



Newsletter February 2025



**February 2025 issue Welcome, CPD,
Updated Toilet Training, Deysbrook
Childminding Network, Climate Action,
Dingley's Promise Training, Childminding
Drop In, Module 8 DfE Child development,
SPHub Feedback Form.**



Welcome to the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub February 2025 Newsletter. We have two face to face conferences in March you might be interested in and two new online trainings you might wish to access?

CONFERENCE: Wednesday 26th March 2025 3.30p.m. 5.30p.m. at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, Spencer Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L6 2WF. Our theme for the conference is Intergenerational sustainability and early numeracy with Diane Boyd (Independent Consultant). Diane will share examples of how young children under five explore early numeracy linked to Intergenerational sustainability.

CONFERENCE: Saturday 29th March 2025 9.30a.m. - 12.30p.m. at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, Spencer Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L6 2WF. 9.30a.m. - 12.30p.m. Our theme for the conference is: Exploring Interactive Reading with young children with Alex Gower-Jones (Independent Consultant). Alex will share examples of how young children under five and Interactive Reading can be explored with the educators who work with them.

NEW RECORDING: Tiny Happy People sensory fun for babies indoors and outdoors with low cost/no cost activities shared by Denise Wright (Independent Consultant). The webinar shows educators how they can inspire parents to undertake sensory activities at home to support their child's learning and development through play.

Also see the following for professionals from Tinny Happy People if you haven't seen already:

<https://canvas-story.bbcrewind.co.uk/tinyhappypeople-guide/Professionals/>

NEW RECORDING: Alex Gower-Jones (Independent Consultant) explores Interactive Reading.

Please email our sph email to book on the conferences or access the recordings re
sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk

Our other online recordings you can share with your staff teams or for yourself re your own professional development are:

EMOTIONAL REGULATION: online recorded session by Maria Beale (SENDCO) and Emma Doran (Early Years Co-ordinator) from Whitefield Primary School, Liverpool. Maria and Emma share how they have worked with children in the early years and their families exploring emotional regulation.

NURSERY RHYMES: online recorded session by Faye Johnson, Assistant Headteacher from Everton Nursery School and Family Centre has put together a session on exploring Nursery Rhymes as a staff team with young children.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE: online recorded session by Amanda Quirk, Early Years Advisory Teacher, from our Hub team has put together an online programme for early years staff exploring communication and language.

[OAP \(ORDINARY AVAILABLE PROVISION\)](#) - Amanda Quirk, Early Years Advisory Teacher, from our Hub team has put together a recording on OAP (Ordinary Available Provision) in early years.

[USING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS](#) - Craig and Pip from East Prescott Nursery School, Liverpool have developed an online recording on how to use a range of musical instruments. Childminders across our Hub have the opportunity to borrow a musical instruments bag but many early years educators will have these musical instruments in their provision.

[MATHEMATICS RECORDED ONLINE](#) - Rebecca Morgan (Nursery Teacher) has recorded a practical session online to share with colleagues to explore mathematics. Email the sph email if you would like to access the session via Vimeo.

[SENSORY CURRICULUM RECORDED ONLINE](#) - Emma-Louise Scott (Nurture Teacher) from Everton Nursery School and Family centre shares her experiences and practical examples of a sensory curriculum.

[EARLY EMOTIONS RECORDED ONLINE](#)

Kaya Doyle (Programme Manager) shares an introduction to early emotional health, the issues children face and links to socio-economic backgrounds.

[LEARNING WALKS?](#)

Are you looking for a Learning Walk in another school or setting to see early years in action? We have the following on offer. Please email sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk if you would like to book on.

East Prescott Nursery School, 86 East Prescott Road, Liverpool L14 1PW. Tuesday 20th March 9.00a.m – 11.30a.m.

Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, Spencer Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L6 2WF. Thursday 27th March 9.30a.m. – 11.45a.m.

If you wish to offer your setting for a learning walk to share practice especially linked to research in communication and early mathematics, let us know via email on sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk

[Don't forget to sign up for Dingley's modules if you haven't already:](#)

DINGLEY'S PROMISE

If you are a Liverpool practitioner you can access Dingley's Promise free. Please register at the following:

<https://dingley.org.uk/dingleys-promise-training/early-years-inclusion-programme/>

Click the link, register, then access whenever suits.

Outside of Liverpool please look at the Dingley's Promise website <https://dingley.org.uk/> for more information. If you would like to access any of the modules please register an interest in the sph email address. sphubnw@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk

Dingley's Promise Training

EARLY YEARS INCLUSION PROGRAMME

Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub

Dingley's Promise Training is bringing about a fundamental change in early years practice across England.

Using our knowledge and experience of supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in our nursery settings for over 40 years, we have developed a range of inclusion training courses to help others supporting children with SEND in the early years.

These courses are funded by the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, and are available to all those working with children in the early years in your local authority, at no cost to you.

Each course has been designed to enable flexible remote learning and includes webinars and resources for practical application of the learning within daily practice.

Courses include:

- Introduction to Early Years Inclusion
- Managing Difficult Conversations
- Behaviours That Challenge

Go to www.dingley.org.uk/training to find out which course is available in your area.

For more details and to sign up
Email: SpHubNW@evertoncentre.liverpool.sch.uk

training@dingley.org.uk

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Dingley's Promise Training

[CHILD MINDER INFORMATION:](#)

[CHILD MINDER DROP IN](#)

Every Wednesday 9.30-11.30a.m. at Deysbrook Community Centre, Liverpool, L12 4XF.

Every Wednesday 9.30-11.30a.m., term time, St Hilda's Church Hall, Hunts Cross, Stuart Avenue, Liverpool, L25 0NG The aim of the Liverpool City region and Beyond Stronger Practice Hub Childminder Forum is to gauge if there is a need which as some childminders are isolated with limited or no networks in their LAs. We aim to initially give some case studies from childminders and share how the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub has supported them over the last 12 months, plus give any national updates, share what CPD we have and share the EEF and DFE funded interventions.

If you attend a drop in or meet up with other childminders across the Liverpool City Region and Beyond area, please let us know so we can advertise, allowing local childminder colleagues to attend, join in and network.

[WELLCOMM BAGS](#)

If you are a Liverpool Childminder and wish to borrow a Wellcomm bag to use with your children, email the sph email as we can support you and loan a Wellcomm bag to you for a period of time.

[CHILDMINDER NETWORK RESOURCE BAGS](#)

If you would like to access these resources across the Liverpool City Region and Beyond Stronger Practice Hub area, email us on our sph email address



Don't forget to access information from our national Stronger Practice website:

<https://www.strongerpracticehubs.org.uk/hubs/nw/liverpool-city-region-and-beyond-eysh>

Here you will find information about our podcasts as well as blogs and training sessions.

We also have a local website on our lead school website. See here for more information:

<https://www.evertonnurseryschoolandfamilycentre.org/strongerpracticehub>

Finally, if you haven't already please complete the below:

As part of National Children's Bureau's role as delivery partner, in quality assuring and evaluating the work of hubs, they have requested that we gather feedback from all those who have engaged with our hub, to support our review process.

We would be grateful if you could follow the link below and complete this short feedback form. Forms will go directly to NCB and will be anonymised.

Please complete the form by 14th February as this is the date that NCB will close the link to collate the data.

<https://forms.office.com/e/7KB0sW9p0n>

Many thanks

Lesley Curtis

Programme Lead for Liverpool City Region and Beyond, Early Years Stronger Practice Hub

Updated guidance from the Department for Education.

Toilet Training

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/toilet-training>

Deysbrook Childminding Network Tracie Dowling



My name is Tracie Dowling and I have been a childminder for over 32 years and I live in Anfield Liverpool. I am also part of the strategic team at Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub (EYSPH) and support childminders within the Region.

My role is to be a point of call to support the childminders, signpost them to early years funded support programmes and link in with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to promote the Early Years Evidence store and Early Years Tool kit.

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

The Stronger Practice Hub has funded a Childminder Network drop In at the Deysbrook Village Centre.

<https://www.deysbrook-vc.co.uk/>

This provides the local childminders with a venue to meet up weekly with their minded children, link to myself and each other to share good practice and access face to face support.



The childminders and children enjoy attending the drop-in sessions as this supports good practice by giving the children experiences to gain valuable social skills like sharing, taking turns, communication, and cooperation by interacting with others children. Having access to larger group activities such as music and movement and craft time also provides opportunities to develop language skills, motor skills, and overall confidence through play-based learning and exposure to larger group activities and toys and helping with preparing for school transition. The Drop in provides a venue for childminder and child-based training opportunities and a space for childminders to connect and build a community with each other.

Over the last few months, the childminders and children have enjoyed the Sustainability Goal bitesize sessions that I have facilitated.

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

We have focused on one goal each week, for example week 1, we focused on Goal 1 'No Poverty'. We all sat together on the carpet and read the story 'The Three Little Pigs' we discussed the different types of housing and what it's like to be homeless. We thought about what the safest house would be and which would have strong foundations that can withstand challenges due to global warming.



I provided the children with an activity using wooden 'Three Little Pig' story props to decorate using crayons and recyclable materials. At the end of the session, I gave each childminder an information pack explaining why I chose the activity, how I incorporate the goals within my setting, extra reading materials / information around the Sustainability Goals.

The following week before we started the next focused activity, we discussed the previous goal and how and what the children did at their childminders setting to include 'poverty'. One child told me she made a Den, but she got upset because one of the children pulled off the blanket. I suggested next time they use pegs to see if the den stayed up longer. She told me her childminder made another den out of a big sturdy box and this was fun. Another child had used their props to tell the story again. This feedback from the children was invaluable and makes the time I spend putting the activities together all worthwhile.

Anne Wrigley a childminder of the Deysbrook Drop in provided me with some amazing feedback. She said by attending the drop in and accessing support gave her confidence when she had her latest OFSTED inspection. By taking part in the bite sized Sustainability Goals awareness made her realise she was already promoting sustainability but hadn't realised this.



Since attending the sessions, she now takes the children to the local charity shop to donate and purchase items and every few weeks she buys wool to knit squares with the children to make blankets for the homeless. Anne and the children go on a trip to St Luke's church to donate food for families who are less fortunate.

During Annes previous OFSTED inspection, the inspector commented on the lack of extra training. In this inspection the inspector said it was evident Anne had been very proactive extending her continuous professional development. Anne explained to the inspector about the SPH webinar recordings and how she liked them as she can dip in and out, at a time that suits her due to the flexibility and thought they were a perfect way to extend her knowledge.

Further reading:

<https://www.strongerpracticehubs.org.uk/hubs/nw/liverpool-city-region-and-beyond-eysph/resources/autumn-time-apples-and-apple-juice-dr>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit/play-based-learning>

<https://www.evertonnurseryschoolandfamilycentre.org/child-minders>

<https://www.evertonnurseryschoolandfamilycentre.org/early-years-sustainable-hub>

Climate Action

Dr. Diane Boyd



The Context

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report (IPCC, 2023) highlighted that “human activities, principally through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming, with global surface temperature reaching 1.1°C above 1850-1900 in 2011-2020”. This staggering message will be replicated in the seventh IPCC (2024) report due out shortly, demonstrating that human action is continuing to have a devastating impact upon our planet. We as educators need to ensure we are developing a sustainability mindset and working with our children, parents, families and communities, to work hard at reducing global warming, as this is imperative for the children in our care. The image below, (Boyd, 2025) reminds us all of the interconnection of the three pillars of Sustainability (economic, environmental and socio-cultural) (Brundtland, 1987) and the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2025). Education for sustainability is an integral part of the holistic nature of Early Childhood with its roots firmly rooted with giants such as Froebel, Montessori and Malaguzzi.



In April 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems - GOV.UK launched the Sustainability and Climate Action Strategy which recognised that "Children and young people are worried about climate change." This gives us all as educators or managers, a clear mandate to develop the nursery/school ethos to encompass all aspects of sustainability. The DfE Strategy also noted that children are worried about their future and passionately concerned about their world, highlighting their desire to protect their world. So, we need to support their concerns safely and securely, whilst empowering them to consider possible solutions and small green steps they can take. We have their future, in our hands.



Credit - image Sandcastles Nursery Morecambe Bay.

The Steps to take.

The strategy (DfE,2022;2023) states that nurseries/schools need to work towards these four aims:

- Excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.
- Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions from education and care buildings, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for children and young people to engage practically in the transition to net zero.
- Resilience to climate change: adapting our education and care buildings and system to prepare for the effects of climate change.
- A better environment for future generations: enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to, and connection with, nature in and around education and care settings.

Let's look at each aim and reflect how in early childhood we can incorporate them effectively and holistically.

Excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.



Quality practice must challenge and empower children's agency, giving them the confidence to ask questions and find practical solutions. The characteristics of effective learning (EYFS, DfE, 2024) align perfectly with the transformative collaborative co-researching approach that UNESCO (2017) recognises as key skills need for the 21st century. Reflect upon the language describing the Characteristics (problem-solving - explore, investigate, creativity, critical thinking and motivation) and plan /provoke pedagogical experiences that will promote them. The DfE Strategy recognises the importance of a "whole school system" that is non-hierarchical and that all staff /children and parents are part of the sustainable approach together. The DfE Strategy (DfE, 2022;2023) also invites all schools and settings to have in place by September 2025, a 'Sustainability Lead or Leads', noting that more than one staff member can draw on their different strengths and offer shared leadership. This would be useful to start engaging now in discussions with all staff members and find out what individual strengths you have within your team that align with these 4 aims from the Strategy (2022,2023). By involving everyone from the start, this will provide a better foundation for your Sustainable journey together. Quality professionalism is about reflecting (see January's newsletter) on how you as a setting can support both the children, staff and communities understanding of Climate Action (SDG 13. UNESCO, 2015).

2.Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions from education and care buildings, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for children and young people to engage practically in the transition to net zero.



When reflecting upon how we can provide quality educational pedagogy (SDG 4 Quality Education, UNESCO, 2015) we recognise that sometimes some aspects of sustainability are completely new to you and might make you feel uneasy about approaching them. This second aim is about providing pedagogical experiences that engage children in understanding and becoming aware of “the transition to net zero”. It is important to remember that this is a whole systems approach, and you can draw upon your local community to help you in this process. There may be parents or grandparents who has the relevant knowledge and would happily sit down and support this aspect of the sustainability journey. It is always useful to audit who you have within your internal and external community!

Another possible supporting tool you can draw upon, is the ‘Eco School Count Your Carbon’ toolkit. Their website states “whether you’re at the very start of your sustainability journey, or you’re a passionate environmentalist looking to effect change, join us on our mission to reduce carbon emissions in educational settings by 50% by 2030 and Count Your Carbon today”.

Count Your Carbon - Eco Schools

Whichever route you take it is important to involve the children in any way possible, so they start to understand energy and the impact of their carbon footprints. The charity Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) also provides guidance with a footprint questionnaire and calculator which you could discuss with the children, so they are part of the solution thinking.

WWF Footprint Calculator

It is important from even the earliest baby/toddler age, you engage in the terminology of energy and on your neighbourhood walks, observing and pointing out to the children's examples such as solar panels, wind turbines and chimneys. Support these conversations by researching and reading together non-fiction books about energy sources and energy environmental challenges. Ensure you embed creative, practical activities around energy and your carbon footprint, which require levels of critical thinking "where the adult encourages children to plan and negotiate as they work towards a shared goal, may improve specific aspects of executive function" (EEF Evidence Store-Self-Regulation). This is quality early childhood pedagogy.

3. Resilience to climate change: adapting our education and care buildings and system to prepare for the effects of climate change.

The DfE Strategy invites all schools and settings to have in place by September 2025 a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to support your sustainability journey. The aim is to start the process of developing a climate action plan that is both workable and achievable by the whole team in your setting. Your CAP must reflect the culture and ethos of your setting, so it makes sense to all stakeholders. Your Climate Action Plan (CAP) does not have to follow any design and can be drawn up to meet the unique needs of your setting. However, a simple, easy-to-use template based on the three Pillars of Sustainability (Environmental, Economic and Social) that you can adapt to your setting is available free to download on the newly launched EY Sustainability hub. Have a look on the website for a template of a climate action plan as a starter.



[Click on this link to hear how you could possibly start to develop your CAP.](#)

It is clear that as early years educators we can use different multi-modal ways of learning resonating with the 100 Language of the child in Reggio Emilia (Malaguzzi, 1998) You could for example, engage in storytelling, provide opportunities for practical role play and songs, whilst on community walks observe seasonal /ecological changes or infrastructural developments "to adapt and to prepare for the effects of climate change" (DfE Strategy, 2022). Remember, early childhood is a holistic pedagogical experience and therefore the interconnection of all 17 SDGs is complimentary.

4. A better environment for future generations: enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to, and connection with, nature in and around education and care settings.

Building upon the previous aim, educators and children need to engage with nature, immerse themselves in nature and encourage children to become ecologically interconnected and advocates for the non-human world (with-in- for). This philosophy will authentically align with all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2015) and the three Pillars of Sustainability. Highfield Nursery School in Ipswich has partnered with Everton Nursery School (Stronger Practice Hubs), have developed an Early Years Sustainable Hub website with the Early Years sector at its heart. The Early Years hub will provide support for educators and managers to implement early childhood sustainability into their pedagogical practice with a free online resource.



Early Years Sustainable Hub | ENSFC

Early Childhood pedagogy is situated within nature, its historical foundations are built upon children being outside in their natural environment and therefore this fourth aim should be already part of your ethos. Research (Wilson, 2018) clearly advocates that for children's mental and physical health they need to be outside interacting, in all weathers and seasons

(Nature Therapy | Psychology Today) resonating with Wilson's theory of Biophilia (1984) which recognises 'humans' affinity to nature'. We need to reflect and question how can children be 'connected' if they do not have a relationship with their natural environment?

To assist settings and nurseries in developing their natural environment there are several initiatives to contact. For example, you can apply for a grant the

Local School Nature Grants - Learning through Landscapes

"Open to schools and early years settings in England, Scotland and Wales, this outdoor learning grant fund has four elements – an outdoor learning training course for your staff, a school grounds climate survey, a Climate Curriculum Kit (valued at £150) and £500 of outdoor equipment chosen from a catalogue of over 100 items".



Department
for Education

Have you seen the recent module 8 from the DfE Child development module series on:

Supporting individual differences and needs. The module covers the provision for children with developmental differences and needs in early years settings. It explains your role as an early years educator in planning, observing and assessing children's learning and development in the context of inclusive environments

<https://child-development-training.education.gov.uk/about/module-8>

Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub
Feedback Form

If you have attended any of our conferences or face to face training, please scan the QR code and send us feedback. Many thanks.



Bob



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