



WELCOME

Happy New Year to you all. We hope you had a relaxing Christmas break.

Our Spring Term Training Brochure is now available, offering a wide range of professional development opportunities. Please take a moment to book your sessions for this term.

We strongly encourage EY leads, owners, managers and childminders to attend the Early Years Leadership Briefing, where we will share key sector updates and safeguarding information for Halton.

You can also follow us on Instagram and TALK Halton on Facebook. We're currently sharing posts linked to DFE starting reception document [Home - Starting Reception](#), which you are very welcome to share with parents through your own social media channels and newsletters.

Best wishes
Sarah

Get in touch with the team on early.years@halton.gov.uk

UPDATES

Leadership Briefing – Book Your Place

Calling all Childminders, Managers and Early Years Leads! Have you booked onto one of our upcoming Leadership Briefings on **Tuesday 20 January 2026**. We're offering two sessions to support flexible attendance 10:00–11:30 OR 18:30–20:00

Join us to stay up to date with key developments and priorities in the Early Years.



Save the Date – EYFS Vulnerable Learners Transition Event

Please add to your diary: the EYFS Vulnerable Learners Transition Meeting will take place on Wednesday 6th May, morning session (8.00am–12.00pm) at The Heath Conference Centre. Further details will follow.

Infectious Diseases Resource Pack for Educational Settings

Public Health teams in Halton, Warrington and St Helens have developed a practical resource pack to support education professionals in managing infectious diseases. The pack includes clear action cards, guidance on exclusion periods, cleaning protocols, and key contacts, drawing on UKHSA guidance and specialist input from the commissioned Infection Prevention and Control Service.



This short 5-minute video user guide is available to help you use the pack effectively in your setting [Educational settings pack slides Video](#)

Infectious Disease Flow Chart



FEYE FUNDING

Spring Headcount Day

Spring headcount day is on **Thursday 15th January 2026**.

Please ensure you submit your spring term headcounts by **midnight on 19th January**.

The system will reopen for adjustments from **20th January**.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

Safety Alert – Baby Sleep Pillows

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) has issued a Safety Alert highlighting the risks associated with baby sleep pillows. Childcare providers are encouraged to share this alert with parents and carers to help keep babies safe:

<https://www.gov.uk/product-safety-alerts-reports-recalls/product-safety-alert-baby-sleep-pillows-psa8>

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Spring 2026 Early Years Training Directory

The Spring 2026 Early Years Training Directory was emailed out before Christmas. Make sure you take a moment to explore the wide range of opportunities available to deepen your knowledge and strengthen your skills in supporting our youngest children.



SEND

2026 SENDIASS Drop-ins

These sessions are for families not already receiving SENDIASS support. If families are already working with SENDIASS, please advise them to contact the service first so arrangements can be made if needed.

SENDIASS will be running drop-in sessions throughout 2026 at two Family Hubs (term time only):

Warrington Road Family Hub – 10am–1pm, 3rd Friday of the month (term time only):

Jan 16 | Feb 20 | Mar 20 | Apr 17 | May 15 | Jun 19 | Jul 17 | Sept 18 | Oct 16 | Nov 20

Brookvale Family Hub - 10am–1pm, last Friday of the month (term time only):

Jan 30 | Feb 27 | Mar 27 | Apr 24 | Jun 26 | Sept 25 | Nov 27

At the drop-ins:

- * No appointment needed
- * 20–30 minute conversations
- * Further support arranged if more time is needed
- * Families can attend either hub, whichever is easiest

Who can attend?

Families or young people living in Halton who have, or may have, SEND. No diagnosis or formal identification is needed. Education setting or home-education status does not matter.

DID YOU KNOW..?

Integrated Early Writing, Talk and Physical Development Audit Tool

Ruth Swailes has developed an Integrated Early Writing, Talk and Physical Development Audit Tool for Nursery, Reception and Year 1. The tool aligns with the DfE Writing Framework while remaining fully developmentally appropriate for early learners.

You can purchase the toolkit for £5 by clicking on the following link [Integrated Early Writing, Talk and Physical Development Audit Tool](#)

DON'T MISS OUT!

Reception Teachers: Participate in DfE Research

The Department for Education (DfE) is inviting reception teachers and teaching assistants to share their experiences of training and working in reception. Your insights will help identify what works well and inform future improvements.

If you would like to take part, please complete the short online form. Participants will receive £70 in recognition of their time for each interview.

FURTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

National guidelines for CPR and choking in infants were updated in November 2025 and became the standard for first aid courses from January 2026.

Safe and Sound, a well-known PFA training provider, is offering a FREE webinar covering the updates, including information and demonstrations.

 Wednesday 14 January 2026

 19:00 – 20:00

👉 Click here <https://www.safeandsound.uk.net/webinars/paediatric-life-support/>

Please note: PFA certificates issued before the changes remain valid until their expiry, however best practice is to attend update CPD, such as the webinar above.

SHARE WITH PARENTS



Supporting School Readiness – Encourage Independence

With the deadline for Reception applications for September 2026 fast approaching, now is the perfect time to encourage families to think about ways they can support their child's confidence and independence as they begin their journey to school. Throughout January, take a look at Halton's Early Years Instagram and the TALK Halton Facebook page for simple ideas and activities to help children grow their independence at home and in the early years setting.



Ensuring your child is immunised at the right time gives them the best protection.

If you aren't sure if your child has had all of their immunisations, contact your GP or drop into a Living Well session where we can check and offer any your child needs to help protect them.



Hosted by:

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

<https://www.cwp.nhs.uk/livingwellservice>



THE LIVING WELL SERVICE

The Living Well Service supports our communities by providing:

- Winter vaccinations
- All routine NHS vaccinations
- Health checks
- Mental health support

If you would like to visit the Living Well Service, you can drop in at the time listed below

DECEMBER		FEBRUARY	
Saturday 13 th	Tesco Extra, Widnes	Tuesday 3 rd	Queen of Hearts
Tuesday 16 th	Queen of Hearts		Pub, Runcorn
	Pub, Runcorn	Thursday 19 th	Asda, Runcorn
Monday 29 th	Wickes, Widnes		
JANUARY		MARCH	
Friday 2 nd	Asda, Widnes	Thursday 5 th	Tesco Extra, Widnes
Thursday 8 th	Asda, Widnes	Wednesday 18 th	Co-Op, Runcorn
Tuesday 20 th	Tesco Extra, Widnes		

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NHS Foundation Trust

Learn more about the Living Well Service at:
www.cwp.nhs.uk/livingwellservice

SCHOOL READINESS

Final Reminder – Apply for School Places

Please remind parents to apply for their child's Reception school place by **15th January 2026**. The Admission to Primary School 2026 booklet, which explains the application process and key arrangements, is [available online](#).

School Readiness Parent Survey

Parents of children starting Reception are invited to complete a short School Readiness Survey. Their feedback will support collaboration between families, early years settings and schools, helping children transition confidently into school. Please share the following link with parents [Is your child starting Reception in 2026](#)

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026

Proud to support
The National Year
of Reading 2026.

**GO
ALL
IN.**

National Year of Reading 2026

Many of us know the benefits of reading, yet fewer people are finding time for it. The National Year of Reading 2026 aims to change that by bringing reading into the heart of everyday culture. The campaign message is simple: "If you're into it, read into it." Reading can deepen the things you already love—whether that's music, baking, films, sci-fi, family time or anything else.

Join the movement and **Go All In** to see how reading in all its forms can unlock more of what you enjoy. [Find out more here](#)

Subscribe

If this newsletter has been shared with you via your setting/school and you would like to receive a copy directly to your own inbox please click on the subscribe button and complete the relevant information.



Take a look at the FREE information and resources on
Halton's Communication Hub

Search



Talk Halton



Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes WA8 7QF