



Nottingham
City Council

**The Early
Years Team**



Nottingham City Early Years Newsletter

**Autumn Term 2026
All Sector Issue 29**

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Autumn Term 2026 All Sector Newsletter!

This issue provides our regular updates on Workforce Development opportunities for the Autumn Term and key dates for your diary. There is also the latest information on funding, training, SEND and news from the Department for Education.

In addition, there are key articles on the Balanced System Pathway Relaunch Event on 6th October, new training from Ben Kingston-Hughes at Inspired Children and critical safeguarding updates, including additions and amendments to our safeguarding training opportunities.

Please remember, we continue to value your honest feedback, which you can share by emailing your comments to earlyyears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Best wishes,
The Early Years Team

Contact Us....

- **Email**
earlyyears@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
- **Website**
www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/earlyyears
- **X (formerly Twitter)**
[@EarlyNottingham](https://twitter.com/EarlyNottingham)



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A Message from Kathryn Bouchlaghem

At the time of issuing this newsletter, you should have already received the following communication directly from Kathryn, before she left the local authority last week.

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to you with news that my last day in Loxley House will be Thursday 3rd September 2026.

As many of you are aware, my post of Early Years Head of Service has been deleted and therefore I have taken Voluntary Redundancy. It will be business as usual for you all as the rest of the fabulous Early Years Team remain in post and will be supporting the wider directorate over the coming months of implementing the revised Targeted Operating Model (TOM) for Children's and Education Services.

A huge thank you to you all, for the support, sometimes challenge, and above all, the commitment you have given the Early Years sector over the last 25 years. I have learned so much from you all and feel incredibly grateful for the relationships and memories I've made.

Whilst I am looking forward to my next chapter, I will miss many of the people who have been such an important part of Nottingham City's caring and thriving Early Years community.

*With best wishes and sincere thanks
Kathryn (KB)*



Many of the Early Years Team have worked with Kathryn during her 25 years of service and as a Team, we wish her all the very best in her next chapter, we are very proud of what we have accomplished as a Team over the years and will build on this as the TOM is implemented over the coming months.

An email around the new arrangements has been sent to all providers the week commencing 7th September 2026 on behalf of Sarah Nardone, Corporate Director for Children's and Education Services. As always, we will keep you updated as this work progresses.

Workforce Development

Summer Round Up

It's been a busy summer for Workforce Development, with hundreds of professionals joining our in-person and online events. We've also launched our new 2026/27 CPD Brochure and refreshed our website, making it easier to find information and book training. We want to thank everyone who has engaged, booked and attended training and as we look ahead, we're excited to continue growing our offer and developing even more opportunities to support the early years workforce across Nottingham City.



Numbers were definitely the focus when practitioners joined our in-person 'Maths - Developing Early Number Sense' training in April. The session was packed with practical ideas, games and simple strategies to help children develop confidence with numbers through everyday play and experiences. Many delegates left inspired with new activity ideas and resources they were keen to try straight away in their settings.

"Very informative session, breaking down all of the skills necessary to develop a secure sense of number. Lots of practical games and resources suggested."

In June, we welcomed headteachers and early years leaders from across Nottingham for our Early Years Assessment: A Leadership Perspective briefing hosted at the Ice Arena. The session explored EYFS assessment requirements, Ofsted expectations, transition into Year 1, and featured a guest presentation from Kindred Squared on supporting children as they start school.

"The clarity and honesty was so refreshing and really reflective of the challenges we face."



Our Leadership Network brought leaders from across Nottingham together for a morning of updates, discussion and networking. Delegates heard from guest speakers on Ofsted and Kinship arrangements, shared ideas with colleagues, and explored market stalls hosted by TTS and Oral Health. The face-to-face event provided a valuable opportunity to connect with others across the sector, take away practical ideas, and help shape future network topics.

"Lots of information about the new inspection framework, a great way to network and hear others' experiences."



Remember:
See all our new
CPD offer by
scanning the QR
code



Early Years Leadership & SENCO Networks

2026/27 memberships now open!

Connect, learn and grow alongside colleagues and experts from across Nottingham's Early Years community.

Join one network — or sign up to both — for practical support, expert input and year-round professional development.

Choose the network that supports your setting

Leadership Network

For leaders and managers looking to strengthen practice, share updates and discuss priorities with peers across the sector.

SENCO Network

For practitioners supporting children with SEND — build confidence, exchange strategies and strengthen inclusive practice.

Membership Prices

3

**Sessions
across the year**

£50

**per network
for the year**

PROMO

£80

**for both networks
if booked
before 30th Oct 2026**

Each network membership gives you the opportunity to stay up to date with key and emerging topics affecting the early years sector, hear directly from expert speakers, and connect with colleagues from across Nottingham to network, share experiences and exchange best practice.

Ready to take part?

Complete the sign-up document and return it to
EYtraining@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

For full details, [visit here](#) or scan the QR code. We look forward to welcoming you!



**Nottingham
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**The Early
Years Team**



Early Years Leadership Network

2026/27 membership now open!

For Nottingham City Early Years Leaders £50 annual membership.

Stay up to date on national and local early years priorities, new initiatives and hear from guest speakers. Plus, time to network, share experiences, browse stalls and exchange best practice .

Shaped by your feedback, each session will be held at a central Nottingham venue and explore themes that reflect the needs of Nottingham City.

2026/27 Session Dates

Autumn

25 Nov 2026 | 09:30am–12:00pm

Indian Community Centre

Guest speaker: NHS Nottingham Speech and Language on supporting EAL children

Spring

18 Mar 2027 | 09:00am–12:00pm

National Ice Centre

Guest speaker: Ben Kingston Hughes, Inspired Children

Includes EYFS areas, characteristics of effective learning, creativity, problem solving, enhanced learning and pro-social behaviour.

Summer

16 Jun 2027 | 09:30am–12:00pm

Indian Community Centre

Guest speaker: TBA

Ready to take part?

Complete the sign-up document and return it to

EYtraining@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

For full details, [visit here](#) or scan the QR code.



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Key Dates for the Autumn Term!

Coming up in the Autumn Term we have lots more exciting CPD training opportunities available!

For full information on all training courses, including timings, venues and cost, please visit the [CPD pages](https://myaccount.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/service/Early_Years_Course_Booking) of the Early Years Website. You can **book all these courses online** at https://myaccount.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/service/Early_Years_Course_Booking.

Below is a summary of key dates, which have been colour co-ordinated for ease as follows:

	Early Years Funding Dates - Email eyfunding@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries
	Training and Network Dates – Email eytraining@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries
	SEND Dates – Email eyfssend@nottinghamcity.gov.uk with any queries

September 2026	
Tuesday 1 st September	Part One – Autumn Term Early Years Entitlement Estimate Payment Based on Summer Term portal claim
Wednesday 2 nd September	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 8 th September	Safeguarding Refresher Suitable or the PVI Sector and Childminders
Tuesday 15 th September	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Thursday 17 th September	Safeguarding Refresher Suitable or the PVI Sector and Childminders
Thursday 17 th September	Safer Recruitment in the Early Years Suitable for PVI Practitioners
Wednesday 18 th September	Higher Level Needs Funding Deadline for the October Panel
Tuesday 22 nd September	Role of the DSL for Childminders Suitable for Nottingham City Childminders
Wednesday 23 rd September	Introduction to SEND Suitable for PVI Practitioners
Wednesday 23 rd September	Play Plots – Part 1 Suitable for PVI and School Practitioners
Wednesday 23 rd September	Headcount Task closes for Autumn Term Funding Claim Last day to submit claim
Friday 25 th September	Provisional Date for Early Years Funding Confirmation Reports Please keep an eye on your emails!
Monday 28 th September	Introduction to Safeguarding Suitable for the PVI Sector

Tuesday 29 th September	Childminder Pre-Registration Briefing For prospective Childminders
October 2026	
Thursday 1 st October	Part Two – Autumn Term Early Years Entitlements Estimate Payment Based on Summer Term portal claim
Thursday 1 st October	Autumn Term Early Years Census Date
Monday 5 th October	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Monday 5 th October	Role of the DSL for Childminders Suitable for Nottingham City Childminders
Tuesday 6 th October	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 6 th October	Relaunch of the Balanced System Pathway Free event for all professionals supporting the speech, language and communication needs of children and young people in Nottingham City
Wednesday 7 th October	Safeguarding Refresher Training Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Wednesday 7 th October	Open Your Eyes to the EYFS – Part 1 Suitable for practitioners in PVI Settings and Schools
Thursday 8 th October	Designated Safeguarding Leads – Part 1 For PVI Practitioners who are new to the DSL Role
Friday 9 th October	Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding Deadline for Autumn 1 Panel
Monday 12 th October	Designated Safeguarding Leads – Part 2 For PVI Practitioners who are new to the DSL Role
Thursday 15 th October	Providing the ‘Best Start’ in Life – Part 1 Suitable for Practitioners in a school, PVI Setting or Childminders
Thursday 15 th October	Childminder Network For Nottingham City Childminders
Friday 16 th October	Role of the DSL for Childminders Suitable for Nottingham City Childminders
November 2026	
Sunday 1 st November	Part Three – Autumn Term Early Years Entitlements Estimate Payment <i>(likely to be paid Friday 30th October)</i> Based on Summer Term portal claim
Monday 2 nd November	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 3 rd November	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed

Tuesday 3 rd November	Nottingham City SENCO Network Suitable for the PVI Sector
Wednesday 4 th November	Pre-School Agreement Trialling Suitable for PVI Sector and Schools
Thursday 5 th November	Inspired Children – Positive Children, Positive Behaviour Suitable for the PVI Settings and Schools
Tuesday 10 th November	Childminder Information Workshop - Part 1 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
Wednesday 11 th November	Nottingham City PVI DSL Network Suitable for Nottingham City PVI Practitioners
Thursday 12 th November	Providing the ‘Best Start’ in Life – Part 2 Suitable for Practitioners in a school, PVI Setting or Childminders
Wednesday 18 th November	Open Your Eyes to the EYFS – Part 2 Suitable for practitioners in PVI Settings and Schools
Thursday 19 th November	Safeguarding Refresher Suitable for the PVI Sector and Childminders
Monday 23 rd November	Prevent Duty Suitable for the PVI Sector
Tuesday 24 th November	Funding Workshop Refresher for Providers Delivering Funded Early Years Entitlement Places Suitable for PVI Sector and Childminders
Wednesday 25 th November	Leadership Network Suitable for Proprietors, Leaders and Managers in the PVI Sector
Thursday 26 th November	Reception Agreement Trialling Suitable for PVI Sector and Schools
Monday 30 th November	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
December 2026	
Tuesday 1 st December	Blended Paediatric First Aid Suitable for all sectors, online e-learning also to be completed
Tuesday 1 st December	Funding Workshop for Providers New to Delivering Funded Early Years Entitlement Places Suitable for the PVI Sector & Childminders
Wednesday 2 nd December	Early Years Finance Portal Training Suitable for Nottingham City Schools
Thursday 3 rd December	EYFSP Full Data Briefing / FS Leaders and Partners Data Brief Suitable for Nottingham City Schools Leaders, Early Years Leads and Partners
Friday 4 th December	Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding Deadline for Autumn 2 Panel

Tuesday 8 th December	Childminder Information Workshop - Part 2 For prospective or newly registered childminders or those requiring a refresher
Tuesday 15 th December	Autumn Term Balance Payment Only paid if estimate has not covered earnings
Thursday 31 st December	Deadline to submit Early Years Entitlement Funding Adjustment Form For informing us of any late starters/early leavers which will be paid/invoiced at the start of the Spring Term.

Keep up to date with Early Years in Nottingham:



Visit our website

Scan the QR Code to visit our website, where you can find:

- News & Updates
- CPD Opportunities
- Funding Guidance
- Safeguarding Information
- Starting Reception Information

And much more!





**Follow us on X
@EarlyNottingham**

Follow us on X to keep up to date with:

- MON** Notts Year of Communication
- TUE** Upcoming CPD Opportunities & Events
- THU** The Balanced System Tips & Insights
- FRI** Upcoming CPD Opportunities & Events

As well as news, updates, resources and more!



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Agreement Trialling Evaluation 2025/26

Our Agreement Trialling sessions have continued to be a success throughout 2025/26. We delivered 12 sessions to **221 practitioners representing 65 different settings** (52 schools and 13 PVI's) from 11 different school trusts, nursery chains, maintained schools and independent nurseries and received overwhelming feedback from 99.4% of those who attended.

These **free, age specific sessions** are designed specifically for those working with pre-school (3-4 year olds) and reception (4-5 year olds) children across the PVI and maintained sectors. The sessions provide opportunities to hear local and national updates, take part in focused discussions and provide **valuable CPD** opportunities, enabling practitioners to enhance their practice, develop their provision, and build confidence and accuracy when making assessment judgements and planning children's next steps.

We are currently planning the sessions for 2026/27. These will provide an opportunity to address and share termly DfE messages on assessment practices, share national initiatives for early years along with addressing the current priorities highlighted in City data trends.

Due to the successes seen over the last year, we have been able to mirror the offer and venues used. All morning sessions will be offered online via MS Teams and we are continuing to host the in-person sessions at the Indian Community Centre (ICCA), 99 Hucknall Road, NG5 1QZ.

The dates and venues for the Autumn Term are shown below:

	Age	Focus Areas	Date	Venue	Time Options
Autumn Term	Preschool / 3-4s	Formative Assessment, Physical Development and Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning	Wed 4 th November 2026	Online via Teams	09:00-11:30
				In person - ICCA, NG5 1QZ	13:00-16:00
	Reception / Rising 5s	Formative Assessment, Physical Development, Expressive Arts and Design and Writing	Thurs 26 th November 2026	Online via Teams	09:00-11:30
				In person - ICCA, NG5 1QZ	13:00-16:00

[Book here](#) and come and join us

Still not sure? Check out some of the evaluation feedback from last year:

- *Great session - really useful to have opportunity to have professional conversations with people from range of settings*
 - *So informative and reassuring - thank you!*
- *It was useful to discuss with other people doing the same job. Helpful to have opportunity to speak to SEND specialists*
- *It was great to hear updates at start and websites etc to use as well as having plenty of time for each person to talk about their child - without having to rush through*
- *Really useful session, love to get strategies from others about how to support children on the cusp.*
 - *It was great to network with colleagues and hear ideas from other settings. Thank you*
 - *I have lots of ideas to take back and use straight away – friendly and informative*
 - *I now feel ready to properly reflect on our curriculum and provision*

SENCO Network Evaluation 2025/26

Our SENCO Networks provide a valuable opportunity for professionals to receive key updates, enhance their knowledge, and develop or refresh their understanding of a wide range of SEND-related themes and topics. In response to participant feedback, identified areas of interest, and continuing professional development (CPD) requirements, each network session in 2025/26 was designed around a different theme to ensure the content remained relevant, engaging, and responsive to the needs of attendees.

During our Autumn Term Network, we welcomed colleagues from the Healthy Little Minds Team to deliver a session focused on attachment theory and early brain development. The session provided SENCOs with valuable insight into the importance of early relationships and their impact on children's developmental outcomes.

Our Spring Term Network welcomed back colleagues from the Healthy Little Minds Team, this time delivering a session focused on 'Family Scripts' and 'Ghosts and Angels in the Nursery'. This session explored why patterns of behaviour can be repeated across generations, introducing the concept of the Internal Working Model - explaining how our own experiences of being parented can influence our approach to parenting and future relationships. Participants were encouraged to consider how this knowledge can support a more reflective and empathetic approach when working with families, particularly in situations where progress appears limited or where practitioners may feel stuck or frustrated.

For the final Summer Term Network, we welcomed Joanna Hill from the Early Years SEND Team, who delivered two bite-sized sessions on Sensory Circuits and Stimming in the Early Years. The training enhanced practitioners' understanding of sensory integration, the purpose and implementation of sensory circuits, and how to identify children who may benefit from them. It also explored the reasons why children may engage in stimming behaviours and provided guidance on how to support this safely and appropriately within early years settings.

We were also joined by colleagues from Nottinghamshire County Council, who provided an overview of cross-border arrangements and the support available for children accessing provision outside of their home local authority. This offered practitioners valuable information to help navigate processes and ensure families receive appropriate support when accessing provision across local authority boundaries.

Feedback from across the 40 settings who attended the SENCO Networks was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of respondents rating the sessions as either good or excellent, demonstrating the value and impact of the networks throughout the academic year.

Membership for 2026/2027 is now open, and we would be delighted to welcome both new and returning members to join us for another year of networking, professional development, and shared learning. The SENCO Network is £50 for the year, but you can get SENCO and Leadership Network Membership for £80 if you book before the end of October! Find out more on the [SENCO Network Page!](#)

Sam and Mel
EYFS SEND Support Workers

The Balanced System Pathway Relaunch

Are you supporting children with speech, language and communication needs and looking for practical advice, resources and guidance whilst waiting for specialist support?

We are delighted to announce the relaunch of [The Balanced System® pathway](#), a free online tool that helps practitioners, families and carers access the right support at the right time. This will be taking place on Tuesday 6th October 2026, 9am – 12pm at the National Ice Centre – please see the promotional poster on page 14!



What is the Balanced System Pathway?

The Balanced System Pathway helps practitioners, families and carers identify and access appropriate support for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs. Through a series of simple questions, users are guided to relevant information, strategies, activities, services, local and national resources that can support a child's development and help determine next steps.

The Balanced System Pathway has been available in Nottingham since autumn 2021. Following collaboration between partners across Early Years, Best Start Family Hubs, Speech and Language Therapy Services and Health colleagues, the Pathway has been thoroughly refreshed and updated with new resources and information to better support families, carers and professionals.

With waiting times for specialist assessment and support often being lengthy, the Pathway helps practitioners and families access strategies, resources and services that can make a difference sooner. The Pathway can help practitioners feel more confident in identifying and implementing support, rather than waiting for specialist input before acting.

Key Features

Rather than spending time searching multiple websites or wondering what support is available, the Pathway brings together resources, strategies, and local and national resources in one easy-to-use place:

Connects users with local support

- Signposts families, carers and professionals to local community resources and services, both digital and face-to-face.
- Reduces the need for professionals to hold extensive information themselves by bringing key resources together in one place.

Provides tailored support Pathways

- Allows users to create personalised Pathways for individual children or groups of children.
- Pathways can be saved, updated regularly and printed for sharing with parents, carers and other professionals.

Improves accessibility

- Pathways can be translated into multiple languages, enabling families to access information in their preferred language.

Join Us

Whether you are already familiar with the Pathway or are discovering it for the first time, we look forward to sharing the refreshed and enhanced version with you.

During this interactive session, you will:

- Discover how the Balanced System Pathway can support your day-to-day practice
- Learn how to create, save and share Pathways for individual children
- Explore practical resources to use with families straight away
- See real-life examples of the Pathway in action
- Build confidence in supporting children with speech, language and communication needs

Explore the Pathway

In the meantime, we encourage you to explore [The Balanced System® pathway](#), site and familiarise yourself with its features. Please note that updates are still being finalised.

Please use this link to secure your FREE place: [Balanced System Pathway Relaunch Event](#) on **Tuesday 6 October 2026** or scan the QR code below!

Balanced System® Pathway Relaunch Event

Join an engaging, interactive session to explore the refreshed speech and language Pathway and build confidence in practice.

Event details

Tuesday
6 Oct 2026 | 9:00am - 12:00pm

Venue
Spotlight Restaurant
National Ice Centre
Nottingham

What to expect

- 1 Pathway showcase**
See the refreshed Pathway in practice.
- 2 Hands-on exploration**
Try practical activities and tools.
- 3 Real-life case studies**
Hear examples of effective impact.

For professionals supporting children, young people and families with speech, language and communication needs across Nottingham City.

Ready to book?

Scan the QR code to book onto the event.



Please share with colleagues who support speech, language and communication needs.



Speech and Language Updates

Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy

We're delighted to share that the Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy Service has secured extended funding until **March 2027** and will continue supporting children and families across **Nottingham City**. The service provides early support for children aged **2 to 2½ years** who have delayed spoken language skills, helping parents and carers develop strategies to encourage communication and language development at home. Support is delivered through home visits, with up to six sessions available.

The service is available for children who:

- Use a limited number of words for their age
- Understand everyday words and simple sentences
- Have age-appropriate social skills

Support is also available for bilingual families, with interpreters and bilingual co-workers helping to deliver interventions in the child's home language. If there are concerns about a child's speech, language, or communication development, parents, carers, and education professionals can make a referral using a new, more simplified referral process.

For more information, including access to the referral form, visit:

<https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/slt-how-to-refer>

Language Lead Training Opportunity

Good news! The Early Intervention SLT service has also **extended their funding for the delivery of Language Leads**. This means that the Speech and Language Team are **now recruiting** practitioners who wish to become a trained Language Lead for their setting. The Language Lead approach is an evidence-informed programme which supports the development of speech, language and communication in the early years. This approach enhances the current offer of speech, language and communication support within settings and provides a significant opportunity for early intervention for all children. It is based on an interactional pedagogy where the Language Lead develops their expertise and knowledge of **quality interactions** within typical provision and is then equipped to support their colleagues to develop these strategies across the setting for the benefit of all children.

Over the last 18 months, 60 Language Leads have been trained by the SLT team, representing 32 different schools and 28 PVLs across the City, developing a shared language for supporting early years children in their language development, supporting transition and raising attainment in line with the governments **Best Start in Life agenda**.

The training follows the below format:

- Information Session for Leaders / Managers: **Monday 2nd November**, 15:30-16:15 on MS Teams
- New to the role Language Lead session 1: **Monday 9th November**, 09:30-12:30, Bulwell Riverside
- New to the role Language Lead session 2: **Monday 23rd November**, 09:30-12:30, Bulwell Riverside
- New to the role Language Lead session 3: **Monday 7th December**, 09:30-12:30, Bulwell Riverside
- Coaching session in your setting to be arranged

If you are interested in supporting the language development of children and want to become a Language Lead within your setting, please contact amy.burton@nottshc.nhs.uk to register your interest or find out more information.

Nottingham City
Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy Factsheet
A guide for parents, carers and practitioners

What is Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy?

The Early Intervention Service is part of the Speech and Language Therapy Service. We provide intervention for children who need some help with their spoken language development. It is delivered at home by the Early Intervention Speech and Language Team. We work with parents/carers to try new ways to help the child's language development. Up to 6 visits are offered.

Where is Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy available?

We offer support for children who live in Nottingham City if they meet the criteria listed in table below.

Who is it for?

Children aged between **2 years** and **2 year 6 months** who have delayed spoken language skills.

At 2 years old	Closer to 2 ½ years old
Children who - Say up to 30 different single words - Understand everyday words and short sentences - Have age-appropriate social skill development	Children who - Say up to 50 different single words - Do not often say 2 words together - Understand everyday words and short sentences - Have age-appropriate social skill development

What if the child has wider needs?

If you are concerned that a child is stammering, or that they have difficulties with understanding and / or social interaction, please do make a referral to the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

What about bilingual children?

We provide our services in the home language using Bilingual Co-workers or interpreters. Learning two languages does not cause a delay in learning to talk. So if a bilingual child says fewer than 30 words at age 2 in all their languages combined, please refer them to our service.

How to refer?

We have made our 2-3 year referral form really easy to fill in! Health Professionals can refer via F12 Pathfinder function on S1. Parents and educational professionals can refer to Speech and Language Therapy by completing the MS Forms on our website: <https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/slt-how-to-refer>



Positive Children, Positive Behaviour **- Inspired Children (Ben Kingston-Hughes)**

We are delighted to welcome Inspired Children, a training provider set up by Ben Kingston-Hughes, author and multi award-winning trainer. Ben and the team have made a name for themselves as delivering some of the best CPD training in the UK and now internationally, appearing on ITV and Channel 4, with their training mentioned in outstanding Ofsted reports and winning multiple awards.

'Positive Children, Positive Behaviour' is a course designed to help us understand what children are trying to communicate with their behaviour so that we can better guide them towards pro-social behaviour and ultimately help them thrive. The course explores why traditional behaviour methods do not work with young children and gives a firm grounding in the neuroscience of behaviour to better understand even the most unusual of behaviour patterns.

The course also details how children "learn" behaviour in the first place and explores how our adult behaviour directly impacts on the behaviour of our young children, showing that sometimes the best way to support positive behaviour in our children is to change our own behaviour. This training strives to give unique insights into children's behaviour to support practitioners. Insightful, entertaining and informative, the course is designed to help practitioners navigate and reframe the behaviour of their children.

This course addresses the following:

- EYFS areas of learning and development – Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language.
- Emotional well-being and mental health
- Positive Behaviour strategies
- Supporting vulnerable children
- Self-regulation and co-regulation

Date: Thursday 5th November 2026

Time: 9:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Nottingham Nursery School & Training Centre

Cost: £35 for Nottingham City Providers



inspired
Children
Play, Nurturing & Curiosity

Early Years Heroes: The Vital Role of the Early Years Practitioner

- Inspired Children (Ben Kingston-Hughes)

We are excited to share a second course provided by Ben and the team at Inspired Children, taking place in the 2027 Summer Term.

This inspiring and motivating course presents unambiguous evidence that Early Years practitioners have the most profound and life-long impact on their children. More than any other teacher a child will ever encounter throughout their life, the early years practitioner dramatically shapes, guides and supports a child to become their future self. Spanning across neuroscience, evolutionary biology, behavioural sciences and global economics, this course shows us once and for all that early years workers have more impact on a child than primary, secondary and even university educators. The course then looks at how we can enrich the early years experiences of our children through the most magical interactions to maximise the potential of this unique developmental time.

The course shares tips and strategies from over thirty years working with children to help us be the best version of ourselves so that we can support children to reach their potential as adults. Looking at simple mindfulness experiences and therapeutic play, the course shows a wide range of ways in which we can support our children through good times and bad giving them the fundamental resilience and growth mindset to last them a lifetime. This course is wonderful reminder of the power of early years and a vibrant testimony to the unsung heroes of education with practical experiences and tips to transform our early years settings. The course fundamentally redefines our role as early years practitioners and is just as suitable for new staff or veterans and managers.

This course addresses the following:

- EYFS areas of learning and development – All
- Characteristics of Effective Learning – All
- Neurological Development
- Morale boosting and teamwork

Date: Tuesday 4th May 2027

Time: 9:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Nottingham Nursery School & Training Centre

Cost: £35 for Nottingham City Providers



**inspired
Children**
Play, Nurturing & Curiosity



Early Years Funding

Early Years Census

As per the business meeting and the Provider Agreement 2026-27, just a reminder that the census is now termly. The autumn census date is 1st October 2026, please look out for the email containing the relevant information and submission deadline nearer the time.

PVI Annual Business Meeting 2027

Our Annual Business Meeting is due to take place on Thursday 4th February 2027, via Microsoft Teams. It is imperative that Nottingham City PVI Sector Owners, Proprietors and Managers of Early Years Settings who provide funded places, attend to receive important updates for the financial year ahead in all aspects linking with the early years funded entitlements – please book here: [Early Years - Nottingham City Council](#)

Autumn 2026 Headcount Information

Autumn Estimate Funding Payments

Providers will have received part 1 of their estimate payment around 1st September 2026. Part 2 will be made on or around 1st October 2026 and part 3, 1st November 2026. Please remember that all payments are based on any children from the summer term headcount that the system believes you will have this term, this will not change even when you complete the portal headcount.

Autumn Term Head Count Task - 1st September 2026 - 23rd September 2026

Please remember that although your portal return would have been submitted before your October and November estimate payments, your estimate payment will remain the same amount as these are based on last term and are signed off in advance of the current term.

Balance Payments

Autumn Term Balance Payments will be paid around 15th December 2026 and as per the Provider Agreement, any debt owed will be taken off from any amounts we may owe you this term, if after this there is an outstanding debt, you will receive an email detailing the amount and arrange to take this off future payments.

Confirmation Reports

Confirmation Reports are provisionally set for 25th September 2026. Please ensure you look through your Confirmation Report within the deadline given. It is crucial that the details on your report are accurate and this is the time to amend, add any new starters or reduce hours for any leavers.

All changes will be included in main balance payments on 15th December 2026, unless we receive the reports late, or require further information, which may take us over the deadline for them to be included.

Adjustments

Any amendments due to leavers or starters after the Confirmation Report stage, will need to be made using the Adjustment Form found [here](#). Please remember that Adjustment Forms need to be completed and sent by 31st December 2026 to receive payment. Payments will be made within the first month of the Spring Term.

Updates from the Department for Education

Consultation on the Proposed Changes to the Entitlements Funding System

The DfE is currently running a consultation to seek views from Local Authorities, Providers and Parents and Carers on proposed changes to the early years funding system. The full consultation and how to submit a response can be found at <https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-funding/early-years-funding-proposed-changes-to-the-entitl/>. We have also provided a [summary sheet](#) of the key proposals and questions for your reference.

The consultation closes on 14th September 2026, with the results due to be published in Autumn 2026.

National Professional Qualifications (NPQ) Review – NPQ for Early Years Leaders

The DfE is seeking views from early years professionals as part of the wider [National Professional Qualifications \(NPQ\) Review](#). The Department are keen to hear perspectives on the National Professional Qualification for [Early Years Leadership \(NPQEYL\)](#), as well as the broader professional development needs of early years leaders. Responses are welcomed from leaders across a range of settings and contexts, including those who have not participated in the NPQEYL.

The survey will explore:

- Experiences of and reflections on the NPQEYL (where applicable)
- The knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for effective early years leadership
- Current leadership priorities and professional development needs across the sector
- How the NPQEYL could evolve to better meet those needs

You can take part in a follow-up roundtable discussion on **Thursday 1 October 2026, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm**. Your feedback will help the Department understand what is working well, identify key priorities for early years leadership, and consider how the NPQEYL can continue to support early years leaders.

The survey can be accessed [here](#) and closes on **Friday 25 September 2026**.

National Year of Reading – Autumn Term Events and Resources

As the National Year of Reading enters its final term, don't miss out on Early Years events and resources! Discover how you can make the most of your local communities to support the development of a reading for pleasure culture in the early years with brand-new free resources, CPD and events.

- [CPD webinar: Opening the door to reading at home, 29 September](#). Encourages you to rethink what genuine partnership with parents looks like.
- [CPD webinar: Once upon a rhyme, 5 November](#). Fresh inspiration to bring poetry, performance and playful language into everyday practice.

Access the full Early Years offer this Autumn Term and catch up on previous terms' content, all through the free and flexible platform. You can [log in here](#) and continue exploring or [sign up here](#) for a guided journey of content that supports you to build and grow a reading for pleasure culture in your setting.

Safeguarding Updates

EYFS Framework Update 2026: Key Safeguarding Changes You Need to Know

The Department for Education has published updated [EYFS Statutory Frameworks](#) for childminders and group and school-based providers, with changes coming into **effect from 1 September 2026**.

While many of the revisions clarify existing expectations, several important changes strengthen safeguarding requirements and reinforce providers' responsibilities for keeping children safe:

-  **Safer Sleep requirements strengthened**
Includes new statutory safer sleep requirements for children covering sleep position, sleep environment, bedding and supervision. Further information can be found in the updated [EYFS Statutory Frameworks](#) and safer sleep guidance. [The Lullaby Trust](#) and [sudden infant death syndrome \(SIDS\) - NHS](#) or [Safer Sleep in Early Years Settings Q&A - Foundation Years](#)
-  **A new statutory duty banned Dog Breeds**
Must not be present at registered childcare premises.
-  **Ofsted Notifications strengthened**
Providers must now notify allegations of **harm**, rather than serious harm, involving anyone living, working or caring for children on the premises.
-  **Safer Recruitment requirements strengthened**
The Crime and Policing Act 2026 has removed the supervised volunteer exemption, meaning all volunteers now require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. In addition, new employees must not start work until their enhanced DBS check has been received.
-  **Staff Suitability strengthened**
Providers must tell staff **and prospective staff** that they must disclose **any information** which may affect their suitability to work with children including, but not limited to, **arrests, charges, convictions, cautions**
-  **Domestic Premises notification strengthen**
Providers must notify Ofsted about any person aged 16+ living or regularly working on the premises
- **Children's screen use**
Practitioners must have regard to the guidance [Help for early years providers: Screen use](#) on children's screen use in early years settings
- **Whistleblowing scope widened**
This now covers any aspect of your provision, not safeguarding alone.

Providers should use this opportunity to review policies, update training and ensure current practice reflects the revised framework ahead of September 2026.

Useful Resources: [DfE Help for Early Years Providers: Resources and Posters](#)

Ofsted Updates Early Years Inspection Toolkit for September 2026

From 1 September 2026, Ofsted will introduce an updated Early Years Inspection Toolkit, with an increased focus on safeguarding, children's welfare and wellbeing. The changes provide greater clarity about inspectors' expectations and reinforce that safeguarding remains central to high-quality early years provision.

Key changes include:

-  **Stronger Safeguarding Expectations**
Additional guidance clarifies practitioners' responsibilities to protect children from harm.
-  **Safe Sleep, Eating and Weaning**
Providers will need to demonstrate their understanding and implementation of statutory guidance relating to safe sleep, weaning and safer eating practices. A new welfare standard has also been introduced.
-  **Greater Focus on Inclusion**
Inspectors will gather more evidence about support for vulnerable children, including those with personal education plans.
-  **Clearer Inspection Judgements**
Safeguarding-related judgement criteria have been strengthened, making it clearer when standards are not met and where children may be at risk.

These changes, alongside the updated EYFS Framework, highlight the continued importance of strong safeguarding practice, children's welfare and effective support for vulnerable children.

 Further information can be found in the [Early Years Inspection Toolkit](#) and in the [Summary of Changes](#) guidance.

Early Years Safeguarding Training Opportunities Update

Why DSL Networks Matter More Than Ever

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Networks continue to provide a valuable opportunity for safeguarding professionals to stay informed, share good practice and strengthen safeguarding arrangements within their settings. With major changes to both the EYFS Framework and Ofsted Inspection Toolkit, the role of DSLs in leading and embedding these developments has never been more important.

Autumn Term DSL Network - Special Guest Speaker Confirmed!

We are delighted to confirm that **a guest speaker from Ofsted** will be joining our **DSL Network on 11 November 2026**.

This is a fantastic opportunity to:

- Hear first-hand from Ofsted regarding the September 2026 changes
- Gain insight into inspection expectations
- Ask questions directly to Ofsted representatives
- Increase confidence in preparing your setting for future inspections

For more information and to book on, please [click here!](#)

Early Years Safeguarding Training Opportunities Update (Continued...)

Expanding Early Years Safeguarding Training and Support

The Early Years Team is committed to ensuring the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector has access to high-quality safeguarding training and support. As a result, we are pleased to announce:

NEW – Role of the DSL for Childminders Training

A new role-specific course designed for childminders, covering the statutory responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with EYFS Annex C and local safeguarding arrangements.

For more information on course content and dates, please [click here](#)

EXPANSION - Designated Safeguarding Leads Training (Group-Based Providers)

Following positive feedback and increasing demand, additional training dates will now be available throughout the year, and the programme has been redesigned into a 2-part course to give the best possible learning experience. This allows greater opportunity to:

- Absorb key information and reflect on safeguarding responsibilities
- Consider how learning applies within your own setting between sessions
- Provide greater focus on practical application, enabling delegates to explore local safeguarding procedures and apply theory to local safeguarding practice, referral pathways and partnership working in more depth
- Explore real-life safeguarding scenarios and strengthen confidence in safeguarding decisions through use of case-studies and activities
- Review templates and guidance documents
- Discuss best practice with colleagues & develop professional curiosity
- Strengthen decision-making and leadership skills

The extended format combines theory with practical exercises and a stronger emphasis on local processes, leaving delegates better equipped to carry out their DSL role effectively and confidently, moving beyond learning safeguarding requirements and focusing on implementing them effectively within their own settings.

For more information on course content and dates, please [click here](#)

UPDATED - Safeguarding Training Developments: From Theory into Practice

Both the [Introduction to Safeguarding Training](#) and [Safeguarding Children Refresher Training](#) will now include a dedicated "**Theory into Practice**" element.

Sessions will place a greater focus on:

- Local safeguarding procedures
- Referral pathways
- Contextual safeguarding issues
- Decision-making and professional judgement
- Practical implementation of safeguarding knowledge

Please click on the course hyperlinks above for more information on course content and dates.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Funding Updates

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF)

We are pleased to share that a vodcast has been designed to support early years providers in applying for the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF). The vodcast provides guidance on the application process and offers practical advice to help providers complete applications effectively.

The vodcast, as well as the application guidance and application form, can be found here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATxGCyylzoo>

SENIF is available to all Nottingham City Private, Voluntary, Community and Independent Ofsted Registered Childcare Providers who offer Early Years Entitlement places. The SENIF is also available to school settings for children who are not in a Reception class. SENIF should be used to support eligible children to access their early years entitlements and ensure settings are inclusive and supporting individual children's needs.

Key dates for the 2026 -2027 SENIF Panels:

Term	Application Deadlines – 12pm deadline	Panel Meeting	Payments
Autumn 1	9 October 2026	15 October 2026	16 October 2026
Autumn 2	4 December 2026	10 December 2026	11 December 2026
Spring 1	29 January 2027	11 February 2027	12 February 2027
Spring 2	19 March 2027	22 April 2027	23 April 2027
Summer 1	21 May 2027	8 June 2027	11 June 2027

If you require any support with SENIF, please contact eyfssend@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Higher Level Needs Funding (HLN)

Key information and dates for HLN applications are currently being finalised and will be sent out shortly directly from education.hln@nottinghamcity.gov.uk This information will also be published on the Early Years Website.

We can confirm that the deadline for HLN applications for the October Panel need to be submitted by 18th September to education.hln@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Inclusive Early Years Fund

This is additional funding to support providers become more inclusive of children with SEND & local distribution of this fund will mirror national guidance, with eligible Early Years Settings and Schools reaching the £1,000 de minimis threshold being notified about their payment before the end of September.

Information on all these funding opportunities can be found by [clicking here](#).

The Early Years Team News and Contact Information

Farewell to Laura Phipps

In addition to Kathryn's goodbye message on page 3, at the end of the Summer, we also said goodbye to Laura Phipps, Early Years Funding Assistant. Laura has left the Team to start an exciting role in a new school, and we wish her all the very best with her next chapter! Recruitment is currently underway for Laura's replacement, and we will keep you updated on this.

Local Government Reorganisation

Following central government's confirmation of its plans for the future of local government in Nottinghamshire on 16 July 2026, work had begun on the transition towards the creation of the two new unitary councils, one covering the current local government areas of Nottingham City and parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe and one covering the current local government areas of Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, and parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe.

The government confirmed on 7th September 2026, that they will be undertaking a rapid review of the LGR programme and are pausing implementation whilst this review takes place.

In the short term, there will be no change to existing services. All services currently delivered by the nine affected councils will continue as normal.

You can keep up to date and find out more on:

- Nottingham City Council's Website - <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/your-council/local-government-reorganisation/> and;
- The shared website for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's Local Government Reorganisation - <https://futurenotts.org.uk/future-nottinghamshire>

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