Dear Providers,

What a few months it has been! Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Early Years Teams have been collaborating ever more closely, trying to find ways to support you as providers better and more efficiently.

We have learnt a lot about each other’s ways of working, through a joint service day in June, and by taking part in an external review over the summer. Thank you to all the providers, partners and colleagues who helped us with this review, which focused on social mobility, and was led by a team of experienced colleagues (peers) brought together by the Local Government Association. We are trailblazers in this new initiative, which is planned to roll out nationally over the coming years.

The feedback from the process has been very positive – the review team praised the energy and commitment of our providers, to do the very best for children and families, and of our partners, in seeking to join up services for families. We have much to do, but some great practice to work on – the START initiative in Peterborough was singled out as excellent practice, and the quality of workforce development in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was acknowledged. This issue of Jigsaw showcases much more other good practice and high-quality provision.

As a new school year begins, the challenges for the sector are clear – recruitment and retention of staff, financial sustainability in operating the free early years entitlements, especially 30 hours, and meeting the increasing range of need of growing numbers of children.

We have an exciting programme of support across both local authorities, with two conferences – School Readiness (Peterborough, November this year) and Narrowing the Word Gap (Cambridgeshire March 2019) – open to all providers, and a range of other activity tailored to the needs of schools, settings and communities. We will continue to work closely together to provide you with the best and most appropriate support, focusing on key priorities such as school readiness and accelerating the achievement of vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

We wish you a successful year and look forward to strengthening our partnership to improve the lives of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough children.
Cambridgeshire Primary School Admissions for September 2019

All Cambridgeshire children, born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015, will shortly need to apply for their primary school place for September 2019.

Applications must be made between 1 November 2018 and the national closing date of 15 January 2019, to be considered for a school place.

Parents who do not make an application for their child will not be offered a Reception place on the Primary National Offer Day of 16 April 2019, and risk their child not being offered a place at their preferred school, including their catchment school, for September 2019.

All parents should be advised to read the admissions guide “First Steps – Admission to Primary School; a guide for parents” before making their application as it contains essential information about the process.

Applications can be completed online at; www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions or, for those parents who are unable to access the online process, please contact 0345 045 1370 to request a paper form.

Please encourage and support parents of children who are due to start school in September 2019 to read the “First Steps Guide” and to make their application on time, i.e. before the 15 January 2019.

Peterborough Primary School Admissions for September 2019

Children start school in the September of the school year in which they turn five years of age, which means most children are four years old when they start school.

Parents are advised with encouragement from you to read the admissions guide: Primary School Admission Booklet 2019 – 2020 before making their application for information on the application process.

Peterborough children born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 are eligible to apply for a primary school place for September 2019. Parent/carers must make an application for the child’s school place using the online system at www.peterborough.gov.uk/admissions between 12 September 2018 and the national closing date of 15 January 2019.

Late applications risk children not being offered a place at their preferred school.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their application on the Primary National Offer Day of 16 April 2019.

For help or more information about the school admissions process, please contact the Admissions Team on 01733 864007 or via email: admissions@peterborough.gov.uk
Opening hours are 9 am – 5 pm Monday to Friday.

If you would like further information or help with this, please contact the Admissions Team on admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or 0345 045 1370.
Cambridgeshire annual telephone contacts and Early Years Foundation Stage audits

In the 2018-2019 membership offer, the Early Years Service has extended its Universal offer to all registered providers to include an annual telephone contact (ATC) or an EYFS audit. These contacts enable non-member settings to maintain annual contact with the Local Authority and provide an opportunity to reflect on the quality of provision that they offer.

Most settings will be offered an annual telephone call. However, each year about thirty per cent of non-member settings will receive a visit. In this way settings who choose not to take up the membership should receive a visit approximately once every three years.

Annual telephone contacts take about 45 minutes, and EYFS Audit visits one and a half to two hours, depending on the size of the setting.

A member of staff will need to be available out of ratio for this time. An EYFS audit visit will normally start with a tour of the setting, with an opportunity to reflect on the environment, the children’s learning journeys and the settings planning. The format then becomes the same as the annual telephone contact, a professional discussion about compliance and quality within the setting. Within this support for children with SEND, use of additional funding, supervision processes and the settings self-evaluation and action plan are discussed. For either an ATC or EYFS audit it is useful to have to hand the same documents you would have ready for an Ofsted inspection as they may need to be referred to.

EYFS audits differ to a Quality Framework visit as purchased as part of the membership offer, in that they focus on auditing and compliance with the Statutory Framework, rather than support and advice. The EYFS audits follow the same format each time, whereas a Quality Framework visit can be themed to meet specific needs within the setting, based on the self-evaluation.

You will be contacted by your Early Years Adviser to book in, either and visit or a telephone call.

Road Safety Week Autumn 2018

Educators can now register for UK Road Safety Week 2018 (19-25 November) at www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk/educators

Coordinated by the charity Brake, Road Safety Week is a great opportunity to engage children of all ages with road safety by using free resources, including assembly and workshop slides, guidance sheets, activity sheets, posters and digital content such as videos and games.

This year’s theme of Bike Smart aims to raise awareness about the importance of being safe while cycling and the dangers cyclists face on the road.
Bookstart in Cambridgeshire – make sure your children don’t miss out!

Every child in England and Wales is entitled to two free Bookstart packs before they reach school age: a Baby bag, gifted in the first year, usually by health professionals, and a Treasure pack, gifted when children are aged 3-4 years.

Cambridgeshire Libraries are responsible for delivering packs to Health and early years settings for them to gift. Early Years practitioners, therefore, have a major role to play in ensuring that each child receives their Treasure pack so that families are encouraged to read together every day and children are inspired to develop a love of books and reading.

On the Bookstart website, there are tips and ideas as to how to make the most of the opportunity that the Treasure Pack gives to involve parents in the gifting, as well as activities linked to the books in the packs, which meet specific areas of the EYFS framework. Visit www.booktrust.org.uk – What we do – Programmes and campaigns – Bookstart – Bookstart for practitioners – Delivering Bookstart – Bookstart for early years settings – Gifting the Bookstart Treasure pack.

Cambridgeshire Libraries delivers packs to early years settings once a year, by area. Please make a note of the dates in this article, to ensure that you don’t miss the email from ‘eycinfo’ containing details of how to order your Bookstart packs for all the three-year-olds who attend your group. Emails are sent out to each setting’s registered email address one month before the order deadline, with a final reminder one week before. The number of settings who have failed to order by the deadline has increased in the last year. Make sure your children don’t miss out!

Huntingdon area:
Order email sent out: Monday 8 October
Order deadline: Monday 5 November
Deliveries: w/c Monday 3 December

East Cambs and Fenland:
Order email sent out: Monday 4 February
Order deadline: Monday 4 March
Deliveries: w/c Monday 1 April

Cambridge and South Cambs
Order email sent out: Wednesday 23 April
Order deadline: Monday 20 May
Deliveries: w/c Monday 24 June

For more information on the Bookstart programme and a description of the packs go to: https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/bookstart.

For any queries regarding Bookstart in Cambridgeshire, please email bookstart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or sue.batchelor@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Escaping children

Ofsted has brought to our attention that a number of children in the Eastern Region have managed to escape from their childcare provision (nurseries, pre-schools, out-of-school settings and childminders).

Please take time to re-risk assess your provision and outings to ensure this doesn’t happen to children in your care. Points to reflect on:

• Can children climb on resources and get over the boundaries (children can be very good climbers, are curious and quick)?
• Do you frequently count the children (it is a good idea to count faces as heads can look the same and one child could be counted twice)?
• When parents drop off or pick up their child could another child quickly sneak out, this could be tailgating another parent, so not easy to spot. For example if a practitioner is manning the door and starts to speak to a parent, they are not being 100% vigilant therefore a child could slip through the open door. Close gates and doors when speaking to parents or if there are any other distractions.
• All practitioners to be vigilant in the provision and on outings.
• Ensure you are risk assessing prior to taking children out.
• Ensure no child is left outside unsupervised.
• Don’t assume handles are out of reach of children.
Bookstart in Peterborough – young children’s literacy through reading for enjoyment

Peterborough delivers the Bookstart initiative through successful partnership working between libraries, the City Council Early Years Team, health visiting, children’s centres and other interested parties.

Early intervention around reading for enjoyment can have a beneficial impact on children’s achievement, empathy and understanding of the world around them.

Baby packs are delivered by health visitors when they carry out home visits to new parents. Library staff also run sessions with parent and baby groups, encouraging early sharing of books.

Treasure packs for three-year-olds are distributed by pre-schools, nurseries and childminders. The packs are stored at Peterborough Education Conference Centre where much of the training for settings takes place. This means that staff attending training can collect packs for their setting as they are in the building. Information about using the packs is also included in the training around early literacy and language development. This partnership with the Early Years Team has proved invaluable in not only distributing the packs, but also getting the right messages across about the value of the packs to early literacy, and suggested interventions which the settings can use with parents to reinforce the importance of parents sharing stories with their children at home.

A limited amount of dual language books are also available. We encourage settings to select families with little or no English to gift these to – this way the dual language books are targeted to have the most impact. Additional needs packs (for children who are hearing impaired, visually impaired or have motor skills issues) are distributed via the Portage Team who work directly with families, as well as specialist teachers and settings with children with SEN.

Bookstart also acts as a focus for projects targeting children under five who are likely to have literacy challenges when they start primary school. Our active partnerships enable the delivery of literacy initiatives with a wide range of communities. A recent example is the City Read, an annual project funded by a local business. Settings linked to schools identified as having lower literacy levels are invited to take part in interactive storytelling session with a Theatre Company, and each child is given a copy of the book to keep. Around 450 children each year take part.

We are building on our partnership working to develop new ways of promoting reading and story sharing with families in the city, with the ultimate vision that this will become a regular part of family life for young children.
Home Visits – Supporting the Transition Process

Peterborough’s Julia Robinson summarises her research with local providers

As part of my recent studies at Pen Green Research Base, I completed a dissertation exploring the value of home visiting in supporting the transition process for young children.

Managers from 42 pre-schools and 15 day nurseries across Peterborough completed a short online questionnaire on the practicalities, benefits and challenges of home visits. I also interviewed a small number of parents and practitioners who had recently experienced a home visit to gain more in-depth perceptions of the process.

Key points from questionnaire re home visits:

- Provided an effective way of gaining information about the child and family including the child’s interests and developmental stage (62%)
- Opportunity to develop child & key person relationship through playing together (70%)
- Provided an opportunity to share information with parents particularly re settling in (82%)
- Almost ¾ of visits (73%) happen during setting opening hours

Detailed responses to questions were summarised in themes below showing the number of responses in brackets.

“From your experience describe how home visits benefit children, families and the transition into the setting”.

Top benefits for children, families and the transition were “a familiar face” (16 responses), “building relationships/trust” (12), and “getting to know each other”/“developing a close bond” (10 each)

When it came to describing how the home visit benefits practitioners, the most popular responses were settling the child more easily (14), more effective planning for the child’s interests (13), and getting to know the family and home situation (10 and 9 responses).

I also asked about the main challenges and the reasons why not, where staffing issues, time constraints and finance were the most common responses.

Summary of data from questionnaire regarding practicalities of home visits

Currently conducting home visits (individual setting type)
- Pre-school 52%
- Day Nursery 40%

More than ¾ of parents agree to a home visit (total %)
- 52% – for all provision types

Period home visit is conducted in advance of child starting at setting (total %)
- 1-2 weeks 70%
- 2-4 weeks 22%
- 4 weeks or more 8%

Length of each visit (total %)
- 10–30 mins 17%
- 30-60 mins 55%
- Over 60 mins 28%

My interviews with practitioners showed how they felt the home visit enabled them to tune in to children’s interests and needs, and so to plan more effectively for the child’s first few days. Practitioners also gained a better understanding of family make up, the availability of toys, books and TV, routines at home and parental strategies for managing routines and behaviour.

The parents interviewed all stated they felt reassured by the home visit and were pleased their child had settled in. They valued being able to share strategies such as managing toilet training or teething, as well as discuss any concerns they had about their child starting in the setting. It had increased their expectations as well as their understanding of the role of the key person.

The study highlighted the value of home visiting as a tool for transition, particularly for more vulnerable children and families, and how they are making meaningful steps towards building relationships, working alongside parents and making a positive impact on parental aspirations for their children. Of those who completed home visits, 96% cited playing with and getting to know the child and family during the visit were key factors for a successful transition into the setting.

julia.robinson@peterborough.gov.uk
Little Bees creates a buzz at sheltered scheme

Residents at Cross Keys Homes sheltered scheme had some very young visitors recently when children from the nearby Little Bees pre-school run by Barnardo’s in Peterborough came along to sing songs.

The youngsters entertained residents with a number of sing-along favourites and everyone enjoyed hearing – and joining in with – the Bear Hunt story.

Little Bees are planning to make regular visits to the scheme, to join in activities with residents there. For their next visit, children are hoping to make Easter bonnets with the residents.

CKH Chief Executive, Claire Higgins said: “Cross Keys Homes aims to create life-changing opportunities across our communities, for people of all ages. It’s fantastic to see that the two generations from Little Bees Pre-school and Cross Keys Homes are coming together informally, just to enjoy each other’s company.

“We know that intergenerational activities such as these are really beneficial to everyone, where spending time with older people supports the development of youngsters, especially with regards to language, and our residents get to relive their childhoods, helping them to stay young at heart! It was fantastic to see smiles on the faces everyone there, old and young.”

Lynn McNish, Children’s Services Manager at Barnardo’s said: “We were delighted to take part in this opportunity to bring two generations together and see the fun that was had by all. We believe in children and welcome new experiences which will see them develop and expand their horizons. We hope the residents enjoyed the experience as much as the young children did.”

Tracy Cave
Pre-School Manager – Little Bees Pre-School

New team member – Peterborough

Our team admin, Sara Brudenell, has recently moved on to pastures new, we wish Sara every success in her new position! Taking up her post we would like to welcome Diana Teixeira. Diana joined Peterborough City Council as an apprentice in June 2017 and worked in the Central Support Unit for a year before moving to the Early Years team. Diana tells us that she is loving working with the team and hopes to further her career in Children's Services.
Early Years and Childcare Service

Just Play Conference 2018

A Playworker’s day out!

Saturday 10 November 2018

Swavesey Village College, Gibraltar Lane, Cambridgeshire CB24 4RS

8.45am arrival – 3.00pm

We are pleased to welcome Meynell Walter as the keynote speaker at this year’s conference. Meynell has been working within the playwork sector for over 30 years, and has a wealth of experience ranging from open access play, training playworkers, delivering playwork qualifications, delivering the annual National Playwork conference and advocating play internationally.

Meynell’s keynote will explore ‘What makes a playworker different?’ identifying different professions within children’s workforce, examining parallels and differences whilst drawing out the essence of playwork practice.

Additional information

This conference promises to be interactive fun both indoors and outdoors! Please wear your play clothes. Refreshments and lunch will be provided throughout the day.

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See workshop information on the next page!
Our selection of workshops:

Playwork theory
Understanding psycholudics and the play cycle: An introduction to the key elements of the play cycle and how we use that understanding in our playwork.

The playwork curriculum is not a framework for learning but more an indication of what the playworker needs to be thinking about and putting in to place to maximise the opportunities for the children’s play.

Aspects of playwork reflective practice
Playworkers need to reflect on practice but why is that and how can we best do it?

Art games
Explore through games how we can introduce creative art to children in a fun way.

Large scale art
Too often creative opportunities are limited in size. Experiencing giant art, a whole new approach to creativity and imagination.

Creative play workshops
Painting without brushes will unleash the painting urge of normal constraint. Be prepared to get creative and messy!

Wide games
From capture the flag and colour war the mix of both complex and simple games that can take place over large and small spaces with few children.

Very active workshops
Non-equipment games and exercises that only require the players and imagination.

Skipping
You will engage in different approaches to skipping including: single rope, simple skipping and double rope.

Please note that workshops are subject to change.

Cambridgeshire out of school club membership 2018-2019 special offer

Upgrade your £129 out-of-school and holiday club membership
In addition to your publicised membership offer you will get:

- Six additional credits on Cambridgeshire Essential courses

And a choice of one half-day visit with the theme of:

- Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements audit

OR

- A Playwork Beyond Quality in-depth visit

For only £149*

Please note additional visits will be charged at the bespoke price

*additional £20 if you already purchased the out of school club membership

To purchase this offer, please contact the Early Years Service on earlyyears.service@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or tel: 01223 706133

Book now!
Visit Learn Together website at www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/early-years/conferences-and-events/just-play to book your place!

For any queries regarding Just Play, please contact eyctraining@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or tel: 01223 706349.

Photo from Just Play Conference 2017
CASEY helps Sawston Nursery to focus on children’s development

Cambridgeshire setting Sawston Nursery is a pleasant, modern building off the main road into the village.

In the quiet of the nursery office, manager Tina Spencer and her deputy Stacey Ward are keen to explain how using Cambridgeshire Assessment System for Early Years (CASEY) has transformed their approach to assessment and supported a clearer focus on what individual children need.

Tina takes up the story: “With 35 practitioners on our staff team, we needed an approach which would quickly give us the overview. CASEY appealed to us because it did what we wanted it to do, and it is free to use.

“Before we used CASEY, we had no clear monitoring tool for assessing children’s development. We were relying on handwritten data and plotters. Adopting the system eased paperwork for our practitioners, and gave a different view of what was happening for leaders and managers.

CASEY has really helped us identify the gaps, and pick up where extra support is needed. It enables us to have more meaningful conversations with the staff team about individual children, and can even highlight the strengths of practitioners when it comes to areas of the EYFS where they may be less confident.”

Sawston Nursery is the most prolific user of CASEY, for both EYFS and Every Child a Talker, with 1,300 assessments since the summer of 2016. Having over 100 children on the books from 6 months upwards, and 33 pre-schoolers, it’s important to be able to get the overview.

Success has taken time, explains Stacey, especially at the start, to load the data for all of the children. One of Sawston’s top tips is to assign the CASEY data input to a single team member. “It’s quicker and easier to have one person adding data at the start. It’s also useful to explore the help topic documents, as these will guide you through the system. Printing them off and building up a manual works well.”

Once the data is in the system, it’s important to share that back with room leaders and individual practitioners, Tina adds. CASEY supports conversations between setting staff about children’s progress and development. “Assessment can highlight areas of difference between people’s views. It’s important to be able to discuss and challenge assessments as part of professional discussion within the setting.” CASEY can also help to highlight emerging needs, supporting the cycle of assess – plan – do – review.

Sawston Nursery was able to use CASEY’s scheduling function to match their approach to assessment so that it reminded them at the right time that assessments were due.

CASEY isn’t perfect – the response times can be a little slow, and the printing capabilities are still limited, so data in CASEY can’t be shared as simply as the Nursery would want. But overall, using CASEY has brought significant benefits. And whilst it won’t solve the recruitment challenges, or increase the cash in the bank, it provides a solid base for Sawston Nursery’s work to help all children to achieve their potential.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile pilot

The Department for Education (DfE) recently announced that a sample of schools will be piloting a revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile in the academic year 2018-2019.

A primary school within Cambridgeshire local authority has agreed to participate in the pilot along with 23 other schools. Each participating school will be following a set of pilot Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The revised ELGs being piloted are available on the foundationyears.org.uk website.

Further information on the pilot can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pilot-launched-to-boost-early-language-skills-and-cut-teacher-workload
Supporting Songs and Rhymes

Communication with babies and young children starts before birth, when baby hears her parents’ voices and musical preferences whilst still in the womb. From birth, most adults automatically change the way they talk to babies using “mother-ese” or child directed speech.

This infant directed talk is common across languages and socio-economic groups, has exaggerated intonation, heightened pitch, repetition of words and a rhyme-like structure. It’s also typical of fathers as well as mothers! Leaning into a newborn’s pram saying in a slow and exaggerated sing-song tone, “who’s a … gorgeous… little… boy… then?” helps the baby to analyse the structure of speech as the adult is highlighting or emphasising words and clauses.

Young children enjoy hearing adults saying or singing familiar nursery rhymes to them. The comforting rhythm means that babies recognise the rhyme by anticipating what is coming, whether it’s a word, sound or action, and later they copy and love to join in, over and over again!

Some traditional nursery rhymes have meanings which are meaningless in today’s world. Some are clearly educational (…1 2 3 4 5…. Once I Caught a Fish Alive) while others are nonsense rhymes that young children find silly and fun (Hey Diddle Diddle, the Cat and the Fiddle)! Select rhymes carefully though as some may be inappropriate by today’s standards.

Leading early years consultant Penny Tassoni states that hearing rhyming patterns and individual sounds in words helps children’s later ability to learn letter-sound associations and supports their phonological awareness, important early reading strategies. She suggests devising a programme of rhymes (over two years) so that the children learn 20 rhymes a year, and may have a repertoire of 40 or so when moving on to Reception.

Every rhyme will give children a different experience so quantity does help! It may be useful to assess children’s progress in learning new rhymes too, some children may need more reinforcement.

Settings often send home the words to a new rhyme and for some parents who do not have English as their first language, hearing the rhyme will be helpful too. Asking parents to record songs or rhymes in their home language is a way of valuing other languages but also helps children’s overall phonic awareness.

Singing songs and rhymes, playing instruments, action rhymes and moving to music make communication fun. They not only support language development and later reading skills but also promote movement and coordination when moving or doing actions in time to the music. The best ones to share are the ones that adults enjoy.

You may wish to reflect on the following points:

• Do you track children’s progress in learning rhymes?
• How many rhymes will your children know when they leave?
• Do you include a variety of actions rhymes, traditional nursery rhymes as well as songs and music from popular culture?
• Do you include some rhymes from children’s home language?
• How do you share rhymes with parents?

Julia Robinson and Andrea Gamman
Peterborough Early Years and Childcare Service

For further information go to: https://literacytrust.org.uk/early-years

Reference:

Coming soon – Reflecting on the Environment – an ECAT perspective, and a profile of the Literacy Hub in Peterborough
Talk, Talk, Talk –
The Power of Language

Speaking is a very important part of our curriculum and underpins many other subjects. At Discovery Primary Academy, communication is a key area of a child’s language development and an important vehicle for learning. Throughout the year, we give speaking great importance and emphasis in our planning, teaching, monitoring and data analysis.

This is how we define the practitioner’s role in supporting children's Communication, Language and Literacy:

• play with enthusiasm, engaging alongside children, being guided by them and not dominating
• plan and introduce new language and give children the opportunity to practise and experiment with the new vocabulary.
• offer an environment that encourages children to talk about what they are doing and think about how they can improve actions or movements
• model appropriate vocabulary and language use, by sensitively responding to children, demonstrating strategies such as listening, initiating and sustaining conversation and negotiating gently and respectfully
• record and observe a child’s developing oracy, their speech and language needs, and their use of non-verbal gesture and communication.
• respect children’s desire to be silent sometimes.

Vocabulary

Our planning sets aside time to teach new vocabulary, often linked to our core story/theme. Within the provision we have other opportunities which promote speaking which include:

• photos of the children engaged in play, placed within the environment, to encourage the children to talk about who is in the picture and what they are doing.
• placing unusual objects within the environment to generate discussion and promote new language
• Key Group time to talk about a topic of interest
• Our “Talking table”, where children can put an object or photograph from home to generate communication with their friends.

Sentence starters

During adult-led activities, the teacher will provide the children with the beginning of a sentence, to scaffold the reply from the child. Sentence stems are used throughout the day, across all areas of learning. When planning Literacy activities, depending on the developmental stage of the child, teachers will plan for the children to verbalise their ideas and sentences rather than writing them down.

The photographs show how we use the learning environment to promote talk through story trays and communication friendly spaces.

Louise Chapman
Assistant Headteacher/Early Years Leader – Discovery Primary Academy
A Cambridge setting extols the virtues of a particular “divider provider” (other products are available)

Like many settings, we use a large Church Hall, and we are also a pack-away setting, so everything has to be moved on a daily basis. This used to make it difficult to create small spaces, and we also needed to find a way of dividing up a huge space to make it more child-friendly. We discovered the Killyleagh Box Company some years ago and found out that although their main business is boxes, they also do room dividers which are exactly what we needed.

The screens come in two parts, a blue post created by folding (on pre-cut lines) a flat piece of the same material, and a flat wall. Tabs on the ends of the walls slot into the posts. Once folded the posts can be kept as is, ready for next time, and are light enough for the children to carry – in fact, there is always huge competition for the job when we tidy up, and it is a perfect ‘reward’ for helpfulness.

Structures can be a simple straight wall (to screen something), two-sided (L-shaped) as an area divider, three-sided, a complete four-sided structure (you can request a door opening when you buy), or any combination of these. They are infinitely adaptable.

The walls come in various colours including a stone castle finish and can be either plain, with cut-out geometric shapes, or with a large rectangular window. We did have some of the large windows originally, but found they bent more readily and didn’t last.

The posts also have a piece that can slot across the bottom, as a foot for stability, but we no longer use them. They were a trip hazard, and the structure is stable enough without them. Occasionally, they are accidentally pushed over but they are so light that they don’t hurt anyone. However, as they are so light they would probably not be suitable for settings with children learning to walk, as they wouldn’t support the child’s attempts to stand.

Other bonuses include the fact that the sheets come flat-packed, with the geometric shapes pre-cut but needing to be pressed out. We find these push-out bits great for all kinds of games and they can be used in the garden too. Eventually, with constant use, the tabs become a bit bent. When they are no longer usable, we cut off the tabs and have large (or can be cut down easily) light-weight and portable notice/display/group work boards.

We found the company about 20 years ago, and have used them ever since. Their customer service is brilliant, they are as helpful as they possibly can be, the product is not expensive, and the delivery is fast. The product also lasts well. In that time we have had to replace the walls twice, but still, have the original posts! Ordering is simple, and you order just what you want, there is no basic set or other set pieces.

Susan Lister
Playlanders Playgroup and Pre-school, Cambridge
What is Ofsted currently finding in Cambridgeshire settings?

**Teaching and Learning**

One ongoing trend is ‘Extending children’s learning opportunities through adult communication and sustained shared thinking’.

One Early Years Adviser said: ‘In the last feedback I went to, the inspector didn’t give outstanding, as although outstanding practice was seen from the manager, there was inconsistency with the staffing practice due to qualifications and experience. She suggested that time was spent modelling and investing in the staff team through challenging supervisions to raise the quality of teaching and play.’

There is a clear expectation to increase the opportunities for children to express their own ideas and to develop their thinking skills further.

Maths is mentioned as well, such as staff do not use all opportunities to challenge children further in their mathematical thinking, in particular to explore and understand measurement and capacity.

**Mark making and writing skills**

Staff do not consistently provide opportunities for the older children to extend their writing skills and encourage them to give meaning to marks that they make. They do not enhance the opportunities available for them to develop their early writing skills.

**Parents’ views**

Providers do not seek the views of parents and act on their ideas as they reflect and evaluate their practice to enhance the continual development of the setting even further.

**Children escaping or going missing (see page 5)**

There are still a lot of children escaping or going missing and for a “pack away” setting in the village hall, the children should be greeted at the door, with parents signing them in and out with the staff member present.

At home time the parents greet them at the main door, door is locked each time anyone enters or leaves. Parents come into the main area to collect their child.

One setting has been picked up twice for safeguarding reasons, as the kitchen door (one of two doors) has been left open when staff go in or out.

There are lots of positive comments as well, but we want to draw your attention to these trends.

**Assessment documents on Learn Together website**

During the summer, we have reviewed all the assessment documents produced by the Early Years Service. The documents are available on Learn Together website. We hope that you find them more user friendly and easy to access.

On our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) assessment page, there are documents that you can download and use for ongoing assessment of children, as well as summative forms, including the statutory Progress Check at Age Two.

If you are using CASEY, these forms will inform your summative input on the system, and we have added the Guidance on Cohort Analysis to give you aid in identifying trends for targeted work with children.

You will also find the information about the Cambridgeshire approach to the Integrated Review. This brings together the information about the child from the Healthy Child Review at 27-30 months and the Progress Check in Early Years Settings at 24-36 months.

You can find the documents at www.cambslearntogether.co.uk – Early Years and Childcare – Observation, Planning and Assessment – Early Years Foundation Stage Assessment.
Peterborough SENCo Surgeries/Forum

The SENCo Surgeries offer an opportunity for the setting SENCo and/or the Key Person to meet with one of the Early Childhood Specialists for Inclusion (Andrea, Emma and Lynne). Each appointment is for 45 minutes and is held at the Peterborough Education Centre (PEC). Practitioners can discuss a range of topics relating to children with special educational needs and disability.

The dates are emailed out to all settings, so please ensure the information is passed on to the setting SENCo. We are aware that it is not always possible to be off ratio and out of the setting, so we will visit settings and meet with practitioners. For settings with a high number of children with additional needs, it is appropriate to meet in the setting as each key person can then meet with their Early Childhood Specialist for Inclusion.

Current dates for Lynne are Friday 2 November 2018, Thursday 15 November 2018 and Monday 26 November 2018 at 9.30am, 10.15am, 11.00am or 11.45am.

To book please email: lynne.jennings@peterborough.gov.uk.

A SENCo Practitioner Forum is held once a term at Caverstede Nursery School. This is an opportunity for setting SENCos to meet up with other SENCos and members of the Early Years and Childcare Team. It is an informal evening where updates are shared and there is a specific focus.

The next forum on Tuesday 6 November 2018 at 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm. and will look at the lending library resources from the Caverstede Early Years Hub and supporting parents with the admissions process.

To book onto the forum please contact: sally.goodwin@peterborough.gov.uk. Please note places must be booked in advance.

Cambridgeshire SEND Updates

SENCo Refresher Network & Briefing Sessions are going down well

The network & briefing sessions are designed to provide setting SENCos with up to date news and information regarding SEND in the early years. Setting SENCOs have told us that they value the opportunity to attend these sessions annually and they like the new format. If you have any further feedback about these sessions or topics that you would like us to cover in the future, please feel free to get in touch.

SEND Surgeries – Telephone Consultations coming soon!

Look out for the SEND Surgery flyers!

The Quality Assurance Team continues to offer regular SEND Surgery sessions for Setting SENCOs. These are FREE for all settings (both members and non-members). The aim of the surgery sessions is to support the early identification of children who may have emerging needs. During the surgery session, the setting SENCo has the opportunity to talk to the Early Years Adviser about their concerns and share observations and assessments (which MUST be anonymised). Discussions focus on the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle (A, P, D, R) and how best to meet the child’s individual needs within the setting.

These surgery sessions have been very well received by the sector, but we would like to remind Setting SENCos to continue to use their own professional judgment when deciding how quickly action should be taken to identify and support a child’s emerging needs. IT MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT SEND SURGERY. If it is felt that the child may be at risk of further delay if action is not taken quickly then the Setting SENCo should continue to liaise with the child’s parents/carers, implement the A, P, D, R Cycle and seek involvement from other agencies where appropriate (Early Years Advisers can provide guidance and signpost to other services).
Cohort analysis and tracking

Cambridgeshire Adviser Chris Barton offers some pointers

Ofsted makes it clear in their Early Years Inspection Handbook that leaders and managers of settings are expected to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their own provision. One way this can be done is by looking for patterns across areas of learning and development for different groups of children. In the Grade descriptors, Ofsted states:

“Monitoring ensures that individual children or groups of children who have identified needs are targeted, and appropriate interventions are secured so that children receive the support they need, including through effective partnerships with external agencies and other providers.” – Early Years Inspection Handbook, Effectiveness of Leadership and Management, page 33.

Ofsted recommendations around understanding the progress of groups recently have included:

“The management team does not have the best possible insight into the progress different groups of children make, to help identify any possible gaps in their learning to strengthen teaching further.”

“While individual children’s achievement is regularly assessed, the progress of different groups is not yet analysed, in order to focus teaching more precisely and address any gaps in provision.”

Completing a cohort tracker helps reflective leaders and managers to question the quality of provision that they offer. It can help to identify weaknesses in continuous provision, the need for further staff training or enhancements to target specific groups of children. It can then be used to influence action plans and to improve the quality of teaching and learning within your setting. Regular cohort analysis can help settings pinpoint weaknesses and ensure that they are taking appropriate actions. Cambridgeshire settings say:

“Cohort analysis has helped me identify that the boys in our pre-school room are not making good progress in writing. We have reviewed our provision in this room and accessed some training to support the staff.”

“We were concerned that our children with English as an additional language were not doing as well as our English speaking children. However, cohort analysis revealed that they were making better progress than other children and should catch up by the time they leave.”

Using each child’s summative assessment can reveal a picture of different groups that the children form either using a paper system or an online system, such as CASEY.

Ensuring that the numbers of children are worked into percentages enables realistic comparisons to be made. For example, if six boys and three girls in a group were underachieving in Shape, Space and Measure, it may be tempting to make the statement that “boys do not do as well as girls in shape, space and measure”. However, if there are 30 boys in the group and only ten girls, then 20 per cent of boys are underachieving and 30 per cent of girls, enabling us to see that it is the girls who are not doing as well as the boys.

The cohort tracker is at its most valuable when it is fully analysed. By considering what patterns and trends have been identified and what can be changed to ensure that children are making good progress it then becomes a working document. It can be used to highlight and support individual children who need additional provision to enable them to make good progress. The information from the tracker can then be fed into the setting’s Quality Framework and Action Plan to determine environmental audits and training materials.

Further reading

Looking back...

It feels like a long time since the Forest School Conference at Grafham Water Centre, a cold, wet day at the beginning of May. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the conference, the two keynote speakers and the choice of two workshops. They listened, they played, explored nature connections, made charcloth, lit fires, walked barefoot in the forest, shared stories, and all came away feeling positive and more confident to move forward in their Forest School journeys.

The summer term also gave a range of practitioners the chance to attend our development courses, An Introduction, Fire Experiences and Games in the Great Outdoors. All those attending confirmed that their knowledge and passion for the subject had increased.

You can read about our termly network meeting in the feedback article from Linda Rowley, who along with her assistant Tricia Salerno, hosted the event for us.

Towards the end of the term, we held our first Forest Schools Skills Day. Eighteen like-minded people met in the village of Grafham and walked along to meet Ian Henderson (Forest Owl) at the edge of his ancient woodlands. Following the true ethos of Forest School, the day was led by those attending. The skills practised included erecting a parachute shelter, learning knots, use of tools, fire, and Kelly Kettle. We also learnt and played some games, taking our shoes and socks off to learn Fox walking. As the nominated “bear” in the game, Heather listened carefully and managed to catch everybody as they tried to steal her food, and ensured that they all had a good soaking from the water pistol.

Looking forward...

Our second skills day will be on Wednesday 31 October, at the Forest Owl’s woodlands between Grafham and Ellington. Practitioners will have an opportunity to enjoy a range of Forest School experiences, extend and learn new skills.

Looking ahead into 2019, the Forest School conference will take place at Wildawood Forest School on Saturday 27 April 2019. It will be packed full of ideas to enhance your provision. The new format will spend more time outside in a Forest School environment. Keynote speakers, lunch and the marketplace will take place in the giant marquee, with workshops, refreshments and reflection outside in the woodland environment. Early booking is recommended as we anticipate high demand for places.

Forest School Qualifications Training

We are delighted to announce, as part of the Cambridgeshire county vision of Forest School for All, that we have identified a Preferred Training Provider for Forest School qualifications.

A robust process identified four applicants who presented to a special panel in July. The unanimous choice of the panel was that Huathe was the best provider to take forward the Cambridgeshire vision.

The leaders of Huathe, Carol and Elizabeth, delivered the key note as well as workshops at the Forest School Conference this year. They have delivered Forest School training for many years and have a sound knowledge of early years.

This year’s planned courses are: Autumn term – level 3; Spring term – level 2; Summer term – level 2 and 3. We have sent a flyer with all the dates, but please contact us if you are interested.

This is a significant great step forward, with major benefits for Cambridgeshire providers.

For more information, contact Heather Jebb, heather.jebb@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or QualityAssuranceTeam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Linda Rowley, Forest School Leader at Priory Park Infant School, St Neots

In the Summer term, we hosted the Forest School Network evening, in our school grounds. Earlier this year, Priory Park Infant School was delighted to become the first school in Cambridgeshire to be officially recognised by the Forest School Association.

Forest School at Priory Park is run by me (Linda Rowley) and Tricia Salerno, Forest School Assistant – and we both think we have the best job in the world! Forest School runs all the year round for all year groups – the children in Reception go over to the lovely Wild Area, within our school grounds, and the Key Stage One children walk over to the woods at the edge of the nearby park.

Practitioners from across Cambridgeshire gathered in our school’s Wild Area on an idyllic summer evening to chat whilst toasting muffins and cinnamon apples over the fire, and boil up the Kelly Kettle for a brew. They sampled our gorgeous elderflower cordial, made by the children, and were even brave enough to try our first ever batch of nettle cordial – which turned out to be quite refreshing! They also tried their hand (or feet!) on the slack line, had a go at pond dipping, had time to get in some practice on a variety of tools, and to have a look at books and resources in our Forest School cabin.

It was such a lovely, relaxed evening that passed by so quickly. It was fascinating to hear everyone’s stories, all at different stages along their Forest School journey.

Thank you so much to everyone who came, and your positive feedback. Thank you too to Heather Jebb for your support.

Everybody is welcome to join the network events at any time – just contact heather.jebb@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to be added to the Forest School mailing list.
Intergenerational care – Sunflower Nursery works with its partner elderly care home

Sunflower Nursery and Richard Newcombe Court, an extra care home, are both services provided by CHS Group in Cambridge.

The nursery started taking their pre-school children to visit the elderly residents at Christmas. Then in February, they spent the day making valentines cards, and playing with puzzles and board games. Both groups were quiet to begin with, but soon were making new friends. The language and confidence skills improved dramatically just from that short visit. Children who are normally quite shy talked to the residents whilst playing board games. Notably these children benefited from the adults’ attention and increased eye contact. We found that structured activities, like puzzles and board games, promoted more effective communication between both age groups.

A resident said, “It’s been lovely because I hardly see my grandchildren anymore, as they live so far away. This really works, the big age difference seems to correlate really well – it’s brought life to the place.”

Recent research into this type of care demonstrated that elderly people were found to have improved moods, mobility and memory after spending six weeks with children and that the children will improve in their speech, language skills and their confidence by these interactions with a different generation than they are used to.

Research has also shown that with at least 6 caring adults in their lives, children fully develop emotionally and socially. In our view, children often get too much mediated contact through computers, and not enough 1:1 personal time with mature adults.

Through our connections with the older adults, the children understood where they are and where they come from. By getting to know “real, live old people” the children have now looked beyond the ageist stereotypes and have asked questions openly, “why are they grey?”, “Why are they wrinkly?”. They have become more comfortable with aging. They have many models for adulthood, but far fewer for older adulthood.

We all know that the involvement of a reliable, caring adult is seen to help children develop life skills, and builds self-esteem and confidence, and we can see the importance of these intergenerational bonds making a significant difference in our children's lives.

In general, the children have developed higher self-esteem, better emotional and social skills, and most importantly, the children feel special when they visit. Children get undivided time and attention from the older adults and it provides the opportunity to talk to them about subjects that they may not discuss in their ‘usual child friendly surroundings’. The children ask more questions, are much more sociable, vigilant and confident and their language skills have improved.

After the positive feedback from the residents at Richard Newcombe Court, and the enjoyment from the children, Sunflower Nursery Cambridge have continued these intergenerational activity days each month, whilst monitoring the benefits this interaction brings.

Nigel Howlett, CHS Group’s Chief Executive, said: “The happiness of our residents is our utmost priority. It’s great to be able to bring two generations together. There is lots of research which suggests that intergenerational care can bring huge benefits, and we look forward to seeing this initiative evolve.” This encouraging and promising type of connection is now a regular initiative within our nursery and within CHS Group.

Kristen Dutton
Nursery Manager – Sunflower Nursery Cambridge
Promoting health in early years settings

The Cambridgeshire PSHE Service has recently updated The Promoting Health in Early Years Settings Programme. This unique resource enables settings to develop a whole setting approach to health-related themes including Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Mental and Emotional Wellbeing, Loss and Change, Safeguarding and Child Protection and Staff Health and Wellbeing.

The programme is available to all early years settings, including childminders, and enables them to embed good practice and healthy messages as an integral part of their work. A growing number of settings across Cambridgeshire have undertaken training to explore ways of effectively implementing the programme back in their setting.

‘This course has widened my understanding of all aspects of health and helped me to think how health promotion is happening in the everyday running of the setting.’

‘I loved the activities on this course and how they made me think hard about how health affects others. I am looking forward to sharing them with my staff.’

‘This programme will help us to teach children about what being healthy means.’

Settings who have engaged with the programme have been successful in promoting partnership working with parents/carers and other organisations in the healthy development of children. The resource also provides links to other national sources of support. The Promoting Health in Early Years Settings Programme is a useful tool for evidencing good practice for the inspection and national good practice standards.

The Cambridgeshire PSHE Service will be running this course again on 20 November 2018 and 6 March 2019, 9.15 am – 12.30 pm.

https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/services-to-schools/pshe/our-courses-and-conferences

For more information: e-mail pshe@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or go to https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/services-to-schools/pshe/resources/promoting-health-in-early-years-settings
Changing rooms at Bretton Community Pre-school

What did we do?

We agreed that the room needed to be used in a multi-purpose way. Everything was emptied from the room and found new homes, including large desks used by staff for planning which took up too much space. Resources no longer needed were gifted to families to support interaction and play at home. Once cleared, the room was painted white – this dazzled and we thought it was too much! We broke up the white with inexpensive storage cupboards and smaller desks for staff use, a notice board and resources to use with the children.

How the room is now used

The room now provides:

- A calm, quiet, neutral space which is inviting and not overstimulating.
- Defined space for staff to have office time e.g. to write up observations, make assessments and plan.
- Storage for resources to support speech, language and communication development.
- Space for group and one-to-one work with children, with resources to hand.
- An area for reading stories and singing with minimal background noise.
- A private and confidential area to have discussions with parents, with relaxed seating.
- An area to use with other professionals e.g. Speech & Language Therapist.

Impact

The room is now used regularly. Practitioners were amazed at the transformation the furniture made, as well as how we made the space special and inviting for children using resources we already had. We all want to use the space more! We are proud of the developments, and the focus of ECAT made sure this was fully achieved. We are still developing the area, and aim to monitor how it is working for different groups of children. Watch this space!

Kirstien Lipscombe (Manager), Helen Goodliffe & Julie Murray (Early Language Lead Practitioners for ECAT) at Bretton Community Pre-school, Peterborough
CINDLE in practice – Beach Babies

Tracy Hutchison, owner/manager of Beach Babies in Landbeach, is keen to show me the Orchard, leased from Cambridgeshire County Council’s Farms estate, which chimes in perfectly with their “growing up naturally” ethos.

We’ve met to discuss Beach Babies’ commitment to CINDLE, the programme created in Cambridgeshire in the mid-2000’s to help children develop independent learning capabilities. Tracy explains how looking at childcare for her own children had led her to question some aspects of the care on offer.

“Our qualified teacher, Nicola Wallis, had come across CINDLE whilst teaching at Cottenham Primary School, and she brought that to us from our early days when she came to work here.” Nicola went to Beach Babies looking for childcare, and ended up working at the setting for 12 years. She remains committed to the approach, and still runs training sessions for the nursery.

Nicola undertook the CINDLE practitioner accreditation offered by Cambridgeshire in the period 2005-08. This was fundamental to embedding the key elements of the approach into the nursery.

CINDLE connected with some of Tracy’s own thoughts, and led her to read around children’s development, eventually undertaking further study (a Master’s degree) alongside Nicola. Other theorists and pedagogical approaches – Steiner and Montessori, Reggio’s “environment as third teacher”, feed into the conversation. Alfie Kohn’s Punished by Rewards is mentioned more than once. I am reminded how David Whitebread’s work on the CINDLE programme influenced the shape of the “Characteristics of Effective Learning” which are now integral to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We talk about what “independent” looks like in the setting – eating, dealing with coats and shoes, resolving disputes. We talk about how a less independent child is often responding to parent/carer behaviour, and how conversations with parents – taking those small steps that support the child to make her own decisions – can be as important as what happens in the setting. We talk about alternatives to praise – a specific aspect of staff induction within Beach Babies. We talk about how much longer a task is likely to take when a child is supported to do it themselves – and how that time investment pays back in the longer term.

I see a number of documents used to support the approach – some specific to CINDLE, others linking to different aspects of nursery practice and parental engagement. Beach Babies offers parents the opportunity to learn about CINDLE: that leads us on to the challenges that children of professional parents can sometimes face, when isolated from extended family support networks and competing with a demanding job.

We discuss how the CINDLE approach is passed on to practitioners, through induction, staff training days (there are 6 each year) and in-the-moment feedback, where a practitioner needs instant direction. But it’s clear that the ethos of the setting incorporates expectations, which are reinforced as children move through the provision.

We conclude with a discussion of how CINDLE can be taken forward, and of the importance of networking around good practice. Tracy stresses the importance of two-way sharing, and emphasises that visitors are always welcome at Beach Babies. I leave the nursery on the other side of the house, reflecting that, as with most purposeful trips, you don’t go out the same way you came in.
Meet the new Cambridgeshire Early Years Lead Practitioners for Private and Voluntary Provision (PV)

PV Early Years Lead Practitioners work alongside the local authority in a voluntary capacity to support quality improvement in PV early years provision in Cambridgeshire, including providing support and challenge to PV settings and offering practitioners the chance to observe good practice in their settings.

Heather Wyllie
Heather is currently the Lead Practitioner at Buttons and Bows Pre-School. She started with Buttons and Bows aged 3, as a pre-schooler, and has worked there for ten years and is part of the leadership and management team. Her role within the setting includes supporting other practitioners, leading sessions, overseeing cohort tracking and leading the planning, observation and assessment. Heather has a BA in Early Years and has been part of the team for four Outstanding OFSTED inspections.

Zoe Corley
Zoe is currently the Manager of Little Thetford Acorns and has worked in a range of settings, including as a childminder and as a portage worker for Cambridgeshire County Council, where she worked with children with Down’s syndrome and developmental delays. She completed her BA (Hons) in Early Years in October 2013. Zoe manages both the pre-school and wraparound care at Little Thetford Acorns and whilst managing the setting has completed her Early Years Initial Teacher Training and her Forest School Leader training. Zoe is extremely passionate about Early Years and Childcare and feels driven to provide the best experiences and outcomes for children.

Kristen Dutton
Kristen is nursery manager for Sunflower Nursery and prior to that was a setting manager for 5 years. She has led outstanding settings and has a BA (Hons) in Childhood Studies. She was nominated for Nursery World Manager of the Year Awards 2016. She has recently implemented an Intergenerational Care Scheme between her Pre-School and the local care home nearby. She is passionate about creating enabling environments for children and has learnt about this from Pen Green Centre for Excellence.
Cygnets Pre-School in Peterborough – the outdoor space

A tale of determination, fundraising, blagging and sheer hard work.

Cygnets Pre-School operates from the Family Action Children and Family Centre in Hampton Hargate. As a charity-run setting, funds are always tight, so the staff team have to be very creative when improving, and maintaining, the learning environment.

The outdoor area has proved very challenging over the years. Previously it was mainly a grassed area which became a mud slide for most of the winter months and a jungle for most of the summer.

Staff have spent the last year working together to bring about an amazing transformation. To replace the grass with a mixture of surfaces including artificial grass, rubber mulch and bark, the setting supervisor applied to the local Tesco store to be considered for their “Bags of Help” token vote scheme. After a successful application and voting process, a generous cheque arrived. This was a huge help, but formed only part of the funding jigsaw. The setting secured grants from local councillors and organised their own fundraising events across the year. Parents helped with donations of plants and other materials. The staff approached parents with skills and contacts to secure some free labour. Pinterest and EYFS on a budget became topics of daily conversation in the setting. Wooden pallets, tyres and cable drums started to make an appearance as staff managed to persuade local companies and family members to donate these. The staff team rolled up their sleeves (and sometimes those of their family members) and started painting, digging and charging up the power tools to create new outdoor zones and an outdoor kitchen area. A grandparent helped to build an amphitheatre for the children to enjoy performances from their friends on the new pallet stage.

The result of all this effort is a garden to be proud of. The children are benefitting from some physically challenging areas, quiet space and the beauty of natural planting and gardening opportunities. Staff can already see a difference in the level of engagement outdoors and the learning that is taking place.

The Cygnets team have proved that where there is a will, there is a way. It required lots of hard work and determination, but was worth every moment.

We are updating the fees and wages survey (last undertaken in 2014!) in order to provide a more up to date comparison.

We can only do this with your input and ask that you complete the survey. You can access the survey via our Support for Childcare Business and Governance page on Learn Together website, or via this link: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TPFA4/.

It will only take a couple of minutes and will provide valuable information which can then be shared countywide and uploaded onto the Cambridgeshire Learn Together page.

Survey deadline is 1 November 2018, with results to be published in January 2019.

Alison Morris
Lead Early Years Business and Governance Advisor – Early Years Service
Opening a Childcare on Domestic Premises business

Things to consider if changing from being a childminder... in Cambridgeshire

Changing from being a childminder to offering childcare on domestic premises means you can work with three other people at the same time.

Initially, your PACEY Childminding Support and Development Officer (CSDO) and the Childcare Sufficiency Team at Cambridgeshire County Council will be able to offer advice. Your CSDO will then support you until hand over to the Early Years Advisor for Private Voluntary and Independent settings.

When planning your business, you will need to think about:

- consultation and market research
- business and financial planning for new childcare
- Ofsted standards and regulations
- fee and wage averages in the area
- accessing funding to support new childcare development
- offering the free funded early years education places

For more details on inspection arrangements, as well as planning regulations and considerations, business rates and employing staff, please go to the Learn Together page and access our factsheet on Opening a Childcare on Domestic Premises Business: https://www.cambslearn.together.co.uk/early-years/business-support/support-for-childcare-business-and-governance/.

Don't forget your own development – you will have access to resources like the Staff Supervision Guidance, Early Years Advisers, and a range of other courses like Continuous Provision. You will also have much to gain from setting colleagues through Foundation Years Forums and networks.

Peterborough two-year-old funding – are you using the correct application form?

Following the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in May 2018, and the office move to Sand Martin House, we have had to make a few changes to the paper application form and the leaflet application form.

Please discard all old leaflets and paper applications you hold to ensure parents are completing the correct form. The correct leaflet will show "September 2018" on the back, and the new address on the freepost envelope. The correct paper application form can be downloaded from the council website (www.peterborough.gov.uk/FreeforTwos).

If you require any leaflets, please get in touch by emailing freefortwos@peterborough.gov.uk.
Cambridgeshire’s Annual Training and Support Programme 2018 – 2019 reflects the latest thinking and offers a professional and comprehensive range of training to support staff development at all levels.

There is a wide variety of professional development courses to ensure Cambridgeshire practitioners are up to date with current practice, to meet mandatory requirements, and keep you abreast of national and local agendas. Your feedback and your evaluations have helped us to commission masterclasses and conferences to stretch and refresh your perspective as practitioners.

The Early Years Training Team is proud to be able to offer high quality masterclasses and conferences within the county. The aim of masterclasses is simple: high quality continuous professional development for experienced practitioners, keeping the cost low, and bringing highly sought-after keynote speakers to your locality. This year we look forward to:

- Penny Tassoni MBE who is an education specialist for children learning through play.
- Dr David Whitebread brings a wealth of experience working within play, developmental psychology and early childhood education
- and Meynell Walter known internationally through play and playwork.

We also offer master classes from Specialised Early Years Advisers who share their deeper knowledge and passion to explore different approaches within the early years such as:

- Pedagogical approaches to early years – inspirations and trends
- Supporting gifted and talented children.

You should have all received your training programme in the post. If any Cambridgeshire providers have not received their copy please contact us at eyctraining@cambridgeshire.gov.uk we will endeavour to get it to you.

**Cambridgeshire Early Years and Childcare Training Team – Why choose us?**

The Training Centre delivers accredited early years and childcare qualifications throughout the county. The team strives to reach out to settings and practitioners and adapt to their learning styles/needs. This includes training delivery in the evenings, twilight sessions, term time only, 1-1 tutorials, Skype, distance learning (for some units), online portfolio and loan of text book relevant to the studies being taken. Costs are incredibly low, with the setting/learner paying £175 non-refundable registration fee (subject to eligibility for funding), and the rest of the course being funded.

**Current qualifications being offered**

- Level 2 Certificate Introduction to Early Years Education and Care (Early Years Educator)
- Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce (Early Years Educator)
- Level 3 Diploma in Playwork
- Level 4 Certificate for the Early Years Advanced Practitioner

For more information on the above qualifications and entry requirements log on to: www.cambslearntogether.co.uk or refer to the annual training programme. If you are considering participating in qualification training please register your interest at eyctraining@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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**Did you know?**

**The Early Years and Childcare Service Training Programme**

In the academic year 2017-2018…

- The team delivered **196** training courses
  - **3631** attended the courses until 31 May 2018
  - **495** people cancelled prior to the course
  - **443** people accepted their place on a course but did not attend
  - **96%** of learners said that the training was good or better
  - **98%** of learners were satisfied with the trainer
What delegates said when surveyed 3 months after the conference ...

**Keynote:** Penny Tassoni, 83% of delegates said that her keynote was excellent or inspiring.

**Keynote:** Jean Gross, 84% of delegates said that her keynote was excellent or inspiring.

Every delegate who responded had shared their learning with their team.

Delegates stated that the conference had a significant impact on practice, changes included:

- More communication with parents about the importance of communication & language
- More resources to support the importance of communication & language and further staff training
- We have already run a phonics workshop for parents
- Implemented new experiences to the children that will inspire talking points such as flowers on the table and adding table clothes to breakfast on odd occasions
- Staff are making sure they use lots of different vocabulary with the children so that hear more words as much as possible.

What delegates said about the conference ...

“I feel the conferences are well planned and very beneficial.”

“Great organisation. Knowledgeable speakers, fantastic location.”

“I thoroughly enjoy every year and always leave inspired.”

“In a world that is forever changing, it’s good to keep up to date with areas that might ordinarily be forgotten about.”

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**Book onto our 2019 Early Years Conference now:**

https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/early-years/conferences-and-events/early-years-conference
Early Years Conference 2019 – our biggest conversation!

Let’s Talk...

Narrowing the word gap in the Early Years

Thursday 7 March 2019 or Friday 8 March 2019 • 8.30 am – 4.00 pm
Marriott Hotel, Kingfisher Way, Huntingdon PE29 6FL

Why is this so important?
The development of communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins the future success for all children in Cambridgeshire.

Our 2019 conference will focus on enriching children’s communication language and literacy to enhance approaches for teachers and practitioners to underpin their future success across the Early Learning Goals.

To support schools and providers with this priority we have changed the focus of the Early Years Conference 2019.

Inspired to reflect...
Throughout this conference delegates will be inspired to reflect on current practice and consider new ways in which children can learn through having playful experiences; every day, in the moment, as it happens...

Narrowing the word gap in the early years
...focusing on how to develop the power of thinking in order to narrow the communication gap, whilst supporting children’s communication and thinking skills through every day activities.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough together represent a large and diverse area, and within our region, many children’s communication, language and literacy levels are significantly lower than the expected level for their age when they reach the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

‘A key priority for us all is to ‘Accelerate the progress of disadvantaged children and young people in the acquisition and development of communication, language and reading….. For those children who are behind during the early years, many remain behind during their primary and secondary education’ (DfE Social Mobility Report, 2017-2020).

Join us...
For a focus on communication, language and literacy – both a national and local priority.

This is a one day conference, which due to its popularity we are delivering twice!

Keynote speakers
Di Chilvers is an advisory consultant in early childhood education having worked in the early year’s sector for over 40 years as a Nursery Nurse, Teacher, Senior Lecturer, Adviser and National Strategies Regional Adviser. For more information about Di please see her website at www.watchmegrow.uk.

Keynote:
Serve and Return Conversations – Making the link between talking and thinking: Di’s keynote will unpick the crucial process of serve and return conversations with babies, toddlers and young children and how they underpin the development of communication, language and understanding. Di uses Learning Stories and examples from practice to show how this all leads to Sustained Shared Thinking.

‘The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development’ (draft (pilot) EYFSP for schools

A further keynote speaker and details of workshops to be announced shortly.

To book your place, please visit:
https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/early-years/conferences-and-events/early-years-conference/
PVI setting members who have purchased the Training and Support Bundle can book two conference places of their choice (subject to availability). You will NOT be able to use training credits for the above conference.
The Team is registered with awarding organisation NCFE/CACHE to deliver accredited qualifications for early years and childcare qualifications.

As part of our accreditation, we are inspected annually on management systems, administration, resources including staff, assessment and internal quality assurance. Throughout the inspection, the External Quality Insurer (EQA) samples evidence across all staff, all qualifications and different types of work submitted by learners. We are delighted to announce the inspector awarded us Excellent throughout the visit with no future actions.

Extracts quoted by the EQA within her inspection:

‘The team at Early Years Training Centre has a good mix of knowledge, competencies, industry experience and skills, to ensure a solid foundation of assessment practice, internal verification and administration is in place from the start. This is a good example of what can be achieved with the right people in the right roles. The systems and processes introduced do exactly what is required without taking over from the main objective of teaching, learning and achieving. Staff responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment and internal quality assurance teams are clearly defined, allocated and understood’.

Assessment: ‘The evidence produced and reviewed was very good, with some learners addressing the required outcomes at a higher level but still within their capabilities. The resources available clearly indicated the aspects of support and assessment required within the qualifications, this related well to the requirements of the levels of the qualification while also addressing learners’ needs’.

‘Internal Quality Assurers are aware that a part of their role is to ensure Internal Quality Assurance focuses on the accuracy and consistency of assessor judgements against the requirements of the learning outcomes to ensure the required standards are being met. The IQAs are competent and experienced. There is an appropriate, effective Internal Quality Assurance and Standardisation process in place which verifies assessor decisions, provides appropriate feedback and ensures all staff are aware of their responsibilities towards the learners on programme, and fully understand the requirements of the learning outcomes as set out in the qualification specification. Through reviewing the commentary and standardised decisions, it is clear Helen Walls and Lisa North are aware of the requirements of the qualifications and best practice in regard to Internal Quality Assurance. The IQAs have worked well with the planned sampling strategy, which allowed for a well-balanced sample of assessment practice to be reviewed. Feedback provided a good audit trail of evidence of achievement of learning outcomes, reinforcing and providing examples of good practice identified in the assessment process. Positive guidance and encouragement was/is taking place, clearly evidencing that competence pays of well in this pivotal role’.

Frances Jackson
EQA NCFE/CACHE August 2018
What’s happening with qualifications – your essential update

The early years sector is facing unprecedented challenges in recruitment. To meet staff ratios in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), you must ensure that your staff have the required qualifications. You must also ensure that they have access to continuous professional development, which is not only crucial to providing the best outcomes for children – it also helps you motivate and retain your workforce.

Whilst some areas of the Workforce Strategy that was published last year have not materialised, the Level 2 and 3 qualifications are being revised and there will shortly be a new early years Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCo) qualification.

**Key changes**

**Level 2 Early Years qualifications**: All current accredited Level 2 qualifications are currently continuing to run. However, the Department for Education (DfE) has now set out new requirements for Level 2 qualifications, which will include more SEND and Child Protection training. These qualifications should be ready for delivery at the beginning of the 2019 academic year – the awarding organisations (i.e. CACHE, Pearson) are currently developing them.

**Level 3 Early Educator**: Previously, learners were required to have a GCSE grade C or above in English and maths. However, Functional Skills at level two are now accepted in lieu of GCSEs. Completers must have also undertake a Paediatric First Aid course within three months of completing the Level 3.

**Level 3 practitioners working with children with SEND**: The DfE has produced a new job description and qualification specification. The Awarding Organisations are now working on developing an accredited qualification for SEND staff (there will also be a qualification at Level 2).

**T-Levels**: Childcare T-Levels are currently being developed as a vocational alternative to A-Levels. The DfE has confirmed that the Education and Childcare T-Level with an early years specialism will enable students to be counted into the ratios at Level 3.

**Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS)**: The School Direct route to EYTS has now closed. However, the graduate entry, post-graduate employment-based and undergraduate route are still available. Government funding is available to support this. For further information visit https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-initial-teacher-training-itt-a-guide-for-employers.

This information was correct at the time of going to print, further changes will be communicated via Early Years and Childcare News Round-Up and www.cambslearntogether.co.uk.

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New in Cambridgeshire: Qualifications funding for Childminders and Childminding Assistants

This year, we have limited funding for Childminders and Childminding Assistants to study for an early years qualification through the Early Years and Childcare Training Centre. The funding is subject to availability and applicants must meet funding criteria. If you do apply please ensure that you FULLY complete your application form and send any evidence requested. Applications will not be considered until we receive all information.

- Level 2 Certificate Introduction to Early Years Education and Care (Early Years Educator) – for Childminding Assistants
- Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce (Early Years Educator) – for Childminders who have GCSE maths and English at grade C or above. Level 2 functional skills are also acceptable.

We have uploaded some useful resources providing guidance on bookings process and a FAQ document for qualifications funding for childminders and childminding assistants. To access these documents, visit our Training Centre page at: https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/early-years/workforce-development/early-years-and-childcare-training-centre.
The Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Opportunity Area is one of ten across the country funded by the Department for Education. It aims to improve life chances for children and young people living in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, through a range of priorities.

Feedback from key stakeholders has identified the Early Years as an area where we can make a real difference, and this has been endorsed by our local Partnership Board. The evidence shows that disadvantaged children in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire have lower attainment than disadvantaged children nationally. Over the next two years of the Opportunity Area programme, we will therefore be focusing on improving language, communication and literacy skills for our young children.

As part of this work, Paula Durrant has been appointed to the role of Opportunity Area Specialist Lead for Early Years. Paula is a highly experienced Early Years specialist with an operational background in the local area. She will be working directly with Early Years practitioners in the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector and in schools to deepen our understanding of the current picture of success.

Over the coming months, she will be developing new collaborative schemes across the Early Years sector, supporting you to enhance your current provision and share and spread best practice. She will therefore be making contact with settings in the area and visiting you to understand your concerns, ideas and priorities. If you would like to contact Paula directly, please email Paula.Durrant@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

There will also be a number of funded programmes that Early Years providers can engage with throughout the course of the Opportunity Area programme. These will include:

- Funded Phonics training
- Funded training in mental health and social and emotional wellbeing
- Sessions for parents to support with concerns about their child’s SEND/mental health concerns.

To access our delivery plan, please visit https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-and-opportunity-areas and click on ‘Fenland and East Cambridgeshire.

And please keep an eye on our website https://fenlandeastcambridgeshireoa.co.uk/ and look out for emails from Paula for updates.

Talking Together in Cambridgeshire

It’s been a busy summer for the Talking Together in Cambridgeshire (TTiC) team. The funding panel met in July, resulting in 15 projects across the project areas being offered awards. The successful groups are delivering an exciting range of programmes and approaches to benefit many children and families. Helen Wootton has been fully occupied organising the paperwork and liaising with all of the organisations involved.

Charlotte Tainsh and Harriet Gervasio attended the National Play Day event, held on 1 August in glorious weather at the Spinney in Wisbech. Charlotte and Harriet enjoyed the atmosphere at this busy community event, chatting to families and introducing a pebble painting activity.

Cambridgeshire Music, working with Youth Music and TTiC, delivered a family music session for under-fives at the Oasis Child and Family Centre during the holiday. That. Lots of fun, action, singing and musical instruments were enjoyed by babies, children and adults alike – the large drums proving particularly popular! During September and October, Sing, Chat and Rhyme sessions will be running in the Oasis and Wisbech South Child and Family Centres.

Through our work with the National Literacy Trust (NLT), we are delighted to report the accountancy firm KPMG is gifting the National Literacy Trust’s Literacy Toolkits to 24 schools in the TTiC project area. The toolkits include 50 books for children aged 2–11 years, guidance and templates to help schools engage parents and the community and membership to the NLT for one year.

New training for practitioners supporting children’s communication and language development will be delivered over the autumn term, and Helen is also working on a book sharing course. The team are keen to share ideas and information – you can keep up to date with the project work and print off resources including the pebble leaflet by visiting the Talking Together in Cambridgeshire Facebook page.

facebook.com/talkingtogethercambs
Sue Church from Eyrescroft Pre-school explains one child’s pathway to support.

We first met the family in April 2016 when the little boy was 2 years old. He took a little time to settle in but soon formed a lovely relationship with his key person. He needed extra support to feel secure as he separated from Mummy, who stayed with him over lunch time to help him develop those important key person relationships.

Over the next few months we provided activities and support to help him develop and make progress. However it became clear that he showed some areas of development that were not in line with a usual pattern of progress. These included communication, speech, social interaction and managing his behaviour in the setting and at home.

With consultation and support of Mum and Dad, the setting referred to the Early Childhood Specialist (Inclusion) in the Early years team to seek further advice and develop a plan for progress. They visited the setting to discuss with his key person and setting SENCo and together planned some initial targets for him.

Alongside this referral, Mum also agreed to support from the Speech and Language therapy service. Mum attended a workshop with his key person. This was able to deliver support and advice for his stammer.

It was agreed that the most appropriate pathway for him would be to seek further support and possible referral through the Early Support Pathway.

Mum attended a meeting in the pre-school to complete the Early Help Assessment, which included some in depth discussion around the family’s circumstances and the child’s development highlighting strengths and any areas where support would be required. A sensitive member of staff enabled the family to provide a detailed assessment that was sent to the Early Help Team and his case was agreed to be heard at the multi-agency panel meeting. The setting was invited to attend and his key person went and was able to talk about him and his strengths and areas where he needed some support.

It was a very thorough assessment and at this point it was agreed that he could continue to be supported through SEN support targets in the setting and that parents would be invited to attend some workshops to help them to understand and support his development.

Over the coming months, he made some considerable progress, especially in terms of his speech and language. However he continued to have some difficulty in social interaction and some other behavioural difficulties, especially in the home which was having an impact on his younger brother and family.

The setting sought advice from Sue Ishmael, the Early Support Coordinator in the Early Years Team who was really helpful and said that as he was still within the Early Support Pathway and was still below the age expected outcomes the setting would only need to provide a letter and he would be considered again at Panel. This happened in only a few days and this time it was agreed that he would be referred to be seen by a paediatrician.

The child was seen at the Child Development Centre for an assessment and the setting and family are now following the advice given to provide him with the most effective transition to school in September 2018. This shows the positive outcome for both the child and family.

Sue Church
Manager of Eyrescroft Early Years and Childcare Centre Pre-school

Benefits of the Early Help Process and the positive outcome for the child and family in Peterborough
Childminders and children in the great outdoors…

…in Hinchingbrooke Country Park

The PACEY Childminding Support and Development Officers for Huntingdonshire and Fen and East arranged a fun day and picnic at Hinchingbrooke Country Park for 19 July 2018 and invited Childminders and their assistants from Huntingdonshire and Fen and East. 30 Childminders, five assistants and lots of children came along to the event. There were activities for all the children to take part in, making smelly cocktails using natural resources found around the forest, bug hunts, colour searches, parachute games (loaned from the Huntingdon and St Neots Child and Family Centres), and pond dipping. Childminders and their assistants were able to take the opportunity to quiz their Childminding Support and Development Officers and receive up-to-date information about development opportunities including the Childminding Conference.

Tracey Holliday from Huntingdon Child and Family Centre spoke to childminders about what the Child and Family Centre are offering, including events taking place throughout the summer. We were fortunate enough to be loaned the outdoor classroom by the team at Hinchingbrooke Country Park, as it was a very hot day, and this gave everyone shelter to get out of the direct sunlight. Childminders and their children were also able to go into the apiary to see the bees at work. Everyone then sat to enjoy a picnic and then went off on the exercise equipment, zip wire and the playground equipment. We would like to thank everyone who came along to enjoy this day full of learning, exercise and fun.

Tina Summerfield and Elaine Baker
PACEY CSDOs

…in Milton Country Park

In June, childminders from Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire enjoyed a morning of fun and exploration at Milton Country Park.

21 childminders and 54 children joined PACEY Childminding Support and Development Officers Carol Grange and Deborah Townsend, together with Early Years Advisor and Forest School specialist Heather Jebb.

The morning was spent in the ‘Wild Place’, where everyone enjoyed firelighting, den building, creative activities and some forest school training.

Here are some comments from the day…

“It was absolutely lovely! Our thanks go to Carol, Heather & Deborah for organizing such a fun childminding event in a safe and fun environment for all the children. We enjoyed seeing and chatting to some other childminders too from outside of the village.

Our children’s favourite part of the event was collecting sticks, stones etc. to build a campfire, we thought it was great too because they all showed great enjoyment in working as a team.

Our favourite part of the event was watching the children explore the environment and use their imagination and strength to climb, build campfires and run up the big hills, helping each other when required.

Although we have booked this special place for events before, each time we go there with the children it reminds us of what a wonderful safe environment it is and what wonderful learning opportunities there are for every child. We shall be returning for more children to get the chance to enjoy this special place.”

Lynda and Laura Molloy
Milton Childminders
I CAN Training for Childminders

My colleague and myself attended the I CAN training in Chatteris at the end of June 2018. We both thought the training was well executed and we thoroughly enjoyed it.

We learnt a lot about our own practice and how we can improve the way we communicate with the children in our setting according to their individual needs.

The resources we got were fantastic and an asset to our setting. We spoke about the training to parents and how we plan to implement this into their children’s day.

As soon as we returned from the training we implemented the training we had learnt into our planning. We especially liked the I CAN cards which provide us with activities to support communication and language and understanding in children. We arranged daily activities with these cards inside and outside our setting.

For example: Understanding what is said – Lets go shopping

For this activity we arranged an outing to the local supermarket for the children to be involved in a food shop. We made the children some simple shopping lists which had both pictures and text.

The children had their own trolley and list and enjoyed exploring the supermarket to find the items. Such a simple activity allowed so much language and understanding to flourish. We extended the outing back at our setting as the children got out the shopping tills and lists and played shops.

Learning and using new words: Blowing bubbles

Another activity we enjoyed with the children was blowing bubbles. The activity allows children to comment on the bubbles they blow, giving them the opportunity to learn new words they hear from the adult.

All the children loved having a go themselves and watching the bubbles they blow fly up high. We also used a bubble machine which the younger children loved watching and trying to pop. We sang a bubble popping song which all the children joined in with.

We intend to carry on implementing this I CAN training into our setting and planning as we think it suits the children we have in our care. It is easily adaptable and can be extended in all areas of learning.

If anyone is thinking of attending the I CAN training we both recommend they take the opportunity.

Michaela Wilson and Kerrie Forsey
Childminders

Summer sports day in St Neots

This year, the childminding community in St Neots kicked off the summer holidays with a sports day planned by Nadine Hastings and Caroline Jackson at a local play area.

Eleven childminders and over fifty children enjoyed traditional sports day events such as egg-and-spoon, bean-bag balancing and sack races, followed with a group picnic and free play in the park and woods.

The children supported and cheered on each other in their teams and went home with a well-deserved medal. Other combined events have included Splash Park and zoo visits, geocaching, treasure hunts and much more.

We are extremely supportive of each other, and proactive in organising a variety of events. Our fun-packed summer provided a great opportunity for young and older children to come together.

Caroline Jackson
Childminder, St Neots
Peterborough mother and daughter team is graded outstanding!

Working together for 10 years, Anne Garghan and Sarah Garghan-Watson are a well-oiled machine sharing the same vision. Anne recently received her first outstanding report when the inspector visited the setting in May 2018. Sarah received her second outstanding during the same visit after previously being graded outstanding in 2013. They put their success down to their communication with parents, commitment to continual professional development and their love of childminding.

The inspector praised the pair by saying “all children make rapid progress given their starting points and capabilities... children thrive in the childminders’ care.”

Anne responded: "It's a real privilege to be graded outstanding, and to be recognised for the work we do. We are a part of these children’s lives, and do anything we can for them and their families. We are more than just childcare to our parents. It's an honour to be asked to care for any child – the least I can do is be the best I possibly can be.”

Sarah added: “This is more than just a job. I am fully committed to all of the children and their families and nothing is too much trouble. Parents can contact me at any time for advice on anything they need support with, such as teething, changing days or times, to supporting the learning at home.

Outstanding doesn't mean perfect, as there are always improvements to be made. When graded outstanding in 2013 it just made me even more focused than ever to continually improve, through constantly reviewing my practice and seeking parents and other professionals opinions.”

We make use of the outdoor environment. Instead of just painting with the children, we take painting outdoors to the field or the woods. We make the school run a fun learning experience, ensuring we leave in plenty of time to stop, explore and talk about what they see in the environment, such as nature, traffic and how to keep ourselves safe.

As childminders, the most important thing for us, is children having fun whilst in our care

Outstanding childminders
Cambridgeshire

Helen Marriott, Haddenham
Amanda Strong, Longstanton
Michaela Wilson, Hartford
Samantha Hastings, Needingworth

Outstanding childminders
Peterborough

Wendy Benton, Hampton
Sarah Garghan-Watson, Bretton
Anne Garghan, Bretton
Cambridgeshire’s new approach to supporting families launched in April 2018.

The redesigned Child and Family Centres will better meet the needs of our growing and rural county, with services being delivered in a broader range of outreach venues, and an extended focus on families with children of all ages. Services included in the new offer are designed to improve outcomes, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in:

- Child development
- School readiness

Supported by improved

- Parenting aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills
- Child and family health and life chances

Child and Family Centres are the route to access one-to-one Family Worker support following an Early Help Assessment referral. Family Workers can support with any issues affecting the family, e.g. domestic abuse, mental health, drugs and alcohol, finances, housing, behaviour and relationships.

Families can also access:

- Parenting programmes
- Adult learning courses
- Health clinics and other related services
- Focused group work, e.g. for young parents, for children with SEND
- Open access play activities based on the Early Years Foundation Stage in Centres and other outreach locations.
- General support and signposting, e.g. help to access Foodbank and other community or voluntary services.

Wisbech Child and Family Centre outreach

‘Happy Hands’ is a five-week programme developed as part of the Child and Family Centre provision, to enable families and young people living rurally to access services.

It comprises:

- Week 1 – Messy Play
- Week 2 – Music & Movement
- Week 3 – Messy Play
- Week 4 – Read & Rhyme
- Week 5 – Cook with Me

And was a great success with over 25 families attending it regularly.

We will now be running it other rural areas of our reach area including, Tydd St Giles, Parson Drove, Wisbech St Mary and Murrow. It is hoped this will help to promote Child and Family Centres and to support those who feel isolated rurally. Feedback received and attendance will help us to continuously review the offer.
...in East Cambridgeshire

East Cambridgeshire Child and Family Centre held a range of activities for children of all ages this summer in new outreach venues, including a Pirate Picnic in Ely Country Park, a nature walk in Burwell Millennium Woods and a sports day at High Barns Play Park.

Our messy play events were particularly popular, and so we are scheduling more messy play events over the coming months.

We are always keen to work with early years settings and childminders to deliver activities throughout the year. For example, if you have a specific interest in improving language or communication skills for your children, we could plan a joint project or activity, e.g. a Bookstart party. Please contact Mary Barnes at mary.barnes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to find out more.

...in Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire Child and Family Centre staff put together various programmes of events to keep the whole family occupied this summer. And what glorious weather we have had! While many of our families across the county enjoyed the consistency and much needed routine of regular groups to keep their little ones entertained, Families turned out in their hundreds to attend a number of summer events held across the district by Child and Family Centre staff. The children engaged in themed craft activities, fun sporting events and a wide variety of good old-fashioned fun to celebrate the summer.

Across St Neots, families enjoyed the traditions of hook-a-duck, lucky dips and face painting as well as windmill making, balloon blowing and a selection of summer crafts, which engaged their creative skills. Children also enjoyed experimenting with smell, colour, texture and taste as they created their own edible ice creams using angel delight, blancmange, cones and hundreds and thousands. Parents and carers were encouraged to join in and embrace the sensations, whilst our regular volunteers rose to the challenge to keep these events running smoothly, for which we are all very grateful.

Many of our centres, zones and external groups used parachutes, enjoying games and songs to make the most of the summer sun outside (and inside when the weather proved a challenge!). Families teamed up to use songs and soft balls and bean bags to extend the activities, and the children used targets, hoops and beanbags to create their own mini physical obstacle course.

The centres teamed up with outside organisers to offer a diverse and varied range of activities. Safari Stu rode into St Neots, bringing with him a selection of exotic creatures – spiders, skunks and snakes. Staff demonstrated the hands-on approach consistently associated with the centres, joining in to role-model to some of the younger (and older!) attendees who were less inclined to feel, touch, smell or hold.

Moo Music, a regular favourite across many of our centres, joined us for the morning at our outside event. Children engaged in a selection of songs, music and props, and as a result, we have new recruits signing up for our September sessions.

Sports and exercise came in the form of Activity Kids, with Stephen and his crew of two young helpers. Stephen very kindly gave up a morning of his time for free, encouraging children and their carers to put their skills to the test as they balanced on balance boards, jumped through hoops and moved their bodies in a variety of ways, in a fun workout for all ages.

In Bury, Alconbury, Somersham and Ramsey, Oak Activities offered a selection of sports including rugby and cricket, for children no matter what their age or ability. Their ethos is to promote teamwork, fitness, wellbeing and co-ordination, and they cater for those with disabilities or reduced movement.

Child and Family Centre staff used the Community centre to set up a session of inflatable fun and soft play activities for children up to the age of eight.

Families across Wyton, Brampton, Huntingdon, St Ives, Needingworth and Buckden also enjoyed sports days set up by Child and Family Centre workers from St Ives, and children tried out various sporting activities such as football and tennis on the greens and parks, and in halls across the villages. The Community Ark kindly donated giant games to add to the sessions.

A huge thank you to all of our staff, volunteers, organisers and families for making our summer a successful and memorable one. Our regular timetable of activities resumes in September, with some exciting new groups on the programme to cater for all ages and abilities.

Sarah Scotcher
Child and Family Centre Worker
Summer time fun events in Barnardo’s and Spurgeon’s Children’s Centres in Peterborough

Spurgeon’s singing groups, as you can see, are very popular

Messy play at Spurgeon’s Children’s Centre

Making spacecrafts at Barnardo’s Children’s Centre

Learning about space in cathedral garden after our trip to see Tim Peake’s spacecraft (Barnardo’s)
Safeguarding and Child Protection

**News and updates – relevant for all professionals working in early years, after school and childminding settings**

The following pages offer all staff interesting and relevant knowledge and information relating to safeguarding children. We hope to build on key information you gained at basic or designated child protection training. If you have any further content you would like included we would always be pleased to hear from you.

With best wishes,

Gemma Hope (Early Years Safeguarding Manager), Fiona Fletcher and Allison Box (Safeguarding Children Advisers) Education Safeguarding Team, Cambridgeshire County Council: 
ecpsgeneral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Alison Riley Early Childhood Specialist and Safeguarding Lead, Peterborough City Council 
alison.riley@peterborough.gov.uk

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**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Early Years Safeguarding Conference**

**Saturday 24 November 2018 • 9.30 am – 3.30 pm**

The Hallmark Hotel, Bar Hill, Cambridgeshire CB3 8EU

Designated Persons for Child Protection from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have a unique opportunity to expand their Safeguarding knowledge and skills by attending this exclusive and informative local conference. Join us to hear two expert keynote speakers in their field, who promise to inform, inspire and influence our thinking about safeguarding practice.

**Keynote speakers:**
- Dr Graham Hill – Child Sexual Abuse: the perpetrators perspective
- Dr Pooky Knightsmith – Building resilience in children in the face of adversity

**Afternoon Workshops**
(choice of 2 per delegate):
- Child Sexual Abuse, the perpetrators perspective – Dr Graham Hill (building on morning keynote)
- Building resilience in children the face of adversity – Dr Pooky Knightsmith (building on morning keynote)
- Domestic Abuse – Safety planning support and guidance for DPs – Jackie Cannell, Education Safeguarding Team
- Applying serious case reviews to safeguarding practice – Sally Giddins, Safeguarding Children Board

Keynotes and workshops may be subject to change. Workshop choices will be requested after booking.

This key annual conference is relevant for all Designated Persons for Child Protection (DP’s) in early years, after school clubs, holiday schemes and childminding settings across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Hot lunch and refreshments are included
Ample free parking
Easy access from the A14

**Fees:**
- Cambridgeshire early years members: £70
- Cambridgeshire early years non-members: £90
- Peterborough settings: £100
- Out of county: £120

To book, visit Learn Together website and click on ‘Course Directory’ and ‘Early years courses’. Scroll to bottom of page and click ‘Conferences’. Any questions, contact the Training Centre on 01223 706349.
Peterborough Early Help

Early Help aims to provide help for children and families with emerging unmet needs at the right time. It recognises that additional help may be required at various times of their lives to help rebuild their resilience and capacity to manage. Support is also provided when families have received specialist support and need a reduced level of support to sustain and continue the progress made.

Early Help Assessments
We promote the use of the Early Help Assessment as the tool for recording the family’s unmet needs. These are completed by any professional who comes into direct contact with families, and who has identified more than one unmet need that would benefit from a multi-agency approach. Training is provided for all professionals.

What does it mean in practice?
All families on whom an Early Help Assessment is opened will have:
• a named Lead Professional
• one holistic family assessment
• one family action plan.

Accessing support
Peterborough recognises there will be some families who need greater support than that available from within the community and will require universal and targeted services. Additional resources can be accessed via a range of Early Help panels in Peterborough. Detailed information on the range of services and support available at Early Help can be seen in the document: https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/healthcare/early-help/peterborough-early-help-strategy.

Early Support Pathway

The service is a pre-school-age service for families with a child who has a complex health needs.

Children will have significant and profound learning, sensory impairment, physical impairment, social and communication difficulties, autism, and other disabilities and conditions that will impact on their lifelong development and learning.

Professional referrals are received through an Early Help assessment. An Early Support Multi-agency meeting happens every two weeks to look at the referrals and to suggest recommendations to support the child and family. A wide range of services could be involved to help support the family including Barnardo’s, Spurgeons, Sleep Solutions, Portage, Early Support Inclusion Officer, a Paediatrician and wider Child Development Team. For further information please contact the Early Support Coordinator on 01733 317411, or email susan.ishmael@peterborough.gov.uk.

Further Information
For further information please contact Peterborough Early Help Helpline on 01733 863649 or email earlyhelp@peterborough.gov.uk.


Multi Agency Support Group (MASG) panels

There are three locality-based MASG panels operating across the city in South, Central & East and North West & Rural. Each panel meets fortnightly and consists of a multi-agency group of professionals that use their skills, knowledge and experience to consider multi-agency interventions that will best meet the assessed needs of a child/family. The panels are designed to provide additional targeted support through a co-ordinated approach. Access to the panel is via an up-to-date Early Help Assessment or Children’s Social Care Assessment which is being stepped down for support at a targeted level.
Consent, respectful touch and the voice of the child

There was a backlash from an interview with Deanne Carson, an Australian Early Years Educator who suggested parents ask their infants questions such as: ‘I’m going to change your nappy now, is that okay?’

She noted that if you pause, wait for body language indicators and for the child to make eye contact then you are letting that child know that their response matters. This is about being respectful, and teaching children that they have autonomy over their own bodies, and that, as adults, we will listen to and respect their wishes. When we are engaging with babies and young children, for example to change nappies, we could share with the baby what we are about to do e.g. ‘Sam, I’m going to change your nappy now’. During the nappy-changing routine, we should engage in talking to the baby or child, maintaining eye contact, show respect by being fully attentive and by not multi-tasking.

Babies and children send us cues all the time. We need to tune in to them respectfully. When a baby turns her head away when offered another mouthful of food, she is saying quite clearly ‘I’ve had enough’. When caregivers say ‘Just one more’ or ‘open the tunnel for the train – here it comes! The message we are sending is ‘I know you have a message that you are communicating to me – but I’m ignoring it’.

It is important to let children know that they are in control of who touches their bodies and how this is done. By saying, “I don’t want you to jump up and down on me. Please stop’, this models how to request the respect of one’s wishes. We need to tell children ‘No’, and have them be ok with that. ‘No, I don’t feel like being hugged at the moment but you can sit near me.’

Consent education is also about non-verbal cues – how does a person’s body language and facial expressions show that they do or don’t want to be touched? Children can get this right – we know what someone wants, even without a verbal ‘yes’ or ‘no’. If a child flicks her plait away, she doesn’t want you playing with her hair. Or when a friend shuffles over on the mat, someone is sitting too close.

We can help by raising a generation of children who ensure that each physical interaction they instigate is wanted and welcomed.

Protective Behaviours aims to empower children with skills and knowledge that encourages them to have adventures and fun whilst feeling safe. We should teach them:

• the correct names for all of their body parts
• the difference between safe and unsafe touch (and NOT good and bad)
• not to keep secrets that they feel uncomfortable / unsafe with
• what to do if they are touched inappropriately
• general assertiveness — especially in relation to their own body

We need to be attuned to the child’s world and to pay attention not only to what the child says but also what they are not saying.

Look out for the Protective Behaviours Learning Event on 1 March 2019 at CPDC, Cambridge — further details will be posted on the DP Knowledge Hub and provided at the Early Years Safeguarding Conference on 24 November 2018.

Fiona Fletcher
Safeguarding Children Adviser
Disqualification by association no longer applies to childcare practitioners in non-domestic settings and schools

Changes to the disqualification by association rule by the Government for early years and after school childcare providers came into effect on 1 September 2018.

The Department for Education has removed the rule banning early years staff from working with children, in non-domestic settings and schools, because of who they live with. Under the previous legislation, an individual living with someone convicted or cautioned for a violent or sexual offence was disqualified from working with children. This applied to household members such as partners, children, including foster children, flatmates and lodgers. Practitioners were able to apply for a waiver from Ofsted, but it could take weeks to be processed by the inspectorate, causing difficulties for staff in settings who do not pose a risk.

It is hoped that the removal of this requirement will go some way to reducing legislative pressures for childcare providers.

Childminders please note: Where registered childcare is provided on domestic premises, the disqualification by association arrangements continue to apply.

New Committee Members and Charity Trustees – Have you informed Ofsted?

If your setting is committee governed and there are changes to your committee membership, Ofsted have specific requirements that must be followed within set timescales (As noted within the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017, Section 3.77 and 3.78):

Committee’s should inform Ofsted about all new members/trustees elected or previous members/trustees leaving the committee. This must be done as soon as reasonably practicable, but always within 14 days of election at the AGM. Ofsted can be notified by using the Ofsted EY3 form:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-and-childcare-providers-ey3-changes-to-individuals

New committee members/trustees must complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Ofsted strongly recommends that committee members/trustees also join the DBS update service. Further information: www.ofsteddbsapplication.co.uk

New committee members/trustees must complete an Ofsted Declaration and Consent Form (EY2). This must happen once the DBS check has been completed and the disclosure notice received. All new committee members, including nominated persons, must then complete the Ofsted EY2 form. Ofsted then establishes suitability for each person and update the setting’s registration details. Ofsted Online Service:
https://online.ofsted.gov.uk/OnlineOfsted/default.aspx

Committee members/trustees who remain on the committee for longer than one year do not need to complete these processes again with Ofsted or the DBS so long as they have previously been deemed suitable by Ofsted.

Additional information for trustees only:
There are rules which disqualify certain people from being a trustee or senior manager of a charity. Being disqualified means that a person can’t take on, or stay in, a charity trustee position or senior manager position. Further information: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/automatic-disqualification-rules-for-charity-trustees-and-charity-positions.
Acknowledgements

Articles, letters and pictures

We are keen to receive all contributions. Please send to Jigsaw Editor, Early Years Service, Cambridgeshire County Council, Box OCT 1215, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP / email: eycinfo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Notes for contributors

Ideally, articles should be 300-500 words and smaller contributions and news items are also welcome. Please include good quality photographs if possible, as separate files, ideally 1 megabyte or larger in size. All photos should have parental permission to print, for any children shown. To request a guidance note for contributors, please email the Early Years Communications Team: eycinfo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

The editors reserve the right to edit articles for length and content in order to best meet the needs of the audience.

Copy deadline for the next edition of Jigsaw is 17 December 2018

Only one Jigsaw, many people? You can also find Jigsaw online at www.cambslearntogether.co.uk – Early Years and Childcare – Resources – Jigsaw

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Cover pic: Colourful wellies at Beach Babies in Landbeach.

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