



## WELCOME

What an informative and surprisingly energetic session we had with Shine Therapy last week, if you missed it there is another chance to 'Shine' with us on **Friday 21st March** - don't miss out 😊

There is a lot going on Early Years at the moment, alongside DfE updates there are some further changes coming up around top up funding and placing eligible 2's. Please make sure that you read our newsletter and attend our termly Leadership Briefings, this is how we share important information with you. Contact us on [early.years@halton.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@halton.gov.uk) we are always happy to hear from you

Thank you for your continued support  
Sarah

## UPDATES

### Charging update

Last month the DfE published an updated version of the [early education and childcare statutory guidance](#), and have now published a [FAQ document](#) to cover the main themes in the questions the DfE have received from providers.

A key emphasis is transparency in how the entitlements are passed on to parents, including that all costs should be clear to parents upfront and a greater clarification of what are considered 'consumables'. The guidance also reaffirms, in line with a recent High Court judgment, that whilst providers can charge for some extras these charges must not be mandatory.

### Top up funding is changing!

We are introducing a new funding system for Early Years nursery age children from 9 months old. **Special education needs inclusion funding (SENIF)** will replace the current top up funding system. Please join us on **1<sup>st</sup> April 2025** at **10.00am OR 6.30pm** for a briefing on the new funding system. We will be sending out further information regarding this following the briefing.

To book your place please [click here](#)

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### Childminder keeping in touch

Join us online for our next session on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm**, where we

Please take some time to read the frequently asked questions and refer to the actual guidance when considering charging practice. The new guidance is effective from 1 April 2025.

will be following up on discussions from last session and having an informal chat about all matters childminder related. Email [early.years@halton.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@halton.gov.uk)  
Looking forward to seeing you all there!

### Halton Local Offer

There is a face-to-face launch event for the Local Offer on **24th March 2025** (08:30 -11:30) at The Heath Business and Technical Park . Come along, we would love to have your input regarding further developments. There will also be a Market Place of Halton SEND Services.

### Timewise – Flexible working: A guide for Nursery Managers

The Timewise Childcare Pioneers project 2024 explored how proactive flexible working cultures could improve staff wellbeing and retention and attract a more diverse pool of candidates. Timewise created a guide for Nursery Managers to support with implementing flexible working in an EY setting: [Timewise-A-Guide-for-Nursery-Managers.pdf](#)

## CHILDCARE EXPANSION

The Provider Portal is open between **17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025** to allow you to submit your estimated hours for the Summer Term.

Don't forget – Summer Term starts on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025**.

Please remind any parents who want to claim the funded hours from April 2025, that they must have applied for their eligibility code via [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

**BEFORE 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**. Any codes with a start date after 31<sup>st</sup> March will not be valid for the Summer Term.



If any children have the symbol next to their name on your Provider Portal and a grace period end date of **31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**, please run an eligibility check on the code to ensure the parents have re-confirmed. If they have not re-confirmed yet, please let the parents know they **MUST** re-confirm before 31<sup>st</sup> March, otherwise the code will not be valid in the Summer Term

## SAFEGUARDING UPDATES

### **Childcare: significant events to notify Ofsted about**

[Click here](#) to read Guidance for Childminders, nannies and other registered childcare providers with examples of what Ofsted considers to be a significant. Wording added to confirm that Ofsted needs to be notified of any changes to the health of those associated with Ofsted-registered childcare that may affect their decision-making and resilience, even where the individual is not working directly with children

See accompanying [blog post](#) by Jayne Coward, Deputy Director for Early Years Regulatory Policy and Practice.

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### **Free Behavioural Support Training by TEAM TEACH**

Thursday 27th March 8.30am-11.30am at The Heath Conference Centre (Lecture Theatre)

Via the PEIA funding we are offering a 3 hour bespoke workshop delivered by TEAM TEACH around supporting behaviour especially around the Transition times in schools. This is designed support all members of staff (including Governors we feel the legal element would be beneficial to them).

The course will cover:

- \* Understand behaviour is communication.
- \* What do I bring to the room
- \* Understanding the environment
- \* Positive Behaviour supports

To book please use the following link <https://forms.office.com/e/YHZscNM1Np>

### **Experience-based route for Early Years Staff**

The experience-based route for Early Years guidance is now statutory. This guidance outlines the recommended approach for Early Years Providers who are interested in carrying out the experience-based route for staff in their setting. This route allows for suitable and experienced staff, who do not hold full and relevant qualifications, to be included in the staff:child ratios at level 3 following a period of supervised practice.

For more information, please [click here](#)

## DON'T MISS OUT!



Early Years Alliance has teamed up with the Safer Food Group to offer comprehensive allergy awareness training.

**Allergy Awareness Hygiene Certificate training level 2** (member price £7.75 +



**EYSEND Seminar-  
Songs, Rhymes and Rhyming Books –  
Why we do it and why it matters**

Join Dr Susan Richards (Lead Speech and Language Advisor at Speech and Language UK) on **19<sup>th</sup> March (10:00 - 11:30)** to talk

VAT, non-member price £12.00 + VAT). This version of Level 2 Food Allergy course looks at allergic ingredients, their effects on the human body, and how to minimise the risks caused by allergens. It is suitable for anyone working in an Early Years setting catering environment, including cooks, staff working in Nurseries and Preschools, supervisors and Childminding professionals.

[Click here to get allergy certified!](#)

about how songs, rhymes and rhyming books can contribute to children's language development. You will learn how neuroscience is helping us understand how language rhythms form the basis for language learning and find out how the structured auditory patterns of songs, rhymes and rhyming books can scaffold language processing for children right from the very beginning.

[Click here to book on](#)

## CLUSTER CORNER



### It's a date!

It's great to hear that some clusters have already set a date to meet up. If you are unsure which cluster your setting/school is part of please contact [early.years@halton.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@halton.gov.uk) and we would be more than happy to put you in touch with one another

Have you seen the Starting Reception document? What are your thoughts? Click on the image to download a copy or head over to <https://startingreception.co.uk/> to take a look

## CALLING ALL CHILDMINDERS

Childminders please take a few moments to complete our online Childminder Consultation. Please click on the button below to share your thoughts and ideas with us.

[Childminder Consultation](#)



### Just added!

DfE Early Years and Childcare Expansion Childminder Virtual Roadshow from DfE Live Events on **Wednesday, March 26, 2025 (6.30-8.00pm)**

[Get your ticket here](#)

## DID YOU KNOW...?

**Webinar for Early Years Providers: improving the way**

**Inclusive Practice in Wraparound Provision**

### Ofsted inspects education

Did you manage to book onto the webinar? If not don't worry you can [watch a recording of the session here.](#)

These resources have been produced by NASEN on behalf of Childcare Works to support inclusive practice in wraparound provision. Ten bitesize videos have been produced to promote inclusive provision and to meet the needs of children with SEND.

[Click here](#) to find out more

## SHARE WITH PARENTS



### Tots Talking

Contact Sarah Jarvis (Communication and Language Early Years Practitioner – Family Hubs) to find out more about how the Tots Talking programme is helping parents to support their child's communication skills

[sarah.jarvis@halton.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.jarvis@halton.gov.uk)

## EASTER BUNNY DUMMY

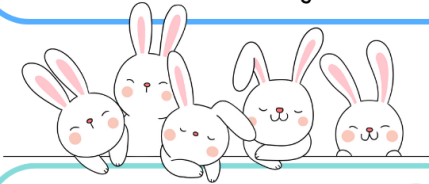
Have you got children that are looking to give up their dummy to the Easter Bunny? Take a look at our ideas, get parents involved and share on your social media



# Giving the dummy to the Easter Bunny

## Dummy Tree

Tie ribbon to the dummy and hang on the tree. A branch of a tree stood in a pot of sand/gravel makes a perfect Dummy Tree. To make it look even more special try spray painting it! Or place the dummies in an Easter Basket. The following day the dummy is replaced with a letter from the Easter Bunny



## Growing a Tree

Share the story 'The Last Noo-Noo' by Jill Murphy and then take the children outdoors to 'plant' their dummies in pots to see if they too can grow a Noo-Noo Tree!



## Dummy Post Box

Decorate a cardboard box at Nursery to create a post box so the children can post their dummies to the Easter Island. Make giving up the dummy a positive and exciting opportunity for the children

## Share Stories

Books are a great way to introduce ideas to children, especially when talking about the characters and their experiences. Take a look below at the suggested titles of stories to share

- 'Bea gives up her dummy' by Jenny Album
- 'Ben gives up his dummy' by Jenny Album
- 'The Last Noo-Noo' by Jill Murphy
- 'Florrie the Dummy Fairy' by Anthony J Crosbie
- 'I want my dummy!' by Tony Ross
- 'No more dummy for Piggy!' by Bernette Ford and Sam Williams

## Involve Parents

Talk to parents of children who use dummies and offer support and guidance - take a look at Halton's Dummy Advice Sheet. Parents and Practitioners can work together to support the child to give up their dummy



## 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

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Talk Halton



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