Dear reader,

Welcome to the new academic year! For those of you who have had an opportunity for some time off over the summer, we hope you have had a good break and are full of energy and ideas for the new term. It’s a big time for new starters at nursery and reception and we hope all of the children are settling in well. The Early Years Team have their own ‘new starter’ with the addition of Rosy Dickinson who has joined the team as an Early Years Inclusion Consultant.

The Northumberland Early Years Team have been busy over the summer developing a new training programme, analysing data from this years EYFS Profile results to share and creating new tools and resources to support you in offering high quality childcare and education for young children.

This edition of the E-Mag includes practice shared by some of our EYFS practitioners, ideas for professional development following the release of our new training programme and an important update from Katie Watson relating to the Two Year Progress Check.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and would welcome any feedback you have. If anyone would like to feature in future editions, please contact a member of the Early Years Team.

Kind Regards,
The Early Years Team
We are delighted to introduce the newest member of the Northumberland Early Years team. Rosy Dickinson joins us as an Early Years Inclusion Consultant and will be supporting providers across Northumberland.

Rosy brings to the team a wealth of knowledge and experience and we are looking forward to working together to develop new initiatives and ideas for practitioners to use in their settings as part of the SEND Local Offer.

Rosy’s contact details can be found on the final page of the E-Mag.

Hello everyone. I’m Rosy Dickinson and the latest addition to the Early Years team. I will be working alongside Julie Beattie as an Early Years Inclusion Consultant. I’m really excited to join the team in Northumberland and look forward to meeting everyone in the near future.

Over the last four years I have worked as a Reception teacher in a Northumberland school. This role provided me with the opportunity to work with children of varying needs. I was fortunate to be given ample opportunity to develop as a practitioner, undergoing training to develop my knowledge and practice on a range of SEND courses. I enjoyed using my creativity to develop strategies and resources to meet the individual needs of children.

I am passionate about the importance of quality teaching to meet the needs of all children. I strongly believe that all children are unique and should be encouraged to be so. I really look forward to working with settings to help all Early Years providers to meet the needs of all the children within their care.”

Rosy Dickinson
Early Years Inclusion Consultant
Dear Colleague,

2-3 year olds attending any kind of childcare outside of the home must have an EYFS Two Year Progress Check. Every child also receives a 27 month Health Review from their Health Visitor as part of the Healthy Child Programme and Integrated Review.

Children’s progress, wellbeing and development are at the heart of these reviews and their parents / carers must be an integral part in assessing how well their child is doing and any strategies that need to be implemented as a result.

The Early Years Team along with Children’s Centres and Health colleagues developed a pathway and some optional paperwork for this integrated check which can be accessed [http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/eyfs-disadvantaged-children/](http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/eyfs-disadvantaged-children/)

We know many settings choose to use their own which is fine as long as parents are part of it and their views are recorded.

Please note you now only need to send a copy to the child’s Health Visitor if there is any concern or you feel it’s important, maybe due to there already being a health concern, child in need issue or perhaps an EHA is in place.

This Integrated Two Year Progress Check is the first measure of how well our early years children are doing and very important for successful early identification and intervention. This is why it is included in the EYFS Passport. It will also be a key feature in the Northumberland Local Offer SEND Inspection. Ofsted have the right to visit any setting, childminder or school during this process and may contact anyone of you to discuss. With this in mind please review your documentation, processes and impact. If you have any concerns or need help in managing the checks please contact your locality EY team. I would welcome any case studies or good practice you would like to share.

Many thanks,

Katie Watson
Early Years Advisor
Children in Northumberland are doing well! The percentage of children achieving a good level of development has risen for the past 3 years.

Definition: Good level of development
Children achieving a good level of development are those achieving at least the expected level within the following areas of learning: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy; and mathematics.
Girls are doing better than boys, however for the first time in Northumberland the gap between boys and girls has closed.

Definition: Good level of development
Children achieving a good level of development are those achieving at least the expected level within the following areas of learning: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy; and mathematics.
Children identified as having a special educational need in Northumberland are behind their peers but there have been big improvements in attainment since 2015.
Children from disadvantaged groups also do less well than their peers but levels of attainment have gone up over the past 3 years for all groups.
Analysing the progress of individual children and groups of children throughout the EYFS, and using that analysis to inform how best to support children’s further development, is a key priority for all of us in early years. We have a duty to improve the outcomes for all young children and at the same time to close the gap between the most disadvantaged and the rest. High quality early learning and care is they key to making a difference. You will no doubt be doing this level of analysis within your own settings.

Looking at data on a county and national level however, gives us the bigger picture and can help us to consider our practice in relation to wider trends. For example that boys do less well than girls, or that writing is the area of learning which children are least likely to reach the expected level. The sooner we do something about it, the more likely we are going to be able to close the gap and help children to catch up with their peers.

Effective analysis of children’s progress enables us to:

- spot trends and patterns in development
- understand what is working well
- identify any gaps in learning
- identify any particular groups of children whose needs are not being met
- ask questions about gaps that can lead to improvements in our practice and provision, for example, “What is it about Exploring and Using Media and Materials that means girls achieve so much better than boys?”
- ensure children are offered the right environment and opportunities to reach their potential
"So, now that I know all this, what can I do to make sure I play my part in closing the attainment gap?"

It is useful to reflect on this data analysis and consider changes to provision and practice in relation to the following:

- Individual children
- Groups of children
- The physical and emotional learning environment including routines and rhythms of the day
- Staff including support from colleagues, training, visits to other settings etc.
- Parents, carers and the home learning environment

The Early Years Team are here to help...

The Early Years team have carefully considered what the EYFS Profile data is telling us to ensure that courses within the Early Years Training Programme 2017-2018 (http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/eysftraining/) have a wealth of opportunities to develop staff expertise and to meet identified needs.

For example, the Northumberland EYFS Profile data 2017 tells us that we still need to do more to support children to engage in writing. The ‘Nurturing Storytellers and Authors’ (QFT03) will support you in developing your reading and writing provision from the youngest babies to children entering KS1. The programme is packed full of exciting courses and workshops as well as networks to support reflective practice, so please take the time to have a good look and get booking! Don’t forget we are able to offer in-house support and training as part of your SLA membership too. We are excited about the work we will be doing together this year to make a real difference to Northumberland children.

Claire Johnson
Early Years Consultant
ADOPTING A MASTERY APPROACH TO MATHS

In an effort to improve the learning experiences offered to support mathematical development, Acomb First School have accessed support from the Great North Maths Hub. In this article their reception teacher Ashley, talks to us about their journey in the past year and the impact it has made for children in her class.

“This past year we have adopted a mastery approach to maths throughout our school. We have really felt inspired by the strategies we have introduced and the development of the children’s mathematical thinking as a result, has been fantastic.

This has also been reflected in the end of year data, which has shown a huge improvement. This is still ‘a work in progress’ and there is much to change and adapt as we go through our journey, however here I will share some of the things we have learned and tried. As is so often the case, there are lots of materials to support the mastery approach from Year 1-4, but not so much for Early Years!

We have received fantastic training from the North East Maths Hub and used resources such as the White Rose planning documents. I am currently reading and using the book ‘Big Ideas of Early Mathematics-What teachers of Young Children Need to Know’ (The Early Math Collaborative, Erikson Institute) and although it is based in American schools, it is really worth a read.
ADOPTING A MASTERY APPROACH TO MATHS

BIG IDEAS

Behind the mathematics EYFS curriculum that we all know and use daily, we need to be aware of the ‘Big Ideas’. These are things which are not written explicitly in the curriculum, but are the concepts, thinking and understanding that a child needs to be able to carry out some of the skills we expect, such as counting.

For example, we want children to recognise ‘three’. But we need them to know that that symbol for three i.e. 3 means something. It might describe how many cars in a carpark, how many sweets in a bag. Children need to learn that that symbol can be used to describe cars, sweets, buttons etc. They need to learn the ‘threeness’ of three. What makes those cars in the carpark 3 and not 5?!

An example was given on one training day that if you always see Ant and Dec together you will never remember which is which! However if you just met Dec first and got to know him before you later met Ant, then you would be able to distinguish between the two! This works with numbers, learning left and right, odd and even. The Big Ideas give you the concepts and thinking to help you teach the children at a much deeper level of understanding.

This year in Reception, we will be focussing only on numbers 1-5 in the autumn term, using them to add, subtract and problem solve. In the spring term we will focus on numbers to 10 and then in the summer up to 20, so that children will have a sound understanding of each of those numbers.
ADOPTING A MASTERY APPROACH TO MATHS

CONCRETE, PICTORIAL & ABSTRACT
In mastery, we use these terms and ways of thinking a lot, with the aim of children becoming fluent between the three.

Concrete – we use manipulatives such as Numicon, cubes, red/yellow counters, bears, real objects to count, add and subtract, ten frames, Cuisenaire rods

Pictorial – the children/adults record drawing Numicon, drawing pictures/counters, part part whole methods, bar methods

Abstract – number sentences, symbols

When children are learning a new concept they learn using a range of concrete, pictorial and abstract methods so they get a deeper understanding of what they are doing.

They are encouraged to use full sentences for their reasoning along the lines of “I know…..because I know…..” This encourages them to use and apply previously learned skills. The children work with partners and groups, so that they are actively encouraged to talk maths.

REASONING
The children are constantly asked “How do you know?” in response to an answer. It is not enough to know the answer, they have to explain it. I had a couple of boys last year, who would always reply “I just know”! Their skills developed over the year and they can now explain their answers. E.g. “I know it’s 10, because I know 5 add 5 is 10.”

DAILY PRACTICE
Outside of maths lessons we have a quick 10 minute practise of key skills every day. We use PowerPoint to create 5 slides for the children to look at. These might include ten frames to count or subitise, coins to count, days of the week in the wrong order, positional language etc. Again the children are encouraged to reason for each of their answers. It’s a great way to keep refreshing the skills they have and a way of assessing all that ‘everyday language’ for time, money, shape, measure etc.
ADOPTING A MASTERY APPROACH TO MATHS

GAMES

There are many skills to be learned by playing games, not just maths, but I try to provide a game of some sort in my ongoing provision. It takes a lot of skill to jump up and down a number line. By banging an object along a number track or hearing coins dropping in a bucket, children use all of their senses to engage further in maths. Maths language such as comparing more/less or tallest/longest can happen automatically. Last year I taught my class how to play chess! The reasoning and thinking that went on was unbelievable! They thought about their next move, predicted and strategized the game. The more able helped the less able play. It was amazing!

I started using Numicon for the first time last year and I intend to use this even more this year, to help get that “threeness of three” understanding. I will also be using the Big Ideas much more.

I had a negative experience of maths at school and this has followed me through life! But this way of teaching has totally changed my thinking and I love teaching maths now!”

Ashley Manning
Teacher
Acomb First School

Moving forward this year, we will be building on what we learned last year and adapting and tweaking to make it even better.

White Rose also have new Reception plans coming out soon. I feel that mastery maths has really changed my thinking on maths.
INCLUSION & SEND SUPPORT FROM THE EARLY YEARS TEAM

Request for Inclusion and SEND Support Form

As from Monday 4th September if you require inclusion /SEND support you need to use the link below to access the Request for Support E Form. We welcome any feedback on the form and will be able to improve it as time goes on.

Click here

The form has been designed to give us a brief overview of the support you are requesting, if it is regarding an individual child, parental consent must be obtained before any personal information can be given.

Website - Early Years Tab

We have added a range of documents to the SEND folder in the Early Years Tab of the Northumberland Education webpage, if you have not explored the link yet this is where you can find it here.

Included are National Strategies publications including the Early Years Inclusion Development Programmes and Social, Emotional Aspects of Development (SEAD).
We have on offer a range of training being offered in this academic year’s Professional Development Programme.

This includes the Northumberland Early Years Inclusion Toolkit under the Quality First Teaching section which promotes inclusive practice. We will continue to focus on developing the electronic version of the Northumberland Early Years Inclusion Toolkit, however in the meantime you can find a PDF version on the tab too along with the assessment tools.

In the last edition of our E Mag we introduced you to the Children’s Physical Disability Occupational Health Service, we promised you training sessions designed to provide practical tips and resources to support children with gross and fine motor skills. You can find details of the new course in the Early Identification and SEND section, ‘Assessing And Supporting Children With Physical Needs (Occupational Therapy).’

We also have an article in this edition of the E-Mag from the Local Authority SEND team to give you more information on their role and responsibilities in supporting children in Northumberland. Please see our ‘partners page’ for further information.

Julie Beattie & Rosy Dickinson
Early Years Inclusion Consultants
My Journey from Interior Design Store Manager to ‘Outstanding Childminder’!

Tamsin James of ‘Tamsin’s Little Acorns’ talks to us about her two year journey to becoming an outstanding childminder.

“When my daughter Charlotte was born I knew I wanted to spend as much time with her as possible, so in 2015 I decided to make a huge career change from managing an interior design store to becoming a childminder. I had no previous experience in childcare other than being a Mum, so with help from Pacey and the Northumberland Early Years team I passed my Ofsted Pre-Registration visit and was both thrilled and nervous to begin advertising for children to attend my little setting.

In August 2016 my first assistant started and then by March 2017 I had another 2 assistants, all Mums and with childcare qualifications. It was important for me to choose assistants that I knew my parents would trust and be comfortable with. We have a fantastic little team and work so well together which is really important when we all work in my house!

My website: [http://www.tamsinslittleacorns.co.uk/](http://www.tamsinslittleacorns.co.uk/)

http://www.tamsinslittleacorns.co.uk/

was up and running and I began advertising on www.childcare.co.uk and Facebook. Within 6 months I was full most days. My business was developing rapidly and thanks to a few parents recommending me I had plenty of enquiries to make me feel confident enough to hire an assistant.
It’s great being able to bounce ideas off each other and discuss different activities and how to improve the setting. The children choose their own key person, which parents are very happy with and often comment how settled and happy the children are. It’s such a lovely homely environment and all the parents know the names of all the children, it’s a real extended family!

In February 2017 Ofsted rang to say they would be visiting the following week to carry out my first inspection. We were nervous especially as we had two new starters on the Monday! We knew our planning was good and the children were all used to our routine, so we didn’t change our usual day at all. The inspector had given us guidance that she would be looking particularly at how we share our time between the children and how effective my management and leadership was.

We felt at ease with the Inspector straight away and she was very warm and friendly, which helped calm our butterfly tummies! The inspector said one of the main things she was impressed with was the Communication and Language development of the children. We have three sets of siblings who have Greek, Polish and French as their second language and although we are not in any way fluent in any of these languages, we do include these in our day to day activities, chats and songs.

We all spend a lot of time discussing child development with parents and carers and provide daily diaries and reports for parents to see how their children are progressing. Parents contact me at all times of the day to check in and we send regular photos and videos which parents really appreciate. The feedback from parents when we notified them of our Outstanding grading was lovely and we were congratulated with gifts and hugs and even more recommendations.

I am so pleased I decided to become a childminder and find it an extremely rewarding and satisfying job. It is so wonderful to share “WOW” moments with children and parents and spending time with my family is just the icing on the cake!”
The Early Years team are pleased to announce the release of this academic years professional development programme! Download your copy here.

Each course has been carefully considered in response to statutory requirements, inspection outcomes, policy change and reform, end of course evaluations, surveys and feedback. Within our programme you will find a range of blended learning opportunities to suit individual learning styles and all practitioners working at different levels and setting types. Alongside our face to face programme is an extensive range of e-learning modules available through Learning Together which can be accessed 24/7 using a range of devices including PC’s, laptops, tablets or smartphones.

We hope you have all received a copy of our exciting Early Years Professional Development Programme and Service Level Agreement document for the PVI sector 2017 - 2018. As you will see we have worked even harder this year to provide a very different yet tailored and extensive programme and through some remaining Early Innovation budget, linked to the 30hr Pilot, we have managed to retain the subscription package once again this year. We trust this will be well received as you adjust to the national roll out of the 30hrs free education entitlement for all eligible 3 and 4yr olds from September 2017.
We have made some changes to the PVI SLA so please make yourself familiar with the document. Whilst we have applied an unavoidable increase to the ad hoc non SLA rate, we have made some beneficial changes for both SLA and non SLA members by introducing a more simplified electronic booking system. This automated system will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our administrative process and quality service delivery for all.

Moving forward, as technology continues to advance and as we move towards a paperless system we will be introducing an electronic end of course evaluation form which we hope to phase in over the course of this new SLA period.

Our programme is also accessible to schools who have subscribed to the early years element of the school SLA and we have opened up our SLA this year to wider NCC colleagues to promote continuity and consistency of key messages. However, we would also like to expand our partnership approach further and welcome new membership from wider education and training establishments who train and educate practitioners in Northumberland.

Thank you for your continued support and to all those who have signed up so far it’s an exciting year ahead.

Theresa Iley
Early Years Sustainability Officer
In this article focusing on the importance of movement rich play, Amanda Willis of Goosehill Early Excellence talks to us about establishing cultures which place high value on supporting children’s physical development within her own settings in Morpeth.

I was initially a teacher and SENCO in a small primary school and then went on to train as an educational psychologist. After several years working as an EP I found myself disheartened by the role that my job had become, as I would spend day after day being squashed in a hallway or a cupboard with an intelligence test and a child I barely knew. Many teachers lacked the time to experiment with intervention strategies and an increasing number of children were referred to me with dyspraxia, ADHD and autism that had missed diagnosis at an early age.

With the birth of my first daughter I jumped headfirst into a business venture by taking over a small private nursery in Northumberland, with the naive belief that I could make a difference, that it would be wonderful to look at intervention strategies and inclusion of preschool children in the hope that some may have a more positive start at school. The nursery was very small at that time (20 place) very traditional and very hard work!!

One thing that had constantly ‘niggled’ while I was working full time as an EP was that children with difficulties sitting still were often given targets with that ultimate aim in sight and movement activities were seldom included on IEPS. I had become really interested in the area of neuro physiological psychology and in movement therapy that was being carried out with brain-injured children.
I was really excited to read an article about JABADAO and the lottery funding they had received to cascade their work within the early years. At the time I was interested in introducing more movement experiences into the nursery as I had felt it was an area that was receiving little input and liked the message from JABADAO that their work was about encouraging the children to have “real good fun in their bodies”.

A member of the JABADAO team visited the nursery and trained the staff and worked with the children, but following their visit my interest in some of the other questions they were exploring was re-awakened and I became involved in their Thriving Child Research project. I worked with Penny Greenland, director of Jabadao delivering some seminars around the country and also developed links with Bette Lamont and the developmental movement centre in Seattle.
Knowing the background and the theory behind Developmental Movement Play encourages you to look at the whole area of early years from a different perspective – through different glasses if you like. We went back to the nursery and I immediately wanted to remove desks and furniture and reorganise what suddenly presented itself as a very limiting and cluttered environment. The first step for us was to educate our own staff so that there would be some degree of consistency – this in itself was hard as nursery had grown in size and at that time we had 16 staff in total some who only worked part time shifts. When disseminating any information it is difficult to be sure that everyone gets information at the same time and in the same way so several evening meetings were needed to pass on information about the approach and the changes that it was going to be necessary to implement.

I now have two settings in Morpeth, one has an idyllic and large outdoor environment and we have been fortunate to purchase a neighbouring paddock and woodland, while our town centre nursery at Goosehill, my initial “baby” has a small enclosed courtyard and we have had to work extra hard to ensure that we offer as many movement experiences as possible due to the fact that space is so limited.
PROMOTING MOVEMENT RICH CULTURES

Staff working in the smaller setting feel that working with limitations has forced them to remain reflective and creative and we are constantly reinventing the environment and evaluating the experiences we offer, something which was praised by several Ofsted inspectors over the years that we have retained our Outstanding grading.

Indoors we have had to use every inch of available space and as our main playrooms for our 3-5 year old children are upstairs we have also had to teach the children about potential hazards, being aware of tripping hazards when negotiating the stairs etc. The children undertake their own risk assessment of their indoor environment, designing their symbols and positioning them appropriately.

We have also had a movement corner as part of our provision now for over 12 years. This is simply just a dedicated place for movement that the children can use alongside the book corner, role play area or mark making area for example and is valued just as much.
PROMOTING MOVEMENT RICH CULTURES

We set the movement corner up to:

- give movement an equal place within the learning opportunities we provide,
- to make a place where children can move spontaneously at times they choose, as well as at specified times and,
- to make a place where children can focus on their bodily-felt experience, where inner focus is as acceptable as outer focus.

The movement corner has now evolved into a permanent feature at Goosehill and is a curtained area with lights and a mirror on the ceiling.

It also becomes a place for quiet reverie if they want to lie quietly and close the curtains. A mat is offered depicting two footprints so that the children can take off their shoes and socks if they are wearing them as we encourage no shoes and is also an indication that usually only two children can enter at any one time.
PROMOTING MOVEMENT RICH CULTURES

The children devise the safety rules for the area and become aware of how to respect what the other person likes/dislikes so that as well as moving they are also learning to read each other’s body language and non-verbal language. Different props are put out each day as part of the continuous provision depending on the mix of children or what is requested.

We try to make the indoor environment as movement rich as possible. For example, we have introduced small rocking chairs in the reading area and a basket of fidget items for children that need them.

We also encourage children to find a comfortable position when listening to a story with some choosing to lie on their stomachs.

These can range from balloons, ribbon sticks, balls, fruit for massage etc. Again as a consideration, when planning, the floor surface in the movement area is changed – mats covered with different fabrics, a bubble wrap carpet, a foil blanket, corrugated cardboard, lino to slide on or an off cut of acrylic mirror for example. The lists are endless.

Many teachers query this and will say surely they need to learn to sit still and upright for when they go to school, however we have learnt that for many children they are not yet neurologically ready to sit “still” and need the sensory feedback from another surface to help “ground” them and help them focus.
PROMOTING MOVEMENT RICH CULTURES

When lining up for any transition from one place to another staff will often introduce a movement focus, for example, crawling into a line. We also think of opportunities for crawling and floor play when designing role play areas and setting up our daily continuous provision.

Children are given the opportunity to mark make on a range of services and in a range of positions indoors and out and we have adapted our resources for continuous provision to create surprises on a daily basis - so construction and small world etc. is not always floor based for example.

I feel that we have had to be really inventive over the years to offer the best all round experiences possible and that following any training, practitioners should maybe think about what is near or accessible to them that would further enhance children’s movement – even a walk outside can offer the opportunity to master walking on different surfaces or jumping across cracks in the pavement and while I am aware that not everyone can visit a wood or beach for example, including local excursions can really add innumerable opportunities for gross and fine motor development. Outdoor excursions are a huge and inherent part of how we operate on a daily basis.

We are at a point where I do honestly feel that what we offer promotes all aspects of a child’s healthy all round development, especially their physicality and movement.

Amanda Willis
Nursery Manager
Goosehill Early Excellence

If anyone would like to find out more about the latest projects and training which Goosehill Excellence are running please get in touch with Amanda Willis at Goosehill Private Nursery on 01670 511695 or by email at amanda_willis@talk21.com
A ‘MINDFUL’ EYP NETWORK...

According to a report published by Public Health England in 2016, about 695,000 children aged between 5 to 16 years in England have a clinically significant mental health illness, highlighting the growing need to invest in children and young people’s mental health.

Acknowledging the need to drive forward a stronger focus in early years and to be more innovative in our thinking and practice, we seized a golden opportunity and invited Jude Brown to our EYP Network, which was opened up to the wider early years workforce, on 5th July.

Jude is a qualified mindfulness practitioner, practicing Primary Teacher and founder of Nurture in Mind Ltd, who uses Mindfulness as a preventative tool, delivering workshops to both children and adults across Staffordshire.

To begin Jude divided the session into two parts, the first part focused on the history and science behind Mindfulness but also enabled us to experience and explore core mindfulness practice and how this modern day practice allows us to stop, be present and create the emotional and mental space we all deserve.
...A ‘Mindful’ EYP Network

Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to take a step back, relax and explore the unique qualities of being ‘in the moment’ through some simplistic breathing, visual and auditory activities designed to enhance our focus and attention on a much deeper level whether at home or back in the setting with the children.

Although difficult to capture the full extent of the activity and laughter, you can see Jude in action demonstrating how a simple inexpensive everyday bubble activity can help to foster Mindfulness in young children. It was a real pleasure to meet and learn from Jude’s wealth of knowledge and experience around this fascinating subject and everyone who attended said how much they enjoyed CPD with a difference. It certainly was an extremely interesting, fun and very thought provoking night.

The network is keen to build on and extend their learning further to drive forward this agenda within their role as a champion of change. We will be reviewing the impact of this new learning and how everyone has started to implement Mindfulness within their personal and professional practice.

The next EYP network is planned for:

Date: Monday 27th November 2017
Time: 7pm - 9pm
Venue: Morpeth Golf Club

Theresa Iley
Early Years Sustainability Officer
PILOTING THE EYFS TRACKING & TRANSITION PASSPORT

Helen Revels, Manager at North Tynies Childcare gives us her feedback following a pilot to trial the EYFS Tracking & Transition Passport.

“We were invited to be part of the pilot for the passport, as a means of improving outcomes for all the children in the North Tyne region. The number of children achieving a Good Level of Development at the end of Reception had fallen for 2 consecutive years. Boys in particular were struggling to achieve their early learning goals, with no apparent or obvious cause.

The pilot enabled us to have a universal format, that we could share with schools, as children moved up to reception, which then created a universal dialogue around children’s outcomes.

The passport has a clear focus on establishing when children are on track or off track from their developmental milestones. This has enabled practitioners to intervene in a much more timely manner, not taking a ‘suck it and see’ approach. The passport enables staff to take the immediate responsibility for helping children to get back on track, not waiting till they go to preschool or go to school, which invariably is too late. Staff are also mindful of evidencing all their interventions, to ensure that there is a clear narrative about children’s development, that can easily be picked up by schools, preschools or other settings.

The Milestones in the Passport are a good means of opening up a dialogue with parents, as i think that most parents feel bamboozled by the EYFS. Most parents want to know if their child is off track, and these milestone statements give clarity to those conversations. It has empowered our staff to ensure that parents are a key part of any interventions that are planned. With respect to children with additional needs, we adapt the statements and conversations to reflect the child’s current achievements, as you would with the EYFS.

The key value of the passport is all practitioners taking the responsibility to identify where and when children are going off track, and then introducing interventions, and measuring their impact by establishing whether it has had the required effect of enabling a child to get back on track - with the support of the home learning environment.”

Helen Revels
Manager
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You can also contact us on our Facebook page - Northumberland Early Years Providers using the link below:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/961277704015894/