

Dear Colleague,

## Early Years Update - Summer 2008

It hardly seems possible that we can be so close to the end of another academic year but already we are fast approaching the end of June! I know you will all be in the final stages of completing your assessments and I hope that as you do this, you will take a moment to reflect on how well the children in your class have developed and give yourself a well earned pat on the back!

As we move towards the introduction of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in September, I know the new academic year will bring some challenges whilst we become fully familiar with the new requirements. Whilst the philosophy of what constitutes high quality early years practice remains the same, the welfare requirements within EYFS mean that we have all got some learning to do so that these statutory requirements are fully implemented. Taking account of the fact that each school and setting must have a practitioner working in the Foundation Stage who is trained in paediatric first aid, I informed all Headteachers some weeks ago about the paediatric first aid courses that have been arranged. Please remember that a paediatric first aider must be present on all outings involving nursery and reception children from September.

I wrote to Headteachers last week to inform them (and you) that the revised EYFS has been published and is on teachernet. The information is included below in order that you are able to identify the changes that most affect you.

The revised EYFS has now been published and the following documents can be found at [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk). From the home page, select "Teaching & Learning" from the left hand column; then select "The EYFS". The second bulleted list on the page provides links to:-

- EYFS Statutory Framework
- EYFS Practice Guidance
- Letter from Sheila Scales
- EYFS table of changes
- Frequently asked questions

There are more changes than I anticipated, although many of them are more relevant for private, voluntary and independent sectors and childminders. The document tries to make clearer the different requirements for schools compared to any other provider. Regrettably it is still very confusing in parts.

Interestingly, EYFS is no longer part of the National Curriculum and to reinforce this, the word "curriculum" has been removed "to avoid confusion". EYFS is, of course, a legal requirement from September 2008.

The most significant change for schools is regarding *nursery* classes with more than 26 pupils in a session. I have spoken in detail with our legal department and will be writing to Headteachers of schools with nursery classes to provide more detailed advice in the next few days.

The table of changes referred to in the bulleted list above, itemises the changes page by page and is a useful reference document that will enable practitioners to determine whether any change is significant for them.

I have made the full letter to Headteachers available on the early year's section of wiganschoolsonline.

## **Tracking Progress**

You will be aware that as a result of the changes within EYFS regarding stages of development, the team are revising the LA advice on tracking progress in readiness for September. By now you will be aware that the coloured Stepping Stones have been removed in the revised guidance. Accordingly we have had to adjust the tracking guidance. You will shortly receive the updated guidance on a CD and there will be opportunities to familiarise yourselves with this at training sessions throughout the year.

Should you require hard copies of the tracking guidance and associated documents please contact Hazel Donohue on 01942 828845.

## **New Posts**

I am pleased to advise you that we will shortly be recruiting to two new posts, both of which will work between the Quality & Inclusion Team and the PNS Primary Team. The posts will be temporary contracts and could be offered as fixed term secondments. We would welcome interest from Wigan teachers once the jobs have been advertised.

One post is that of CLLD consultant who will work in maintained and private and voluntary settings on the development of Letters and Sounds. You will be aware that Sue Hurst has already done some work on this and Sue has provided some further information on Letters and Sounds further in this update.

## **Foundation Stage Profile Update**

You will be aware that the FSP becomes the EYFSP from September this year. A revised handbook is to be launched next week and all schools will receive a copy direct from the National Assessment Agency (NAA). Apart from making the changes to the Early Learning Goals for Linking Sounds and Letters and renaming Mathematical Development into Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy, I understand that it is only the guidance section that will be different as it will incorporate guidance that has been issued from NAA since its original publication.

From September, the individual pupil booklets are being discontinued and will no longer be available, even electronically. NAA are promoting the use of the e profile and we will be running training for this as usual. You may want to visit the NAA website or the QCA website for further information – [www.naa.org.uk](http://www.naa.org.uk) or [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

## **Moderation Plans for 08-09**

For the next academic year we have arranged for moderation meetings for **Reception** teachers to take place in smaller groups in Children's Centre Clusters as detailed below. Please note the specific attendees for the last two sessions – "Mop Up"- practitioners who were unable to attend their designated cluster due to unforeseen circumstances. "Directed by moderator" – practitioners who Moderators feel need to attend an additional event due to their particular circumstances. "New to Reception" – practitioners new to reception should attend one of these sessions as there will be the opportunity for more support.

3.2.09	1.15pm - Cluster A1 and A2 - Meadowbank Children's Centre
11.3.09	1.15pm - Cluster A3 and A4 - Platt Bridge Children's Centre
17.3.09	1.15pm - Cluster A5 and A7 - Hope Children's Centre
28.4.09	1.15pm - Mop Up / Directed by moderator / New to Reception Westfield Children's Centre
5.5.09	1.15pm - Mop Up / Directed by moderator/ New to Reception Westleigh Children's Centre

As a result of the positive feedback received from Nursery Practitioners, moderation of nursery judgements will now take place annually to support Nursery practitioners to ensure accuracy of assessment data as children move into Reception.

### **Nursery Moderation**

18.6.09 1.15pm - Room 4, Golborne

### **Foundation Stage Outcomes Duty**

Once all the FSP results are received we will be eagerly awaiting the results to identify how successful we have been in meeting the LA targets. Our work with schools and settings will be increasingly focused on "closing the gap" between the most disadvantaged children and the rest. Part of this work will involve more focused moderation work with the schools identified. More on this and the planned programmes in the Autumn Update!

### **Newly Qualified Teachers/Teachers new to the EYFS**

The first of our meetings will take place at 4.00pm on 18 November at Ince CE Primary School. The focus of the meeting will be the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, Observation and Moderation. There will be an opportunity to look round the schools' Early Years Foundation Stage – Nursery and Reception.

These meetings are of value to Practitioners working in Nursery or Reception and provide an ideal forum to network with other practitioners. They are open to NQTs/Teachers new to Reception/Graduate Trainees or indeed anyone who feels they would like to attend. We aim to keep abreast of NQTs joining the EYFS but if you are new and therefore not on our database and would like to attend please contact Janet Johnson 01942 828922 or [Janet.Johnson@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:Janet.Johnson@wigan.gov.uk)

### **Responding to the Rose Review: schools' approaches to the systematic teaching of phonics.**

This briefing reports the results of a short survey of schools' responses to the Rose Review and the subsequent guidance from the Primary National Strategy on the systematic teaching of phonic knowledge and skills to children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The survey looked at the extent to which a sample of schools are acting upon the key recommendations of successful phonics teaching as identified by Rose Review. Some of the findings of the survey are:

- Schools with long-established phonics programmes have reviewed and improved their provision in response to the review, in particular the frequency and pace of their phonics sessions.
- The relationship between the phase of the Letters and Sounds programme and the age of the children varies from school to school. For example, some older children in

the schools which had only recently introduced systematic phonics had gaps in their phonic knowledge and so were working on an early phase.

- The clear structure of Letters and Sounds and the well written handbook have helped staff to feel confident about teaching phonics, even when they are inexperienced.

The Rose review recommended that a phonics programme should be:

- Be fully compatible with a broad and rich curriculum;
- Be systematic, with a clearly defined and structured progression;
- Be delivered in discrete daily sessions at a brisk pace that is well matched to children's developing abilities;
- Be multi-sensory, encompassing various visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities which actively engage children;
- Make clear the importance of speaking and listening as the foundation for embarking on a systematic phonics programme and for acquiring the skills of reading and writing;

In Wigan, during the last year, training for Letters and Sounds has been accessed by approximately 85% of maintained and private and voluntary settings. Many schools have invested in training for a variety of published schemes, Letters and Sounds however, is the only scheme that provides activities for children working within Phase 1. This Phase is for children in Nurseries and early Reception and focuses on developing the listening skills required to discriminate between sounds. Rose states that a child is ready to be making sound symbol relationships around the age of 5. Research has shown that children who successfully embed Phase 1, then go on to make rapid progress through the other phonic phases.

Practitioners within Wigan have begun to implement Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds during the pre - school year and continue this into Reception. Where a school has invested in a published scheme, this is being introduced when the children are ready to go on to Phase 2, (the stage at which sound/symbol relationship is introduced.)

Further training for Letters and Sounds will be held on 07/10/08 with a 9.15 am start. The venue is yet to be confirmed. This training will have input from a Reception practitioner who will share the use of Letters and Sounds and other published schemes in Reception. If you would like any further information, please contact Sue Hurst on [Susan.Hurst@wiganmbc.gov.uk](mailto:Susan.Hurst@wiganmbc.gov.uk)

## **Wigan Quality Standard**

In order to ensure that Wigan Quality Standard supports practitioners to develop high quality and inclusive provision as described in the Early Years Foundation Stage principles, it has been necessary to make some minor changes to Wigan Quality Standard. Revisions have been made as follows:

1. Ensuring that the wording of audit indicators is compatible with EYFS;
2. Changes to the training programme, ensuring that specific audit training is provided and the identification of associated courses that will support practitioners in developing Wigan Quality Standard action plans;
3. Changes to the assessment process in order to ensure that settings are fully prepared for FINAL assessment;

All settings that are accredited or working towards Wigan Quality Standards will be notified of the details of these changes in September.

**At the time of writing, a number of settings are in the process of being assessed or are due for re-accreditation under the Wigan Quality Standard. Once confirmed by the Ratification Group, their hard work and commitment will also be recognised at an awards ceremony.**

**We hope that all those who have been invited to attend the next WQS Awards ceremony on Thursday July 3<sup>rd</sup>, will be able to join us! This year, our Director, Nick Hudson will be presenting the awards. Details of those receiving awards will be provided in the autumn term edition of Start Write Magazine.**

### **Flexible Delivery Pilot / Increase in the Free Entitlement**

**A group of 12 schools with maintained nursery classes are working on a pilot project at the moment, exploring the implications of delivering the free early years provision in flexible ways. This requires them to move away from the traditional, sessional delivery pattern and to offer continuous delivery throughout the school day. Some of these schools are also being given the opportunity to market their spare capacity so that parents can buy additional provision in order to meet their needs. During the next academic year we will share the findings and there will be opportunities for other schools with maintained nursery classes to join the pilot. A similar pilot is beginning with private and voluntary providers.**

**From September 2009, for some of our most disadvantaged children, the free early year's provision will increase to 15 hours per week. From September 2010 all eligible 3 & 4 year olds will receive 15 hours.**

### **Early Support Update**

The Early Support programme is the vehicle through which we provide better services for children under five with disabilities and for their families. It forms part of the Children's Centre Core Offer and enables access to the Early Years Foundation Stage for children with disabilities.

The programme has a key role in influencing and designing the development and delivery of services for disabled children within Wigan:

**1. Key Working** Although still in the planning phase, once implemented, Key Working will support the provision of 'joined up' services to families. Key Workers will have a responsibility for working together with the child and family and associated professionals - thus ensuring the co-ordinated delivery of an interagency care plan for the child and family.

**2. Early Support training** is the medium through which the principles and practice of Early Support will be embedded in Wigan. The programme began in November last year and the training programme consists of eight training courses which are designed for all sectors and services, including parents:

1. Introduction to Early Support
2. Working in Partnership; Accredited L5
3. Early Support Service Audit Tool
4. Key Working
5. Supporting Children with Additional Needs and Disabilities; accredited L3

6. Monitoring Protocol for Deaf Babies and Children
7. Development Journal for Babies and Children with Downs Syndrome
8. Development Journal for Babies and Children with Visual Impairment

Developments within Wigan provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to engage in Early Support, in what was recently termed as 'one of the government's great success stories' in the 'Parliamentary Hearings for Services for Disabled Children' summary report, and, as stated in a recent national newsletter on Early Support; 'Wigan's efforts have been considerable'.

### **What does this mean for children in settings and schools?**

1. Better co-ordinated information about children's needs, thereby influencing better outcomes;
2. Earlier identification of need;
3. A pathway of support for the child, family and setting;
4. Support with transition;
5. A primary contact " Key Worker" for the child and family if needed;
6. Professional development with the option of accreditation.

For more information please contact: **Tracy Murphy-Jones; Early Support & Safeguarding Coordinator** or, visit the Early Support Website at; **[www.earlysupport.org.uk](http://www.earlysupport.org.uk)**

To book on the training courses, please contact:  
**The Childrens Workforce Strategy team on 01942 486253**

### **Early Education**

Many thanks to all those of you who supported this term's Early Education conference, we hope you enjoyed it! Our speaker, Jason Bangbala, provided us with plenty of light entertainment as he shared some excellent strategies for supporting good behaviour. Many of us went home feeling refreshed after what had seemed a very long day.

### **Autumn Conference – Ian Gilbert**

We assure you our next speaker will be equally charismatic and entertaining! Ian Gilbert from Independent Thinking will be talking about the development of children's thinking skills.

This conference will take place at 7.00pm on Thursday 9 October (venue to be confirmed). A flier will be sent into school early in the Autumn term. Please book early to avoid disappointment.

Early Education members have discounted entry to all our conferences and your local Branch (Wigan) continues to offer discounted membership. If you would like more details of how to join please contact Janet Johnson 01942 828922 [Janet.Johnson@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:Janet.Johnson@wigan.gov.uk)

### **Spring conference – Gervase Phinn**

Due to popular demand we have managed to secure a booking for one of our favourite speakers, Gervase Phinn!!! Gervase will be speaking on 25 February 2009 and the title of his conference will be: 'Opening the Magic Door – Literature in the Early Years.' Tickets for this conference will be available early in the Spring term 2009.

## CPD Programme for 08-09

We have attached information about Early Years Training for the forthcoming academic year. Please note that this is for information only and is intended to enable you to plan staff access to relevant courses. Once the PDC provide the codes for each of the courses, we will notify you of these and then you will be able to book places in the usual way.

The most significant change is that Wigan Quality Standard Portfolio sessions have been replaced with area based '**Early Years Foundation Stage Advisory Drop-in Sessions**'. At these sessions practitioners will be able to speak to a member of the Early Years team about any aspect of Early Years provision for example; Wigan Quality Standard, ICAN, EYFS planning and assessment, Inclusion.

### Inclusion – Transition Meetings

During this term Transition meetings regarding children with additional needs known to the Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team have been taking place. The purpose of these meetings is to share information about the children and to identify interventions that will support continuity as the child moves into reception. The Early Years Consultants have been working with settings regarding the identification of children with additional needs. If you require any further information regarding transition please contact the child's setting in the first instance.

### Team Contacts

Just a reminder that the 206205 number is being discontinued and that the updated contacts and numbers are as follows –

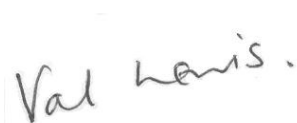
<b>Quality &amp; Inclusion Team Manager</b>	Suzanne Payne	01942 828852
<b>Senior Early Years Consultant</b>	Jayne Challiner	01942 828916

	<b>Early Years Consultant Quality</b>	<b>Early Years Consultant Inclusion</b>
<b>West</b>	Janet Johnson (828922)	Carole Morris (828851)
<b>Central</b>	Andrea Smethurst (828859)	Gill Thomas (828936)
<b>East</b>	Sue Hurst (200899)	Suzanne Christy (200899)

### Finally.....

As we near the end of this academic year I would like to thank you for your continuing efforts to ensure that our youngest children get the high quality opportunities they deserve. I trust you will all make the most of the summer break!

Yours sincerely



Val Lewis  
Early Years Adviser, Wigan CYPS