



Nottingham

City Council



Stay Connected with Early Years!

Issue 30 – Wednesday 18th March 2026

Read me now – Urgent and important information

National SEND Consultation

In February 2026, the Department for Education's Secretary of State published the **Schools White Paper: [Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#)** alongside a **consultation on [SEND reform \(Putting Children and Young People First\)](#)**. The DfE are now consulting on proposals to reform the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) System, aiming to improve help and support for children and young people with SEND across the 0 to 25 years system. The consultation document explains the planned changes and seeks comments from everyone with an interest, including children, young people and families, schools and early years providers. The consultation closes **18th May 2026** and can be accessed at [SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

Local SEND Maturity Matrix Survey

In addition, Nottingham City Council's SEND Programme Team has a clear indication of the expectations placed on local areas and the level of evidence and reflection required within our Local SEND Reform Plan. The Team is keen for all colleagues directly involved in SEND Services across the partnership to contribute to completing a SEND Maturity Matrix to ensure the full breadth of professional perspectives is captured, so the final submission is reflective of system-wide understanding and experience. Completing the Matrix will also help us assess our current position as a partnership and ensure that our Reform Plan is both accurate and robust in demonstrating our progress, challenges and priorities. Please do take this opportunity to contribute by completing the [SEND Maturity Matrix Survey](#) before the deadline of **Friday 27th March 2026**.

Help for Early Years Providers: EYFS Profile Assessment Support

The DfE have released their support package to help reception teachers and PVI practitioners with rising 5s to carry out the EYFS Profile assessment. The package aims to build clarity and confidence when completing the Profile, strengthen the reliability of practitioner judgements and consists of a suite of online training materials which can be accessed [here](#). DfE are also funding LA facilitated EYFSP termly assessment sessions to support practitioners by sharing DfE messages, enable consistency by addressing misconceptions, build practitioner confidence and enable practitioners to share best practice. These messages will be incorporated into our current agreement trialling offer for the summer term and will be used to shape our training offer for 2026-27. More information will be shared as it is received from the DfE.

Our best place is Face to Face

During March, our communication focus is 'Our best place is Face to Face' and posters were sent to leaders last week (9th March). This week you will have received activities and a story link to support the strategy and next week a rhyme and a Makkaton sign will be shared. Please use the ideas shared within your setting and share them, along with links to the video clips, with parents to encourage them to use the strategy at home. For more information, take a look [here](#)

Read what's coming up next - Important but not urgent information

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme – Places available to book now

The HAF programme is back for the Easter Holidays and is available to support children who receive benefits-related free school meals, giving them access to fun activities and a free lunch every day during the school holidays. There are exciting and inclusive activity clubs at venues across the City. If you know of children and families that would benefit from accessing this provision, please pass on this booking link - <https://eequ.org/nottinghamcityholidayactivitiesandfoodhaf>

New Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF) System

All local authorities are required to make a SENIF available for children with special educational needs (SEN) who are accessing a funded early years entitlement place. In Nottingham City, SENIF is available to all Ofsted-registered childcare providers and schools offering funded early education places and is designed to support children with low-level or emerging needs, identified through a graduated approach. February 2026 marked an exciting milestone with the launch of a new system for allocating the SENIF in the City, aiming to ensure early identification and intervention through a more effective, fair and transparent process. Whilst further information can be found on the [Early Years website](#), the Early Years team are also holding a briefing session for schools and childcare providers who would like to find out more and how to access this fund. **This free briefing will be held on Wednesday 25th March 2026, 5pm – 6pm, Online via Microsoft Teams.** To secure a place, please complete the booking form by clicking [here](#).

Read when you get a moment – Information you might find interesting

MMRV vaccination programme: stakeholder communications toolkit

Following some parts of the country seeing an increase in measles cases this year, there has been a change to the measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV) vaccine schedule, with varicella, a chickenpox vaccine, being introduced into the childhood vaccination programme from 1st January 2026. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and NHS England have created a [stakeholder communications toolkit](#) to support stakeholders with communicating this vaccine and there is further information on the associated [News Section](#) of our website.

Digital Upskilling: Recorded Resources for Providers

Childcare Works have shared a new recording for providers to support with digital upskilling in Microsoft 365 applications. This resource is split into chapters to cover practical tasks in Excel, Microsoft Forms, and Word that providers may find useful for daily tasks and business planning. This resource can be accessed at; [Making the most of digital tools for early years and childcare providers - childcareworks.org.uk](#)

Healthy Little Minds

Healthy Little Minds have released their upcoming workshop brochure for April – September 2026. The brochure can be viewed https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/mg3mqk0s/hlm-workshop-brochure-apr_sep_26.pdf Please contact Healthy Little Minds at hlm@nottinghamcity.gov.uk if you have any questions.

Early Years Office Opening Times and Future Communications

Please note that the Early Years Office will be closed on Friday 3rd April 2026 and Friday 6th April 2026 for the Easter Bank Holidays. There will be no *Stay Connected with Early Years* issued over the Easter break, our next communication will be our All-Sector Summer Term 2026 Newsletter which will be sent on Wednesday 15th April 2026. *Stay Connected with Early Years* will resume fortnightly from Wednesday 29th April 2026.

Safeguarding Updates

Managing Allegations LADO Update

Nottingham City Council LADO team is now made up of Mona Cook and Jodie Turner, who can be contacted at LADO@nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Please remember any allegation must be referred to the LADO and more information can be found [here](#).

Survey – CCTV & Digital Device Usage in Early Years Settings

In December 2025, the Secretary of State for Education announced that she would appoint an expert panel to review how CCTV and digital devices are used in early years settings. The panel will provide recommendations to Government regarding whether CCTV should be mandated. It will also inform safeguarding guidance the Department will develop by setting out best practice, technical information and expectations regarding CCTV and digital device usage. To assist with this work, providers and early years staff are invited to **complete this survey by 20th March 2026**, the results of which, and the views expressed, will be considered by the panel during their review.

Reminder -Free Reducing Parental Conflict Awareness Briefings

With extensive experience training practitioners across the City and County, Equation provides evidence-informed guidance to help staff recognise early signs of parental conflict and respond effectively. This online training is taking place on the following dates:

 31st March 2026 – [book your place](#)

 16th April 2026 – [book your place](#)

 13th May 2026 – [book your place](#)

 11th June 2026 – [book your place](#)

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