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Liverpool City Region *and Beyond*  
Early Years Stronger Practice Hub

# Newsletter

## January 2024

Happy New Year to All our subscribers of the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub. We are looking forward to working with you over the new few months either online or face to face. Our newsletter this month focuses on the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage that all the early years workforce should be aware of. We have inputs from June and Lynsey providing information for our childminders across the region and how to network. I hope you have had the chance to check out the new national Hubs website providing information about all 18 Hubs across England sharing their practice and research.

[sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk](mailto:sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk)

Please ask colleagues to subscribe to our newsletter.



# January 2024 issue

Welcome, Vodcast: Upcoming changes to the EYFS, Latest information, NELI, Spotlight, Childminding, Lynsey Thomas Childminder Mentoring Scheme, NPQEYL, Guidance for Early Years Providers, Practitioners and Parents, Early Years Evidence Store, Local Business Support.

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## Vodcast: Upcoming changes to the EYFS

NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE | HANNAH PARLETT [Foundation Years - From pregnancy to children aged 5](#)



In this latest vodcast, Charlotte Stockton (Early Years Foundation Stage Implementation Team Leader at the Department for Education) sets out the upcoming changes to the EYFS, coming into effect in January 2024, subject to parliamentary procedure. She outlines what these changes will mean in practice in settings and answers some frequently asked questions on topics such as changes to the Level 2 Maths requirement, changes to childminder training requirements, supporting children with SEND, supporting children with EAL, and supporting the workforce.

Watch the [vodcast](#) here:

You can also read the [updated EYFS frameworks](#) in full ahead of the changes coming into force.

## 2 new EYFS frameworks

From the 4th January 2024, there will be 2 revised EYFS frameworks that will replace the current EYFS framework.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that they follow the current version of the framework for their provider type.



Department  
for Education

### New online Early years child development training

#### Developed by early years experts

- Build your child development knowledge.
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- Test your knowledge and reflect on your practice.
- Watch practical training videos.
- Access modules in any order at any time.



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Make notes as you learn



Download a certificate after each module

Find out more by visiting:  
[child-development-training.education.gov.uk](https://child-development-training.education.gov.uk)

## **2 new EYFS frameworks**

From the 4th January 2024, there will be 2 revised EYFS frameworks that will replace the current EYFS framework.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that they follow the current version of the framework for their provider type.

The 2 new EYFS frameworks are:

EYFS statutory framework for childminders and

EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers

The EYFS framework also includes Early years qualification requirements and standards.

EYFS statutory framework for childminders :

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657825a90467eb001355f552/EYFS\\_statutory\\_framework\\_for\\_childminders.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657825a90467eb001355f552/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_childminders.pdf)

EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/656f23550f12ef07a53e024e/EYFS\\_statutory\\_framework\\_for\\_group\\_and\\_school\\_based\\_providers.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/656f23550f12ef07a53e024e/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)

Please share with your early years colleagues so they are aware and ready for the 4th January 2024.

# Early Years Evidence Store

Calling preschools, school-based early years settings, nurseries and childminders! Are you looking for ways to develop your practice but not sure where to start?

@EducEndowFoundn has added new themes to its Evidence Store to empower your practice and boost learning and development for young children.

Explore now: <https://eef.li/evidence-store>

Approaches and practices to boost early maths– such as teaching the association between number and quantity - are explored in one of two brand new themes of the Education Endowment Foundation’s (EEF) Early Years Evidence Store, launched on Wednesday 8th November 2023.

Developed as part of the EEF’s work supporting the Department for Education’s Stronger Practice Hubs, the Evidence Store takes a comprehensive look at priority areas for early years learning and development. Co-developed by researchers and educators it identifies approaches early years staff can use to support learning and development. The store provides a summary of the best available evidence for the approaches and illustrates how they could be put into practice with children in all types of early years settings.

The new theme on early mathematics summarises five approaches, including teaching problem solving skills for maths and supporting maths language, to give early years professionals guidance and pointers on how to implement them to boost learning and development.

Each approach is accompanied by videos of it in action, and further written examples to illustrate how it could be put into practice. For the approach for teaching association between number and quantity, the Evidence Store shows Honey, a childminder, following a mud pie recipe during play with a group of two- to three-year-olds. She uses words and gestures to illustrate how much of each ingredient the children need and then labels the amount after counting the ingredients.

According to the EEF’s Early Years Toolkit, a high-level research summary designed to help early years staff make decisions about how to improve outcomes, approaches to support early numeracy can boost young children’s progress by as much as seven months.

The second new Evidence Store theme published recently, looks at early literacy, which according to the Toolkit can boost progress by as much as four months. This theme includes guidance on approaches such as interactive reading, where the adult engages children purposefully during shared reading to encourage them to be an active participant in 'reading' the book.



# Calling all early years colleagues.

We are having conferences through January and February to share more information about the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub with Diane Boyd in person for her keynote sharing more practical ideas for early literacy and mathematics around the 17 Sustainable Goals, opportunities to network with colleagues and receive a conference pack of free resources to use in your practice.

Our conference dates are:

**Friday 1st March** Liverpool City Region Everton Nursery School and Family Centre 2.30-4.30p.m.

**Saturday 2nd March** Liverpool City Region Everton Nursery School and Family Centre 10a.m. – 12 noon

**Friday 15th March** Tower Wood Outdoor Education Centre Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 3PL 2.30-4.30p.m.

**Saturday 16th March** The Mazuma Stadium, Morecambe Football Club, Christie Way, Westgate, Morecambe, LA4 4TB 10a.m. – 12 noon

**Friday 22nd March** Lakes College, Hallwood Road, Lillyhall Business Park Workington, Cumbria, CA14 4JN 2.30-4.30p.m.

**Saturday 23rd March** Learning Gateway lecture theatre, Fusehill Street campus, University of Carlisle, CA1 2HH 10a.m. – 12 noon

All the early years workforce are welcome at any of the 6 identical half-day conferences.

Please email [sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk](mailto:sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk) to book a place. This is an opportunity to network with colleagues, hear from Diane Boyd (keynote speaker) on making links between communication and language and early mathematics through the sustainable goals and receive a free goody bag to use in your setting.

Throughout the Spring we are aiming to offer training both face to face and online for early years educators who work with children aged 0-3 years through the evidence-based PEEP programme, as well as offering training sessions for all on outdoor play exploring the evidence-based Movers programme. Look out for more information in our next newsletter on how to apply for a training place.

Sustainable Development Goals

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

# Interactive Reading



EEF blog: Interactive reading – More than just reading a book!

When choosing and sharing books with children please consider Nicola Cherry's blog on Interactive Reading. This term sounds complicated but means that the quality way in which educators share books with children, has an impact on the children's language development.

Nicola Cherry is an Early Years Content Specialist for EEF and has twenty years of experience working as a teacher and leader in a variety of early years and primary settings, mainly in deprived areas across

Bristol and North Somerset. She has experience supporting others working in schools, nurseries, children centres, PVI and childminding settings.

We know that reading books and stories to young children benefits their learning and development, including their communication and language. But evidence suggests that ?“interactive reading” – during which an adult encourages a child to talk about the story – can be a particularly effective approach.

# NELI Preschool

**Craig Bolton, Headteacher at East Prescot Road Nursery School, Liverpool, guides us through the successful implementation of the programme in his Maintained Nursery School.**

Implementing a new initiative can be a challenging and daunting process. Barriers to implementation can be rooted in a variety of causes, including opposition from key stakeholders, inadequate resources, lack of clarity about goals and vision, blurred roles and responsibilities, lack of collaboration or lack of motivation. So often, new initiatives fail to embed and do not generate the intended impact.

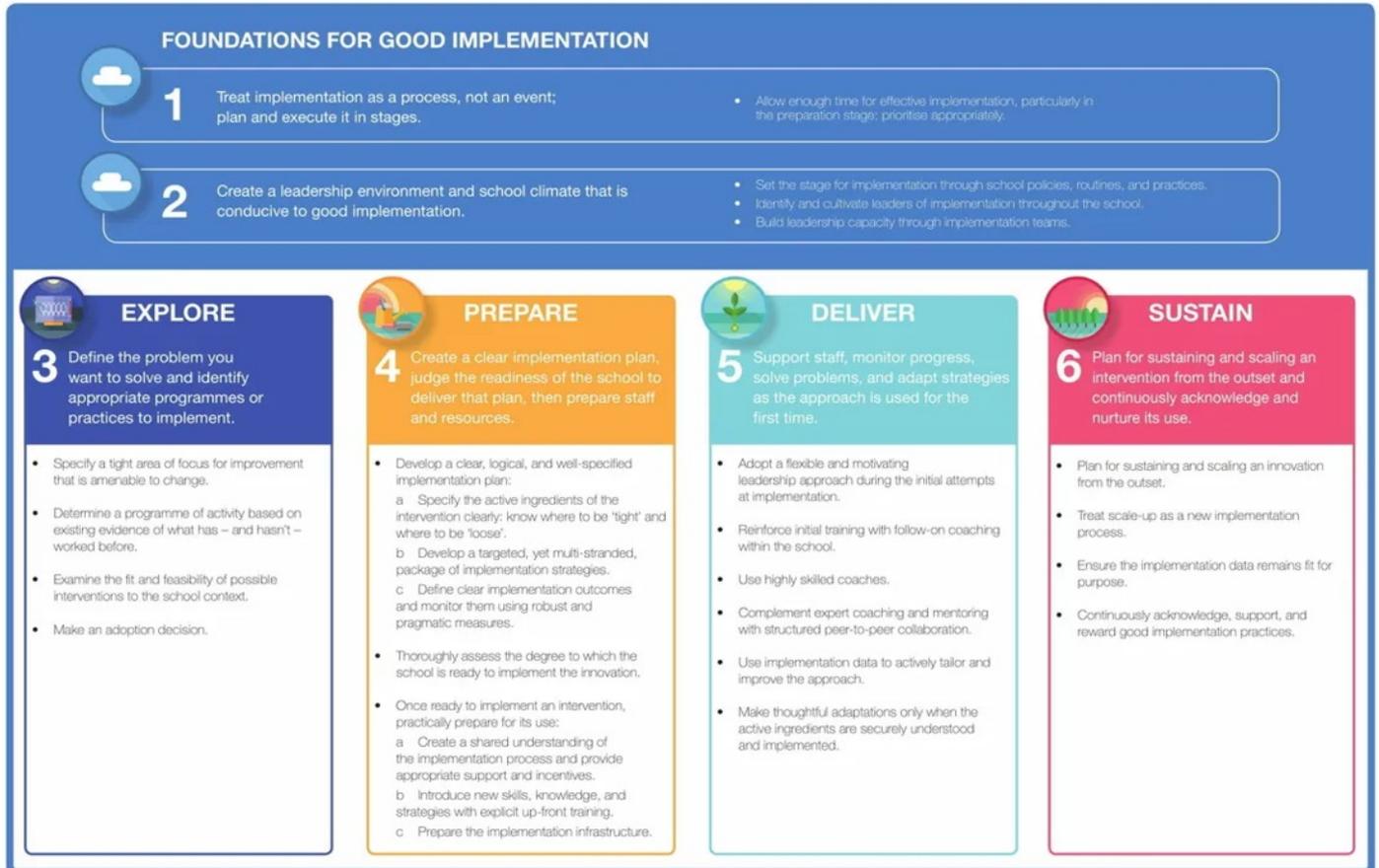
We were determined that our journey towards successful implementation of NELI Nursery (now renamed NELI Preschool) would be a success at East Prescot Road.



**Successful implementation starts with thorough planning and preparation.** We knew that we needed to create an environment that was conducive to successful implementation: "identifying who would lead the initiative; " considering the changes to policies and routines that would be needed; " building capacity by forming a NELI implementation team, involving key personnel across the school.

**What tools supported our implementation?** We followed the EEF's evidence-based approach 'A School's Guide to Successful Implementation' to ensure that implementation of the programme would be far more likely to succeed. Having made the decision to adopt NELI Preschool, the support provided by the NELI team was invaluable from the outset. Our school was partnered with our own NELI Language Lead who supported us to develop a clear and logical implementation plan.

**What preparation was needed?** Central to our plan for implementation was the wonderful programme of professional development and training provided by NELI Preschool. I wanted our whole teaching team to be involved and all practitioners engaged with the training materials, which were delivered in a series of online modules. The first course covered the fundamental aspects of understanding and supporting language development, as well as an overview of the NELI programme. It included details of how to complete our pupil assessments and how to use Language Screen to select pupils for the intervention part of NELI.



The second course looked at the structure of the group and individual sessions that make up the intervention as well as the resources and activities involved in the programme. This final short course presented new activities introduced in the second 10 weeks of the intervention around phonological awareness to complement our existing phonics teaching in the classroom. With all key staff trained, we downloaded the app and used the Language Screen tool to assess four key areas of language: Expressive Vocabulary, Listening Comprehension, Receptive Vocabulary, Sentence Repetition. Each assessment took just 10-15 minutes to complete. The results of the initial assessments determined the children's groupings for the duration of the programme.

**What was the impact of the training materials?** All our classroom staff took part in the training, which was easily facilitated by the online modules. The course developed practitioners' subject knowledge in relation to children's language acquisition: sentence structure, words and their meaning and grammatical awareness. The structure of the programme was carefully explained, supported by video recording of whole-class, group and individual sessions work in practice. Staff reported that they felt far more confident in their subject knowledge following the training and were able to clearly articulate the aims of the programme. This 'shared understanding' is a critical element for successful implementation. It is important to identify and agree the 'active ingredients' of the initiative at this point and ensure that they are clearly communicated.



### **What about the delivery of the programme?**

Creating a climate where all staff feel supported is crucial at this stage. Successful delivery means that the whole team are involved in finding solutions to problems as they arise and evaluating progress towards shared goals. In our school, as was the person leading the implementation, my priorities were to reinforce the key elements of the training, ensure the 'active ingredients' were consistently in place and to provide follow-on coaching to meet the varying requirements of our staff team. The additional capacity of the implementation team of key personnel from each class was also critical to supporting a smooth pathway to delivery. In the classroom, the prepared session plans, interactive content, resources and home learning activities provided the teaching team with the support they needed for successful delivery. NELI Preschool is very well supported by a central team, who are able to provide additional guidance, support and refresher training as required.

### ***What was the impact of the programme?***

The impact has been phenomenal. NELI Preschool adds so much value to our curriculum offer. The high-quality books and resources continue to engage our children. The whole-school approach to language intervention means that all children participate and benefit. The uplift in our children's language outcomes has been transformative. Our children added an additional five months of progress over the 20-week programme. All children made gains, but the greatest uplift for children in the individual and group interventions and our disadvantaged children. East Prescot Road Nursery School is a Strategic Partner of the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub.

# Early Years Blog

Amanda Quirk, one of our EYFS team, has written a short blog on communication. We have so many interactions with our children throughout a day considering the purpose and impact of them is important. Destination Communication shares 6 things to consider to create rich interactions for children in an early years setting:

1. Language Rich
2. Inclusive
3. Positive
4. Scaffold
5. Engaging
6. Responsive



# Childminding



My name is June Cargill, I have been registered for nearly 30 years and I am a proud strategic partner to The Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub where I hope I can share my skills, knowledge and experience with the EYSPH to support Childminders.

Having been registered for many years, I have experienced countless changes in the sector from the introduction of Ofsted from Social Services, worked with many new initiatives and seen new and updated publications and guidance come and go. I worked as a Childminder Network Coordinator within Sure Start and stayed open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

I have also just completed the Early Years Personal Development Programme (EYPDP) which, as one example allowed me to enhance my resources for Early Mathematics. Also available is the Early Years Childhood Development Training if you are newly registered or a level 2 and a fully funded L3 SENDCO qualification. Newly updated is the EEF Evidence Store that shows evidence based examples on how to improve areas which has affected children's development during the pandemic for example Communication and Language. The Evidence Store is free to access and comes with good practice videos.

I would like to share with you how I keep myself updated with government and best practice guidance.

I know first-hand that Childminders are unique in the way we work... self-employed but regulated and this can be an isolating career. Having no one to ask advice or ask a question on our practice or to sustain our childcare business can be stressful and can impact our well-being and motivation. I have a small WhatsApp group from colleagues I have met from the EYPDP and its become a daily routine to "check in" and ask others opinion's.



Those of us who remember when Childminder Networks funding was cut, had a huge impact on how we networked. Recently again with the lockdowns, contacts were lost, colleagues retired from the sector and play groups reduced. From being told we are a critical workforce to keep our country running during the pandemic to struggling having our sector seen as a recognised early years professional, the role is an emotional rollercoaster!

I would like to share one of the main ways I keep up to date.... email alerts from various organisations like Ofsted.

By signing up to be notified when there has been updates to essential information for example the revised EYFS draft publication due for implementation Jan 2024, The Statutory framework for the early years or the Development Matters but also for publications for Safeguarding, The Prevent Duty, Extreme Weather along with the wider information from the Department of Education.

# Childminding

No better example of how alerts helped me was when the Government announced the first COVID-19 lock down. To say the sector was in shock would be an understatement but when information was released, this came by way of an email alert. This was challenging as what was correct at 0800 in the morning was then updated by 1600 in the afternoon but I was confident that at least the information I had and also shared with those colleagues who got in touch with me for advice was accurate without bias or influence.

These new webinars prompted me to review my own curriculum to ensure the curriculum is still effective.

I have listed a few organisations you may be interested in if you haven't already signed up to or follow on social media.

Ofsted Ofsted - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Department of Education Department for Education - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

The Foundation Years Foundation Years - From pregnancy to children aged 5

Liverpool City Region EYSPH strongerpracticehub ([evertonnurseryschoolandfamilycentre.org](http://evertonnurseryschoolandfamilycentre.org))

Speech and Language UK Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives

National Childrens Bureau National Children's Bureau ([ncb.org.uk](http://ncb.org.uk))

Liverpool Safeguarding Children Partnership Liverpool Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) - scp ([liverpoolscp.org.uk](http://liverpoolscp.org.uk))

Matt Ashton Director of Public Health for Liverpool City Council (Twitter)

The Early Years Alliance early years alliance | ([eyalliance.org.uk](http://eyalliance.org.uk))

PACEY Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years | PACEY

Twinkl Primary Resources - KS2, KS1, Early Years (EYFS) KS3, KS4, Twinkl

Thank you for your time to read this and I hope you have found something that has been useful to you.



# Early Years Professional Development Programme



Hello, I would like to introduce myself, my name is Tracie Dowling and I am a Department For Education Childminder Mentor in Liverpool. The role has been created by the DfE to support childminders to help children recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and others. I have been an OFSTED registered childminder since 1994, foster parent, mother, grandmother and was a Childminder Network Co-ordinator in a Liverpool Children's Centre.

The bespoke support childminders can access include:

identify strengths and areas for development

improve your confidence in or knowledge of child development

implement the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

plan an effective curriculum

support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

support children with English as an additional language (EAL)

build strong relationships with parents and carers

One Childminder I have mentored through the scheme had a previous OFSTED grade as 'needs improvement'. The childminder worked hard to improve her practice and has now achieved a "good" grade in all areas. She has expressed how she feels through my support has gained confidence in her practice.

The other childminders accessing the support have commented on the up to date information I have shared, training opportunities and signposting. They have said it has given them the confidence knowing their curriculum and activities support children's learning.

With the creation of Stronger Practice hubs, I feel this is a perfect opportunity for childminders to gain extra support, access training, information sharing and provide their minded children with the opportunity to access a weekly drop in session. This will help build confidence and social experiences which we all lacked in the pandemic.

Our local hub here in Everton are hands on and are welcoming us to access services and I would like to encourage childminders to join the hub and take up this amazing opportunity. For more information please contact me on 07772176159. I look forward to meeting you all and sharing good practice.

*"The mentoring scheme was really helpful. Tracie provided valuable information and ideas to support me. She also provided information about events coming up in future to provide additional support. It was also good to have someone to talk to who understands the daily challenges childminders face." Selina Culleton.*



# Early Years Professional Development Programme



## Michelle Bennett, Outstanding Childminder Morecambe

Early Years Professional Development Programme (EYPDP) Cohort 2 I started in September 2023 and really enjoy all aspects of the EYPDP. I have been a childminder nearly 10 years and previously worked in nurseries and schools. I really enjoy the mixture of people on our weekly webinar and love how interactive the EYPDP is. We all share ideas and then can try the ideas out and feedback the week after. The online work is great as I can do this in my own time. There are lots of different links for resources and websites. We have a absolutely fantastic tutor with an amazing knowledge. This makes learning really enjoyable and something to look forward to weekly. The tutor really cares and listens to all our ideas. I have always loved doing any training for CPD, and even better we don't have to pay for the training as there are presently funded places to access. I have been recommending the EYPDP to people I know and only 3 to 3.5 hours commitment a week which is workable. I consider the EYPDP has definitely improved my way of working to benefit the lovely little ones who come to visit.



## Forest School session

Local childminders met for a Forest School session recently at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, Liverpool. Please email [SpHubNW@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk](mailto:SpHubNW@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk) as we would like to hear of other childminder networks across the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub that we can share across our network.



# NPQEYL



## Final Applications for the Fully Funded Early Years Leadership Qualification

The *National Professional Qualification in Early Years Leadership* (NPQEYL) is designed for leaders qualified to at least level 3 with a full and relevant qualification who are, or are aspiring to be:

- managers of private, voluntary and independent nurseries
- headteachers of school-based or maintained nurseries
- childminders with leadership responsibilities

It is fully funded (subject to eligibility, see below) for this school year and **applications are now open for the next cohort of learners – starting in February 2024.**

### What will participants Learn?

You'll develop expertise in the knowledge, skills and concepts for leading an Early Years setting. These include best practice around child development and additional and specialist educational needs, as well as culture, organisational management and partnerships you may make as the leader of an Early Years setting.

With a practical focus to the programme, you will be supported to make small but important changes to your and others' practice throughout the programme.

### What is involved?

It will take 18 months plus a further 3 months for assessment and consist of a series seminars that can be online and/or arranged in local groups with time self-directed study. Whichever provider you choose they all cover the same standards framework:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f5f92a9eeof2000db7be6e/National-Professional-Qualification-for-Early-Years-Leadership.pdf>

# NPQEYL continued

## Who is Delivering the NPQEYL?

Applicants can choose from a list of national providers all offering the same course. Listed below are the teaching school hubs for our hub area and links to local information:

Local Teaching School Hub	Areas Covered	More Information
Embrace TSH	Chorley, West Lancashire	<a href="https://embracetsh.co.uk/npqs/leadership-npqs">https://embracetsh.co.uk/npqs/leadership-npqs</a>
Generate TSH	Halton, Warrington, Wigan	<a href="https://generateteachinghub.org/npqs/leadership-npqs-suite/npq-early-years-leadership/">https://generateteachinghub.org/npqs/leadership-npqs-suite/npq-early-years-leadership/</a>
Inspire NW TSH	Liverpool, Wirral	<a href="https://inspirelearningtsh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Inspire-NPQEYL-flyer.pdf">https://inspirelearningtsh.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Inspire-NPQEYL-flyer.pdf</a>
One Cumbria TSH	Barrow-in-Furness, South Lakeland, Copeland, Allerdale, Eden, Carlisle	<a href="https://onecumbria.education/npq-in-early-years-leadership/">https://onecumbria.education/npq-in-early-years-leadership/</a>
Rainbow TSH	Knowsley, Sefton, St. Helens	<a href="https://www.rainbowtsh.org.uk/page/?title=National+Professional+Qualifications+%28NPQs%29&amp;pid=18">https://www.rainbowtsh.org.uk/page/?title=National+Professional+Qualifications+%28NPQs%29&amp;pid=18</a>
Star TSH	Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale, Lancaster, Preston	<a href="https://www.starinstitute.org.uk/teaching-school-hubs/national-professional-qualifications/">https://www.starinstitute.org.uk/teaching-school-hubs/national-professional-qualifications/</a>

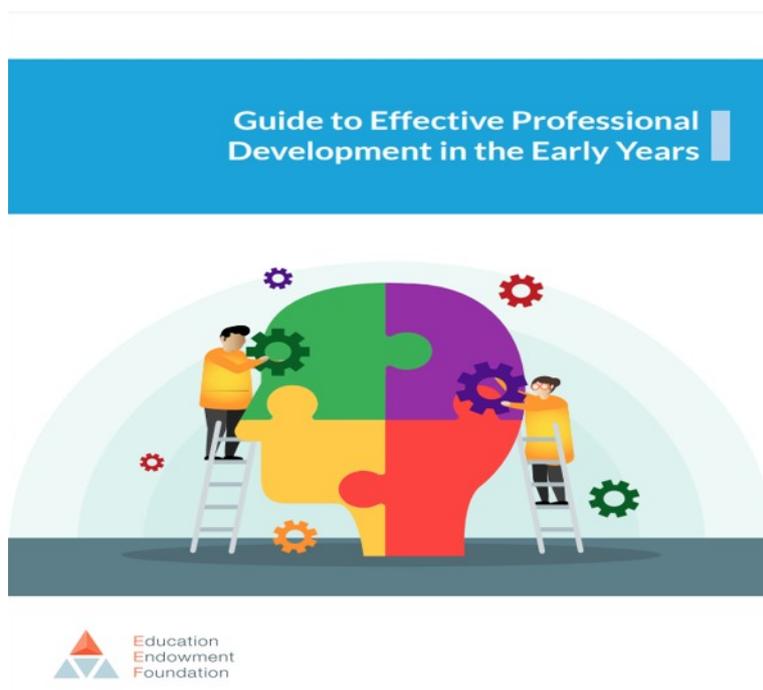
## Funding Criteria

The DfE has released grants to providers of the NPQEYL until the end of the school year 2023/24; saving around £1,000 per person. You will be eligible for the funding if you work in one of the following:

- In a state-funded, independent special, virtual or hospital schools.
- For a Local authority nursery in England.
- In a pre-school class that's part of a school in England.
- In a private nursery that is registered with Ofsted.
- As a childminder or nanny and registered with Ofsted.

Please check your individual circumstances and eligibility with the chosen provider before applying. They will also advise you on how to complete the application for funding from the DfE. There is also more information shared by the DfE here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-leadership-national-professional-qualification>

# Early Years Professional Development Guide



Professional development (e.g. a structured training course) is key part of sustaining high quality practice for our children in early years. Choosing the right training and then implementing the learning into our settings is part of a continuous cycle of improvement that we all undertake.

To assist in accessing the right professional development the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) have produced a guide for early years professionals <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store/guide-to-effective-professional-development-in-the-early-years> making choices about which professional development to prioritise.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATION CYCLE



- 1 Prepare, Reflect and Plan**
  - Agree/prepare professional development conversation focus
  - Reflect on own knowledge, skills and practice
  - Set goals within an agreed action plan
- 2 Build Knowledge and Motivate**
  - Select credible sources of evidence such as the Early Years Toolkit and Evidence Store.
  - Identify the 'best bets' from the evidence
  - Consider their relevance to individual contexts
- 3 Identify ways to support the development of practice**
  - Review current approaches, practices and goals
  - Identify an expert educator to model/support/instruct
  - Rehearse the practice and offer feedback
- 4 Plan opportunities to embed and review**
  - Provide prompts and cues to support practice
  - Scaffold peer support and opportunities for self-monitoring
  - Encourage productive repetition of practice
- 5 Review goals**
  - Review goal setting and action plan
  - Celebrate achievements
  - Share success with others



# Ofsted Resources and Information

## Guidance for EY providers and practitioners and parents

25



OFSTED What EY Providers Need to Know

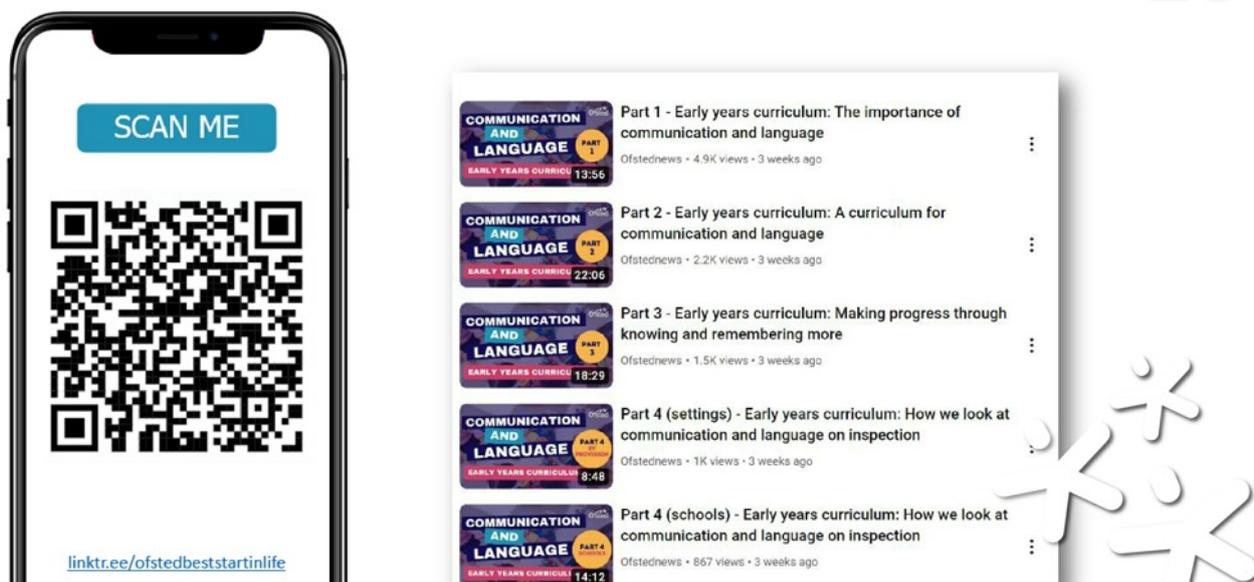
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-eif-inspections-and-the-eyfs>

OFSTED Best Start in Life

<https://linktr.ee/ofstedbeststartinlife>

## Playlist on Ofstednews YouTube channel

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# Evaluation of Reception Jigsaw



The Education Endowment Foundation (or EEF as they are generally known) has published the independent evaluation of Reception Jigsaw

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/reception-jigsaw>, a professional development programme which aims to improve maths teaching and outcomes for reception children (four- to five-year-olds). Delivered by White Rose Maths, the programme is underpinned by core principles of early maths teaching, such as learning through play, using real objects and meaningful contexts to introduce learning, and building on individual children's interests. Reception staff take part in five training twilights and five coaching sessions over the course of an academic year. This evaluation of Reception Jigsaw, conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), looked at the impact of Reception Jigsaw on young children's (four- to five-year-olds) maths development. The researchers looked at data from 138 schools and found that children whose school took part in the programme made, on average, the equivalent of one extra month's progress compared to those who did not. A copy of the full evaluation report is here: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/reception-jigsaw>

# Best start in Life

What we know from our education recovery research  
some babies have struggled to respond to basic facial expressions  
delays in children’s speech and language development  
social and friendship-building skills have been affected and children need more support with sharing and turn- taking  
regression in children’s independence and self-care skills  
impact on children’s physical development, such as delays in babies learning to crawl and walk.  
Best start in life – a research review for Early Years



## Key messages from part 1

- The curriculum covers all children.
- Adults consider what children already know and can do.
- Children with gaps get extra help.
- Practitioners consider a child’s interests when choosing activities.
- Children’s play is valued.
- Explicit teaching introduces new knowledge.

## Main findings from part 2

- The prime areas are crucial and are interlinked.
- Communication and language are fundamental to every aspect of young children’s thinking and learning.
- PSED underpins children’s early learning and emotional well-being.
- Physical development is central to children’s health and fitness.

## Key messages for communication and language

- There is a need for careful and deliberate curriculum planning.
- Don’t underestimate the importance of social and emotional well-being.
- Introducing and embedding vocabulary and language structures needs careful thought.
- Practice makes permanent.

## Key messages for physical development

- Practitioners may want to consider how their curriculum:
  - identifies small steps
  - helps children build on what they already know
  - includes explicit modelling and teaching of fundamental movement skills
  - provides activities that deepen and extend a child’s capabilities
  - gives children the space and time they need to practise.

## Key messages for PSED

- Practitioners need to think about how they:
  - support children to develop warm, positive relationships and interactions
  - support children to develop a positive sense of self
  - help children to develop an understanding of emotions
  - help children learn how to get along with each other
  - providing opportunities for children to explore,