

NURSERY NEWS

Your membership magazine

www.ndna.org.uk

Talk with me!

Communication, speech and language skills underpin a child's learning and development; they are a key aspect of self-expression and are fundamental to our day to day well-being.

As we leap into spring, full of energy and excitement for the season's joys and beauty, we all need to use our speech and language skills to share that happiness with others.

We plan our *Healthy Body, Happy Me* campaign for this time of year to make sure you and your children get maximum benefit from it. This year it's all about speech and language – the theme is *Talk With Me!*

We want to support you to give all your children the best foundation skills so they can make the most of life's

opportunities, flourish and enjoy their young lives to the full with their friends. For some children, these skills have suffered over the past couple of years and now they need a boost.

Talk With Me has a different theme every day of the week during the campaign which runs from Monday 20 March for five days, with a home learning day on Saturday so that families can join in too. Our daily themes for this year are stories, STEM, water play, nature and movement.

Find out more about the theory and the wide range of fantastic activities our team of early years advisers have put together on the NDNA website: ndna.org.uk/healthy

And please, make sure you shout about whatever you do!



6

FUNDRAISING



13

LIFE CYCLES



16

AFTERNOON WITH BEN K-H



Supported by



TALK WITH ME
20-24 March 2023
#HealthyBodyHappyMe

Resources now available: ndna.org.uk/healthy



Are you recruiting?

We have created three nation-specific early years employer toolkits to support you in finding the right candidates to help your setting thrive.
#firstfiveyearscount

Download here: ndna.org.uk/firstfiveyearscount



Support when you need it most

Expert advice for peace of mind

NDNA can advise you on curriculum requirements, regulatory issues or inspections. Our legal helpline advises on legal matters, from employee issues, health and safety, or contracts with parents.



Saving you time

Download and use over 90 pre-written policy and procedure templates, giving you the security and reassurance that you are meeting all regulatory requirements.



Improving practice

Book high quality training from NDNA. We can deliver to your team at your setting, through live virtual classrooms, or via our member-exclusive, low cost online training bundles.



Saving you money

We can save you money on nursery suppliers, day-to-day essentials, play resources and equipment, insurance, HR and health and safety advice, DBS checks and more.



Keeping you more informed

Our regular events, email newsletters and membership magazine, Nursery News, make sure that you are always in the know.



Giving you a stronger voice

Join our campaigns and be heard by MPs, policy makers and Local Authorities. Join forces with peers at free UK-wide NDNA network forums and work together on common goals relating to your local area.



Find your member benefits at
www.ndna.org.uk/hub/member-hub

Medal from the King

We are so proud of Kids Planet Day Nurseries founder Clare Roberts, who received her OBE medal at Windsor Palace. Clare said: "I am immensely proud to be part of the early years sector and dedicate this honour to all my colleagues within Kids Planet and the wider industry, for the incredible work they do for children each and every day."



Spring MEMBER EVENTS

Our spring member events in March continue to be a mix of online and in person events. Speakers include Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (Wales), Learning through Landscapes (Wales), Claire Warden Educational Consultant (Scotland), Ofsted (England) with Citation presenting on HR/health and safety at all events. Find out more here: www.ndna.org.uk/member-events

Quality Counts

Congratulations to the 17 nurseries (five in Wales and 12 in England) who achieved NDNA's Quality Counts award in 2022. This mark of quality improvement proves that the setting goes above and beyond to offer the highest quality learning experiences for children.

Find out more here:
www.qualitycounts.org.uk

'We are thrilled and proud to have achieved this accreditation and to have the hard work of our staff recognised!'

Angmering Day Nursery



We need to talk...

Speech, language and communication are the key elements of our Healthy Body, Happy Me campaign this year. Because children cannot be healthy and happy if they struggle with the fundamentals for learning and being understood.

There are lots of amazing activities lined up for the week and we hope you and your children enjoy exploring these vital topics together. We can't wait to see how you're doing so please share what you are up to with us on social media as well.

March also means we are coming up on the Spring Budget and the sector needs to be heard. We have been working hard to get information out to the press and the public about the financial pressures you are under.

Next financial year will be extremely challenging as costs continue to rise faster than funding rates. We have collected more evidence on the level of Government underfunding, the cost pressures of the new wage increases and how this is forcing settings to close and we will continue to shout from the rooftops about the need to support providers at this vital time.

Everyone in society loses out if children are not invested in at the earliest opportunity. We will not stop shining a light on this and fighting for your needs.

We will also be using our research on English councils' underspends, the Welsh Government's Digital Childcare Offer and funding follows the child principles in Scotland to push for a simplified UK funding system to help providers as well as parents.

In Scotland the Minister has again denied the challenges providers face, despite overwhelming evidence from NDNA and MSPs on all sides of the debate. We continue

to work across all parties to make the case for Scotland's children and we will focus on this with the new leadership of the SNP as well.

I am looking forward to our first face-to-face member event in Wales this spring. It's been three years since we were last able to run this event in person here and I can't wait to be able to get together, share some best practice and support one another through the latest curriculum changes and updates.

We continue to find new and different ways to support you wherever we can, from our First Five Years Count campaign to promote the importance of the sector alongside the work being done by the Royal Foundation, to securing new member benefits on challenging business rates revaluations.

Our communication and language is clear – the early years needs urgent attention and long-term solutions. Now Governments must listen.

PURNIMA TANUKU OBE,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Get involved online!



@NDNAtalk



@NDNAtalk



/ndna.org.uk



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How do you motivate your early years team?

One of the best ways to make sure your nursery succeeds and becomes a safe haven for parents and children alike is by having a motivated and engaged workforce. But we're facing a tough time right now – we're in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis and in an industry with long hours and big responsibilities, making this a reality might seem hard. So we're here to fill you in on our top tips for creating a happy, healthy environment that your staff can thrive in!

1. Communication

Effective communication is a huge part of maintaining and developing engagement with employees. Take time to actively listen to the suggestions of your staff so they know their perspective is being heard and taken seriously. You could schedule one-on-one meetings, implement an open-door policy or start getting everyone together once a week – depending on how your nursery runs, of course. This is a great way to make sure everyone feels heard and encourage your staff to take pride in how the nursery is developing with their help.

Opening dialogues about mental health in the industry is also a key part of communicating with your staff. The job can be demanding, so it won't surprise you if your staff seem to be struggling. Implementing solid well-being policies as well as an Employee Assistance Programme will show your employees that you care about their mental health and that you're there for them through tough times.

2. Recognition

Your employees need to feel valued within their teams and the wider organisation. Giving positive feedback and telling your staff you appreciate and respect what they are doing can go really far when motivating your employees. But providing tangible benefits for good work will also go down a treat – these could be extra holiday days, gift vouchers or team meals to name a few. Whatever works for your business!



3. Training and upskilling

Training is one of the most effective ways to engage and motivate your workforce. Not only will your team feel valued from your investment in their professional development, but it'll ensure your whole team are working to the same standard and that no one is in the dark about developments in the industry. Training will also give them new skills to put into practice at your nursery, so the whole business can grow and thrive at the same time.

4. Empowerment

Making sure micromanagement and nit-picking are a thing of the past is a failsafe way to motivate your employees. Enabling your staff to take ownership of their work will encourage them to engage in the business as a whole and contribute to its success. Additionally, relay your goals and visions for your nursery to your staff and get their opinions on how to achieve these goals. Not only will this give you new perspective (which can never be a bad thing) but it'll again help your staff feel valued and empowered in their environment.

Citation – by your side.

As an NDNA partner, we're a trusted provider in the industry – so you can have faith that we know how to help you manage the challenges unique to your early years setting.

If you'd like to chat about how Citation can help with your HR and Health & Safety, just give us a call on **0345 844 1111** and quote 'National Day Nurseries Association' to access your member benefit.

NDNA Conference and Awards

- Shape the future of childcare

We're delighted to be putting on our Conference and Awards Ceremony in June for 2023. We'd love you to join us!

Taking place at the Coventry Building Society Arena on June 9, we're focused on *Shaping the Future of Childcare: Making the First Five Years Count*.

If you're a leader, manager or practitioner looking to be more informed and improve your practice, our fabulous line-up of speakers will inspire and educate our delegates. Explore our leadership and practice streams, network with early years professionals, save money with our exhibitors and enjoy a well-deserved day out!

There are many reasons why you should join us and celebrate at the NDNA Conference and Awards in 2023:

- Our dazzling expert speakers – our range of engaging speakers will entertain and inform you. Hear from endearing storyteller Gervase Phinn, join Pete Moorhouse in his interactive woodwork workshop, explore the benefits of a love-led practice with Jane Malcolm and gain valuable insight into building designs and layout with Dr Amanda Gummer
- Early bird ticket offer - book before the end of March and benefit from 24% off your ticket price
- Celebrate the sector's successes with us – We're incredibly proud and passionate about our sector and our members. Tell us what you love about the early years sector and why the first five years count to you. Our awards ceremony recognises excellence and celebrates outstanding achievement in our sector
- Browse our specially selected exhibitors - Meet our range of exhibitors offering a variety of products and services to help your nursery business flourish
- Network with other members and make new friends and contacts - Catch up with old friends and meet new people between speaker sessions over tasty food and drinks
- Meet the NDNA team - Why not chat to our Chief Executive, Purnima Tanuku OBE, our trustees headed up by Sarah Steel and our senior team of directors? We are here to help and meet you face to face to discuss your challenges.

Go to www.ndna.org.uk/conference and www.ndna.org.uk/awards

NDNA live virtual classroom training

Prices quoted are the discounted member rate followed by the non-member rate.

✓ Advanced Safeguarding for DSL

£126/£168, four modules

- Module 1 on 20 Mar; Module 2 on 23 Mar; Module 3 on 27 Mar; Module 4 on 30 Mar
- Module 1 on 17 Apr; Module 2 on 20 Apr; Module 3 on 24 Apr; Module 4 on 27 Apr
- Module 1 on 09 May; Module 2 on 12 May; Module 3 on 16 May; Module 4 on 19 May
- Module 1 on 23 May; Module 2 on 26 May; Module 3 on 30 May; Module 4 on 02 Jun

✓ Autism Awareness in Early Years

£51/£68, two modules

- Module 1 on 22 Mar; Module 2 on 29 Mar
- Module 1 on 03 May; Module 2 on 10 May

✓ Baby Room Leader

£51/£68, two modules

- Module 1 on 22 Mar; Module 2 on 29 Mar
- Module 1 on 19 Apr; Module 2 on 26 Apr
- Module 1 on 10 May; Module 2 on 17 May
- Module 1 on 24 May; Module 2 on 31 May

✓ Brilliant Babies

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 20 Mar; Module 2 on 23 Mar; Module 3 on 27 Mar; Module 4 on 30 Mar
- Module 1 on 27 Mar; Module 2 on 31 Mar; Module 3 on 3 Apr; Module 4 on 6 Apr

- Module 1 on 18 Apr; Module 2 on 21 Apr; Module 3 on 25 Apr; Module 4 on 28 Apr

✓ Building Your Curriculum

£26/£35, one module

- Module 1 on 27 Mar
- Module 1 on 25 May

✓ Developing Outdoor Provision

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 16 May; Module 2 on 19 May; Module 3 on 23 May; Module 4 on 26 May

✓ Effective Team Leadership

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 21 Mar; Module 2 on 24 Mar; Module 3 on 28 Mar; Module 4 on 31 Mar
- Module 1 on 17 Apr; Module 2 on 20 Apr; Module 3 on 24 Apr; Module 4 on 27 Apr

✓ Leadership & Management

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 21 Mar; Module 2 on 24 Mar; Module 3 on 28 Mar; Module 4 on 31 Mar
- Module 1 on 18 Apr; Module 2 on 21 Apr; Module 3 on 25 Apr; Module 4 on 28 Apr
- Module 1 on 15 May; Module 2 on 18 May; Module 3 on 22 May; Module 4 on 25 May

✓ Positive Behaviour in Early Years

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 18 Apr; Module 2 on 21 Apr; Module 3 on 25 Apr; Module 4 on 28 Apr

✓ Preparing for Your Inspection

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 02 May; Module 2 on 05 May; Module 3 on 09 May; Module 4 on 12 May

✓ The Role of the SENCO

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 21 Mar; Module 2 on 24 Mar; Module 3 on 28 Mar; Module 4 on 31 Mar
- Module 1 on 18 Apr; Module 2 on 21 Apr; Module 3 on 25 Apr; Module 4 on 28 Apr

✓ Quality Interactions with Babies

£26/£35, one module

- Module 1 on 19 Apr
- Module 1 on 11 May

✓ Toddler Room Leader

£79/£105, four modules

- Module 1 on 13 Mar; Module 2 on 16 Mar; Module 3 on 20 Mar; Module 4 on 23 Mar
- Module 1 on 17 Apr; Module 2 on 20 Apr; Module 3 on 24 Apr; Module 4 on 27 Apr

Find out more about LVCs on our website at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/training-resources

Please note there will be a small price increase from 6 April 2023.

In a world where you can be anything... Be kind!

"It's about reaching out and respecting one another, being kind and instilling those crucial values at an early age."

Nicola Fleury, Kidzrus Nursery

Nurseries taking part in fundraising and community good works is a win-win for everyone. With a rise in people needing help, they are spreading their wings and getting involved in supporting families and the wider community.

In doing so, nurseries are embedding their place at the centre of their neighbourhood or village. Their business or charity benefits from the local publicity. Our children are learning from an early age how important it is to be kind and look after each other.

Fundraising activities can be wide ranging, from a small-scale coffee morning to a week of community activities. Nurseries are also heavily involved in local food banks, with some even organising their own food and clothes banks. A survey by daynurseries.co.uk in 2020 suggested that one in five nursery staff had set up their own schemes.

Food banks

Kidzrus in Manchester set up their Family Foodbank during lockdown which kept them very busy. They received parcels and financial donations as well as setting up a partnership with Morrisons, M&S and Costa Coffee. Their nurseries delivered parcels and shopping but were also a hub for people in need. They still collect food and nearly new clothes, sharing them with their families and local community.

Their MediaCity nursery has a rail for used clothes and school uniform items.

Nicola Fleury from Kidzrus advises:

- Set up a separate Facebook page to keep local interest, include photos and feedback from families who benefit from food parcels. Anyone in need can send a direct message
- Create a fundraising page so parents and supporters can give what they can but remember that many people are struggling at the moment too
- Link in with your local shops and community organisations.



Supporting someone in your nursery

Many nurseries fundraise in response to a poorly child or parent in need. The nursery comes together to help someone which gives them a focus.

Fundraising for Early Steps, Bathgate in East Lothian is part of their sole/soul! It is close to owner/manager Carol Armstrong's heart. Following the limits of lockdowns, Carol wanted to do "something BIG" so agreed to a sponsored walk over hot coals in aid of Mila, who has additional needs.

Early Steps has always fundraised. "Staff talk to the children about what the different charities do, they love it. They really see the benefits of their actions on other people. It's great for their numeracy, their confidence skills and people enjoy seeing the children involved."

Their event grew and other local charities got involved. They brought in a local band and the community set up tombolas and bake sales. They even had a classic car show.

"It can be anything to get people involved. We know that people are interested in cars, but you never know what people have and can use. Not everyone has to participate, you just come along, everything goes towards it. It was definitely a really big communal event!"

They raised over £10,000 and their children even handed over the giant cheques to the charities. They are already planning another, BIGGER event next year.

Carol's fundraising pointers:

- To get people involved and enthusiastic: "talk to staff about what they would like to do, who they would like to raise money for, send options out to parents: my team are even suggesting skydiving"
- "Don't be afraid to reach out to the community to help out" – a raffle with donations from local businesses pushed up their total



- "Just go for it – it is a very rewarding experience. Anything you can do is always appreciated."

Kids Planet Greenbank fundraised for a parent who has been battling cancer since 2019. The Liverpool nursery has raised over £1,300 from their family fun day which included a raffle with generous donations of signed memorabilia from Liverpool and Everton FC!

Community fundraising

Many nurseries get involved in local fundraising events to strengthen links with the community and embed their nursery brand.

NDNA Trustee, Tina Jones MBE opted to sponsor a team in their local golf club's charity centenary event. Tina's nursery, Tiny Tots was also celebrating their 50th anniversary so in an extra special twist, the team she sponsored was made up of ex-Tiny Totters, their eldest baby now 49 years old!

Tina said: "It was fabulous fun for everyone involved, and a great talking point for the nursery and the community. All the guys enjoyed it and the two teams were very competitive between themselves too."

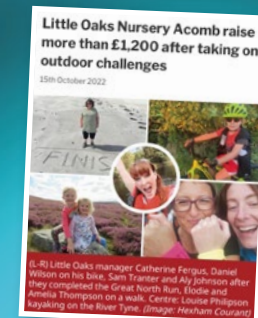
With their ethos of fundraising, the event grew and other local charities also got involved. They brought in a local band and the community set up tombolas and bake sales. They even had a classic car show with local car enthusiasts.

Coop Little Pioneers' Warwick Gates and Leamington settings decided to hold a pyjama party to raise money for a local homelessness charity. They even caught the attention of local mayoral celebrity the Mayor of Leamington, who attended in his pyjamas. Together they raised £240!

We fundraise for our own nursery

Sam Tranter is a parent trustee of Little Oaks Nursery and after school club in Acomb, Northumberland, which is run as a charitable incorporated organisation. They hold two main fundraising events per year, the summer fayre at the local school and a Christmas shopping event in the village hall. They fundraise to boost their resources but also to keep fees low for parents.

She said: "We team up with the local community and have a great working relationship with the school – it benefits everyone. The children see the interaction between staff and their parents at events. There's a real sense that the nursery is



embedded within local life, there's a connection there. We work with the WI and other groups, it's a multigenerational mix."

This year they also challenged children, parents and staff to take part in outdoor activities that interested them. Setting up a Go Fund Me page meant that individuals and families could bring in sponsorship money to one place. Sam ran the Great North Run, manager Catherine Fergus hiked 115km in the Orkneys and one family kayaked the River Tyne.

"We were clocking up the funding in between our usual events. It's our fundamental aim not to put up our prices. Everything is threatened by finances."

Little Oaks also applies for local authority funding especially to support children with additional needs.

Read all about it!

You have put in the hard work, raised the money and achieved your goals. Now enjoy the fruits of your labour.

The best way to promote your activities – and in turn your nursery and the work you do there – is to send your local journalists a press release. Think about newspapers, online news hubs, local radio and tv.

This need not be onerous. A good press release needs to include:

- A short ideally snappy headline
- The date
- Photocall details (time, date and place) unless you are sending photos from your event/activities – some nurseries like to hold a cheque presentation opportunity too
- Summary of your news – what have you done, what is the result, include how it affected the children and nursery
- Include a quote from someone relevant – the nursery manager/owner or the event organiser
- Your contact details so they can ring or email you for more information.

Also don't forget to share your news and photos on your social media platforms. If you tag NDNA then we will share for you too!

 @NDNAtalk

 @NDNAtalk

 /ndna.org.uk

See our funding officer's tips on page eight

Michelle's fundraising tips

There's no denying it, times are tough at the moment. We are all constantly on the lookout for ways to cope with the seemingly never-ending daily price increases for things like groceries and energy costs.

Sadly, we know only too well that our members are also struggling so I will be offering you some fundraising hints and tips in Nursery News that I hope might prove useful.

Asking people for money to help your nursery during the cost of living crisis might seem daunting, but there are some easy ways you might want to consider.

'Crowdfunding' could help you raise funds for particular financial issues you may be facing, for example, not being able to purchase new essential equipment and facilities, setting up a foodbank for the local community, or receiving short-term help with a major expense.

People can make a donation to help you and they do not expect to receive anything in return. You can quickly and easily

set up a fundraising page that people can donate to, such as:

- Go Fund Me: <https://bit.ly/3wtbnpY>
- Just Giving: <https://bit.ly/3DgOaey>
- Total Giving: <https://bit.ly/3kP69ly>
- Crowd Funder (private settings): <https://bit.ly/3RaCTSx>
- Crowd Funder (voluntary settings): <https://bit.ly/3wx0iEs>

Some sites charge platform or transaction fees so check that out before signing up.

Another opportunity that might be useful is:

- LoveReading4Kids is offering grants for early years providers to help buy books for children: <https://bit.ly/3kDCM5H>

If you need advice when applying for funding or have any fundraising ideas you would like to discuss please email me **Michelle Gray, NDNA's Corporate Partnerships and Funding Officer** Michelle.Gray@ndna.org.uk.



Rates revaluation - are you ready?

What is it?

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has revalued all commercial properties across the UK based on rental values in April 2021. These new valuations will start to be reflected in business rates bills from April 2023.

Last time business rates were revalued for April 2017 some members saw rises of 50% or more. Most nursery premises are freehold properties so their rates will be based on similar properties' rental values. The more information the VOA has about realistic rental values, the more accurate the valuations are likely to be.

What has happened to rateable values?

Commercial property consultants Lambert Smith Hampton confirmed to Nursery News that the overall rateable value of nursery properties in England and Wales has risen by 15%. Richard Flockton, Associate Director of Ratings, said: "But there is a huge range: from rates that were slashed by 80% to those hiked up by 650%. The average rateable value for a nursery will now be around £26,000. A transitional period means bills won't reflect the full increases straight away, but will be introduced incrementally.

"Any nursery business which believes their property has been revalued too highly or who believes information that has been used to calculate this value is wrong, can appeal the new valuation."

How can you appeal?

Anyone wishing to appeal the 2017 ratings must do so before 31 March 2023.

For the 2021 revaluation, there is currently no deadline for nurseries in England and Wales to appeal. Scottish nurseries would need to appeal before July 2023. Currently nurseries in Wales and Scotland do not have to pay business rates but will still receive bills from their local authority which will include a 100% discount.

Appeals are currently taking about a month to complete. Presently, rates relief for nurseries in Scotland ends on 30 June 2023. In England there are three stages to the appeals process – Check, Challenge and Appeal. Each may take months to progress. Any adjustments to business rates bills will be backdated to April 2017 or April 2023 depending on which valuation has been appealed.

Business rates relief

If you only occupy one property, you may be eligible for small business rates relief if your rateable value is below £15000 (small business rates relief). You may get a discount from your local authority if you can evidence you are eligible for hardship relief. <https://bit.ly/3kNaS7m>

Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3HceDLm>

Check your property's rateable value here:

<https://bit.ly/3ZWYpOC>



Lambert Smith Hampton is offering a **discount** on their usual fees (**20% of savings made for the life of the list**) for NDNA members who would like them to appeal their new valuation. To find out more call Dave Bullimore, Richard Flockton or Elaine Ainley on **0113 245 9393** or email EAinley@lsh.co.uk quoting the discount code **NDNALSH23**.



National Day Nurseries Association

*Brighter thinking
for early years



NDNA's Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene

Be confident that your team know how to prepare and serve food according to up-to-date standards.

Improve your practice for £5*

*Applies to NDNA members only until 31 March 2023



National Day Nurseries Association

NDNA Spring member events

Wales: Cwmbran 14/03/23

Scotland: Online 22/03/23

England: Online 30/03/23



SCAN THE QR CODE TO
FIND OUT MORE

Proudly sponsored by:



Hosting a T Level Student

T levels, introduced in September 2020, are vocational courses broadly equivalent to three A levels. Courses are taken in college with a strong focus on work placements. We spoke with Gerry Garvey at Little Oaks at Muddy Boots Nursery in Cumbria and their student Tom Nicholson.

Q Why did your nursery decide to host a T Level student?

We had previously hosted CACHE and BTEC EYE students. T levels were marketed as being done in collaboration with businesses like ourselves, so I was specifically interested in student outcomes and how they could be put into practice in our nursery.

Q How did you go about this?

We were invited to a childcare specific T level event by Kendal College and learned how the course was run and had been developed with input from local childcare providers. I signed up to take on a student.

Q How long has the student been in your setting and how does it work in practice?

We were really fortunate to take on Tom who started with us in September 2022. His course is two years long, with two exams in the first year. We as an employer can also set projects for him. He spends most of his time in college learning the theory side, then spends 45 days in the setting so he can put into practice what he has learnt. In return we mentor him and give him the information, advice and opportunity to learn new skills and interact with staff and children using our local curriculum and "In the moment" planning.

Q Does it cost your business anything?

Monetary wise no. However to give the student the best opportunity we allocated him a mentor, investing the time of a staff member to give Tom feedback and review his progress.



Q What are the benefits for the nursery, staff and children?

Tom is in his second term with us, the benefits we have seen so far is that he is able to build up fantastic relationships with staff and children. The qualification is industry specific which has meant that we have not had to change how we plan for the children just so Tom can complete criteria for certain modules he has to undertake.

Q Are there any challenges and if so what would you do differently next time?



We have not encountered any challenges so far, however we are mindful for a student to get on this course, the entry criteria is a lot higher around the maths and English element, at Level 4 minimum. I feel this could be a barrier for some students. This qualification could be used by students as a stepping stone to their next qualification such as university, so more practitioners could be lost to further education instead of being employed in an early years setting.

Q Any advice for other nurseries considering this?

There are no costs, the students we have met at the college are motivated and have met a stringent process to get on the course. Check out your local further education providers to see if they deliver the course and have a chat. It worked for us.

Q How has your experience in the nursery so far supported your professional ambitions? Do you anticipate taking up a career in Early Years Education?



Tom: I didn't want to do A-Levels post-16 and hadn't found any college courses I liked. But when I found the T level at Kendal College it sounded perfect; learning about child development alongside the practical experience.

The time on placement at nursery supports your learning, so you understand the content that you are being taught. Gaining a Level 3 qualification means I could become a nursery practitioner, teaching assistant, nanny or au pair. I could go on to higher education.

I am enjoying my experience in childcare and my time at nursery has given me a deep insight into what the career would be like. I still have another year on placement at a school and I am interested in another setting to understand my career options.



T Level graduates could also go onto a Level 5 apprenticeship. Scan the QR code to find out more:

Welcome to this special four page myNDNA guide for practitioners. myNDNA is free – sign up for your weekly tip and activity! Go to www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna

Inspiring your little scientists



"I am neither very clever nor especially gifted. I am only very, very curious!"

Albert Einstein

What are 'science skills'?

Children are born curious, the world is an adventure, every new experience offers sensory opportunities to explore and discover.

Encourage children to notice nature's wonders, giving them time to explore resources and try new approaches. As children play they make scientific discoveries: understanding force and motion as they play with ramps and pulleys.

As children observe and interact with their environment, they move from 'wow' to 'why'. They understand more, acquire new vocabulary, develop enquiry skills: "What does it do?", "How does it work?", "Why does that happen?"

Exploring ideas through trial and error helps children understand cause and effect –, learning water needs adding to sand to make sandcastles.

'Sabotaging' or limiting resources leads children to ask questions. Providing only buckets, scoops and dry sand for a sandcastle enables children to notice they should add water, then experiment to see how much they need.

Children build a growth mindset as practitioners use setbacks as learning opportunities. Children gain resilience through persisting.

Natural phenomena provide ideal opportunities to wonder together – how does a caterpillar become a butterfly?

British Science Week, 10-19 March is about 'Connections'. We have covered life cycles, but find ideas for other scientific aspects on the British Science Week website: www.britishtscienceweek.org

Look at me grow!

Start by looking at children's own life cycles. You will need baby items (bottle, dummy, nappies, pram, clothes, cots) and baby photos.

To develop awareness of the human growth cycle and identify changes since they were born, show them photos of the practitioners as babies and young children. Sequence them and discuss how they have changed.

What can children do now that they couldn't do as babies? Use baby items as prompts or visit the baby room. Discuss how children grow, change and develop skills like running, climbing, using tools, outgrowing clothes, becoming independent (dressing, toileting).

Talk about future changes. What can adults do that children can't? Display baby photos of practitioners, children, parents and grandparents to observe and compare. Find things they have in common as well as identifying differences.



Scientific approaches:

- **Observe.** Look closely, notice, identify similarities, differences, changes
- **Classify.** Sort, order, develop reasoning skills
- **Predict.** Open-ended conversations to guess such as "what might happen in a cocoon?", enabling thinking without requiring right and wrong answers
- **Experiment.** Encourage a "what if..." approach ie "What if we didn't give the bean any water?"
- **Measure.** Measure outcomes and use maths in everyday contexts such as recording number of days for the eggs to hatch into caterpillars.



Life cycles

Encourage families to look for signs of new life while they are out and about. Notice the longer and lighter days and milder temperatures. These make the plants grow - see if the children can spot buds, bulbs and new shoots. They may notice the birds being busier as they make nests or feed their young. Try listening for bird song.

I can...

Children love to celebrate what they can do now that they couldn't do before. Encouraging this to be shared and celebrated builds their sense of self, well-being and confidence.

Help them to think about all of the things they have learnt since they were a baby. Discuss individual achievements that children have made and celebrate their accomplishments such as learning to put on their coat, fasten their shoes, pour a glass of water, use a knife and fork, pedal a bike, use the toilet or write their name.

Ask the children to come up with their own achievements which they are proud of. Offer positive encouragement and congratulations for every new skill they identify. Try sharing an example of something you have recently learnt: "I can ..." Encourage them to celebrate things their friends are good at too.



Dancing butterflies

Remember to give children opportunities to express their scientific learning creatively across the curriculum.

In preparation for the dancing butterflies activity, share The Very Hungry Caterpillar story (Eric Carle), discussing the stages of the life cycle. At another time, listen to Grieg's

'Butterfly' music and think about how caterpillars and butterflies move.

Find a big space and play the music again as children experiment with the movements - crawling like caterpillars or flapping or swirling like butterflies. Scarves can be used as wings.

When children are confident, demonstrate how they can sequence movements in the order of the life cycle e.g. curl up like an egg, wiggle like a caterpillar, spin a cocoon, wrapping themselves up in a scarf to emerge as a beautiful butterfly.

For the Tiny Caterpillar Song and actions, visit <https://bit.ly/3JgxJCE>



Case study

Here's how one nursery introduces life cycles with their children.

Aziza Patel, manager at First Class Nursery, Huddersfield says: "We have an annual focus on life cycles across the whole nursery from babies to preschool. We repeat the same theme each year so children can build on their learning and memory from one year to the next."

The nursery's holistic approach to learning ensures children develop an understanding of the life cycles of both plants and animals. Children observe the growth of live butterfly eggs and grow vegetables on site.

Staff place butterfly eggs on the fascination table, where children carefully monitor the cycle - from eggs to caterpillars to butterflies. To extend children's learning, resources are available including The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Eric Carle), a story sack, photographs and pictures of different caterpillar and butterfly species and a butterfly tuff spot where children can sequence the life cycle.

"Being able to link the story, the resources and see the eggs, caterpillars and butterflies in real life helps children to engage deeply in their learning."

Parents also get involved with the life cycles theme at home. Most recently, each child worked with their family to create a life cycle using images and words on a paper plate. Some completed life cycles of chicks or butterflies, while others focused on their child's own life cycle, showing how they grew in mummy's tummy, became a baby, and then started nursery. The nursery also posts a blog of the children's learning around life cycles on their website.

TTS have a butterfly kit available March to September: <https://bit.ly/3XUtHEg>

Remember if you are growing live butterflies or chicks in your setting, you will also need to meet their welfare needs. Check with your supplier before purchasing to ensure you are able to look after them properly.

Blooming beans

You will need bean seeds e.g. broad beans, paper towels, water, small plastic bags, tape and a pen.

- Look closely at the beans. Compare the packet ones with fresh, if possible, and cut some open to see what is inside
- Talk about what seeds need to grow (water, air and sunlight) and compare with what children need to grow
- Wet a paper towel, put it inside a small plastic bag, add a bean, then seal the top. Write the child's name on the bag
- Tape the bags to a window so the beans have access to sunlight
- Regularly check the beans to ensure the paper towel stays wet and add more water as needed. The seeds should start to grow within two to three days
- Monitor the changes as they happen and take daily photographs. Add these to a book and display it with the beans.

Encourage experiments such as planting one bean without wet paper, or putting one in a dark cupboard. Compare, observe and discuss the differences with those on the windows. Encourage children to offer explanations.

Transplant the seedlings outside and watch them grow. When they are ripe, shell the pods and eat the beans. Take photos at all stages to record your bean life cycle. Store some beans in a sealed container to plant next year.

Caring for pets at your nursery

Pets help children to build empathy, care and responsibility. But did you know that the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales) and Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) 2006 make a pet owner legally responsible for ensuring pet welfare needs are met? Here's how you can make it work in your setting.

Nominate a staff member as the main carer, responsible for the animal's welfare, including seeking advice if the pet is unwell. Your chosen pet will need a large, dry, comfortable cage with adequate bedding and somewhere to eat and sleep undisturbed. Fresh water, adequate food, daily exercise and regular cleaning will also be required.

It's a good idea to have a clipboard with schedule of care. Let the children check daily that the pet's needs have been met.

Handling a pet should be supervised by confident adults and it's a good idea to develop a code of conduct. This may include:

- Always be gentle and calm
- Hurting, teasing or frightening the pet is unkind
- Stroke the pet on their side in the direction of the fur
- Remember - animals sleeping or eating should be left alone.

Ensure robust hand hygiene after touching the pet, food bowls, toys, bedding, etc.

For more information and advice visit www.bluecross.org.uk

www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna

myNDNA
The place to learn, share and grow



Why not support your families to grow a sunflower?

All you need is a plastic cup, sunflower seed and some peat-free compost for every child. Provide instructions about how to look after their seed. Use your social media platforms to encourage parents to share photos of the seedlings and measure it as it grows. When the sunflower heads turn brown, these can be left to dry, left out for the birds or used to grow more sunflowers.



Healthy Body, Happy Me 2023

See our 'Healthy Body, Happy Me: Talk With Me' campaign launching on 20 March 2023 for further science activities to develop receptive and expressive language skills through STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

Scan the QR code to find out more



Look out for our Coronation Special, with lots of activities and facts to help celebrate the day with your children.

Activities with children must always be risk assessed. Children must have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Five, six, pick up sticks

Managing stick play

Children love to play with sticks and having them available for loose parts play in the outdoor environment will always be popular. Try introducing stick games, such as playing pick-up sticks (taking it in turns to pick up a stick from a pile without moving any of the others) or sticky letters (arranging the sticks in the shape of their initials) or encourage children to invent their own games.

Remember, stick play falls into the category of risky play. By learning to manage risks, children will understand how to play with sticks safely. Explore the risks and dangers with children and discuss how these can be managed. You may have a 'safe stick system' such as "You can hit the ground, trees or other sticks but not anyone or any living thing" or "If the stick is longer than your arm, one end must stay on the ground."

Agree your safe stick rules and encourage children to consider questions to help select suitable sticks for their chosen activity. Once they know what they are using the stick for, they can decide if it is the right size for the purpose or if there are any dangers such as having a sharp end or being too long or too heavy. Don't forget to remind children not to put sticks in their mouths and to wash their hands after stick play.

For more ideas, visit the NDNA website and look for our publication 'Nature Play - Inspiring Outdoor Approaches' and courses 'Outdoor and Risky Play'.



Tree or not tree

This activity helps children explore the scientific approach of classification. Supporting them to articulate why they have classified items develops critical thinking and reasoning skills, gaining deeper understanding and knowledge.

- You will need access to a natural outdoor space with trees and some baskets or boxes
- Take children outdoors to collect a range of natural items from the ground e.g. twigs, cones, moss, leaves, acorns, pine cones, pebbles, seeds etc. Remind children not to touch their mouth or put items in their mouths
- Take time to look at the resources as they occur in the natural environment. Engage children in conversations e.g. "Why are the sticks / pine cones on the ground?" or "What is moss made from?"
- Talk about which items may have come from a tree
- Back in the setting, explore features children notice such as size and pattern and what they feel or smell like
- Using two baskets or boxes, label one "tree" and one "not tree". Support the children to sort items into each set and discuss why they have made those choices.



Something on a stick day

Something on a Stick Day, 28 March 2023, traditionally celebrates food on a stick. Try this science experiment to observe changes, by making frozen fruit yoghurt lollies on a stick.

You will need strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, natural yoghurt, lollipop sticks and moulds, bowls, spoons and a freezer.

Observe the berries closely - shape, size, texture, weight etc. before rinsing and mashing into a puree, talking about changes they notice. Separate the yoghurt into three bowls, adding one type of puree to each bowl.

Talk about the changing colours as children swirl and stir the mixture. Save some mixture for later.

Pour it into lollipop moulds and freeze for three to four hours. Predict what will happen in the freezer. Once set, take them out and discuss the differences between the frozen and unfrozen yogurt. Can the children explain what they think has happened? Now enjoy!

Fantastick things to do with sticks include:

- Make stick dens for toys
- Measure puddles
- Create stick people
- Decorate sticks
- Play hide the stick.

Why not share these ideas with parents to try at home?



Tuesday
28
March



tts talking

EARLY YEARS
PODCAST



Enriching Learning
Opportunities Outdoors

NEW! Introducing the TTS Talking Early Years Podcast

Introducing the new TTS Talking Early Years Podcast: Unlocking the potential for learning in the Early Years. Each week, our host, Alistair Bryce-Clegg, will be joined by guest experts, early years practitioners, and our very own in-house educational experts to explore everything Early Years!

Alistair and guests will share practical guidance and inspiration for your settings, signposting you to relevant resources. Plus, we'll be sharing exclusive supporting content to help inspire the next generation of learners.

Our bitesize episodes are the perfect addition to your morning routine or evening downtime, so grab yourself a cup of tea and get comfortable as we unlock the potential for learning in the Early Years.

EARLY YEARS
PODCAST



Join our host, **Alistair Bryce-Clegg** and guests as they **unlock the potential for learning in the Early Years**.



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Ask the experts...

Ben Kingston-Hughes is a multi-award winning early years trainer and exponent of the benefits of play. He is the director of Inspired Children Ltd which delivers positive play sessions for vulnerable children across the UK.

*Ben Kingston-Hughes*

Q You are obviously a massive champion for children playing, in a nutshell how important is play for their learning and development?

My teenage son recently volunteered on a children's session and spent the afternoon being chased by an adopted child. After the session he said, in a typical teenager voice, "So is that your job then? You just play?"

The truth is, there is no such thing as "just" play. To my son it was a throw-away moment, but for the young, vulnerable child it was a huge deal.

Physical play, for instance, is a key mechanism for building healthy hearts, lungs and bones. You can't build these aspects of life-long health in adulthood. It is too late by then. This means my son was actually helping that child to have a healthier and even potentially longer life.

Play is also crucial for mental health and well-being. So, for the young boy, play was profoundly important, especially considering the trauma he had previously been through.

Play is extremely neurologically rich, enabling brain growth in a way that no amount of watching screens could ever do. So my son was potentially supporting the child to grow his brain.

What my son does not know is that previously the child had been kept completely sedentary, strapped into a pushchair and fed on junk food. He had been morbidly obese and at extreme risk of health complications. Now, with a loving and nurturing adoptive family the child is beginning to thrive. So my son was supporting the one type of play that had been restricted in his early childhood.

So in a very big nutshell, for that one child, play was everything.

Q Why is their environment important to supporting their play?

The enriched environment directly inspires different play experiences. If a child is in a big space they will usually start running, but if they have a slope to roll down or a wall to balance on they will instinctively play in different ways. Children explore the world through play and play is enhanced if the environment lends itself to experimentation and investigation. Also, an environment that provides a wide range of sensory experiences for children is really important. An enriched environment will also stimulate the imagination and give children wonderful opportunities to make believe.

Q What is an enriched environment?

An enriched physical environment is characterised by interactivity. Basically, children need to get something back from their environment, whether this is sensory feedback, a sense of awe and wonder or simply the freedom to move and explore. There needs to be a clear two-way relationship between the child and the environment. This is only half of the story. An enriched environment is also characterised by the responsiveness of the adults. Far more important than any amount of resources or apparatus is the nurturing adults who support play.

Q Please outline three simple things nursery managers can do straight away to enrich their environment effectively.

Firstly, we need to make sure that the adults in any environment understand and support play. They need to be nurturing, supportive and above all fun. They need to be able to see the world through the eyes of a child and support joy.

Secondly, we need to provide a sensory buffet for our children ensuring our environments are truly stimulating using all of a child's senses. They need to be able to move and manipulate resources, see, hear, smell and taste wonderful things on a daily basis.

Finally make sure there is awe, wonder, surprise and joy in our environments. Bring in new resources and allow children to "discover" them. Hide interesting pebbles and fossils in your environments, bury dinosaurs and gold coins in the sand pit.

Q What do you do to relax in your spare time – do you play?

I work six days a week delivering training for settings and working with children. However, I do play badminton for a team that always loses, and I also collect torches.

Hear more tips from Ben at NDNA's FREE Afternoon With... event on 26 April 2023.

Find out more here:
<https://bit.ly/3HQUZpL>



Our brains are developing really fast.

Join our campaign to have the importance of nurseries recognised!

Read more about early years education and why
#FirstFiveYearsCount

ndna.org.uk

Step up to be a Toddler Room Leader

We are delighted to announce the launch of our latest course, Toddler Room Leader, which follows our highly successful Baby Room Leader course. More than 1,500 practitioners have completed the Baby Room Leader course and we know from feedback that many practitioners have now stepped into this role without any prior leadership training.

Whether it's the baby room or the toddler room, taking on a leadership role carries significant responsibility.

Room leaders are highly skilled in all aspects relating to quality care and education and in supporting children to grow and develop in their own unique way. Becoming a room leader for the first time and taking responsibility for a team requires an additional skillset.

If, as a manager, you have identified an individual as suitable for the role, do you know if they understand what the key attributes are of a good leader? If you're not sure, don't worry! NDNA's Toddler Room Leader course will provide practitioners with the leadership skills necessary for delivering high quality practice to this age group

Amongst other skills, the Toddler Room Leader needs to communicate effectively. They need to inspire and motivate the team, become an agent for change and lead by example. They need to be good problem solvers and think creatively to make the right changes possible.

It is difficult for anyone to be able to do this from the outset without the right training. This is why the first two modules of Toddler Room Leader focus on these vital leadership skills.

Course delegates will learn to use SMART objectives, understand the importance of reflection and evaluation and understand how to plan for challenging conversations.

There are opportunities throughout the course for room leaders to reflect on their current practice and consider how they might improve it further.

Learners complete gap tasks between modules, such as reviewing the setting's behaviour policy for its appropriateness for toddlers. Leaders also need to know how to support their team to understand children's behaviour at each developmental stage.

By the end of the course we aim to give all learners foundational principles and skills to enable them to grow into successful leaders and gain the confidence to lead a team to deliver the highest quality of care and education to toddlers.

The course is delivered via our Live Virtual Classroom over four modules. We run between two and three courses per month at a cost of £79* per person. Find the next course available on our website, here: <https://bit.ly/3Xvfz3m>

Additional resources – Baby Room Leader course <https://bit.ly/3HXykh2>



Check out our latest Live Virtual Classroom Courses for Spring

Our babies courses are proving particularly popular – see page five for dates of courses:

- Baby Room Leader
- Brilliant Babies
- Quality Interactions with Babies
- Positive Behaviour in Early Years
- Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs.

NDNA SENCo qualification delivery partner

NDNA has secured delivery partner status with Best Practice Network and is a key part of the project to train 5,000 practitioners.

The DfE made the commitment to train practitioners to SENCo Level 3 as part of its Early Years Recovery Fund. NDNA has taken on a staff team to deliver this qualification for the sector, which includes training, mentoring and supporting people to become accredited. The last intake is expected to be in April 2024 and each course runs for four months. Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3YqnZKK>

According to DfE's most recent statistics, more children with SEND are entering early years provision than ever before. In response to this, NDNA has developed a suite of training courses and products to assist practitioners to best support these children with their individual needs.

Courses include:

- The Role of the SENCo - Live Virtual Classroom and Face to Face
- Communication and Interaction - Strategies for Children with SEND/ASN/ALN - Live Virtual Classroom and Face to Face
- Introduction to Supporting Children with SEND (Free) - Online
- Supporting Children with SEND - Online
- SEND: Courageous Conversations - Online
- SEND: Education, Health and Care Plans - Online
- SEND: Working with Parents - Online

*Please note that there will be a small price increase from 6 April 2023.



Scotland
National Day Nurseries Association

Hello from Jane

I love this time of year when we start to see new life growing out from the cold winter ground.



In this edition we bring you news of changes to the Scottish Social Services Council Register and also information about the review of the Codes of Practice.

There have also been a number of changes to both child protection guidelines and also to GIRFEC. To help you with this, members can now access our brand new Child Protection training. Enjoy the spring as we head towards summer and lots of sunny days to enjoy being out in the nursery garden.

Jane

Jane Malcolm
Policy Manager, NDNA Scotland

Sign up to Millie's Mark

Since Millie's Mark was launched in Scotland in 2019 by then Minister Maree Todd, it has gone from strength to strength despite a pause for Covid restrictions, with around 20 nurseries awarded and more signed up.

We are hoping to reach one thousand settings accredited across the UK by summer – please help us by considering how your nursery would benefit from having Millie's Mark, the gold standard in paediatric first aid. All your staff working with children must be PFA qualified and their knowledge tested regularly to give them confidence to act in an emergency.

Trinity Tots in Edinburgh (pictured above) is among the latest nurseries to be awarded. Nursery Manager Natalie Kane said: "We are delighted to have been awarded Millie's Mark, our focus is always on the safety, health and well-being of the children and receiving this award is typical of our teams determination, passion and drive to provide the very best in Early Learning and Childcare." Find out more here: www.milliesmark.com

New Training for Scottish Members

NDNA Scotland is delighted to inform our members of our brand new online training: **Introduction to Child Protection (Scotland)**. This course has been developed by our Scottish team in line with the recently updated National Guidance for Child Protection (2021) and the GIRFEC policy refresh.

The course covers key topics such as:

- Relevant legislation
- Recognising the signs of different types of abuse
- How to handle disclosures and report concerns.

Completing this course will give you and your team extra reassurance and confidence in your practice to recognise signs of harm and protect children.

For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3iUbrSW>



Scottish Social Services Council – Register for the Future and Codes of Practice Review

NDNA Scotland regularly respond on your behalf to consultations which will have a direct impact upon your practice. We recently responded the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) consultation which set out proposals to improve and streamline the way people working in social work, social care and early years services in Scotland apply to register.

The SSSC are proposing changes to the register, to the processes and to the qualifications they accept for registration. Following the consultation the SSSC have published their next steps.

The number of register parts will reduce from 23 to four: Social Workers, Social Work Students, Social Care Workforce and Children and Young People Workforce. Within this there will still be the three levels: support worker, practitioner and lead practitioner. Staff will have to apply for registration within three months of starting a new role and be registered within six months. They are going to include more information on the public Register, including specialist qualifications for social workers and fitness to practise information currently available on a different part of our website.

There will be several changes to the registration process which will be ongoing with an annual declaration and fee, instead of registrants having to renew registration every three or five years. They are going to accept the main benchmark qualifications for additional register parts with the same SCQF level requirements, to allow more flexibility. The time given to achieve a required qualification is reducing from five years to three years, with the exception of new registrants with no recognised qualification joining as a supervisor, manager or residential childcare worker.

There will also be a new model of continuous professional learning (CPL) designed which will include mandatory skills and knowledge.

We are also working with the SSSC on the review of the Codes of Practice which both employers and employees have to adhere to. There will be a formal consultation launched in April this year and we will run a consultation event which you will be invited to attend. Look out for details of this in the fortnightly e-bulletin.





Cymru
National Day Nurseries Association

Hello gan Sarah



Croeso i newyddlen gyntaf 2023!

Roedd y flwyddyn ddiwethaf wedi bod yn un brysur a heriol, felly hoffwn ddiolch i chi am gymryd amser i ymuno â'n sesiynau i drafod yr ymgynghoriad ar y Safonau Gofynnol Cenedlaethol ar gyfer gofal plant a reoleiddir a'r drafft o'r trefniadau asesu ar gyfer lleoliadau meithrin a ariennir nas cynhelir. Mae hyn wedi ein cynorthwyo i ymateb i'r ymgynghoriadau ar eich rhan, ac rydym yn edrych ymlaen at barhau i weithio gyda chi drwy unrhyw newidiadau a ddaw.

Eleni, rydym yn edrych ymlaen at eich cefnogi ymhellach gyda'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru <https://bit.ly/3KsOYBe>, y Gymraeg a gyda gwaith Cynllun Gweithredu Cymru Gwrth-hiliol. <https://bit.ly/3xKXxjk>

Mae tîm NDNA Cymru yma i'ch cefnogi! Cadwch mewn cysylltiad â ni drwy roi tag ar Twitter @NDNACymru, drwy ein tudalen Facebook page neu drwy wales@ndna.org.uk

Sarah

Sarah Coates, Rheolwraig Partneriaethau Polisi a Strategol, NDNA Cymru

Hello from Sarah

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2023!

Last year was a very busy and challenging one, so I would like to thank you for taking the time to attend our sessions to discuss the consultations for the National Minimum Standards for regulated childcare and the draft assessment arrangements for funded non-maintained nursery settings. This helped us to respond to the consultations on your behalf, and we look forward to continuing to work with you through any changes in due course.

This year we are looking forward to further support you with the Curriculum for Wales <https://bit.ly/3D9HTkF>, Welsh Language and the work of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan. <https://bit.ly/3XSw5Lz>

The NDNA Cymru team are here to support you! Please keep in touch with us, tag us on Twitter @NDNACymru, via our Facebook page or at wales@ndna.org.uk

Sarah

Sarah Coates, Policy and Strategic Partnerships Manager, NDNA Cymru

Cynnig Gofal Plant Cymru: Gwasanaeth Digidol Cenedlaethol

Bydd lleoliadau gofal plant sy'n gweithio gyda Chynnig Gofal Plant Cymru yn gwybod bod y gwasanaeth digidol cenedlaethol newydd yn awr yn fyw ac yn agored i rieni a lleoliadau i greu Cytundebau Cynnig Gofal Plant ar gyfer y tymor hwn. Diolch am gofrestru gyda'r gwasanaeth newydd er mwyn helpu i sicrhau bod rhieni yng Nghymru yn gallu parhau i gael mynediad at ofal plant wedi'i ariannu gan y Cynnig. Heb eich cefnogaeth chi ni fyddai hyn wedi bod yn bosib!

Cofiwch:

- Rhaid i bob rhiant sy'n dymuno derbyn gofal plant wedi'i ariannu gan y Cynnig o fis Ionawr 2023 wneud cais trwy'r gwasanaeth newydd
- Dim ond trwy'r gwasanaeth newydd y gellir gwneud ceisiadau am ofal plant wedi'i ariannu gan y Cynnig o Ionawr 2023.

Bydd systemau etifeddiaeth Cynnig Gofal Plant Lleol yn dirwyn i ben dros y misoedd nesaf, gan olygu mai'r gwasanaeth digidol cenedlaethol fydd yr unig system Cynnig Gofal Plant y bydd angen i leoliadau weithio gyda nhw o dymor yr hydref 2023.

Ceir rhagor o wybodaeth am y gwasanaeth digidol cenedlaethol newydd yma <https://bit.ly/3WxvmOD>

Peidiwch ag anghofio, os na lwyddoch chi i fynychu'r sesiynau hyfforddi ar-lein ar ddefnyddio'r gwasanaeth newydd, gallwch eu chwarae yn ôl yma <https://bit.ly/3Z57TGA>

Cysylltwch â llinell gymorth Cynnig Gofal Plant Cymru am unrhyw wybodaeth bellach. <https://bit.ly/3Z8pMol>



Childcare Offer for Wales: National Digital Service

Childcare settings who work with the Childcare Offer for Wales will know that the new national digital service is now live and open to parents and settings to create Childcare Offer Agreements for this term. Thank you for registering with the new service to help ensure parents in Wales can continue to access Offer-funded childcare. Without your support this would not have been possible!

Please remember that:

- All parents wishing to take up Offer-funded childcare from January 2023 must apply through the new service
- Claims for childcare provided to parents taking up the Offer from January 2023 can only be made through the new service.

Local Childcare Offer legacy systems will wind down over the coming months, meaning the national digital service will become the only Childcare Offer system that settings will need to work with from the 2023 autumn term.

Further information on the new national digital service can be found here <https://bit.ly/3kC82IG>

Don't forget, if you didn't manage to make the online training sessions on using the new service, you can play them back here <https://bit.ly/3j4vNIZ>

Please contact the Childcare Offer for Wales helpline for any further information. <https://bit.ly/3DaRQ1i>



Cwricwlwm i Gymru

Mae pob lleoliad ac ymarferwyr ar siwrnai tuag at roi Cwricwlwm i Gymru ar waith, ac fel nifer o siwrneiau, bydd pawb mewn rhan hollol wahanol. Rwyf am eich sicrhau, yn ystod y cyfnod cychwynnol yma o roi ar waith, mae pob rhan o'r siwrnai yn ddilys ac rwyf yma i'ch cefnogi ar eich siwrnai ar hyd y llwybr rydych wedi ei ddewis.

Wrth siarad gydag aelodau, awdurdodau lleol ac Athrawon Ymgynghorol y Blynnyddoedd Cynnar mae'n ymddangos bod rhai camsyniadau wedi codi mewn perthynas â'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru. Byddwn ni ynghyd â Llywodraeth Cymru ac Athrawon Ymgynghorol y Blynnyddoedd Cynnar yn gweithio i gyfarch unrhyw gamsyniadau fel maent yn codi.

Bydd Cwestiynau Cyffredin (FAQs) yn cael eu diweddarau yn gyson ar Hwb a byddaf yn parhau i rannu'r diweddariadau yma gyda chi drwy ein newyddlen ac ar ein gwefan. Gwylwch allan am adnodd chwalu'r chwedlau CWLWM fydd allan yn fuan!

Gobeithio byddwch wedi gweld ein diweddariad am y 'Cwricwlwm i Gymru' ar ein gwefan, a fydd yn ei gwneud yn haws i chi ddod o hyd i'r adnoddau rydych ei angen. Daliwch ati i chwilio mysg y tudalennau a defnyddio'r adnoddau sydd ar gael ei chi.

Mae hwn yn amser cyffrous iawn i addysg blynnyddoedd cynnar yng Nghymru. Cysylltwch â mi ar y ffôn neu drwy e-bost os oes gennych unrhyw gwestiynau, pryderon neu adborth a gofynnwch am drefnu sesiwn 1:1 anffurfiol os ydych chi am drafod rhywbeth arall mewn manylder. Daliwch ati, rydych yn gwneud gwaith anhygoel!

Hayley Edwards, Swyddog Addysg Blynnyddoedd Cynnar NDNA Cymru Hayley.Edwards@ndna.org.uk

Curriculum for Wales

All settings and practitioners are on a journey towards implementation of Curriculum for Wales and as with many journeys, everyone will be at completely different points. I want to reassure you that in this early period of implementation, every point of the journey is valid and that I am here to support you in progressing along your chosen path.

Upon speaking with members, local authorities and Early Years Advisory Teachers (EYATs), there seem to be a few misconceptions that have arisen in regard to Curriculum for Wales. Together with EYATs and the Welsh Government we will work to address any misconceptions as they arise.

One way of doing this will be regularly updated FAQs on Hwb and I will continue to share these updates with you through our email newsletters and on the website. Please do keep an eye out for an upcoming CWLWM myth-busting resource!

Hopefully you will have seen the latest update to our 'Curriculum for Wales' page on the website, which will make it easier for you to navigate and find the resources you need. Keep exploring the pages and use the resources available to support you.

This is an exciting time for early years education in Wales. Please feel free to contact me through phone or email with any questions, concerns or feedback and do ask to book in for an informal 1:1 session if you would like to discuss anything in further detail. Keep going, you're doing an amazing job!

Hayley Edwards, NDNA Cymru's Early Years Education Officer Hayley.Edwards@ndna.org.uk.





Holly Hedgehog Pre-School with their award

The Waiting Game - when will responses be published?

At the time of going to print, Nursery News was still waiting for the Government to respond to the ratios consultation and a separate one about supporting children with SEND. Both closed in September.

Our CEO Purnima Tanuku has been asking Ministers and senior civil servants when the response will be published, but media reports suggest it could be "months" before we are updated.

Robin Walker, recently-appointed Chair of the Education Select Committee, told Radio 4's Today programme in January that the ratios proposal of five two-year-olds per practitioner was "universally unpopular" and very unlikely to happen.

NDNA responded to the ratios consultation, clear that expanding ratios would not support providers to reduce fees. The Government needs to increase investment in our youngest children's futures.

Purnima added: "Now is definitely not the time to reduce support for children who have come to nursery having spent formative months under tough Covid restrictions. They have spent huge swathes of time with only their immediate family, rather than friends, relatives, children their own age in early years settings and have had less support from professionals such as early years practitioners and health visitors.

"This is why nurseries are working harder than ever to support these children."



Making Your Mark

Millie's Mark accreditation for early years best practice in paediatric first aid has almost reached a milestone: by summer we will award our 1000th nursery!

Millie's Mark – developed with Millie's Trust and administered by NDNA – was launched by then Childcare Minister Sam Gyimah at our conference in July 2016. Following a pilot, the first nurseries were awarded late 2016.

To qualify, all staff must be first aid trained but also able to demonstrate



confidence and knowledge. The panel usually accredits around 15 settings per month, this last for three years so some of these are re-accreditations.

Little Holly Hedgehog Pre-School in Crawley were delighted to be awarded in the latest round of applications. Christy Ball from the pre-school said:

"Staff carry out weekly first aid quizzes, we have become very inventive, planning entertaining ways to keep all staff engaged with first aid which increases confidence whilst highlighting the importance of it."

Sign up at: www.milliesmark.com

Robin's Select Committee Inquiry

Robin Walker, Chair of the Education Select Committee, has chosen to put out the committee's first inquiry on the crucial issue of childcare, which he says is close to his heart.

Purnima met with Mr Walker, Worcester MP, to discuss our response which included, along with our stance on ratios proposals:

- Why a child's First Five Years Count and a link to our campaign ndna.org.uk/firstfiveyearscount
- Research showing that investing in high quality early years education and care gives children the best start in life, reduces the attainment gap and leads to the highest rate of economic returns
- Childcare is an area of chronic underinvestment in the UK compared with other OECD countries: the UK spends less on children aged 0-5 than Lithuania, Estonia or Slovenia
- Costs for childcare providers continue to rise – from April 2023, wages will go up by at least 10% and energy support is reduced; business rates are set to increase with the new valuations

- Local authorities will get an average increase of 3.4% from April, with many LAs receiving only 1%
- Evidence to back the call for reform of the childcare support system which is confusing for parents and providers and leads to millions of pounds left unspent in council budgets. NDNA has recommended the Government use Tax-Free Childcare accounts to pool all streams of childcare funding
- NDNA's own research and Ofsted statistics show that nurseries are closing at a faster rate this year; nurseries in areas of deprivation are most at risk
- The sector has a chronic staffing crisis; they need a Government strategy to address this urgently to drive more qualified people into early education careers.



Purnima met Robin Walker MP in Parliament.



34%

increase of the value of offers since 2021

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increase on the value of offers received since 2021

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