Leaders' Day, leaders and setting representatives considered the benefits of integrated working through their collaborations, for example by involving Children's Centres, Reception teachers, school SENCos and Childminders in their meetings. With the continued backdrop of changes to Early Years, they also found the delivery of a Change Management session engaging and stimulating.

If you would like to speak to a Collaboration Leader to find out the benefits of being a collaboration member or leader then please contact eycollaborations@kent.gov.uk. Over the coming months, some settings may also find that they are contacted by Collaboration Leaders to invite them to join a local collaboration meeting to find out just how beneficial collaboration membership is.

7 Kent Children and Families Information Service

We are here to help

What is the Kent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) and what does it do?

We provide free, confidential, impartial information and advice to parents, carers and members of the public. We can help families with childcare, early education, parenting, family life and issues that affect children.

If you are a childcare provider we can supply your details to parents and carers. You need to ensure your details are up to date to allow us to keep parents and carers fully informed about your service. We can only advertise the details of your service with your written permission. If you haven't used our service before please get in contact and help us to help you.

For further information please view our page on the directory by following this <u>link</u>.

CFIS can help you to:

- advertise your setting's 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 are happy to offer advice, information and assistance whenever needed.

Contact the Kent CFIS who will be more than happy to signpost you to the correct department or organisation.

Kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

03000 41 23 23

www.facebook.com/kcccfis

Please remember if you are looking for information about headcount week, estimates, PVI calendar or EYPP this information and more can be found on the <u>KELSI</u> website. If you are unsure on how to complete an application form for the Free for Two funding please contact the Free for Two Team directly <u>eyfreefor2@kent.gov.uk</u> or call them on 03000 413 700.

8 Briefing and Networking Sessions

The February Briefing and Networking Sessions were well received. Those attending received updates from the Early Years and Childcare Service, some of which are mentioned in this Bulletin. They also had the opportunity to network, sharing good practice ideas around boys writing.

Why not save the date for the next round of sessions in June?

Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Dartford/ Gravesham)	EYC 16/007	06/06/2016	Inn on the Lake	Dartford
Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Maidstone/Tonbridge & Malling)	EYC 16/008	09/06/2016	Oakwood House	Maidstone
Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Tunbridge Wells/Sevenoaks)	EYC 16/009	14/06/2016	Salomons	Tunbridge Wells
Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Canterbury/Swale)	EYC 16/010	16/06/2016	Best Western – Abbots Barton	Canterbury
Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Dover/Thanet)	EYC 16/011	20/06/2016	St Augustine's	Thanet
Early Years Briefing and Networking Session (Ashford/Shepway)	EYC 16/012	29/06/2016	Holiday Inn – Ashford Central	Ashford

9 Newsflash

Two documents relating to collaborations will shortly be emailed to existing leaders and subsequently be posted on KELSI. The documents are the Eligibility Criteria for KCC Centrally Funded Services and a revised Leaders' Guide to Collaborations.

10 Contact Us

Sufficiency and Sustainability

Free For 2 (FF2) Team

Improvement and Standards

Equality and Inclusion

Collaborations

Treasure Chest

Workforce Development

Kent Children and Families Information Service

KFI SI:

Sufficiencyandsustainability@kent.gov.uk

evfreefor2@kent.gov.uk

EYCImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk

EYInclusion@kent.gov.uk

EYCollaborations@kent.gov.uk

Treasurechest@kent.gov.uk

Earlyyearsworkforce.ask@kent.gov.uk

kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/curriculum and pupil learning/early years and childcare/including all children.aspx

Schools e-bulletin http://www.kelsi.org.uk/working_in_education/news.aspx