

## Early Years SEND Update Summer 2020



As we come to the end of an unprecedented academic year for schools and settings I would like to express my thanks, along with colleagues across the sector, for all that you have done and are doing in this very difficult time, where advice and guidelines change from one day to the next and yet you carry on with one goal...to support the children you have in your care to the very best of your ability to enable them to have fun and to learn in a safe environment.

### Early Years SENIF Webinars

We had hoped to be able to be delivering face to face training sessions at this time, introducing you to the new digital form and supporting you to complete the paperwork. We had to quickly adapt and have been offering the sessions as webinars over the past three weeks. Hopefully you have been able to attend one. If not, don't worry as we plan to have a link to the training on the SENIF page of Kelsi, which means you can just access it at a time to suit to you.

### SENIF Hotline

Debbie and Fleur have been available every day during the past 4 months between 9.00 am and 10.00am to answer your SENIF related questions. We will continue to offer this support over the next two terms.

Debbie James - SENIF Practitioner Lead  
03000 418862

Fleur Thorogood - SENIF Practitioner Area  
Lead

03000 418807

Specific queries relating to individual children will continue to be sent to [SENIF@kent.gov.uk](mailto:SENIF@kent.gov.uk)

### Deferred Entry

Please be sure to check the flowchart on Kelsi if you have any children with SEND whose parents are thinking about or who have been offered deferred entry for school.



### SENIF

SENIF Requests can still be submitted and we are considering them as normal, but they won't start unless it's confirmed that your setting is open/child is accessing their sessions, so please let us know. SENIF cannot be backdated so if you do choose not to submit until September then it won't start until the following month. For new requests for SENIF that are received prior to term 2 where you are unable to complete a reviewed Personalised Plan (as children have been absent, or your setting has been closed); these will be considered in the normal way but with the current personalised plan.

### SEN Support Allowance

As we have been unable to really evaluate the effectiveness of this allowance this year due to COVID-19 and many settings having been closed for some time, we will continue to pay this to Private, Voluntary & Independent settings for the next academic year but will be monitoring this via two questionnaires over this time. This allowance is not available to maintained nursery classes.

### Monitoring & Support Officers

The team has continued to contact EY providers remotely at this time and settings report that it has been helpful to have the support. We will continue to work in this way for at least term 1 to minimise the numbers of adults coming into your settings in the light of COVID-19.

### SENIF Practitioners

SENIF Practitioners have continued to support settings and in some cases parents during lockdown, by having weekly phone calls, being part of virtual LIFT meetings, signposting to support or creating resources that can be used to support children and their parents. Again, we are not planning on visiting in term 1 but will carry out virtual support to settings.

KCC

*Early Years SEND Update - Summer 2020*

## Early Years SEND Update Summer 2020

### SENIF Implementation Plan (SIP)

Last year we learnt that OFSTED would be looking more carefully during inspections at how additional monies that were received were being utilised.

We set up a working group to see how we could support you with this and we were due to trial the two documents during the spring terms.

Needless to say, that was put on hold, as more pressing matters arose!

We have very recently shared the options with settings that had said they would be keen to trial them.

Once we have evaluated their responses, we hope to be able to share the SENIF Implementation Plan and wider finance tool with you, in the Autumn term, via some online training.

### Portage

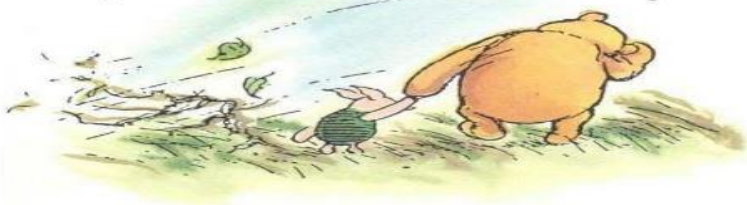
Portage Practitioners are continuing to "virtually see" families regularly so are available for conversations around transition and setting targets on the children's personalised plans. Remember the Portage leaflet that you received a while ago now, that will be helpful to you, when welcoming children who continue to have Portage, to your setting.

And finally.....

Piglet sidled up from behind  
"Pooh", he whispered

"Yes, Piglet?"

"Nothing", said Piglet taking Pooh's paw.  
"I just wanted to be sure of you."



I hope that you can be sure of us and our support for you, as we move into an uncertain, but hopefully more settled, new academic year.

Stay safe and take care.



Zenia Ford  
SEN County Manager Early Years