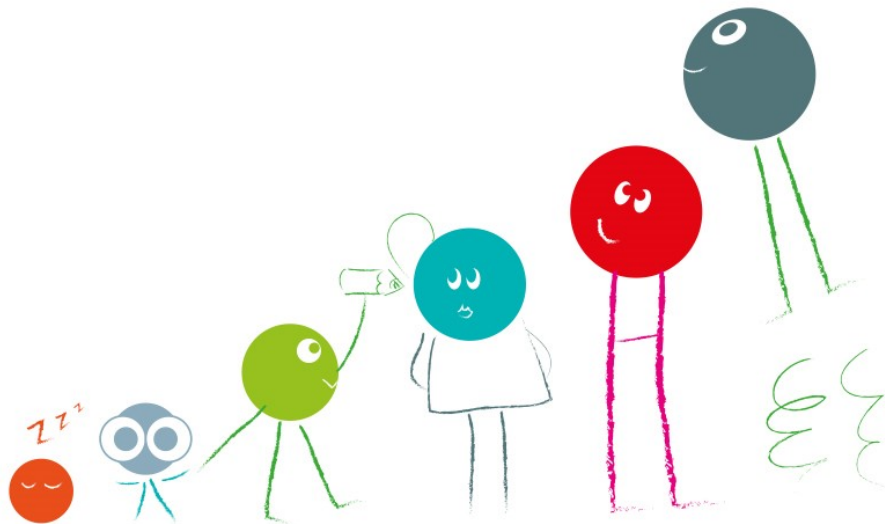




Early Years and Childcare Excellence

Early Years and Childcare Bulletin

July 2018

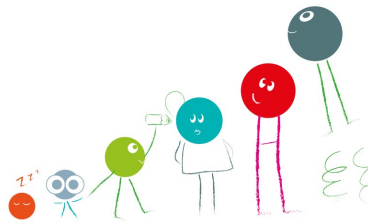


Kent County Council

Early Years and Childcare Service

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Welcome and Introduction Alex Gamby, Head of Early Years and Childcare

Hello everyone and welcome to the summer edition of the Early Years and Childcare Bulletin.

Children, Young People and Education Mission Statement

Matt Dunkley, CYPE Corporate Director, has recently shared the following Mission Statement:

Aim: Making Kent a county that works for all children

Vision: All Kent children feel safe, secure, loved, fulfilled, happy and optimistic

How: By:

- Joining up services to support families at the right time and in the right place
- Securing the best childcare, education and training opportunities
- Being the best Corporate Parent we can be
- Developing a culture of high aspiration and empathy for children and their families
- Valuing children and young people's voices and listening to them.

Child Poverty Strategy

If you have attended one of our recent Early Years and Childcare Briefing and Networking Sessions and/or the Early Years Collaboration Leaders Day, you will be aware that KCC is developing a Child Poverty Strategy. Thank you to those of you who attended at least one of these events and for your contribution to the discussions therein.

To view the Briefing and Networking presentation slides please click on this [link](#).

In the context of this information, delegates made a number of suggestions as to how providers might make a contribution to combatting and mitigating the effects of child poverty, as follows:

- Providing/signposting parents to information
- Recycling clothes, books, toys etc
- Looking at ways to extend Fare Share type food schemes across Kent.

If you have any other thoughts/suggestions, please do let us know by emailing EYC@kent.gov.uk in order that these can be taken into consideration for the Child Poverty Strategy.

Baseline Assessment and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Dfe has now published the outcomes of its consultation on Baseline Assessment. Please find here a [link](#) to this document.

Additionally it has published a pilot version of the *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage : Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five*. Please note that this document does not represent final Government policy and is for the sole purpose of schools participating in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) pilot. It applies only to Reception Year in these schools. The EYFSP pilot is the first stage in a consultative process, with a full public consultation to follow the conclusion of the pilot. For clarification, this will be in addition to and not instead of Baseline Assessment

I hope that you have a pleasant summer and whatever you are doing that you are able to enjoy some very well earned and deserved rest and relaxation. Thank you very much for all that you continue to do for Kent's children and families.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ASer' followed by a flourish.

News and Updates

Consultation on the Kent County Council's Early Years Payment Process

Thank you to everyone who responded to the consultation on the Early Years Payment Process, which has now closed.

The consultation was required due to the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities September 2017 from the Department for Education (DfE) which recommends all authorities should consider paying providers monthly from 1 September 2018.

The consultation resulted in 65% of the respondents stating they wish to continue with the current method. As stated in the consultation documents KCC is only able to provide one payment method, and therefore in line with the majority of responses we are continuing with the current method.

KCC believes this current method gives providers a cash flow advantage (50% of the termly funding is allocated at the beginning of each term and the balance paid midway through each term) and therefore monthly payments would have been less favourable.

Department for Education Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

In June 2018, the DfE published a new [Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#). From 1 September 2018 this will replace the 2017 statutory guidance.

Also available are a new [Model Agreement](#) and new [Operational Guidance](#).

Stretched Funding options from Autumn 2018

Please be reminded that from September 2018 there will be two options for claiming stretched funding via Synergy:

Option 1. Claim the funding as non-stretched (over 38 weeks) on Synergy and stretch it yourselves with the parent.

Option 2. Claim the stretched funding over 48 weeks per year.

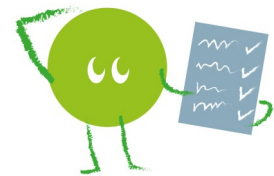
Please be aware that if you choose option 2 there is a 48-week sample calendar on KELS I which gives you the closure dates to enter into Synergy (marked in purple).

For further information on the stretched funding options please see the 'PVI calendar and funding tools' section on [KELS I](#) or contact Management Information on 03000 422828 or email eyfe@kent.gov.uk.

Important Information – Headcount Submissions

We are becoming increasingly concerned about the number of providers who are not managing to submit their headcount data by the required date(s). Until now we have been able to make exceptions, recognising that there have been teething issues with Synergy. From September 2018 however, we will no longer be able to support this. Full details of when estimate and headcount claims need to be submitted are on KELS I in addition to which Management Information send out emails and reminders well in advance. If you know that you, or a member of your staff who usually submits the headcount on your behalf, will be

on annual leave or off sick during headcount week, please make sure that you make clear and robust alternative arrangements to ensure the data is uploaded. Failure to do so will result in you not being paid.



Overallocations

Since the introduction of 30 Hours, we have seen a marked increase in the number of providers claiming too many hours for children who are taking up their entitlement at more than one provider. Please ensure that when parents complete the Parental Declaration form they are providing details of what hours they are accessing elsewhere and ensure you are clear about whether these hours are universal or extended. If the parent is unsure then please contact the other provider so that you can both be sure exactly what you are claiming. If both providers try to claim universal or extended hours for the same child, this will result in payments being withheld and delays whilst Management Information asks for supporting evidence. We know this has a detrimental effect on group providers' cashflow, but the effect on a childminder can be significant as this can account for a third of their income for the term. Management Information tries extremely hard to process overallocations quickly but needs evidence from both sides to complete their checks. Please return any requested paperwork as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Changes to Synergy Portal

Several changes are being made to the Synergy Portal over the coming weeks which should improve customer experience. A new User Guide will be available mid to late August once testing is complete but in time for the September headcount. Please look out for further details from Management Information.

In conclusion, we absolutely want to pay you the correct amounts of money promptly, within identified timescales. Please help us to help you!

Compliance

During recent compliance visits undertaken by the Childcare Sufficiency Officers it has become apparent that parental declarations are not always being fully completed.

The parental declaration forms an integral part to the process of accessing Early Years funding on behalf of the parent and therefore should be fully completed before headcount week.

Please ensure that all relevant sections are completed by the parent and that they sign in all appropriate places.

From 25 May 2018 two new parental declarations have been introduced; one for claiming 2 year old funding (FF2) and one for 15 universal hours, 15 extended hours and Early Years Pupil Premium funding.

The new parental declarations have been divided into 'parts' to make it easier for parents to complete and sign the relevant sections. Part four of the FF2 form and part seven of the 3 and 4 year old form, **must** be signed, as this is the declaration by whom has parental responsibility for the child.

Free Early Education and Childcare Leaflets

Postcard type leaflets promoting Free Early Education and Childcare in five languages are now available on [KELSI](#). Languages available are Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian and Slovak.

Committee Information

Are you a new trustee, have you just registered with the Charity Commission? If so you may have received their new welcome pack which from 30 April is being sent to all new trustees who they have an email address for.

The new pack focusses on the main duties of the role, providing essential information to help understand the governance basics, financial filing requirements along with practical steps that can be taken to carry out trustee duties effectively.

The Charity Commission believes this could act as a refresh for existing trustees which is why it has been made public. Your Childcare Sufficiency Officer can advise you further and the pack can be obtained following this [link](#).

Foundation Stage Forum

You may recall last year we communicated that we may not be able to continue to fund Kent County Council's membership of the Foundation Stage Forum in the future. We are sorry that unfortunately we are no longer in a position to be able to continue this membership and therefore have not renewed this year. Our membership expiry date is 4 September 2018.

We appreciate that some providers use the Forum in Kent, particularly for the Tapestry programme, but overall activity has been low. Those of you who are members yourselves will still be able to access the Forum but without the previously applied discount.

Using Disability Access Fund (DAF)

Thank you to everyone who is using the Disability Access Fund so positively to improve outcomes for children with disabilities or special educational needs. We are thrilled to see its impact and the range of uses practitioners are using the money for. Please continue to apply for this additional funding if you have children who meet the criteria.

Further information can be found on [KELSI](#).

We are keen to collect examples of how Kent practitioners are using the funding so we can share good practice with each other.

Thank you to Betty Lewis Nursery for sharing, with parental permission, the following example of the difference a specific resource can make.



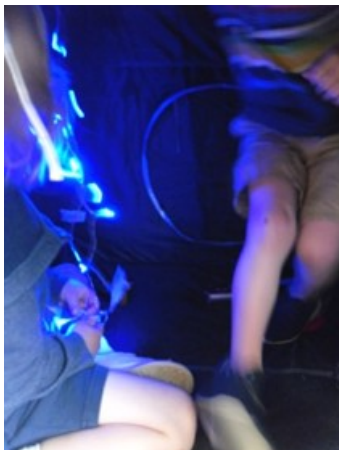
The Dark Tent!

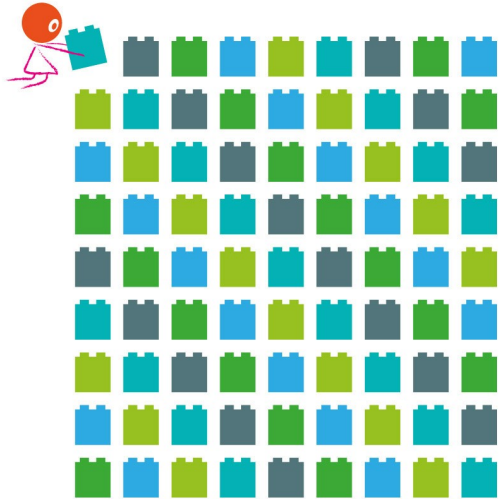
We have used our DAF money to purchase a dark tent to support one of our children with a visual impairment. Harry does not like the dark, so we spoke to Mum about how she manages this at home. She uses a space light which makes Harry feel comfortable at night.

We decided to try and recreate this at preschool, by filling the dark tent with lots of fairy lights and some colour changing fibre optic lights.

Although at first hesitant, Harry ended up in the tent, with his peers investigating the lights and other sensory toys we filled it with.

Meanwhile, his friend made a 'hoover' from junk modelling, and felt the tent needed a good clean up at the end of the session!





SENCo Qualification – further details to follow in due course

The Department for Education (DfE) has published the Level 3 Early Years SENCo qualification specification. The qualifications developed from this specification are intended to support Early Years practitioners to gain accreditation for the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to perform the Early Years SENCo role effectively. This recommended specification has been designed by Early Years experts and stakeholders supported by the DfE.

The DfE has also published a Level 3 EY SENCo job description which is intended as guidance for Early Years providers and practitioners to help clarify the role of the Early Years SENCo in non-maintained Early Years settings.

Paediatric First Aid Statutory Requirements

Whilst it is certainly good practice to have all staff paediatric first aid trained we wanted to clarify the statutory requirements to dispel any misunderstanding.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, April 2017, on page 22 states:

“At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. Childminders, and any assistant who might be in sole charge of the children for any period of time, must hold a full current PFA certificate. PFA training must be renewed every three years and be relevant for workers caring for young children and where relevant, babies. Providers should take into account the number of children, staff and layout of premises to ensure that a paediatric first aider is able to respond to emergencies quickly”.

That details the initial requirements; however, in addition the following statutory requirement also applies:

“All newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who have completed a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016, must also have either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff:child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an early years setting. Providers should display (or make available to parents) staff PFA certificates or a list of staff who have a current PFA certificate”.

Additional detail (Annex A) can be found in the footnote on page 22 of the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017](#).

The Local Offer

For those of you who have already completed your '12 questions' to add to your CFIS pages, you will be delighted to see them live on the site. The questions are accessed by clicking on the purple local offer triangle.

If you need support to complete these questions please attend one of the local workshops, use the relevant 30 Hour toolkit or SENCo handbook pages or contact an Equality and Inclusion Adviser EYinclusion@kent.gov.uk



Workforce Working Group - Raising the Profile of Early Years

We have recently held our first meeting of the 'Early Years and Childcare Workforce Working Group'. The group is represented by attendees from Early Years and childcare settings, childminding, higher education providers, Community, Learning and Skills and the Early Years and Childcare Service. The group was set up in response to increasing concerns over challenges the sector is facing with recruitment, retention and workforce development.

We want the group to be the voice for the Early Years and Childcare sector in Kent, to represent you in national agendas and to ensure that projects and plans moving forward are informed by the local need.

At our first meeting we discussed current challenges with recruitment and retention, the 2017 DfE Workforce Strategy, the recently announced [SENCo level 3 qualification specification and SENCo job description](#), links with qualification training providers, developments for the recruitment hub and the quality of information for individuals on career progression and raising the profile of Early Years and Childcare as a career choice.

We aim to keep you updated with actions from the group, local and national developments and other significant workforce developments.

If there are any particular aspects you feel we should focus on or you wanted to share with us, please email earlyyearsworkforce.ask@kent.gov.uk

Supporting young children’s resilience in the Early Years

The framework for Early Years clearly identifies the importance of promoting young children’s resilience. One of the four overarching principles in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2017) states:

“every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured”.

This, along with the other three principles, underpins the learning and development opportunities that Early Years providers offer to young children.

The different ways children learn are captured in the EYFS as the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Delivered through a play-based learning environment with quality interactions from knowledgeable adults these characteristics identify the key skills children need to be confident, capable and resilient.

When young children are resilient they demonstrate a number of these characteristics. The success in promoting these relies almost entirely on the skills of the practitioners working with young children, and specifically how strong the key person approach is:

“... we learn incredibly early how to relate to other people, to have confidence and trust in them – or not. Our bodies are programmed in infancy to cope well with stress and to be resilient - or not.” Gerhardt (2004)



This positive relationship between a key person and a child ensures the child feels safe and secure, with the emotional support to enable them to cope emotionally with unexpected events and thus ready to explore, investigate, question and actively be involved. These are the qualities needed to promote the characteristics and ultimately build resilience. For example, imagine an 18 month old child building a tower with wooden bricks which falls down. A child in a safe secure environment with an adult that they trust will try again. They will demonstrate a ‘can do attitude’; they will ‘bounce back’. The same for a four year old learning to ride a bike or a one year old learning to walk.

Children will have the opportunity to make mistakes, to test and trial activities, and will see practitioners doing the same. For a child to observe adults demonstrating the characteristics tells them it is acceptable for things to not work first time, for mistakes to be made as this is what builds resilience.

“Successful people are not those for whom everything comes easily, but are familiar with failure”. Stewart (2011)

A knowledgeable skilled Early Years practitioner will also be able to present an enabling environment, which in itself will offer learning opportunities to develop resilience. Referred to as the 'third teacher', a quality environment will continue to offer learning opportunities in the absence of an adult. For example, activities that require critical thinking, that promote problem solving and that have no determined outcome, focussing on the process rather than the end product.

Resilience is key in developing the attitudes and behaviours to be successful. It supports children's mental health and is essential to support lifelong learning.

Kent County Council's [Threads of Success](#) provides a variety of training on this topic.

The Forest School Association

The Forest School Association is celebrating its 5th birthday this month. If you would like to find out more about how the association encourages small childcare settings to explore the wild spaces nearby visit them on Facebook at [@ForestChildcareAssociation](#).

Kent Children and Families Information Service

We are here to help

Your details, your responsibility

Your details may not be displayed on our website, so you could be missing out on potential business. We recommend that you review your childcare provision details held on a regular basis.

Your permission settings

The information you give us will be made available, with your consent, over the telephone, in writing and via the internet. You have the option to restrict the ways in which your information is published. It is important that you complete the permissions form correctly using the following link to [our permissions form](#).

Make sure your details are up to date

Are the details of your nursery or preschool up to date?

Do we hold the correct contact details for your service?

Are you providing before and after school care that CFIS are not aware of?

Register to use our online service where you are able to update your details at a time that is convenient to you. The information can be found on our [website](#) or by calling us Monday to Friday between 9am-5pm.

If you need to contact us about any of the above please call us at 03000 412323 or email kentcfis@kent.gov.uk

Mischief Makers – the Summer Reading Challenge coming to Kent libraries

Children aged 4-11 are invited to join the Summer Reading Challenge in all Kent's libraries, from 14 July to 15 September. To take part in the Challenge, all children need to do is sign up at their nearest library. There is no cost involved.

The theme for 2018 is Mischief Makers; celebrating the 80th anniversary of the much loved comic, Beano.

An information sheet on the Summer Reading Challenge is available [here](#). You can also visit the Mischief Makers [website](#).

Briefing and Networking Sessions

Our regular Briefing and Networking Sessions provide a good opportunity to keep your setting and staff up to date and to network with colleagues from other settings.

We run sessions for Early Years and Childcare settings and schools and also specifically for settings providing Out of School care including schools.

Why not book a place on the next round of Early Years and Childcare Briefing and Networking sessions and benefit from the opportunity to network and hear important updates?

EYC 18/227	The Cornwallis Suite, Maidstone	2 October 2018
EYC 18/228	The Ark Christian Centre, Dover	3 October 2018
EYC 18/229	St Augustine's, Thanet	4 October 2018
EYC 18/230	Best Western Manor Hotel, Gravesham	11 October 2018
EYC 19/054	Riverside Church, Whitstable	5 February 2019
EYC 19/053	Holiday Inn, Ashford Central	6 February 2019
EYC 19/055	Darenth Valley Golf, Sevenoaks	11 February 2019
EYC 19/056	Hadlow Manor Hotel, Tonbridge & Malling	13 February 2019
EYC 19/057	Mercure Tunbridge Wells	11 June 2019
EYC 19/058	Mercure Brands Hatch, Dartford	12 June 2019
EYC 19/059	The Coniston, Sittingbourne	18 June 2019
EYC 19/060	Hythe Imperial, Shepway	19 June 2019

Threads of Success Marketing Information

We are delighted that so many people have opted in to receiving information from the Early Years and Childcare Service about the promotional and marketing opportunities we continue to offer. However, we have not had a response from everyone yet and remember, unless you opt in, you might miss out! To opt in, if you haven't done so already, please visit <https://www.threadsofsuccess.co.uk/gdpr-form>.

Lastly, if at any time you want to be removed from all non-statutory communications, just email threadsofsuccess@kent.gov.uk and we will remove you from our promotion and marketing list.

Contact Us

Threads of Success	www.ThreadsofSuccess.co.uk ThreadsofSuccess@kent.gov.uk
Threads of Success Recruitment Hub	https://www.threadsofsuccessrecruitment.com/home
Sufficiency and Sustainability	Sufficiencyandsustainability@kent.gov.uk
Free for 2 (FF2) Team	Eyfreefor2@kent.gov.uk
30 Hours of Free Childcare	30HoursFreeChildcare@kent.gov.uk
Improvement and Standards	EYImprovementServices@kent.gov.uk
Equality and Inclusion	EYInclusion@kent.gov.uk
Collaborations	EYCollaborations@kent.gov.uk
Emporium Plus	Emporiumplus@kent.gov.uk
Workforce Development	Earlyyearsworkforce.ask@kent.gov.uk
Kent Children and Families Information Service	Kentcfis@kent.gov.uk
Management Information	eyfe@kent.gov.uk
KELSI	http://www.kelsi.org.uk
Schools e-bulletin	http://www.kelsi.org.uk/working_in_education/news.aspx

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