



IN THIS ISSUE

- Free Entitlement Updates
- Childrens Services Integrated Front Door
- Lockdown Procedures
- Applying for school places for children with SEND
- Developmental Language Disorder
- Committee News - Information for Registered Charities
- Full and Relevant Qualifications
- Early Years SEND Conference
- Childminder Information
- Briefing and Networking Sessions
- Contact Us

Welcome and Introduction

Causes for celebration!

'Good and Outstanding' Districts

Ofsted inspection outcomes continue to improve with Dover, Thanet, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells currently having 100% of group settings with an Ofsted grade of good or above.

Free for Two Take up

Free for Two take up has also seen an increase, with 3788 children accessing a free place at the last count, a take up of **69.70%**. This is a 2.34% increase compared to this time last year.

Achievement Gap narrowing

In addition to the Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development having increased in Kent this year to 75.3% (from 74.3% in 2017, we have also seen some narrowing in achievement gaps as follows:

Group of children	2017	2018
Free School Meals (Eligible)	22%	17.5% ↓
Disadvantaged *	20.2%	17.4% ↓
English as an Additional Language	9%	6.3% ↓
Special Educational Needs	59.3%	55.5% ↓
Children in Care		
• Kent County Council	• 49.4% (20 Children)	• 46.8% (21 Children) ↓
• Other Local Authorities	• 17.2% (7 Children)	• -24.7% (3 children) ↓

*Percentage difference between the mean average of the lowest 20% and the median average for all children.

Whilst more still needs to be done to support accelerated progress and achievement for children in these groups, this is a positive and encouraging picture.

Thank you to all of you for your contributions to these 'good news' stories - through your ongoing good work you are continuing to make a difference to outcomes for Kent's youngest children and their families.

To note

Providers who have purchased training or products recently will have noticed that they have been charged VAT. Threads of Success services, training and products have, in the past, been exempted of VAT due to the fact that KCC (as a local authority) is an eligible body. The Education People is a limited company (not a charity) and (although created by KCC) is not recognised as an eligible body to exempt its customers from VAT. This is applicable to all similar companies across the country created by local authorities and not only to The Education People.

Alex Gamby

Head of Early Years and Childcare

Free Entitlement

30 Hour Codes

Management Information (MI) has had numerous queries from parents and providers this term with regards to the discretionary period assigned to 30 Hour codes. MI has since been in contact with the Department for Education (DfE) who has clarified the situation.

Prior to September 2018, local authorities (LAs) were informed that they could apply a discretion to 30 Hour codes where parents could prove they made the application before the cut-off date. The evidence MI could accept were screenshots from the parents' secure messages section in their childcare choices account showing an application was submitted before the deadline date (i.e. before 31 August, 31 December and 31 March).

This was incredibly time consuming for LAs and providers, so in response to MI feedback the DfE developed the Eligibility Checking Service (ECS) to automatically amend parents' start dates where an application was made and confirmed by the deadline but the confirmation was delayed. This would then automatically allow parents to be confirmed without the need for evidence.

Due to this development of ECS, MI can **no longer** accept screenshots from parents' accounts as evidence that they submitted an application by the deadline. If the automatic discretion has **not** been applied, this means their application was not received and confirmed by the deadline and is therefore not eligible for the discretion. Ultimately the family is **not eligible** for the term's funding.

If parents feel they did submit in time but their code has a start date after the deadline, they must dispute this with HMRC on 0300 123 4097 and go through their appeals process. There is no need to send a screenshot to MI as they are unable to confirm funding from this. When speaking to HMRC the parent must argue the **start date of their code, not their eligibility**. HMRC will tell the family they are eligible, which they are; however, their code is not valid for funding for the current term in accordance with DfE statutory guidance. It is this difference which is causing the most conflict between LAs, providers and parents, so it is vital parents understand the situation to be able to appeal their case correctly.

30 Hour Audit

The midterm 30 Hour Audit was sent out to providers on Friday 26 October. This audit will only include children on the headcount submissions that have been paid. If there has been an overallocation on a child's extended hours, or a KELSI check was missing, or the claim was submitted as an adjustment, these children will not be included. If a child reaches compulsory school age in spring term 2019 they will also not be included as they will no longer be eligible for early years funding.

The midterm 30 Hour Audit will highlight to providers those children who are eligible in spring terms and which children will enter their grace period before the start of term. This is an opportunity for providers to speak to the parents to encourage them to renew their details with HMRC in time for their code to be updated for a spring term claim.

Free Early Education Funding – Headcount Submissions

We continue to be concerned by the number of settings and childminders who fail to submit headcount information. In a previous Bulletin we explained that failure to submit would result in funding being withdrawn. We have recently become aware of several issues including providers who believe they have successfully submitted information or others who have submitted only half their information perhaps by inputting data for their two year olds but forgetting to repeat the process for their three and four year olds. We appreciate how busy you are and that a withdrawal of funding could cause serious sustainability issues so over the course of this year we will be monitoring the reasons why data is missing. In the meantime, MI will be updating their guide to submitting headcount data to ensure that every step of the process is followed. Please contact MI if you are having difficulty submitting your headcount.

Free Entitlement Dates to Note

Estimate data collection period for three and four year olds for the spring term is Friday 16 November to Tuesday 27 November.

The final payment date for funded two year olds this term is 17 December. Claims must be submitted by 7 December.

Children's Services Integrated Front Door

The new Integrated Front Door went live on the 1 October 2018. This brings together the Central Duty Team and Early Help Triage Team into a single integrated team that has been established to seek to ensure that service requests are sent to the appropriate destination. The Integrated Front Door is responsible for dealing with all Request for Support at an Intensive Level and above (Levels 3 and 4). The old Inter-Agency Referral Form (IAR) and Early Help Notification (EHN) have been replaced by a single Request for Support Form.

To view the new Request for Support Form and accompanying guidance please click [here](#).

The decision making around the most suitable services to meet the needs of children who are referred on a Request for Support will take place within the Front Door going forward. Support Level Guidance (previously the Threshold Document) has been developed to assist partner agencies when considering where children and young people sit within the continuum of need. The guidance is accessible online and comes with an accompanying

Support Level Guidance summary page. This is a double-sided sheet that is colour coded for ease of use and can be easily downloaded.

To view the Support Level Guidance and Support Level Guidance summary page please click [here](#).

Lockdown Procedures

The Education People's Education Safeguarding Team has produced a guidance document to support providers to consider how best to ensure the safety of children, parents and staff in the event of a local threat or emergency which may result in a setting being placed into 'lockdown'. The clear and concise information, which includes information to be shared with parents, will enable providers to ensure they have the necessary procedures in place in the event of a lockdown incident.

[Guidance for Early Years settings on lockdown procedures](#)

Applying for school places for children with Special Educational Needs and where settings are in receipt of the SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF)

A mainstream school place should always be applied for and accepted whether or not it is parents' preference for deferred entry or when there is an expectation that a special school placement will be given as an outcome of the statutory assessment process, as this cannot be guaranteed.

If deferred entry has been agreed by the school and in order for the setting to continue to be eligible to request support, the County SEN Inclusion Officer will need to be in receipt of a letter from the school confirming deferred entry has been agreed and when the school will offer a place from.

SENIF can only be agreed in line with the Early Education Entitlement so the child must continue to be in receipt of this in the preschool setting and not on the roll of the school. The SEN Inclusion Fund can only be agreed until the end of the term in which the child turns five, in line with the Early Education Entitlement.

If a child has a final Education, Health & Care Plan which names the preschool setting in Section I then deferred entry agreement from the Primary School will not be required as the LA has deemed the preschool setting appropriate provision until the term after the child turns five.

If your child has a special school named on their EHCP then their entry to the special school cannot be deferred unless there is an agreement with the SEN department and the Special School.

The Education People are raising awareness about Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Did you know that.....

- DLD is one of the most common childhood disorders – two children in every class are affected
- DLD causes long-term difficulties with talking
- DLD affects school achievement, friendships and self-esteem.

What is DLD?

DLD stands for Developmental Language Disorder. Having DLD means that a child or young person has severe, persistent difficulties understanding or using spoken language

DLD was previously known as Specific Language Impairment (SLI).

DLD is diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) only and is used for children over the age of five years.

There is no known cause of DLD which can make it hard to explain. DLD is not caused by emotional difficulties or limited exposure to language.

A child with DLD may also have other difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia or speech sound difficulties.

DLD is not caused by other medical conditions such as hearing loss, physical impairment, Autism, severe learning difficulties or brain injuries. However, someone with these difficulties may also have a Language Disorder.

'Language Delay' is no longer used to describe language skills that fall below the expected level.

For preschool children where the diagnosis and prognosis may be unclear the term **Language and Communication Needs (LCN)** is being used in Kent.

How do I identify difficulties?

Early identification and support is really important and although children under five won't receive a diagnosis of DLD we need to be look out for signs that a child has Language and Communication Needs (LCN) that might indicate DLD...

In preschool settings, look out for the following risk factors that may mean a child is at risk of DLD, where the more risk factors present, the more concerns there may be:

- Parental/professional concern
- Lack of progress in language or education despite targeted support
- Late talkers with poor language comprehension
- Poor use of gesture (although this alone may be due to other underlying difficulties)
- Family history of language impairment.

It's important to note that many 'late talkers' go on to catch up with peers so this alone is not an indicator. Key clinical indicators include:

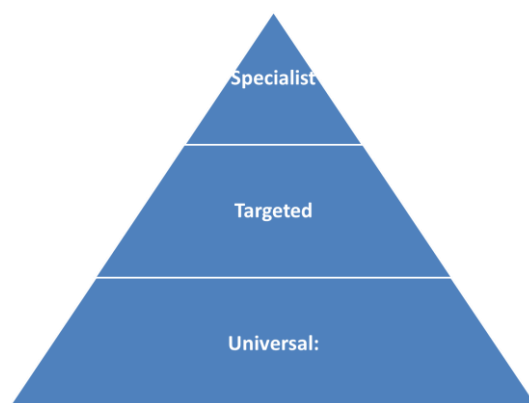
- History of literacy difficulties in family
- Late to produce *words* AND *word combinations*, (by 24 months)
- Late words + late word combinations + family history of literacy difficulties = significant risk
- Verbs* are particularly important – lead to word combinations and set the stage for grammatical development. Limited verbs a key marker. Generic verbs
- Prognosis also lower for children with lower comprehension, limited gesture skills and/or limited imitation of body movements
- Lack of expected progress in response to targeted intervention.

Language difficulties may also underlie behavioural difficulties such as low self-esteem, anxiety or misbehaving in class.

DLD looks different for each individual. The child's specific difficulties can also change as they get older and need to develop more complex skills.

How can I ensure I have the skills to support children with Language and Communication needs?

Across Kent, training for early years and school years staff can be accessed through booking on CPD Online, with the following key training:



Please contact your local Speech and Language Therapy department as we are able to arrange presentations at early years/school years SENCo forums or ad hoc sessions.

For more information about DLD and the impact please use the links below and access the 15 minute video we have filmed in Kent.

<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/international-dld-day-19-october-2018>

A 5 minute film on the process of Terminology change

<https://www.afasic.org.uk/about-talking/types-of-slc/what-is-sli/>

RADLD: DLD 1-2-3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQ-s02HWLb0>

www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy/

www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/cypts

Committee News

The Charity Commission has just released the following information for all Registered Charities.

From 12 November 2018 all charities will be required to check and update their details before they can access the annual return.

This [handy guide explains what information is covered by the service](#) (ODT, 140KB) so you can collect it before you log in. It also explains which parts of that information the Commission will make available to the public.

From the 12 November the first time you sign in to do your [annual return](#) or [update your charity details](#) the service will:

- guide you through several screens that show your charity details
- highlight where you have missing information that needs to be provided (this will be tailored to your charity depending on how up to date your details are on the register)

You will be able to save your charity information and return to the service if needed. When all the missing information has been provided you will be able to continue to submit your annual return.

You will only need to provide all the missing information the first time you sign in to do your annual return or update your charity details after the 12 November.

Whenever you need to update your charity details in future you can choose which sections or information to edit and update.

Changes to trustee and charity contact details

The Commission will be asking you to check that the details for your trustees remain up to date. This includes adding any new trustees and their contact details. You must make sure that each person named is not [disqualified from acting as a trustee](#).

You will need to remove the details of any trustees who are no longer involved with your charity.

When you update trustee details, if they are linked to other charities the changes will take effect across all other charity entries too. This will help to keep the register accurate and reduce duplicate entries.

Trustees will also need to provide their home address and telephone number. This helps with validating the identity of trustees. No trustee contact details or home addresses will be shown to the public.

Changes to email addresses

All trustees will be asked to provide their email address or confirm that they do not have one. This email address will be used to contact trustees about their charity and applied to all their entries on the register.

Trustees will only be contacted by email if the Commission is handling a case about your charity, or to provide regulatory alerts/updates to help you to run your charity effectively.

Changes to bank account information

You will be asked to provide details of all your UK bank/building society accounts. This information will not be available to the public.

This information will be used to make sure that charities are protecting and managing their funds appropriately., Trustees have a duty to act responsibly, reasonably and honestly and protect charity funds and assets so that they are only used to support or carry out its purposes.

Workforce

Do you know where to go to check which qualifications are full and relevant?

New early years career progression map released by the DfE

The DfE qualification site can be found [here](#) and gives you the information you need to check which qualifications are full and relevant, information on the proposed SEND qualifications, apprenticeship levels and the recently released early years career progression map.

The career progression map was designed by early years experts and stakeholders and is supported by the DfE. It gives individuals and leaders who are supporting the progression of their workforce information on the types of job roles within the workforce and associated qualification levels.

Pathway documents have been created to highlight the typical roles and responsibilities that could be associated with different job roles at varying levels. These include case studies and would be useful for either those looking for a career in early years and childcare or those who are looking at different options and potential pathways within the workforce. These resources would also support succession planning and the development of an effective staffing structure.

The Education People's Early Years SEND Conference

The Early Years and Childcare Service hosted a very well attended and inspirational conference that was funded by the DfE. Early years childcare providers, parents and professionals from across Kent spent the day focusing on the needs of children with special educational needs and their families.

Key themes for the day included:

- The 30 Hours Delivery Programme
- Inclusive practice
- Co-production
- Improving communication and information for families

We welcomed two inspirational keynote speakers:

Sherann Hillman MBE

Sherann is Head of Family Services for Seashell Trust which is a National charity supporting children and families in Stockport. Sherann was awarded an MBE in the 2017 New Year's Honours list for her Services to Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Phil Armstrong, Early Excellence Head of Regional Development South & London

Phil is the Early Excellence Head of Regional Development for London and the South, having previously worked as Head of Centre in London since 2016. Over the last 16 years he has worked across the early years and primary sector, including headship positions. His most recent role was as head of an integrated early years centre.

Delegates attended a range of workshops presented by Portage, Coram Family Trust, ASD Ashford, More than Words and 21Together. The market place provided delegates with the opportunity to find out additional information to support families in their early years settings.

'Amazing guest speakers'!!

'Really empowering talk which makes me remember why I work in early years and to focus on the joy of childhood'.

'Experienced speakers in both conference and workshops, very inspiring in all aspects of early years education. I took away lots of positives which will impact on our setting'.

'Excellent reinforcement of co-production, families need to feel empowered in decision making and clear practical advice on how to achieve this'.

'Content rich event which allowed time for delegates to share experiences and ideas.'

'This has been the best conference by far'!

Provider Agreement Declarations

Thank you to all ECMs who have returned their declarations to MI. There are still a large number of childminders who haven't returned them. Even if you are not delivering funded places this term please take the time to complete and return your declaration. If you have not returned your declaration next time you wish to claim, it could delay your payment.

Compliance Visits to ECMs

Quality Advisers are now beginning to contact ECMs to organise Early Education and Childcare Compliance Visits which form part of the Provider Agreement. If you claimed funding last term or are claiming this term you may be contacted shortly.

Safeguarding Training

It is a requirement for the designated person in schools to attend safeguarding training every two years and update their knowledge at least annually. Although there is no specified requirement for childminders it has always been a recommendation that childminders attend an update every two to three years.

There is no requirement to attend a particular type of course. Any course childminders attend must help them to meet the requirements of the EYFS. Childminders should also keep themselves up to date with the local Kent procedures. This can be done by attending local training and also by signing up to updates on the Kent Safeguarding Children Board website.

The Education People have developed an e-learning package for childminders which will be available shortly and will meet their requirements for update training. We will let you know when it becomes available.

Kent Childminder Facebook Group

A closed Facebook group has been set up to support Kent childminders. Registered childminders can request to join the group [here](#). You will need to provide your Ofsted EY number and the name on your Ofsted registration certificate when making the request. Before joining the group we would encourage all childminders to check the privacy status of their own Facebook profile.

Threads of Success marketing information

We are delighted that so many people have opted in to receiving information from the Early Years and Childcare Service about the promotional and marketing opportunities we continue to offer. However, we have not had a response from everyone yet and remember, unless you opt in, you might miss out! To opt in, if you haven't done so already, please visit <https://www.threadsofsuccess.co.uk/gdpr-form>.

Lastly, if at any time you want to be removed from all non-statutory communications, just email threadsofsuccess@theeducationpeople.org and we will remove you from our promotion and marketing list.

Briefing and Networking Sessions

Our regular Early Years Briefing and Networking Sessions provide a good opportunity to keep your setting and staff up to date and to network with colleagues from other settings.

The presentation slides from the October Briefing and Networking Sessions can be viewed [here](#).

Evaluations were positive with comments such as:

“Lots of information and signposting to changes in process and reflection of impact on 30 Hours” and

“Good clear information easy to understand, opportunity to share information in table discussions and network with colleagues”

Why not book a place on the next round of Early Years and Childcare Briefing and Networking sessions and benefit from the opportunity to network and hear important updates?

EYC 19/054	Riverside Church, Whitstable	5 February 2019
EYC 19/053	Holiday Inn, Ashford Central	6 February 2019
EYC 19/055	Darenth Valley Golf, Sevenoaks	11 February 2019
EYC 19/056	Hadlow Manor Hotel, Tonbridge	13 February 2019

Contact Us

Threads of Success	www.ThreadsofSuccess.co.uk ThreadsofSuccess@theeducationpeople.org
Threads of Success Recruitment Hub	https://www.threadsofsuccessrecruitment.com/home
Sufficiency and Sustainability	Sufficiencyandsustainability@theeducationpeople.org
Education for Sustainable Development	ESD@theeducationpeople.org
Improvement and Standards	EYImprovementServices@theeducationpeople.org
Equality and Inclusion	EYInclusion@theeducationpeople.org
Collaborations	EYCollaborations@theeducationpeople.org
Childminding	childminding@theeducationpeople.org
Emporium Plus	Emporiumplus@theeducationpeople.org
Workforce Development	Earlyyearsworkforce.ask@theeducationpeople.org
Kent Children and Families Information Service	Kentcfis@kent.gov.uk
Management Information	eyfe@kent.gov.uk
Free for 2 (FF2) Team	Eyfreefor2@kent.gov.uk
KELSI	http://www.kelsi.org.uk
Schools e-bulletin	http://www.kelsi.org.uk/working_in_education/news.aspx

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