

Early Years Workforce Newsletter

Autumn 2020

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Goodbye and thank you - from Jane Routen

Early Years Training Officer - Early Education Development Team

To all friends, colleagues, practitioners in the Early Years sector, I send my good wishes and thanks, as I leave to take up retirement.

I have enjoyed working so much, that it took me a while to decide to plunge into the retirement lake, but I know I have a super husband and our families, waiting with 'warm towels'. I know we will have more time to give love n hugs to them all. I cannot wait, **so on your way COVID 19 Jane Routen has spoken.**

Everyone knows how much I love teaching, I shall miss it so much, especially sharing anecdotes (permissions given,) about our experiences as practitioners, mothers, managers, grandmas, creche workers, nursery workers, childminders and play workers.

We learn from each other and it helped us put the Early Years Foundation Stage into context and I hoped made the training 'real'.

I know you all celebrate the **Unique children** you live and work with and hope you agree, we are in a privileged position to make an enormous difference to the next generation.

Keep up the **GREAT WORK**, and remember my favourite phrase, "*you are human beings not human doings..... take time out with children to be.*"

Recovering from Lockdown: listening to young children

Communication develops from the earliest days of life through positive, loving interactions in supportive spaces. Early learning includes opportunities for active play, exploring surroundings, following a child's interests, nurturing creativity and encouraging independence. All these activities support early language development. Although children develop at their own pace, a child's early language is a sign of their current wellbeing (health and happiness), and a predictor of their potential life chances. Language delay at five years can have implications for children's longer term social, emotional development and learning.

Although we don't know the full impact of Lockdown in Leicester on children and families, we do know that there are many ways in which everyone in their lives can support young children to express their feelings, feel listened to and be encouraged to make choices every day.

The [Health for Under 5s](#) website is just one of the many places to find support and advice on developing young children's communication skills. The council is working with partners to develop an online Speech, Language and Communication Pathway that will bring together support for Speech, Language and Communication needs at the right time, in the right way, in the right place. Combining details of local support (digital, telephone and face-to-face) with national guidance and tools, this will be an interactive experience accessible to families and the wider workforce.

We will continue to involve children, families and staff in improving support for language development in recovery from COVID-19. Look out for details of our joint activities at the Early Years network or contact SLCProject@leicester.gov.uk to find out more.

Coronavirus Financial support for your business

A range of Coronavirus (COVID-19) support is available, from the Government.

Use the [business support finder](#) to see what support is available for you and your business.

Some of the schemes may have closed some will be closing soon and some new schemes have been announced by the government. Most cash grant schemes administered by the local authority have closed but there is a new **Test and Trace support payments** scheme for Leicester City residents who are required to self-isolate - click [here](#) for more information.

Providers can also refer to our [Business support - tools and tips \(COVID-19\)](#) for information and further links to a range of free business planning tools which providers can access for support with business planning.

Updates - Jobs related support schemes

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The [CJRS](#) or the 'furlough' scheme will end on 31 October 2020 and will be replaced by the Jobs Support Scheme (see below).

There have already been some changes to the CJRS in the recent months:

- from July: employers have been able to bring furloughed employees back to work for any amount of time and any shift pattern, while still being able to claim CJRS grant for the hours not worked.
 - from August: employers have had to pay Class 1 employer NICs and pension contributions for furloughed staff.
 - from September: the level of CJRS grant reduced from 80%* to 70%* of employee wages
 - from October: the CJRS reduced further to 60%* of employee wages
- (* subject to certain caps/limits).

Job Retention Bonus scheme

This scheme was announced by the government in July 2020.

- It aims to support and encourage employers to keep on furloughed employees after the CJRS ends on 31 October 2020.
- Employers will receive a **one-off payment of £1,000** for every employee who they have previously claimed for under the furlough scheme as long as they remain continuously employed with them until at least 31 January 2021.
- To be eligible, employees must earn at least £520 a month on average between 1 November 2020 and 31 January 2021.
- More information is available in the policy paper for this scheme which can be accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/job-retention-bonus>

Jobs Support Scheme (from November 2020)

This scheme will open on 1 November 2020 and run for 6 months and is designed to protect viable jobs in businesses to help keep their employees attached to the workforce.

- Employees must be on an employer's PAYE payroll on or before 23 September 2020 and must work at least 33% of their usual hours for the first 3 months of the scheme after which the Government will consider whether to increase this minimum hours threshold.

- For every hour not worked by the employee, both the Government and employer will pay a third each of the usual hourly wage for that employee with the Government contribution capped at £697.92 a month.
- The grant will not cover Class 1 employer NICs or pension contributions which will remain payable by the employer.
- Employees will be able to be put on and off the scheme and do not have to be working the same pattern each month subject to having an agreed pattern for a minimum of 7 days.
- Employers using the Job Support Scheme will also be able to claim the Job Retention Bonus if they meet the eligibility criteria.
- More information is available in the policy paper for this new scheme which can be accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/job-support-scheme>

Employees having to Self-Isolate

- Refer to the government guidance on [Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\)](#) which includes information on staff self-isolating and check how to [claim back Statutory Sick Pay paid to employees due to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- There is also guidance under the **CJRS or furlough scheme**. Refer to the paragraph titled '[If your employee is self-isolating or on sick leave](#)' (scroll down to the relevant paragraph).

We recommend that you clarify with your accountants and/or the HMRC whether it would be appropriate for your business to claim SSP or furlough considering your overall circumstances.

Kickstart Scheme - Support to create job placements

The [Kickstart scheme](#) gives financial support to create new 6-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.

The scheme is open to all organisations BUT each application must be for a **minimum** of 30 job placements.

If your organisation is creating fewer than 30 job placements you can [find someone to apply on your behalf](#).

Schemes ending soon

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

- Applications for the second round of this grant are now open. If you are eligible and your business has been adversely affected on or after 14 July 2020, you must make your [claim for the second grant](#) on or before **19 October 2020**.
- You cannot claim the grant if you trade through a limited company or a trust.
- If you are not eligible for Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, you may be eligible for [Universal Credit](#) or [Employment and Support Allowance](#).
- Subsequent rounds will not cover any periods covered under the earlier rounds.

Coronavirus Bounce Back Loan

- If your small to medium-sized business (SME) is affected by coronavirus, you may be able to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000 through a [Bounce Back Loan scheme](#).

- The government has indicated that this scheme, and other Covid-19 loan schemes, are open to applications until end of November but please refer to the full information for each scheme and check with the lenders.

SEND Electronic Referrals

The SEND service electronic referral form is now available for all new referrals to the Early Years Support Team.

Before completing a referral, you will need to register for a 'My Leicester Account'. You will only need to do this once so make a note of your username and password.

- [Register for a 'My Leicester Account'](#)

Once you have completed your registration, access the referral form at:

- families.leicester.gov.uk/send-support-services-referral.

Coronavirus updated advice and guidance for childcare professionals

For all the latest updates, quick links to important guidance and reporting procedures on:

- EY Attendance reporting
- Public Health guidance – Flow chart to support early years settings
- Guidance for reporting confirmed cases for COVID -19
- Reporting closure
- Coronavirus: business support
- DFE helpline information

<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/childcare-professionals/coronavirus-updated-advice/>

Tip - add webpage link to your favourite or a create shortcut to this page, so that you can easily access this information.

Early Years Attendance Reporting Form

All settings are reminded to complete the [EY attendance reporting form](#) at the end of each week.

We have a number of settings who are not sending us their weekly attendance information to include in our DfE submission. This means that we are unable to report an accurate picture. It is really important that this data is as accurate and complete as possible as DfE use this information from local authorities to consider the response and support they may need to give as a result of the impact of Covid 19.

→ [Complete EY weekly attendance report form](#)

Who should complete this form:

Any settings that has early years children (0-4) attending their provision, including:

- Full day care / pre-schools

- Childminders

The form is to be completed on a weekly basis to report the attendance of children and staff at all early years settings.

When entering the register date - use the date for the **Friday** of the week you are reporting on. When completing the weekly figures section:

- Tick the days that you have had children in attendance

Enter against each of those days the number of children attending by their status.

- If you have not had any children in during the week, you do not have to complete the form

The table below gives you a summary of which status to use.

Status	Definition
Keyworker	Registered children that have already been identified as keyworker children
Vulnerable – SEND	Registered children that have already been identified as vulnerable
Vulnerable – Social care	Registered children that have already been identified as vulnerable
Vulnerable – Other	Registered children that have already been identified as vulnerable
Registered	Registered children that have not previously been identified as a keyworker or vulnerable child
Out of school care	Children who only attend your provision before or after school and during holidays

Government Guidance – Covid 19

Action for early years and childcare provision during the coronavirus outbreak (updated 22 September 2020) – is guidance for providers registered with Ofsted and childminder agencies for children of all ages, including nurseries, preschool and wraparound childcare and clubs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

DfE Coronavirus Helpline

Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline weekend opening hours

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline remains available to answer questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education and children's social care. Please listen carefully to the available options and select the most appropriate to your nursery, school, or college's current situation.

Now available 10am to 4pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline by calling:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm

Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 4pm

Brokerage Support - Childcare

If your provision is currently full or due to COVID-19 you have reduced your capacity and therefore are unable to offer childcare places to parents.

Please signpost parents to families.leicester.gov.uk/coronavirus-find-childcare

Alternatively, parents and carers who require support with brokerage can email family@leicester.gov.uk

Launch of Business Support request e-form

If you have concerns about the impact of Covid-19 on your business sustainability.

Please complete the e-form families.leicester.gov.uk/business-support-questionnaire

What happens next

The information you provide will assist the EED team to determine the appropriate follow up support. We will be in touch by either telephone or email.

Sustainability and Impact of Covid 19 on Businesses Questionnaire

An important survey to determine how the childcare market is changing and being impacted by COVID 19 will be sent out to providers at the end of October. We ask for your cooperation in completing this information, as it is essential that we can identify sustainability concerns and endeavour to support wherever possible.

Provider Agreement 2020 (term and conditions for 2, 3 and 4 year FEEE)

A revised provider agreement for delivery of funded early education places has been drawn up and will be sent out to you via an email from EED team. This will include instructions for signing up and submitting to the LA as your terms and conditions for delivery of funded places. Please look out for this email in the forthcoming weeks.

Duty of care responsibilities

If you have a child on register that has not returned since lock down (or a period of closure you have had within the Covid pandemic) to your setting **without explanation** – you are reminded of your safeguarding duties and are expected to follow up with the family if the child is well and why they are no longer attending. If you have concerns about the response or lack of response, then you should follow this up in line with your safeguarding policy.

Autumn term EYFS Network – coming soon!

We are intending to offer an online EYFS network opportunity to settings and schools in the second half of the term – please look out for the date to be communicated shortly.

Early Education Development Team Online Professional Development Opportunities

Due to the Covid pandemic EED are beginning to offer early years providers with some professional development and support opportunities via MSteam. In this half term Quality Forums and Business support sessions have been offered and well received. Practitioners and managers have shared practice and supported each other in considering solutions to some of the current challenges.

Please let us know if you have booked and had any difficulties with technology; which has prevented you accessing these sessions (EEDteam@leicester.gov.uk). We aim to develop our offer further in the second half of the autumn term, so please look out for the opportunities which will be emailed to you from EED.

Libraries – New Storytelling Playlist

Leicester Libraries have created a new Storytelling Playlist – A Story a Day – to support the Time To Read programme for Leicester School Foundation Stages -children 3 to 5 years. The aim is to encourage Leicester families to share stories and books at home together. Please share this information/link with your staff, parents and carers.

- [Follow this link to access the playlist on YouTube](#)

Early Years Inclusion Funding (Element 3)

A payment of 50% of the Early Years Inclusion Fund for your Setting / School will be made in the next 2 weeks based on the most up-to-date date held on our pupil database. An adjusting payment will be made late October / early November once all of your headcount data has been received and verified.

Early Years support Team – SEND Training

In response to Covid-19, the Early Years Support Team are providing an online training programme (via Microsoft Teams) during 2020/21. We are able to adapt many of our courses to deliver online to whole settings – please talk to your Area SENCO if you wish to arrange this.

For autumn term training opportunities please see the link below

[Families.leicester.gov.uk/early-years-training-offer](https://families.leicester.gov.uk/early-years-training-offer)

Family Learning Opportunities

Everybody's Reading – FREE - Family Fun with Stories Workshops

Please encourage parents to join our online 2 hour workshop that will use a range of practical activities and video clips linked to this year's story of 'The Gingerbread man'.

The activities will help you to understand:

- How to be more confident in supporting your child's reading
- How to make reading fun using games, activities and props linked to the story
- How to extend your child's skills in answering questions about the story with our 'What, Why, Where, Who' game
- How to choose safe online resources that will help you to support your child's reading at home

For the workshop you will need:

- Some card to make puppets – the back of a cereal box will work well
- Crayons or pencils

The online slots are running every morning and afternoon. To enrol please call 0116 4541900

Once you have enrolled you will be allocated to an online group with 8 other parents/carers. You will be given details of how to join our secure Google Classroom, how to use Google Meets and your tutor will email you about starting the workshop. This email will invite you to the Google Meets video workshop and give you access to the resources in Google Classroom to use in the workshop slot. The activities in Classroom will be available for a few weeks so you can re-visit them with your child.

On completion of the workshop we will provide each family with a copy of the book and the 'What, Why, Where, Who' game through the post.

If you would like more information before you enroll you can watch a YouTube video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1EADb-wWx78> or email Alison.greet@leicester.gov.uk

Information about Family Learning autumn term courses can be found at <https://sites.google.com/leicesterlearns.ac.uk/lasals/home/family-learning> or you can join our Family Learning Facebook group to keep up to date with courses and ideas for activities at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/LasalsFL>

Healthy Start Updates

There has been a change to what eligible parents can receive with the healthy start vouchers. Please see the link to the scheme below and promote to parents who may be eligible in your provision:

families.leicester.gov.uk/healthy-start

Qualifying criteria

Women who are at least 10 weeks pregnant or families with children under four years old will qualify if they are getting:

- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (with a family income of £16,190 or less per year)
- Working Tax Credit (with a family income of £16,190 or less per year)
- Universal Credit (with a family take home pay of £408 or less per month)

New Development Matters

The Department for Education have published [Development Matters](#) the new non-statutory curriculum guidance which supports the delivery of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. Schools participating in the early adopter year are delivering the new framework this year. Those who are not early adopters, will need to continue using the existing framework until statutory roll out of the reforms in September 2021.

A [vodcast](#) on the new Development Matters is available to watch at your convenience. You can also access an audio-only version on [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#)