



Nottingham
City Council

Nottingham City Early Years Newsletter

Summer Term 2026
All Sector Issue 28

**The Early
Years Team**



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Summer Term 2026 All Sector Newsletter!

This issue provides our regular updates on Workforce Development opportunities for the Summer Term and key dates for your diary. There is also the latest information on funding, SEND and DAF. In addition, there are key articles on EYFS Profile Assessment Support and Starting Reception and opportunities to get involved in Agreement Trialling facilitation, Languages Leads, Education Endowment Fund Projects and the national SEND consultation. There is also the latest information from HMRC, Ofsted and the Department for Education.

Please remember, we continue to value your honest feedback, which you can share by emailing your comments to earlyyears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

**Best wishes,
The Early Years Team**

Contact Us....

- **Email**
earlyyears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
- **Website**
www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/earlyyears
- **X (formerly Twitter)**
[@EarlyNottingham](https://twitter.com/EarlyNottingham)



Contents

Topic	Page
Workforce Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Term Round Up • Maths – Developing Early Number Sense • To Be Two • Room Leaders Network 	3
What’s coming up in the Summer Term? - Key Dates for your Diary Overview by month of key training and funding related dates	7
Early Years Funding	10
EYFS Profile Assessment Support	11
Recruitment Opportunity – Agreement Trialling Facilitators	14
Language Lead Training Opportunity	15
Starting Reception	16
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Updates	17
National SEND Consultation	18
Updated Guidance for Childminders on Claiming Household Expenses	18
Thanks to our Wraparound Providers	19
New Recruiting Projects from the Education Endowment Foundation	20
Government Guidance on Screen Time for Under 5’s	20
Updated EYFS Safer Sleep Requirements	21
Frequency of Ofsted Inspections to Early Years Providers	22
Early Years Team News and Contact Information Space available on the Early Years Schools Forum Sub-Group Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Reminder	22

Workforce Development Spring Round Up

What a term it's been!

It's been another jam-packed few months for us in Workforce Development. We were delighted to host our first in-person DSL network in six years, held 3 successful Annual Business Meetings with our PVI settings, and delivered a Head Teacher Briefing focused on the Best Start in Life agenda. Plus, a whole lot more! It's been a real pleasure to run more sessions face-to-face and at varied times—giving us more opportunities to hear from you, connect with you, and see you in person.

Spring Highlights

Early Years Priorities: A Leadership Perspective

On 22nd January, the Early Years Team delivered an information session for Head Teachers at the Council House, focusing on Nottingham City's approach to the government's Best Start agenda. The event brought together over 60 attendees, creating a lively and engaged atmosphere.

"The chance to collaborate with other senior leaders from other schools. Time to sit with my Deputy Head Teacher to reflect on the big picture and how it applies in school."



Brilliant Babies!

This two-part, in-person session explored how babies develop physically and cognitively. It also covered early support strategies, safer sleep guidance, and essential health and safety considerations. Practitioners reflected on effective environments, the importance of strong attachments, what an appropriate curriculum looked like, and the many ways to work closely with parents.

'The course & delivery was excellent in making the course relevant to my setting. The interaction of tasks and activities helped to get a more hands on approach to learning and understanding.'

DSL(PVI) Network

On 25th February, the Early Years Team, in collaboration with the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership, hosted an in-person DSL Network at the Indian Community Centre, welcoming 54 attendees. We were delighted to be joined by Healthy Little Minds, Nottingham Family Hubs, and Teams Around the Family, who shared valuable information, insights, and best practice with the group.

"Lots to think about — the session made me reflect on families in our setting who could benefit from support. A great session with so much useful information."



Nottingham City Council Early Years:
Workforce Development
Excellence in quality, rooted in
context, driven by practice.



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Maths—Developing Early Number Sense (3-4 Years)



Join us for a hands-on, practical session all about early number sense! We'll explore simple, playful ways to bring maths to life in your setting, boost practitioner confidence, and create environments that spark children's curiosity. Expect lots of ideas, resources, and interactive activities you can take straight back to use with your children.

Date: Thursday 23rd April 2026

Time: 09:15am—12.15pm

Venue: Nottingham Nursery School

Book here!





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Years Team**



To Be Two

Build your confidence in supporting two-year-olds through practical activities and real-life strategies. Explore behaviour, self-regulation, and how to create an enriched curriculum through play, quality interactions, and an enabling environment — with time to reflect and share learning between sessions.



Date: Wednesday 22nd April PT1

Wednesday 20th May PT2

Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm

Venue: The Vine Community Centre

Cost: £50



**Scan the QR code
To book onto the
course!**



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The Early
Years Team



Have you booked on to Room Leaders Network

Date: Thursday 30th April 2026

Time: 09:15am - 11.15am

Venue: Indian Community Centre

Cost: Free (only for Network Members)

We are pleased to confirm that the free room leaders network will be offered to all settings with leadership membership again this year and we have finished analysing feedback from the spring leadership network to identify the focus of the session.

In response to requests, we will be focusing the session on building a deeper understanding of the role of a room leader and developing knowledge and understanding of how the room leader role can support OFSTED case sampling when preparing for and during an inspection.

**To book your
place please scan
the QR code**



What's Coming Up In The Summer Term!

Coming up in the Summer Term we have lots more exciting CPD training opportunities available!

For full information on all training courses, including timings, venues and cost, please visit the [CPD pages](#) of the Early Years Website. You can **book all these courses online** at https://myaccount.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/service/Early_Years_Course_Booking.

Below is a summary of key dates from the Early Years Team, which have been colour co-ordinated for ease as follows:

	Early Years Funding Dates - Email eyfunding@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries
	Training and Network Dates – Email eytraining@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries
	SEND Dates – Email eyfssend@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries

April 2026	
Wednesday 1 st April	Part One – Summer Term Early Years Entitlement Estimate Payment Based on Spring Term portal claim
Tuesday 14th April	Being a SENCO Suitable for the PVI Sector
Wednesday 15th April	Building a ‘Strong Foundation in Reception’ Part 2 Suitable for those working with Reception children in schools
Monday 20th April	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 21st April	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 21st April	Childminder Information Workshop Part 1 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
Wednesday 22nd April	To be Two Part 1 For PVI, Childminders and School Practitioners working with, or planning to work with, 2 year olds
Wednesday 22 nd April	Headcount Task closes for Summer Term Funding Claim Last day to submit claim
Thursday 23rd April	Developing Early Number Sense 3-4 Years For Practitioners working with 3-4 year olds in Pre-Schools in the PVI Sector or Nursery / F1 in Schools.
Monday 27th April	Safeguarding Refresher Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Thursday 30th April	Room Leaders Network For Settings who have returned the Leadership Membership

May 2026

Friday 1 st May	Part Two – Summer Term Early Years Entitlements Estimate Payment Based on Spring Term portal claim
Friday 1 st May	Provisional Date for Early Years Funding Confirmation Reports Please keep an eye on your emails!
Tuesday 5th May	Childminder Information Workshop Part 2 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
Thursday 7th May	Prevent Duty Suitable for the PVI Sector
Monday 11th May	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 12th May	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Wednesday 13th May	Childminder Network Suitable for Nottingham City Childminders Only
Wednesday 20th May	To be Two Part 2 For PVI, Childminders and School Practitioners working with, or planning to work with, 2 year olds
Thursday 21st May	Introduction to Safeguarding Suitable for the PVI Sector
Thursday 21 st May	Summer Term Early Years Census Date
Friday 22 nd May	Higher Level Needs Funding Deadline for Summer 2 Interim Panel
June 2026	
Monday 1 st June	Part Three – Summer Term Early Years Entitlements Estimate Payment Based on Spring Term portal claim
Wednesday 3rd June	Agreement Trialling F2 Suitable for PVI Sector and Schools
Thursday 4th June	Nottingham City SENCO Network Suitable for the PVI Sector
Friday 5 th June	Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding Deadline for Summer Panel
Monday 8th June	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 9th June	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Wednesday 10th June	Nottingham City PVI DSL Network Suitable for Nottingham City PVI Practitioners

Monday 15th June	Childminder Information Briefing For prospective childminders
Thursday 18th June	Pre-School Agreement Trialling Suitable for PVI Sector and Schools
Friday 19th June	Introduction to Safeguarding Suitable for the PVI Sector
Monday 22nd June	Safeguarding Refresher Training Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Wednesday 24th June	Leadership Network Annual Membership suitable for Proprietors/Leaders and Managers in the PVI
Monday 29th June	Designated Safeguarding Leads For PVI Practitioners who are new to the DSL role.
July 2026	
Wednesday 1st July	Workshop for providers new to delivering funded early years entitlement places Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Wednesday 1st July	Refresher workshop for providers delivering funded early years entitlement places Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Thursday 2nd July	Childminder Information Workshop Part 1 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
Thursday 9th July	Workshop for schools on claiming the funded early years entitlements Specifically for new School Office/Business Managers to support with the claiming process
Monday 13th July	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 14th July	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Wednesday 15th July	EYFSP Initial Data Briefing Specifically for Nottingham City School Leaders, Reception and Year One Class Teachers and Subject or Phase Leaders
Wednesday 15 th July	Summer Term Balance Payment Only paid if estimate has not covered earnings
Thursday 16th July	Childminder Information Workshop Part 2 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
August 2026	
Monday 31 st August	Deadline to submit Early Years Entitlement Funding Adjustment Form For informing us of any late starters/early leavers which will be paid/invoiced at the start of the Autumn Term.

Early Years Funding

Parent Queries

A reminder that if parents have queries, they should be directed to the Families Information Service by contacting 0115 8765910 or using the form found here: [Families Information Service team](#).

Parents should not be directed to the Early Years Team as our role is to work with providers. If we do need to become involved with a parent query, this will be done through FIS liaising with us. This is to ensure that the family receive a smooth customer journey. Thank you for your understanding.

2 Years Olds Eligible for both Working Parent Entitlement and Early Learning for 2's (formerly disadvantaged/Families Receiving Additional Support)

A reminder that where there are 2-year-olds are entitled to both entitlements, they must be recorded on the portal using the Early Learning for 2's hours first and then the Working Parent Entitlement hours for any hours above 15 (for example, for a full 30-hour claim, 15 hours must be recorded in both the universal and extended columns).

Early Years Census

As shared at the Business Meeting and detailed in the new Provider Agreement, a reminder that the Early Years Census is now termly. The **Summer Census date is 21st May 2026**, please look out for the email containing the relevant information and submission deadline.

Summer Term 2026 Headcount Information

Estimate Funding Payments

Providers will have received part 1 of their estimate payments as they are made around 1st April. Part 2 will be made on or around 1st May and part 3, 1st June. Please remember that these are based on any children from the Spring Term headcount that the system believes you will have this term.

Summer Term Head Count Task- 23rd March - 22nd April

Please remember that although your portal return would have been submitted before your May and June estimate payments, your estimate payment will remain the same amount as these are based on last term and are signed off in advance of the current term.

Balance Payments

Summer Term Balance Payments will be paid around 15th July and as per the Provider Agreement, any debt owed will be taken off from any amounts we may owe you this term, if after this there is an outstanding debt, we'll work with you to agree whether to take this off future payments or raise an invoice.

Confirmation Reports

These are provisionally set for 1st May. Please ensure you look through your Report within the deadline given as it's crucial the details are accurate. This is the time to amend, add any new starters or reduce hours for any leavers. All changes will be included in main balance payments on 15th July, unless we receive the reports late or require further information which may take us over the deadline for them to be included.

Adjustments

Any amendments due to leavers or starters after the Confirmation Report stage, will need to be made using the [Adjustment Form](#). Please remember that Adjustment Forms need to be completed and sent by 31st August 2026 to receive payment. Payments will be made within the first month of the Autumn Term.

EYFS Profile Assessment Support

The Department for Education has released a new suite of [EYFS Profile assessment support](#) materials, offering clear guidance, practical examples, videos, and key messages for practitioners and senior leaders involved in making Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) judgements.

What these new materials aim to do:

- ✓ Build practitioner confidence
- ✓ Ensure consistency when making judgements
- ✓ Address common misconceptions about assessments
- ✓ Strengthen professional dialogue with Year 1 colleagues

These resources also highlight the crucial leadership role of Head Teachers and Senior Leaders in supporting and quality-assuring EYFS Profile assessments.

What's Inside the Resources

“A selection of ELGs has been chosen to offer clarity where practitioners most often seek it.”

The new guidance includes focused support on:

- The role of Head Teachers and Senior Leaders
- Making reliable best-fit judgements
- Inclusive assessment approaches
- Ensuring smooth transitions into Year 1

The Early Learning Goal (ELG) example pages include short videos and anonymised case studies for selected ELGs. These examples show assessment in real contexts, demonstrate best-fit judgements, highlight inclusive approaches, clarify misconceptions, and support reflective professional dialogue. They are intended to inform, not replace, professional judgement.

How to use these resources in your Setting:

- Explore each section to deepen understanding of the EYFS Profile
- Watch the videos during team meetings or CPD
- Use case studies as prompts for moderations discussions
- Share key transition messages with Year 1 Teachers and SENCOs

These resources will also form the basis of our Summer Term Agreement Trialling sessions when the DfE guidance will be shared in greater detail to support practitioners making the end of year assessments and moderating judgements.

For Reception colleagues, these sessions will run on **Wednesday 3rd June 2026**, online in the morning and face to face in the afternoon. You can [book on here](#).

“These resources are designed to build practitioner confidence and strengthen professional judgement across the EYFS.”

A spotlight on Word Reading and Writing

From last year's data, word reading and writing remain our lowest performing areas in Nottingham City, with only 70.4% of children achieving the Early Learning Goal (ELG) for Word reading (compared with 76.5% nationally) and 67.2% achieving the ELG for Writing (compared with 71.9% nationally). These areas remain two of our biggest gaps with national.

Please take time to look at the information shared below, in relation to word reading and writing, taken from the DfE's [Help for early years providers : EYFS profile assessment support](#) and reflect on how you are assessing these ELG's within your own school.

Word Reading: Moving Beyond the Phonics Checklist

The Word Reading ELG focuses on a child's ability to decode words using their current phonic knowledge. While many schools use systematic phonics schemes, **it is vital to assess children against the specific ELG criteria rather than just the milestones of a particular scheme.**

ELG for Reading

Children at the **expected level** will:

- ✓ Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs
- ✓ Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending
- ✓ Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words



The 4 minute video found here: ([Help for early years providers : ELG: Word Reading](#)) highlights that "expected" looks different for every child. For instance, Mia reads simple sentences with fluency, while Mohamed may pause over longer words to sound them out—both are considered to be at the expected level because they demonstrate consistent sound-blending and decoding. In contrast, a child who reads like Alana is assessed as emerging because she relies on guessing from pictures or context rather than reliably applying phonics knowledge.

By focusing on what the ELGs actually describe, nothing more and nothing less, schools can ensure that every child's progress is accurately reflected and supported

Writing: Communication Over Perfection

The heart of the Writing ELG is the ability to communicate meaning through legible text. A significant takeaway for practitioners is that children do not need to compose independently or write extended pieces to meet the goal.

ELG for Writing

Children at the **expected level** will:

- ✓ Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed
- ✓ Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters
- ✓ Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others

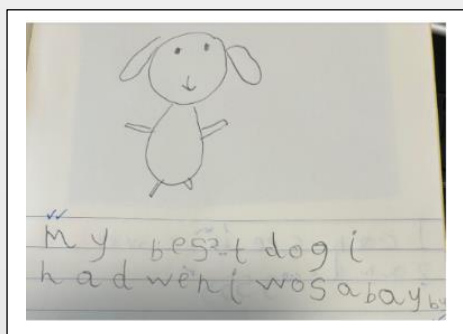


Key Messages

Dictation and guided writing are highly encouraged as valid assessment tools. The 5 minute video ([Help for early years providers : ELG: Writing](#)) shows that phonetic plausibility is key; for example, spelling "beach" as "bech" is a valid demonstration of phonological awareness for a Reception-age child.

To enable children to reach the writing ELG at the end of Reception, it is important throughout the year that children are provided with sufficient high-quality opportunities to practise writing in a range of different contexts.

Case studies like Taylor and Harper show that while minor errors in letter formation or punctuation may occur, their writing remains legible and makes sense, placing them at the expected level. As you will see from the examples, there is also no expectation that letters must sit on lines to be classed as being correctly formed.



By focusing on what the ELGs actually describe, nothing more and nothing less, schools can ensure that every child's progress is accurately reflected and supported

Recruitment Opportunity!



Nottingham
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The Early
Years Team



The Early Years Team are looking to expand the team of Facilitators to support with Agreement Trialling!

We are looking for experienced practitioners, from both schools and PVI settings, who have the skills to facilitate group discussions, manage group dynamics and provide verbal feedback during the Agreement Trialling sessions (both in person and online).

The successful candidates will need to demonstrate the following knowledge, skills and experience:

- ✓ Professional curiosity
- ✓ Experience working with children in Pre-School and/or Reception
- ✓ An understanding of current assessment practices as outlined in the EYFS Statutory Handbook

The role will require a maximum of 8 days' work throughout the academic year and settings will receive payment towards supply/release costs of £250 per day.

If you are interested in joining the team of facilitators, please contact Desiree.Roemersma@nottinghamcity.gov.uk to request an information pack or look out for an email which was sent to Leaders and Managers on Tuesday 14th April 2026.

Closing date: Wednesday 29th April 2026 at 5pm.



Language Lead Training Opportunity

The Speech and Language Therapy team are looking to recruit new practitioners who wish to become a Language Lead in their setting.

The Language Lead approach is an evidence-informed programme which supports the development of speech, language and communication in the early years. This approach enhances the current offer of speech, language and communication support within settings and provides a significant opportunity for early intervention for all children including those with speech, language and communication needs. It is based on an interactional pedagogy and the intervention is carried out within typical EYFS provision.

If you want to become involved in the Language Lead Training opportunity, or want to find out further information, please register your interest with amy.burton@nottshc.nhs.uk

This training is once again being offered for **free** and runs each term. The training follows the below format:

Monday 18th May 3:30 on MS Teams	Information Session for Leaders / Managers
Weds 3rd June 1-4pm , Bulwell Riverside	New to the role Language Lead session 1
Weds 10th June 1-4pm , Bulwell Riverside	New to the role Language Lead session 2
Weds 24th June 1-4pm , Bulwell Riverside	New to the role Language Lead session
Coaching session in your setting to support with the implementation of strategies	

For more details, please contact: amy.burton@nottshc.nhs.uk



Starting Reception

Starting school is an exciting milestone for children and their families.

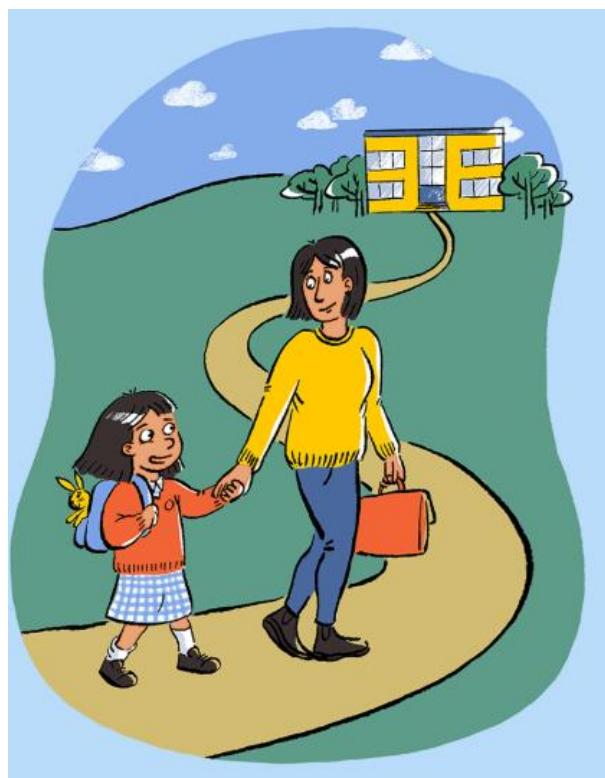
To help make the transition into Reception as smooth and positive as possible, we encourage settings to share Starting Reception (www.startingreception.co.uk) with parents and carers of children in their preschool rooms who will be starting school in September.

Starting Reception is a free, practical online resource designed to support families in preparing their child for school.

It outlines the key skills, routines and small steps that help children feel confident and ready for their first day.

Many of these will be skills you are already helping children to practise and develop over the coming months.

Settings may also find it helpful to map their existing planning against the Starting Reception skills, using the guidance to strengthen transition support and ensure children are developing the foundations that will help them thrive as they move on to school.



Scan the QR code to take you directly to Starting Reception....



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Updates

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF)

Spring 2026 saw the successful launch of the new Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding known as the SENIF. The SENIF is available to all Nottingham City Private, Voluntary, Community and Independent Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers who offer Early Years Entitlement places. The SENIF is also available to school settings for children who are not in a Reception class.

The SENIF should be used to support eligible children to access their early years entitlements and ensure settings are inclusive and supporting individual children's needs.

Key dates for the SENIF Panels can be found below:

Term	Application Deadline	Panel Meeting	Payments
Summer 1	5 June 2026	9 June 2026	12 June 2026
Autumn 1	9 October 2026	15 October 2026	16 October 2026
Autumn 2	4 December 2026	10 December 2026	11 December 2026

If you require any support with SENIF, please contact eyfssend@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Higher Level Needs Funding (HLN)

HLN Funding is allocated to support children and young people with severe, and complex SEND whose needs exceed the resources typically available within the setting and exceed the threshold of SENIF. HLN Funding is available to all Nottingham City Private, Voluntary, Community and Independent Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers, along with schools and academies.

Key dates for the HLN Panel can be found below:

Term	Application Deadline	Panel Meeting
Summer 2 Interim	22 May 2026	8 June 2026

If you require any support with HLN, please contact Education.hln@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Disability Access Funding (DAF)

From 1 April 2026, DAF is increasing to £975.00 per year, per child, for children who meet the criteria:

- ✓ The child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
 - ✓ The child is in receipt of an Early Years Entitlement place and aged **9 months to 4 years**.
 - ✓ The child is not attending a Reception class in a primary or infant school/academy
-
- School DAF claims should be added to the School Census and all paperwork retained as evidence if requested.
 - PVI DAF claims should be sent to eyfssend@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Further details of all of the above funds can be found at

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/earlyyears/section-pages/equality-and-inclusion/early-years-send-fund-disability-access-funding/>

National SEND Consultation Have Your Say!

On 23 February 2026, the Department for Education's (DfE) Secretary of State published the **Schools White Paper: [Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#)** alongside a **consultation on [SEND reform \(Putting Children and Young People First\)](#)**.

On 25 February 2026, the DfE announced [Sir Kevan Collins has been appointed as Delivery Advisor to the Secretary of State](#), Sir Kevan will support the Schools White Paper delivery, focussing on SEND reform and local authority engagement.

There has also been a [series of guidance documents published](#).

The changes announced aim to create an inclusive system where support is embedded from the very start of a child's life. The DfE is committed to developing a locally integrated system, bringing education, health and care together so children's needs are identified early and families receive effective, evidence-based support from the outset.

You are encouraged to get involved by accessing the consultation at [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#) and to take part with events that will be taking place throughout the consultation period.

Please note this consultation closes on 18 May 2026

Updated guidance for childminders on claiming household expenses

HMRC has published guidance for childminders on how they can continue to claim household expenses, including wear and tear costs deductions, whether they use Making Tax Digital for Income Tax or not. The [new guidance](#) and the updated [Business Income Manual](#) guidance can be found on GOV.UK and the key points from the guidance are:

- All childminders can claim a deduction for costs of buying, repairing or replacing household items used for their business, including wear and tear of household items and furniture, household costs and food and drink, whether they use Making Tax Digital or the alternative rules for the sector.
- Only those with qualifying income above £50,000 will begin using Making Tax Digital from 6 April 2026. In 2027 the qualifying income threshold will drop to £30,000 and then in 2028 to £20,000.
- If childminders use Making Tax Digital they will record and claim their actual expenditure on buying, repairing or replacing household items and furniture, which can be higher than 10% in some instances. If they are still using the alternative method, they will continue to claim for 'wear and tear' using the flat 10% estimate.

The government will actively engage with childminders and stakeholders to review the impacts of moving from the 10% deduction to actual costs for wear and tear expense claims and more information about Making Tax Digital for Income Tax on [HMRC's campaign page](#).

A Warm Thank You to our Wraparound Providers

Following the closure of the national Wraparound Programme on 31st March 2026, Hannah Streatfeild and Emily Whitehead, Deputy Directors, School Groups, at the Department for Education have asked us to share the following message of thanks to our Wraparound Providers.



As we reflect on the significant progress made since the start of the of the national Wraparound Programme, I wanted to express my heartfelt thanks for the incredible work you've done to expand and enrich wraparound childcare. Your dedication has helped create a remarkable number of new places for families, contributing to the over 105,000 wraparound places delivered nationally and with places still growing.

But the story isn't just in the numbers. It's in the inclusive, high-quality provision you are building. You've ensured that more children can access enriching activities beyond the school day.

Your work alongside schools and the local authority has made this expansion possible.

Your marketing efforts have helped families discover new childcare options, boosting take up and increasing access to financial support through Tax Free Childcare, making wraparound more affordable for families who need it. Thanks to you, parents can head to work knowing their children are safe, supported, and having fun every single day.

You've helped make wraparound feel less like a service and more like a community - warm, responsive, and built around what families really need.

As we transition out of the Childcare Works contract on 1st April and move into the next phase, with additional investment going into local authority capacity, we want to continue building on this success together, supporting you to keep delivering high quality, accessible, inclusive childcare for every family. We are working hard to ensure you continue to have access to the best practice resources and from the 1st of April, most of these resources will be available via your LA contact who will have access to the Early Years and Wraparound Knowledge Hub.

Most of all, thank you for caring so deeply. Everything you've delivered so far is changing lives for the better, and it truly shows.

*Hannah Streatfeild and Emily Whitehead
Deputy Directors
School Groups
Department for Education*

Explore the Education Endowment Foundation's New Recruiting Projects

The EEF recently launched [four exciting new research projects](#) for early years settings and Reception classes. These programmes have been selected based on their potential impact on the attainment of socio-economically disadvantaged children.

Projects include:

- [Talk With Tales for Children \(Twitch\)](#), a professional development programme aiming to improve language interactions and language development among 3–4-year-olds through training on dialogic pedagogy.
- [OxEd Whole Class and NELI](#), a universal oral language enrichment programme for Reception pupils, delivered alongside or independently of NELI, a targeted companion intervention.



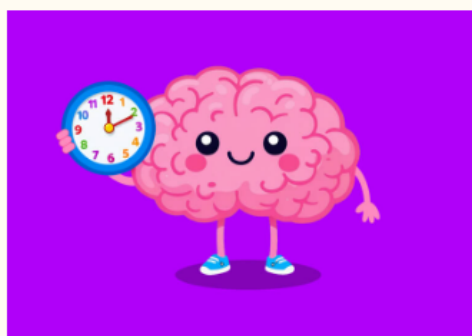
By taking part, settings can access subsidised professional development for staff. They'll also contribute to the evidence base on what works to improve outcomes, especially for those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Find out which projects are available to you by clicking [Search your setting](#)

Government Guidance on Screen Time for Under 5's

On 27 March 2026, the Government has released new guidance on screen time for children under 5. The guidance **supports parents and carers in creating healthy screen habits for young children.**

Find out more here: [Baby and toddler screen time guidance - Best Start in Life](#)



How much screen time should my child have?

Limit total screen time for young children, wherever possible.

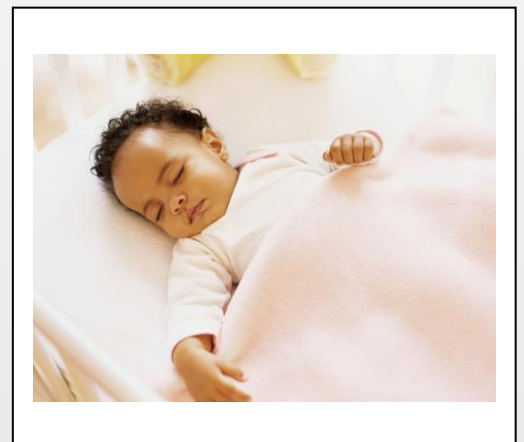
- **Under 2 years:** Avoid screen time other than for shared activities with family that encourage bonding, interaction and conversation.
- **2-5 years:** Try to keep it to 1 hour a day. Less if possible.

Updated EYFS Safer Sleep Requirements Coming September 2026

Subject to the Parliamentary and legislative process, new safer-sleep wording will be added to the EYFS Framework from **September 2026**. These changes have been developed with expert input from **The Lullaby Trust**, medical specialists and **Ofsted**, ensuring stronger, clearer expectations for keeping babies safe during sleep.

Key Requirements for Children Under 2 Years:

- **Safe Sleep Positioning**
 - Babies and young children must always be placed **on their backs** in their own separate sleep space, on a **firm, flat surface** such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor. *Babies aged 1 and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot.*
- **Clear Sleep Spaces**
 - Sleep spaces must only contain a **firm, flat, waterproof mattress** and **lightweight bedding** tucked securely below the shoulders.
 - A well-fitted **baby sleep bag** may be used—always follow the manufacturer’s guidance.
- **Blanket Safety**
 - When blankets are used, babies should be placed **feet-to-foot** at the bottom of the cot with blankets firmly tucked in.
- **No Additional Items**
 - Cots must not contain toys, pillows, extra blankets, cot bumpers, wedges, straps or any other loose items.
- **Temperature Control**
 - Babies should not become too hot or cold. The recommended room temperature is **16 – 20°C**.
- **Head Uncovered**
 - Babies’ heads must always remain uncovered during sleep.
- **Supervision**
 - Children **under six months** must always have an adult in the **same room** for every sleep.
 - All sleeping children must be **frequently checked** and **always within sight and hearing** of staff.
 - **Staff knowledge:** Providers must ensure all staff have read the NHS guidance on **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)**.



Further trusted advice on safe sleep is available from:

- [The Lullaby Trust](#)
- [Foundation Years – Safer Sleeping Practices for Early Years Educators](#)
- [The NHS – Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\)](#)

Ofsted to Inspect Early Years Providers More Frequently

From **April 2026**, Ofsted will increase how often early education and childcare settings are inspected, supporting the DfE's *Best Start in Life* strategy.

This shift to a **4-year inspection cycle** (instead of the current 6 years) aims to give parents more up-to-date reassurance about quality and safety in early years settings.

- ✓ All providers on the Early Years Register will receive at least one inspection by **March 2030**
- ✓ After that, inspections will take place every **4 years**
- ✓ Settings with identified concerns may be inspected more frequently
- ✓ Newly registered early years providers will be inspected within **18 months** instead of 30 months

For further information, check out:

- The DfE's policy paper on [Inspection of Early Years Register Providers: Requirement for Ofsted](#)
- The DfE's strategy for [Giving Every Child The Best Start in Life](#)



The Early Years Team News and Contact Information

Space available on the Early Years Schools Forum Sub-Group

We have 1 space available for a representative from the PVI Sector to take part in this sub-group. Dates for the 2026-27 academic year will be set shortly, but if you are interested in taking part, please contact katherine.crossley@nottinghamcity.gov.uk for an Expression of Interest Form. You can find out more about the sub-group by [clicking here!](#)

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Reminder

Over the next couple of weeks, you will receive a survey link for the Provider Survey as part of our full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. This assessment is a statutory duty, and we are aiming for 100% submission from the sector to enable us to measure childcare supply and demand in the City. Please do complete your survey by the deadline when issued.

Contact Us....

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