



WELCOME

As we reach the final week of the summer term, we'd like to take a moment to thank everyone across our Halton Early Years community for your incredible hard work, dedication, and support throughout the academic year.

This year has been filled with achievements, and we're proud to continue championing high-quality Early Years education, in line with the government's [*Best Start for Life*](#) strategy.

While we're already planning for an exciting year ahead, please **save the date** for our **Autumn Term Cluster**—details below!

For those heading into a well-earned summer break, we hope you enjoy a chance to rest and recharge. And for those continuing to work over the summer (just like us!), please do keep in touch with the team via early.years@halton.gov.uk

Our next newsletter will be with you in the **Autumn term**. Until then, thank you once again —and have a wonderful summer.

Best wishes
Sarah



DIARY DATES

Autumn Early Years Cluster

Friday, 24th October

Mark your calendars—you won't want to miss this opportunity to join this session about early years curriculum, observation and assessment with Ruth Swailes. More details to follow.

UPDATES

Early Years Qualification Checker

As a manager in an early years setting, ensuring your team meets the Department for Education's qualification standards is essential. The **Early Years Qualification Checker** is your go-to tool for verifying whether a staff member's qualification is "full and relevant" for working in early years settings in England. Please use the qualification checker to make sure qualifications are approved as full and relevant by the DFE to confirm that staff can count in ratios.

 **Use the checker here:** gov.uk/guidance/check-an-early-years-qualification

Become an early years teacher

There are several ways to train to become an early years teacher. You can do undergraduate degree training, an early years teacher degree apprenticeship, or there are postgraduate options if you already have a degree. All of these routes lead to early years teacher status (EYTS). For more information click here

<https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/life-as-a-teacher/age-groups-and-specialisms/early-years-teachers>

Upcoming Ofsted Webinars: Changes to Education Inspections from November 2025

From **September 2025**, Ofsted will host a series of live webinars to help education providers understand the key changes to inspections coming into effect from **November 2025**.

 **Book your place and view the full schedule:** [Education Inspection Framework Engagement Programme](#)

Stay informed and prepared—don't miss this opportunity to engage directly with Ofsted.

Update EYFS Statutory Framework

To see the update EYFS Statutory Framework for group and school based providers, and Childminders [click here](#)

EXPANSION/ENTITLEMENTS

Apply for eligibility codes

Please remind parents to apply for their Working Family eligibility code, via

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk **before 31st August 2025**, if they want to claim the 30 hours funding for 9-23 month, 2, 3 or 4 year olds from September.

DATA AND SUFFICIENCY

Ready for Reception & WellComm Summer data

This is a gentle reminder that the collection date was **Friday, 27th June**. If you have not yet submitted your data, please ensure that any remaining returns are sent to Katherine Wildy at Katherine.wildy@halton.gov.uk as soon as possible.

Early Years Sufficiency Collection

We kindly ask that you:

-  Update your Places and Vacancies information on the **Provider Portal**
-  Complete the relevant Microsoft Forms survey by **Thursday, 18th July 2025**

All details are included in the email from Clare Rowlands, sent on 4th July.

-  [Nursery & Pre-School Survey](#)
-  [Childminder Survey](#)



Your input is essential to help us ensure sufficient early years provision across the borough. Thank you for your continued support!

SAFEGUARDING UPDATES

Our model Safeguarding policies are out!

Our model safeguarding policies have been updated to reflect the **new 2025 reforms**, please take a moment to check your inbox (and spam/junk folder, just in case) to ensure you have received the documentation. An official **FAQ** is also available to help you understand the changes, please [click here](#) to access.

DON'T MISS OUT!

From September 2025, there is a new requirement in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework that Early Years providers 'should' have regard to the new [nutrition guidance on GOV.UK](#)

Sensory Food Education in Early Years Settings

Sensory food education is a powerful way for educators to help children build a healthy and positive relationship with food. By exploring food through all five senses, children can better understand their own preferences and become more open to trying new foods. This approach supports the development of lifelong healthy eating habits.



For more information on how to run sensory food education in your setting take a look at the [Help for early years providers: Sensory food education](#) and [TastEd website](#)



Catch up on the Foundation Years vodcast, *"Nurturing Nutrition: Building Healthy Foundations in the Early Years."* Discover practical strategies, research findings, and real-world examples on how to create supportive food environments that encourage healthy eating habits and long-term wellbeing in young children.

LET'S CELEBRATE!



Halton's Professional Development in Early Years

Thank you to the practitioners that were able to join us for Halton's Professional Development in Early Years celebration last week. It was truly lovely to hear how your practice and pedagogy have evolved as a result of the training. For those of you who were unable to attend, we want to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate everyone who took part in the 2024–2025 programme.

SHARE WITH PARENTS

The **Starting School** document is now available online in multiple languages. Please share this information in your newsletters, on your social media, and with families in your community.

Let's help every child start school with confidence!

🌲 Forest School Fun for Future Reception Starters!

Weston Point Primary Academy is hosting free Forest School sessions for children starting **Reception in September 2026**. These nature-based events help boost confidence, creativity, and social skills through outdoor play and discovery. Families can enjoy building a Gruffalo den and exploring the wonders of the natural world together.

📅 Dates:

Saturday, July 12

Sunday, July 20

🕒 Time: 11am – 1pm

Spaces are limited, so registration is encouraged.

👉 To book your place or learn more, please [click here](#)

Halton Holiday Activity and Food Provision (HAF)

Halton Borough Council is delighted to announce that it has secured Government Funding from the Department of Education, to enable local providers to offer FREE

activities and lunch during the summer holiday period to school aged children from Reception to Year 11, who receive benefits-related to free school meals. There are also a number of places available to other vulnerable groups of children and young people, such as SEND, Young Carers and NEET. The link below (**HAF**) will take you through to the summer providers details.

Halton Holiday Activity and Food Provision (HAF) Bookings Now Open.

Visit www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk to book your place

Scan to find more

Logos: FamilyHub, CHalton, NHS, HALTON, Funded by UK Government

FURTHER UPDATES

The recent case of Genevieve Meehan's death in a Stockport nursery highlights the importance of safer sleep practices. In particular, the need for safer sleep training and education in early years settings. **The Lullaby Trust** offers low-cost, evidence-based training for professionals working with babies and young children - to find out more [click here](#)

Also take a look at the free resources by clicking on the image below

Advice for Early Years settings - sleeping space for babies

The safest place for babies to sleep is on a clear, flat and separate sleep space such as a:

- Mattress
- Cot
- Crib
- Travel cot
- Carrycot

We advise against sleeping babies in a seated or inclined position such as in:

- pushchairs/buggies
- car seats
- bouncy chairs
- swings
- hammocks

These are not suitable sleep surfaces for babies as they are not firm and flat, therefore can be associated with an increased risk of SIDS. This is because if a baby's chest is close to, or on their chest, this position can restrict their airways and become a possible contributing factor to SIDS so should be avoided.

All of our safer sleep advice is for every sleep and nap.

If a baby falls asleep in a sitting device they should be moved to a flat surface. Don't place sitting devices on a high or soft surface.

This advice should be the setting's policy to ensure safer sleep is always followed.

SLEEP SUPERVISION

In a nursery/childcare environment, sleeping babies should be closely supervised. This can be a member of staff being present in a dedicated sleep room while the babies sleep or frequent monitoring by members of staff in an open play room.

- Inspect cots, bedding and mattresses and ensure all are in good condition before each sleep session
- To avoid overheating, babies should be dressed appropriately for the room temperature the ideal temperature is 16-20 degrees

Approved Childminder 2020
Company registration number: 11932424

Safer sleep for babies

A guide for professionals

Logos: The Lullaby Trust, UNICEF, Basis

Safer Sleep Awareness

A Guide for Childminders, Foster Carers, Nannies and Nursery Settings

Logos: The Lullaby Trust



Watch this vodcast to ensure safe sleeping environments for babies and young children in your care. Featuring expert insights from Alex Robinson (Department for Education) and Ellen Lithgow (The Lullaby Trust), the vodcast offers practical advice and real-world examples



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