

Early Years, SEND and Childcare Briefing

10 July

Dear Provider,

Welcome to the Early Years, SEND and Childcare briefing delivered to you on a fortnightly basis, please share with your teams and local networks.

Safeguarding

EYFS safeguarding reforms – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

On 17 October 2024, the Department for Education published its [official response to the consultation](#) on proposals to strengthen safeguarding requirements in the statutory EYFS framework. These reforms are set to be implemented from September 2025 subject to parliamentary procedure. FAQs in regard to the new safeguarding reforms are attached for your reference.

Protective Preparedness for Education Settings Webinar

The Department for Education (DfE), in partnership with the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), invites you to the 'Protective Preparedness For Education Settings', a webinar focussed on counter terrorism protective security and preparedness for education settings. The webinar will provide an overview of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, and how education settings can consider counter terrorism protection and preparedness. Please see the attached flyer for further information.

Domestic Violence

Children of pre-school age tend to be the age group who show most behavioural disturbance such as bed wetting, sleep disturbances and eating difficulties. Children in this age range may feel guilty about the abuse and blame themselves for it. Domestic violence and abuse hurts children's self-esteem. They may have fewer friends than others, and get into trouble more often.

You may find the following sites useful for cultivating staff knowledge

NSPCC learning: [Protecting children from domestic abuse](#)

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/support-for-parents-and-carers/child-abuse-and-harm/children-affected-domestic-abuse-violence>

Cafcass guidance attached.

BFFC training and network offer:

- **DASH and MARAC Training – Level 2**

14 July, 1.30-4.30pm (Civic Offices)

To book a space complete the RBC booking form [Book training](#)

(It is recommended to attend the DA Level 1 training before attending the DASH and MARAC training)

Leadership

Provider Survey Reminder – Deadline for completion 10 July

The Early Years (EY), Childcare (CC) and SEND teams work in parallel to focus support, advice, and information to providers in Reading. Our statutory responsibilities include:

- Securing sufficient childcare, which is high quality, flexible, inclusive and accessible to all children, with a focus on those families who are disadvantaged.

- Providing information to parents and prospective parents which is up to date, easily accessible, online and details available childcare, early education and funded spaces in the local area.
- Ensuring the availability of information, advice and training for early years and childcare providers which promotes high-quality provision.

It is essential that we gather information from Reading providers to understand the impact of the advisory offer and what your priorities are for the year ahead.

If you haven't already completed the survey that was sent to you on 1 July and again on 8 July please could we ask that it is completed as soon as possible.

Early Years SEND Transformation Webinars

We are running webinars to update you all on changes in relation to Early Years SEND. This includes changes to specialist placement processes; a new Monthly Multi Agency Professionals Panel that you can refer in to and expansion of the EY SEND team. Please book onto an upcoming webinar to find out more about this:

11 August, 10-10.45am

11 September, 3.30-4.30pm

Early Years SEND Inclusion Funding Changes & Webinars

Early Years Inclusion Funding is changing to become a tiered funding model; this means applications will be approved based on the child's needs. Please do not complete any previous application forms and await further information about the new paperwork which will be published by August. There will be webinars running to explain this in more detail.

14 August - 3.30pm

9 September - 3.30pm

You can book on to the webinars [here](#).

Early Years SEND Social Communication High Need Bases

There are still spaces available at Blagdon & Norcot High Needs bases. If you have any children who's needs you feel may benefit from this provision, please speak to parents and get an expression of interest form into the setting and early years. The application form is available here: [Under 5s with SEND - Brighter Futures For Children](#)

Work Experience

The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) is working with individuals who are eager to gain hands-on experience in the childcare, administration and adult health and social care industries. Many already have relevant training or transferable skills, they just need a chance to apply them.

Would you consider hosting a short-term work experience placement?

The DWP will:

- Match you with a suitable candidate
- Handle insurance and paperwork
- Provide ongoing support throughout the placement

If you are open to a quick chat or would like more details please contact Cherylen Phoenix, Labour Market Recruitment Specialist Team: Tel: 03000864210

Do Something Big campaign

The summer wave of the [Do Something Big campaign](#) is running until 14 September 2025, encouraging more people to explore a fulfilling career in early years and childcare. New adverts include 15-second social videos that challenge common barriers to joining the sector, alongside new

content specifically designed to encourage more men to consider working in early years roles. The campaign will be across TV, radio, digital, social media, billboards, and the rail network. The [campaign website](#) also directs potential applicants to [Find A Job](#) where providers can advertise roles for free.

BFFC training and network offer:

- **Workshops on the Statutory Guidance**

Admissions & Invoices: 14 July, 2-3pm & 17 July, 6.30-7.30pm (Teams)

To book a space complete the [booking form](#) and share your questions with the team ahead of the session.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

All aboard the toilet train

ERIC have started an online campaign called All Aboard the Toilet Train. You can sign up to receive advice straight to your inbox as well as digital asset packs. Find out more here: [All aboard the Toilet Train: Get ready for school - ERIC](#)

Rates of nearsightedness, or myopia, are skyrocketing in children

Scientists say it has to do with how little time they're spending outdoors. Here's why it's so good for your vision. Research shows that spending more time outdoors in daylight can help prevent the development of myopia among children. Being outdoors and focusing on an object at a distance gives your eye muscles a chance to relax. According to Xiong, Sankaridurg, Naduvilath, Zang, Zou, Zhu & Xu (2017) Even an extra hour outside can reduce the occurrence of myopia by 45%.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5599950/>

Philippa Garn will be delivering a Therapeutic Thinking session for Early Years providers and childminders on 11 September, 6.30-8.30pm.

Please email early.years@brighterfuturesforchildren.org to book a place.

Giving Every Child the best Start in Life

This week the Department for Education (DfE) published the 'Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life' strategy. This aims to bring together early years and family services, putting children's first years at the heart of work to improve life chances.

The publication sets out the first steps in a decade of renewal, with government spending close to £1.5bn over the next three years to begin the work needed. It builds on existing commitments and lays the foundations for further reform.

This includes expanding and strengthening family services, making early education and childcare more accessible and affordable, and improving the quality of early education and childcare to deliver stronger outcomes for children, families and society.

The DfE will work in partnership with the sector, listening to the voices of children and their families, and co-designing solutions with those who work most closely with our youngest babies and children. Read the publication in full here [Giving every child the best start in life](#)

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) space requirements consultation open

On 12 May, the Government launched a new space requirements consultation, which runs until 11 July. The consultation is seeking views on whether to introduce flexibility into the EYFS that will allow free-flow outdoor space to be included in the indoor space requirements, with a possible cap

on the number of additional places that can be offered. The government is also seeking feedback on the proposed definition of “free-flow”. Have your say here [Space requirements in early years childcare settings in England - GOV.UK](#)

SALT: Health Bus

On 14 July, the Early Years Speech and Language Therapy team will be coming to Reading on the health bus.

Location: ASDA Lower Earley, in the North carpark (close to the library)

Between: 9am- 12pm

The team will be available to chat to families of preschool aged children and answer any questions. They will also run a **Scaffolding Communication** session, from their series of workshops live from the bus 9.30 - 10.30am. Please see poster attached with further information and to share with families.

BFfC training and network offer:

- **Attention Autism Course** - The next two-day course will be on the 13 and 14 November and is £150pp. If you were previously booked on you will receive email directly however if you wish to book onto this course please email early.years@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
- **EY SENCO Network** – Please note the EY SENCO network on the 7 October is being rearranged for another day. Please keep an eye out for more information shortly.
- **New Course! Introduction to Intensive Interaction Workshops**; This is an opportunity for Early Years Setting Staff & Schools Staff to gain an introduction into Intensive Interaction; its principles & key techniques to support children develop their fundamentals of communication skills. This will be split over two 90 minute online workshops & is free of charge.
 - **Workshop 1:** 6 October 3.30-5pm
 - **Workshop 2:** 13 October 3.30-5pmIf you wish to book onto this course, please email early.years@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Specialist Advisory Support

SEND Advisory Updates

- **Recruitment! EY SEND advisor:** We are pleased to announce that we have had agreement to recruit two EY SEND Advisors on a fixed term two-year post. This will support our capacity to continue to offer you high quality SEND advisory support.
- **New referral form;** We are still receiving requests for support on old paperwork; please can you use the latest form which is found here: [2024-EY-Advisory-Team-Parent-Permission-Form.docx](#) – this will be moving to an online form shortly.
- **SEND Contact Days:** First four Tuesdays of the month

Early Years and Childcare Advisory Support

Childminders, daycare, sessional and wraparound and holiday providers are invited to [request time](#) with a member of the Early Years and Childcare team for advisory support between agreed partnership visits.

Local News

Important changes to Reading's Parents' Portal

From **Monday 14 July**, the way parent/carers log in to the Brighter Futures for Children Parents' Portal will change.

The Parents' Portal is the platform used for school admissions, early years funding and children's centres.

To make things simpler and more secure, Reading Borough Council is introducing Single Sign-On (SSO) using [My Reading Account](#).

This is the same account families may already use for other Reading Borough Council services.

Step-by-step instructions, FAQs and troubleshooting tips are available on the BFFC website to help guide families through the process [Parents portal - Brighter Futures For Children](#)

The Parents' Portal will be unavailable from 10am on Monday 14 July for 24 hours.

Family Information Services – Activities in Reading Summer 2025 & SEND Local Offer Newsletter

The Family Information Service have created a summer holiday activities page on the Family Information Service (FIS) website, the page will be updated regularly until the end of August. Please use the following link to view and share with your parents and carers [Reading Directory | Activities in Reading Summer 2025](#)

General Holiday Activities can be found on the following search list - [Search Results | Reading Services Guide](#)

Childcare for parent carers who need information on childcare including holiday clubs, childminders etc for the school holiday – www.readingfis.org/childcare



It's here! The Summer edition of the new look **SEND Local Offer Newsletter 2025**. It's packed with lots of information including blogs from:- [Reading Directory | SEND Local Offer Newsletter Summer 2025 - Issue 38](#)

- **Blogs** – Lara Patel, Executive Director Children's Services, Andrea King, Strategic Transformation Lead for Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing & Families First Strategic Lead, Berkshire Neuro Diverse Preventative System Programme Lead, RISE Summer Edition, Victoria Andrews, Founder & Creator of Chance to Dance Stars, Millie Taff, Carers Lead, Transformation Team Directorate of Communities and Adult Social Care (DCASC) and Weronika Kowalczyk, Newest Member of Family Information service and SEND Local Offer Team.
- **News items**, what's on/events available throughout the Summer holiday's

- **Early Years** – updates from the sector
- **What's on**, events and workshops
- **Preparing for adulthood** – 16-25 updates
- **Mental health and wellbeing** support
- **National organisations** supporting SEND
- **Short breaks**, support services and much more... please remember, this is just a snapshot of the wealth of information that can be found on the www.readingsendlocaloffer.org

Children's Centres

[Reading Children's Centres](#) welcome all families and provide a wide range of services to give children the best start in life. Please share the link to the website with your families for further information and timetables.

Training

Under 5's Training Offer 2025-2026

The new CPD training offer from the Early Years, SEND and Childcare team for 2025/2026 is now available on our [website](#).

[Dingley's Promise Comic Relief Early Years Inclusion Training](#) is time limited free early years inclusion training that is funded by the Comic Relief Changemakers programme and aims to embed inclusive practice.

[DfE Early Years Child Development Training](#) is free online training that provides an overview of child development and offers practical advice for supporting children in your setting, including reception years.

Virtual Reality Trauma Awareness

Join Reading Virtual School in the Summer term for an immersive training experience using videos and reflection to understand how adversity and trauma can impact a child's development, presentation and ability to engage in learning. Explore how professional curiosity and building good relationships can support children to heal from trauma and achieve stronger outcomes. For more information and to book a session for your setting please email cathy.mccarthy@brighterfuturesforchildren.org.

Compliments/Celebrations

Your contributions

Is there something you are particularly proud of that has been achieved by staff or the children in your setting? Do you have a team member that is celebrating long service or achieved a new qualification that deserves a shout out? Please share these with us so that we can share your news with the sector!! Email: early.years@brighterfuturesforchildren.org.

Previous updates can be found on our [website](#).

Kind regards

Early Years Team

Brighter Futures for Children

Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU

Email: early.years@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Web: www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org

