

The Education People

Early Years & Childcare Service

Support and Intervention Plan for Ofsted registered early years and childcare providers in Kent

December 2025

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Section one: Introduction

- 1 Kent County Council (KCC) and The Education People are committed to working in partnership with all Ofsted and childminding agency registered providers within Kent to support them in providing high-quality (by implication inclusive) early learning and care for children and young people.
- 1.1 In Kent we (being KCC and The Education People) aspire to and expect that every child and young person makes good progress in their development from birth, to achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and beyond, to have the best opportunities in life and to be safe, happy, thrive and be fulfilled.
- 1.2 The context for this Support and Intervention Plan is that in November 2025, Ofsted introduced its new Inspection Framework. The evaluation areas for registered early years providers to be inspected are:
 - safeguarding
 - inclusion
 - curriculum and teaching
 - achievement
 - behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines
 - children's welfare and well-being
 - leadership and governance.
- 1.3 Out of school providers will be inspected across the same areas other than for the learning and development requirements.
- 1.4 Possible inspection outcomes for all types of provision are across a 5-point scale, being:
 - Exceptional
 - Strong Standard
 - Expected Standard
 - Needs Attention
 - Urgent Improvement.
- 1.5 Safeguarding will be judged as Met or Not Met.
- 1.6 This Support and Intervention Plan applies in full or in part for private, voluntary and independent early years group providers, maintained school nurseries and nursery schools, independent schools and academies, childminders and standalone out of school childcare providers.

- 1.7 The EYFS and the provisions of the Ofsted Childcare Register establish the frameworks that providers must work within and comply to, aiming to ensure that children are empowered and supported to learn and develop to the best of their potential and are kept healthy and safe. In Kent we believe that every child has the right to attend a setting that at least meets Ofsted's 'Expected Standard' and hence has access to the best environment, experiences and support possible.
- 1.8 To achieve this, KCC commissions The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service to deliver a range of support and (where needed) intervention services, which are captured in this Support and Intervention Plan, including how they can be accessed. These services, which may diversify as appropriate and necessary for different provider types, plus some others that may be chargeable, include:
- Pre-registration information, advice and support
 - Information, advice and support for newly and/or re-registered provision
 - Ongoing support for all types of provision
 - Intervention support where Ofsted has found Leadership and Governance to be less than its 'Expected Standard'
 - Intervention support where Ofsted has found safeguarding policy and/or practice to be 'Not Met.'
- 1.9 The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service (in this document may be referred to as 'we') comprises the following teams that are involved in the delivery of the Support and Intervention Plan:
- The Sufficiency and Sustainability Team
 - The Early Years and Childcare Quality Team
 - The Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Team.
- 1.10 Across these teams, a range of underpinning universal services are available, which in summary include:
- termly (6 times a year) Early Years and Childcare Bulletins, bringing information about national and local updates, initiatives, requirements and sharing best practice
 - termly (3 times a year) Briefing and Networking Sessions across the county
 - support for business sustainability
 - support for improving the quality of provision
 - facilitating access to services for children in need of additional support.
- 1.11 The provisions of this Support and Intervention Plan build on this universal offer.
- 1.12 Providers offering any or all of the Government's Free Early Education Entitlements must do so in the context of Early Years and Childcare Statutory

Guidance and Kent's related Provider Agreement and any associated addendums. The Support and Intervention Plan also addresses the circumstances in which a provider offering Free Early Education Entitlements may have the ability to offer these withdrawn, the process and timescales for this and how the intervention support available can mitigate, if not eradicate, the risk of this happening. It is KCC's and The Education People's unequivocal desire and intention to avoid this happening unless children's welfare and wellbeing is considered to be at risk.

Section two: Pre Ofsted registration support

Early years and out of school group provision

- 2 The Sufficiency and Sustainability Team is responsible for supporting the development of new early years and out of school group provision from inception through to Ofsted registration. When a provider is first considering opening new provision, the following support is available:
- For early years groups, a pre-recorded webinar entitled 'Are you ready for your Ofsted registration?'
 - For out of school groups, a pre-recorded webinar entitled 'Setting up and registering out of school provision with Ofsted.'
 - An annual report on childcare sufficiency, showing surpluses and deficits of places across the County
 - Market research
 - Things to consider when searching for premises.

- 2.1 Once a provider has secured premises and/or submitted their Ofsted application the team will support with:
- Business and finance administration
 - Where applicable, understanding Free Early Education Entitlements and the Kent Provider Agreement.

Contact email address sufficiencyandsustainability@theeducationpeople.org

- 2.2 The Early Years and Childcare Quality Team can be commissioned (on a chargeable basis) to support the development of new early years and out of school group provision prior to Ofsted registration. This support may include:
- Leadership and governance
 - Workforce development
 - Statutory requirements, including safeguarding and welfare requirements
 - Learning and development
 - Creating a high-quality, inclusive environment.

Contact Email address: eycquality@theeducationpeople.org

Childminders

- 2.3 For those considering going into childminding, the Early Years and Childcare Service's, Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Team offers the following.
- 2.4 A [briefing session](#) which provides delegates with information to help them to:
- decide if childminding is the right career for them

- consider the business and regulatory implications of becoming a registered childminder
- proceed with the registration process.

2.5 A chargeable [Kent pre-registration course for prospective childminders](#), providing delegates with all the knowledge and information needed to set up a new childminding business.

2.6 A chargeable pre-registration conversation to have a bespoke discussion with a member of the team to focus on specific elements in preparation for an Ofsted registration visit.

Contact email address childminding@theeducationpeople.org

Section three: Newly Ofsted registered and on-going support

Early years and out of school group provision

Once a provider is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register, the Early Years and Childcare Service offers on-going support.

Sufficiency and Sustainability Team

- 3 A named Childcare Sufficiency Officer will be assigned to the group provision, offering tailored guidance in the following areas as appropriate and necessary:

- Free Early Education Entitlements
- Business planning
- Financial management
- Governance structures
- Marketing strategies
- Place development and expansion

The Sufficiency and Sustainability Team can also provide support to Out of School providers who are only on the Ofsted Childcare Register.

Contact email address sufficiencyandsustainability@theeducationpeople.org

Early Years and Childcare Quality Team

- 3.1 Group provision will be assigned a named Early Years Quality Adviser for early years groups or Out of School Quality Adviser for out of school groups, who will maintain regular contact and provide expert advice on:

- Leadership and governance
- Workforce development
- Statutory requirements, including safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Learning and development (not applicable for out of school groups)
- Creating a high-quality, inclusive environment.

- 3.2 The Early Years Quality Adviser or Out of School Quality Adviser will work with the provider to agree on a programme of ongoing support, which may include in-person and/or virtual meetings, phone calls, and email correspondence.

- 3.3 When Welfare Requirement Notices are issued, the Early Years or Out of School Quality Adviser will offer support as appropriate and necessary.

- 3.4 Additional support available includes access to a suite of funded webinars to support continuous professional development optional chargeable services such as bespoke training and consultancy.

- 3.5 Following any changes to registration e.g. change in legal status, rename of provision, change of management or change of premises, resulting in a re-registration with Ofsted, the programme of support will be reviewed with the relevant adviser/s and adapted appropriately.

Contact Email address: eycquality@theeducationpeople.org

Childminders

- 3.6 Once a childminder is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register, the Early Years and Childcare Service's Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Team offers on-going support.
- 3.7 For Ofsted registered childminders, a named Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Adviser will be assigned to your provision, offering regular and tailored advice and guidance in the following areas as appropriate and necessary:
- Free Early Education Entitlements, business planning and development
 - Creating a high-quality, inclusive environment
 - Safeguarding and welfare requirements
 - Curriculum and Teaching/achievement
 - Behaviours, attitudes and establishing routines/children's welfare and well-being
 - Leadership and Governance
- 3.8 When Welfare Requirement Notices are issued, the Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Adviser will offer support as appropriate and necessary.
- 3.9 For childminders registered with a childminding agency, support for the quality of the provision is provided by the agency. Advice should be sought from the Childminding Quality and Sufficiency Team when concerns are raised regarding children's development and seeking appropriate support, alongside enquiries about Free Early Education Entitlements.
- 3.10 Additional support available includes:
- access to a private Facebook page for Kent childminders
 - access to a suite of funded webinars to support continuous professional development
 - optional chargeable services such as bespoke training and consultancy.
- Contact email address childminding@theeducationpeople.org
Contact telephone 03301 651220

Section four: Intervention support and withdrawal of Free Early Education Entitlements

Ofsted reform and Free Early Education Entitlements regulations

- 4 On 9 September 2025, Ofsted confirmed changes to education inspections and the introduction of report cards and the Department for Education (DfE) announced changes to accountability measures for education providers. These changes include inspections of early years providers with inspections under the renewed framework that commenced on 10 November 2025.
- 4.1 The introduction of report cards and changes to inspection outcomes for all types of early years providers means several early years regulations will need updating. This includes the regulations that enable (but do not require) local authorities to refuse to fund or withdraw Free Early Education Entitlements from providers not achieving the relevant, specified Ofsted judgement.
- 4.2 There are also regulations requiring local authorities to secure the provision of information, advice and training to early years providers registered with Ofsted that have been subject to one or more of the Free Early Education Entitlements withdrawal triggers. The DfE has updated these regulations and the Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance so these thresholds and triggers accurately reflect the renewed inspection framework.

Intervention

- 4.3 The Local Authority (KCC) receives notifications from Ofsted when a provider is inspected and receives one or both of the following judgements:
- Safeguarding is graded as not met
 - Leadership and Governance is graded as below the Expected Standard.
- KCC also receives notifications from Ofsted when a provider is issued with a Welfare Requirement Notice, which may be integral to or separate from a wider inspection and which may or may not necessitate intervention support.
- 4.4 When a provider receives a judgment as listed in paragraph 4.4, local authorities are required to secure the provision of information, advice and training.
- 4.5 The Early Years and Childcare Service, acting on behalf of KCC, will lead a coordinated package of intervention support based on the indicators raised at inspection up until the providers' next inspection. It is important that providers understand and engage with the offered support to make swift improvements to

meet the Ofsted Expected Standard and in accordance with the Kent Provider Agreement.

- 4.6 Providers will receive a letter from The Education People (on behalf of KCC) detailing the Early Years and Childcare Service's response and will be required to sign an acknowledgement of commitment to engage with this

Termination and withdrawal of Free Early Education Entitlements

- 4.7 The new triggers for allowing local authorities to refuse or withdraw Free Early Education Entitlements will be where one or more of the following apply:

Free Early Education Entitlement	Trigger
All entitlements	Safeguarding: Not met
30 hours working families and universal 3–4-year-olds	Leadership and Governance: Urgent Improvement
Early learning for 2 year olds	Leadership and Governance: Needs attention or below.

- 4.8 On receipt of a final report card from Ofsted that indicates one of the triggers as listed in paragraph 4.4 above:
- the provider will not be able to claim Free Early Education Entitlements for new children to the provision
 - existing children who will become or who are already eligible for Free Early Education Entitlements can still be claimed for, to ensure continuity of care. Evidence of attendance may be required to secure the Free Early Education Entitlements
 - KCC, in liaison with The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service, has the final decision to withdraw Free Early Education Entitlements for all children if there are significant concerns regarding safeguarding particularly.
- 4.9 On receipt of a second final report card from Ofsted where there is no evidence of improvement, the provider will be unable to claim Free Early Education Entitlements for any children in their care from the beginning of the next term following the final report card.
- 4.10 Where a provider is reinspected and is judged to be at the Expected Standard and that safeguarding is met, KCC will, in liaison with The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service, reinstate their ability to deliver Free Early Education

Entitlements from the date that the Early Years and Childcare Service receives the draft Ofsted report card.

- 4.11 For the Appeals Process at any point during the withdrawal of Free Early Education Entitlements, please refer to the current Kent Provider Agreement.
- 4.12 For full and detailed information about the withdrawal of Free Early Education Entitlements please refer to the current Kent Provider Agreement.