

Early Years Update Summer 2007

As we near the end of another academic year I would like to take this opportunity to update you regarding National and Local Developments related to Early Years.

As usual the update has been e-mailed to Headteachers with a hard copy sent via the "black bag" to the named Foundation Stage contact for each school. Please let Sue Turnbull know if the FS contact for your school has changed, via email on s.turnbull@wiganmbc.gov.uk

In last term's update information was provided regarding the Childcare Act 2006 and the inclusion of a power whereby the Secretary of State sets targets for Local Authorities based on the Foundation Stage Profile results. I am pleased to be able to update you regarding our work in this area:

- During the summer term all **Maintained Nurseries** within the Local Authority completed an audit which focussed on all aspects of Nursery provision including; tracking progress and targeting along with the promotion of children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication Language and Literacy. This audit was followed by an observation visit carried out by members of the Early Years team during which each Nursery's strengths and areas for development were confirmed.
- All Nurseries identified that tracking and targeting was an area in which they would benefit from sharing information about their practice and learning from other teachers. The need for moderation of judgements made about children's achievements of Stepping Stones was also identified.
- As a result of this feedback, moderation events for **Nursery Teachers** along with support and development sessions during which good practice can be shared and support given which will enable teachers to ensure there is sufficient focus on tracking and targeting have been planned into the annual training programme. Details of these events will be provided early in Autumn 07.
- Enhanced moderation of judgements made about children's stage of development in **Private and Voluntary Nursery provision** has also been planned into the training programme for the next academic year.
- For **Reception Class** provision, existing Foundation Stage Profile moderation arrangements provide opportunities for teachers to discuss judgements made. For the academic year 07-08 one of the moderation tasks has been altered to enable teachers to bring information regarding 2 children compiled over time. This task is described in detail in the Foundation Stage Profile Moderation Task Booklet which will be circulated, along with the FSP Moderation Certificate for 2006-07 near the end of the summer term.
- It has also been identified that moderation events for **Teaching Assistants** would support their contribution to observation and assessment of children in the Foundation Stage and so this will also be planned into the training programme for 07-08.

Opportunities for Early Years practitioners to learn from one another will not only support the required focus on pupil tracking but will also the consistency of judgements made about children's development through Nursery and Reception Class provision in schools across the Local Authority. This will be supported by work with the private and voluntary sector. The Early Years Team believe that this focus on observation, assessment and tracking in the Foundation Stage will have a positive impact on children's attainment.

Foundation Stage Profile Moderation Arrangements for 2007-8

This year schools who will receive a half-day visit from their moderator in either the Spring or the Summer term. The visit is not designed to focus on the moderation of judgements. It will primarily be used to discuss the practice and processes related to the observation of children and the quality of day to day learning and teaching. The validation of a school's results depends on both the outcome of the moderator visit and the statutory moderation meeting.

Statutory Moderation Meeting ATTENDANCE AT ONE OF THESE MEETINGS IS OBLIGATORY	15.5.08 1.15pm – 4.00pm This meeting is for practitioners in clusters: A3 B3 A5 B5 A6 B6 A7 B7	Quality Inn Wigan
	22.5.08 1.15pm – 4.00pm This meeting is for practitioners in clusters: A1 B1 A2 B2 A4 B4	PDC

Cluster Support Meeting

Once again there will be an opportunity for all practitioners to meet with their moderator and other colleagues early in the Spring term. Two half day Profile Support meetings have been arranged for all practitioners. You are free to attend either of these sessions. Both will be held at the Professional Development Centre, Hindley. Please book on one of these sessions in the usual way by contacting staff at the P.D.C.

Cluster Support Meetings	22.1.08	9.15am – 12.00pm	PDC
	31.1.08	1.15pm – 4.00pm	PDC

The team of moderators extend a sincere “thank you” for all your hard work and hope that you enjoy a restful Summer break.

Should you have any further queries at this stage do not hesitate to contact, Jayne Challiner on 01942 200899.

Early Years Projects - Nursery INSPIRE

The Early Years team have developed and run a number of projects all of which have the ultimate aim of raising attainment. Many of you will be familiar with INSPIRE, Flying Start, and Forward Together all of which have been developed for use in Reception Classes. In order to support the continued development of partnership with parents, we are now delighted to be able to offer **all Maintained Nurseries** the opportunity to deliver a nursery version of the INSPIRE project.

This project has been developed building on the success of the reception based work INSPIRE – INVOLVING SETTING PARENTS IN RAISING EXPECTATIONS – it is a project designed to promote partnerships with parents prior to their children starting nursery education. Recent research has shown that working in partnership with parents has a positive impact on children's attainment.

All settings taking part in this pilot project will receive materials to support the delivery of the project in addition to training advice and cluster based support throughout involvement. Each nursery will be contacted individually and invited to access training to support the delivery of this project.

If you require further information regarding any of the Early Years Projects please contact **Emily Wood**. Emily is currently co-ordinating the development and delivery of Early Years Projects, her contact details are, e.wood@wiganmbc.gov.uk.

New Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In the last Early Years update information was provided regarding the new Early Years Foundation Stage. The Early Years Team have taken delivery of the new materials for schools and settings in Wigan. As explained previously these materials are currently being used by central staff to develop guidance and development information to support settings in implementing this new framework. We plan to begin the training programme with a launch of the Early Years Foundation Stage on the 17th October at which Janet Ackers one of the DFES Senior Regional Advisors for the Foundation Stage will provide a brief introduction to the framework. This will be followed by a more detailed training programme during late Autumn 07 and Early Spring 08 in order to ensure that schools, settings and other professionals working with children between the ages of 0 and five are well prepared to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage framework in September 2008.

Details of the launch and training programme will be circulated early in the Autumn Term.

Letters and Sounds

The new DfES phonics scheme called "Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics" has now been released. This is a development from the resource file, "Playing with Sounds." The Rose Review provided core criteria for defining an effective, high quality phonic programme. This states that such a programme should be well matched to children's developing abilities, be fully compatible with a broad and rich curriculum and be systematic. Further information on core criteria and choosing a phonic programme can be found at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/phonics/pogrammes

"Letters and Sounds" fits all the core criteria. It comprises of booklets and a DVD that provide guidance and a six phase teaching programme, that takes children from early Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 1. Phase One emphasises the importance of developing Speaking and Listening. It is divided into 7 aspects, which then cover 3 strands, Tuning into Sounds, Listening and Remembering Sounds and Talking about Sounds. When a child is able to discriminate between sounds, (Rose states this will be at around the

age of 5,) they are then ready to embark on Phase Two, which marks the beginning of systematic, high quality phonic work.

Further information regarding "Letters and Sounds" will be shared with schools during the next academic year, beginning with PNS briefing sessions in September.

Providers in the private and voluntary sector will be receiving training on implementing "Letters and Sounds" in July. Each setting will be encouraged to implement the programme, with the expectation that children entering Reception classes in September '08 will have had this experience. Schools should be receiving 5 copies each of the programme. Further copies can be ordered from DfES Publications on 0845 6022260. Information with regard to available training will be provided in the Autumn Term. In the meantime, if you would like any more details then you are welcome to contact Sue Child on 200899, s.child@wiganmbc.gov.uk

Inclusion

The Local Authority aims to support early intervention and prevention of additional needs. During this Summer Term Inclusion Workers have been supporting practitioners and parents, through transitional review meetings, as children known to the Inclusion Team move from Nursery to Reception Class.

You may be aware that the criteria for Statutory Assessment and Statements were revised during 2005. The revised criteria considers the way in which support for pupils in the Foundation Stage can be provided whilst being mindful of the need to identify children with additional needs before transition to formal statutory education.

Early Years Additional Resources via Targeted Individual Support (TIS) are only provided for those children whose needs are deemed to be severe, complex and persistent and who require support which is additional to, or different from, that provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the Local Authority. In order to judge the persistence of the need, the child's response to intervention over time will be taken into account. This also allows for the judgements to be made about the kind of interventions that are likely to be most helpful. The severity of need is a measure of lack of response to appropriate intervention and persisting at such a level that the child would be unable to make adequate progress without additional resourcing.

Further details can be found in Chapter 8 and Appendix 7 of the Supporting Pupils with Additional Needs file. It is envisaged that awareness raising sessions will be provided in the near future. Further details will be sent in the Autumn Term.

Wigan Quality Standard – ICAN Accreditation

In addition to the usual information regarding Wigan Quality Standard, which continues to remain key to supporting the development of Early Years Provision across the all sectors within Wigan Local Authority, in September 2006 Wigan's Children and Young People's Services in partnership with Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT launched the ICAN Early Talk training and accreditation programme.

This programme has involved members of the Early Years Team working together with ALW PCT Speech and Language Therapy Service to deliver training and support for setting to become accredited under the ICAN Early Talk scheme. I CAN Early Talk is a UK wide programme specifically developed for nurseries and settings that provide day care and/or education to children under five . Its aim is to promote communication-supportive environments for all children and to ensure effective pre-school provision for children with a communication disability. I CAN Early Talk supports the themes in early years policies throughout the UK by offering a programme of **advisory support, information and professional development** delivered in partnership with children’s services. Currently schools and setting that have achieved Wigan Quality Standard Accreditation can access the ICAN Training and Accreditation Programme.

The following settings have been **recommended for accreditation or re-accreditation under the Wigan Quality Standard** since the last update. Once confirmed by the Ratification Group, their hard work and commitment will also be recognised at an awards ceremony.

Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
Holy Family RC	Abram CE School	St John’s CE Infant School
St James Catholic Primary	Hindley Green Community Primary	Parklee
Woodfield	St Oswald’s Catholic Primary	Foot prints Day Nursery
Whitley Pre School		Little Stars Day Nursery
		St Joseph’s Pre school
		Leigh Central
		Leigh Community Starter group

The following settings have been accredited under the **I CAN Quality Assurance Scheme** and will be invited to the next awards ceremony.

Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
St. Aiden’s	Happy Hours	Westleigh Children’s Centre

Two further settings are due to undergo ICAN assessment during the next fortnight and if successfully accredited, will be invited to attend the awards ceremony.

Further Development of the Wigan Quality Standard

Information has previously been provided about the development of **Wigan Quality Standard into Key Stage One – the Seal of Approval**, and we are now pleased to update you on the progress of this work. A small number of schools have been involved over the

last 18 months in a Primary Learning Network set up to build on good practice already established in the Foundation Stage in each school and continue this into KS1.

All the schools in the network have been accredited with Wigan Quality Standard for their Foundation Stage provision and so are able to draw on the experience of the reception teachers. New audits have been developed by the schools involved in partnership with the Early Years Team. One of the new audits, 'The Foundations of Continuity' has been specifically designed to support transition from Foundation Stage into KS1. All the schools have worked through these audits, produced action plans, developed provision and evaluated the impact on outcomes for children.

The schools involved have found this process to be so successful that they were keen to share this work with other schools. A showcase event was held on the 5th June and schools that have recently been re-accredited with the WQS for their Foundation Stage were invited to attend.

Information will be provided in subsequent updates regarding the Wigan Quality Standard into Key Stage One.

The following schools have received the Wigan Quality Standard into Key Stage One - Seal of Approval:

Aspull Church Primary
Aspull Our Lady's Catholic Primary
St David's Haigh and Aspull
Woodfield
St John's CE Infants

WQS Recognition of Achievement Awards Evening

This evening is an opportunity for the Children and Young People's Services Department to celebrate practitioner's achievements in order to recognise the hard work and dedication it takes to provide quality care and education. This celebration will take place on Wednesday the 11th July at Room 4 in Golborne. During the evening 3 different awards will be presented: Wigan Quality Standard, WQS Seal of Approval and I CAN – Early Talk.

Reception/Year 1 Classes

There will be a meeting on 29th June at 9.30 to discuss effective provision and planning for Reception/Year 1 classes. This will be held at The Old Nursery, Higher Folds and will be suitable for NQTs and practitioners who will be teaching such a class for the first time. If you would like to attend then please contact Sue Child on 01942 200899 or s.child@wiganmbc.gov.uk

Early Education

Unfortunately it was necessary to cancel this term's conference but we hope that you will make a note in your diary for the Autumn Term.

Speaker: Trevor Hawes

Date: 18th October 2007

Venue: Quality Hotel, Wigan

The Wigan Branch of Early Education is extending the offer of discounted membership. From now on all practitioners working in early years settings in the Wigan area will be able to take advantage of this offer all year round!

Annual subscription rates to Early Education are currently as follows:

Individual - £37.50

Group A - £95 for settings of up to 5 people

Group B - £150 for settings of up to 10 people

Wigan's 10% discount will entitle you to membership at the following rates:

Individual - £33.75

Group A - £85.50

Group B - £135

This will entitle you to membership/membership renewal for one year

Membership of Early Education ensures discounted entry to our termly local conferences in Wigan and..... we have a fantastic range of speakers planned for next year!

At national level there are numerous other benefits including receipt of the termly journal and regular newsletters.

If you would like to join or (rejoin) please telephone Janet Johnson 01942 26205.

Finally.....

This term two members of the Early Years Team leave us to take up new roles, Clare Oxborough (Early Years Advisory Teacher, Inclusion) who left in May to take up the Post of Children's Centre Teacher with Salford LA and Nicola Goulding (Early Years Advisory Teacher, Quality) who leaves at the end of the academic year to take up the post of Reception Class Teacher at Aspull Church School here in Wigan. We wish Nicola and Clare well in their new roles and thank them for the contribution they have made to Early Years work in Wigan. The team are currently recruiting to both of these posts.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you a restful and refreshing summer break, and on behalf of the Early Years Team, we look forward to working with you once again during the next academic year.