

# NURSERY NEWS

Your membership magazine

[www.ndna.org.uk](http://www.ndna.org.uk)



## 25 years of growing with you

**2** 024 is a big year – it's 25 years since National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) officially became a charitable organisation.

Within that time, we have all seen a huge amount of change, but one thing that has not changed is our dedication to supporting you our members who in turn support our youngest children. This is a good point to take stock of all we have achieved, with your help, and look forward to another 25 years as the voice of the sector.

We want to celebrate with you, so within this special anniversary edition of Nursery News you will find a template to create your own bunting. We would love to see your

photos and videos of your individual bunting with children and staff getting creative. As part of our celebrations we are offering tickets to our conference, sponsored by Hope and Citation, at £25 each.

We are also excited about our **Healthy Body, Happy Me** campaign **Off We Grow** which is all about growth and development, helping children to foster attachments and friendships. The relationships children have with adults and each other are key to understanding themselves and feeling secure. Daily activities encourage play, curiosity, responsiveness, storytelling skills and relaxation.

Happy anniversary! [www.ndna.org.uk/25-years](http://www.ndna.org.uk/25-years)



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ALL ABOUT CEREBRAL PALSY

**We are proud to be headline sponsors of the 2024 NDNA Awards!**

Good luck to all nominees, you inspire us everyday with the important work you do to educate and develop young minds.



**NDNA**  
Corporate Partner  
National Day Nurseries Association  
Championing early years for 25 years

**HOPE**  
is all you need

Learn more about the discounts and benefits you get from Hope as an NDNA member.  
[Hope-education.co.uk/ndna](http://Hope-education.co.uk/ndna)

**healthy body happy me 2024**  
OFF WE GROW

Supported by **HOPE** is all you need

Resources available here:



**OFF WE GROW**  
**25-29 March 2024**  
**#HealthyBodyHappyMe**

**NDNA**  
National Day Nurseries Association  
Championing early years for 25 years

## Expert advice



Have a question about your inspection?  
Unsure of ratio requirements and qualifications?  
Want to know more about funded childcare?

### Free early years advice

NDNA's team of advisers have the knowledge and expertise to advise you on curriculum requirements, regulatory issues or inspections.

- Inspection outcomes
- Safeguarding issues
- Disputes with parents
- Challenging behaviour with parents and children
- Dealing with the press
- Funded hours
- Staff qualifications and ratios.

If you are unsure of any issues, give us a call and we can set your mind at ease.

*"The advice was timely and helped me both mentally and practically. If ever membership cost is questioned, believe me when I tell you it was so well spent this year!"*

Kitty Mason, Holland Park Prep School

### Free legal advice with your membership

Members also have free access 24/7 to a Legal Helpline who can provide advice on:

- Employment law
- Contracts with parents
- GDPR
- Debt recovery.

Call NDNA today on 01484 407070. All advice is free as part of your membership.



Find your member benefits at  
[www.ndna.org.uk/hub/member-hub](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/member-hub)



## Forum for you

NDNA is delighted to announce an online forum, exclusively for NDNA members. The forum is a place for NDNA members to talk, share and find support on running your childcare business and improving everyday practice such as:

- Funding
- Inspections
- Recruitment
- SEND, ALN, ASN
- And all other topics related to your childcare business.



You can also see your next local network meetings and communicate with the Network Chair and other members in your area.

Visit [www.earlyyearsforum.org](http://www.earlyyearsforum.org)

## 25 years and counting

You may notice a different feel to this edition of Nursery News.

We have lots of '25s' dotted around, including in our logo, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of NDNA becoming the organisation we are today, a charity set up by our members, for our members.

You can see all the major events on our timeline in this edition. We can't cover everything in just two pages but it has been great to look back at how the sector has grown and changed.

I always say we're still young but we have done so much already like establishing Wales and Scotland offices and developing training and programmes that make a real difference to the sector such as Maths Champions, Quality Counts and Millie's Mark.

And we're not resting - we have lots of exciting plans for the coming year. Our conference and awards evening are great opportunities to come together, share best practice and celebrate the sector. This year we're offering discounted tickets at £25 so we hope you're able to join us.

We know that health and well-being is crucial for children and staff so we have launched NDNA's PANCo programme this spring. As work on the Institute of Early Years Education continues we are making staff well-being a key priority. The Minister visited Toadhall Montessori Nursery to recognise them as the first nursery in Wales to achieve Millie's Mark, the gold standard in paediatric first aid.

We remain focused on why we were established, to be a voice for

the sector as well as providing the services and support you need. We do this so you can focus on what you do best; care for, nurture and educate our youngest children.

Thank you to everyone taking part in our surveys in England, Scotland and Wales that spotlight the challenges you face and help us fight for the investment and policy changes you need. We will be publicising the results over the coming weeks as we seek to shape the Chancellor's Budget and spending decisions in Scotland and Wales.

NDNA is your organisation. We were set up by nursery owners to speak up for your needs and ensure that children access high quality early education and care. Just like the sector we represent, we've grown and changed over the years. I can't wait to see where we will go from here, together.

*Purnima Tanuku Obe*

PURNIMA TANUKU OBE,  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



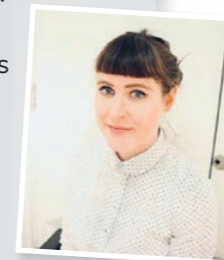
## Join our SPRING MEMBER EVENTS

Your free member events sponsored by Citation:

- 13 March – Wrexham (CIW and Olivia Corbin-Phillip)
- 20 March – Glasgow (Learning Places Scotland and Kate Hookham)
- 26 March – virtual for England (Maths Champions and Nicole Hunt).

Citation will present on legislative changes and new regulations.

- 25 April – Afternoon with... Kerry Murphy (sponsored by Hope).



[ndna.org.uk/member-events](http://ndna.org.uk/member-events)

Get involved online!



@NDNAtalk



@NDNAtalk



/ndna.org.uk



Nursery News is NDNA's magazine for members. It is published by NDNA, National Early Years Enterprise Centre, Longbow Close, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD2 1GQ.  
Advertising in this publication is paid for and does not necessarily reflect the views or constitute endorsement from NDNA.

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## Employment law changes in 2024

HR & Employment Law already cause unique issues in the nursery sector, with long hours, staff shortages and increasing staff burnout. On top of these usual difficulties, there are lots of changes happening in Employment Law. Citation's experts are here to give you an overview of what's in store for 2024...

### January - July

#### Employment Rights (Amendment, Revocation and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2023

##### Holidays

- These regulations formalise lots of existing principles on the **calculation of holiday pay** and **rights to carry over holidays**, and came into force on **1 January 2024**
- They'll also make it lawful for employers to **pay rolled-up holiday pay for irregular hour and part-year employees** (when an amount for holiday pay is paid alongside the employee's hourly rate). This will come into force for businesses with holiday years starting from **1 April 2024**. If your holiday year starts in January, it'll apply from **January 2025**
- Rules for **holiday accrual for irregular and part-year workers** will now allow these workers to accrue holiday at a rate of 12.07% of the total hours worked in that pay period. This is for holiday years starting from **1 April 2024**
- Employers must consult if they want to introduce these new options for relevant existing staff (once the legal start date has passed).

These regulations also confirm that employers should **keep records** to show compliance with the **48-hour working week limit**.

#### Flexible working

There are already rights in place to make flexible working applications, but these are being extended.

- **The Flexible Working (Amendment) Regulations 2023** will apply from **6 April 2024** and make the right to request flexible working a day-one right
- **The Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023** is likely to come into force in **July 2024**. Employees will be able to make **two applications** every 12 months; employers should make decisions within **two months** and will be required to discuss alternative options with the employee before rejecting a request.

#### Carers Leave Act 2023

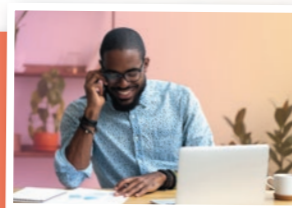
Expected to apply from **6 April 2024**. This introduces a new **day-one right** for employees to take **up to one week of unpaid leave** to provide or arrange for care for dependants with long-term care needs.

#### Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023

- **Extends current protection** employees have against redundancy when they're on maternity leave to **pregnant employees and employees returning from maternity leave** (covering the **first six months** of their return)
- If their role is selected for redundancy during this time, they get priority for any suitable alternative roles
- Widens the protection for those on **adoption leave and shared paternity leave**.

## Navigate 2024 and beyond with Citation

There are even more employment law changes coming up, affecting TUPE reforms, paternity leave and sexual harassment amendments, plus a few with unclear implementation dates. As an NDNA partner, Citation is a trusted provider in the industry and can support your nursery in this year of unprecedented employment law change. To find out more about how we can keep you updated and get your business ready, just call Citation on **0345 844 1111** and don't forget to quote 'National Day Nurseries Association' to access your member benefit and preferential rates.



## Come and celebrate at the NDNA Conference and Awards 2024!

It's show time and we have a guest speaker line up like you've never seen before, with a sprinkling of celebrity magic to get the party started.

Join us on Friday 7 June at the Coventry Building Society Arena to celebrate NDNA's 25th anniversary as a charity and help shape the future of high-quality early education and care.

#### We're conference ready and here's why you need to book your tickets now:

- Be inspired and entertained by guest speakers Elliott Rae and Ashley John-Baptiste
- Hear from Minister David Johnston and take part in his Q&A session
- Conference tickets for 2024 are ONLY £25 for both leaders and practitioners
- Be part of an engaging day of CPD with industry experts
- Be informed and have a voice to make a difference in shaping our sector
- Chat to our experts and visit our exhibition space for a range of discounts
- Party and celebrate the 2024 award winners at a glitzy evening ceremony and dance the night away.

We're delighted to welcome Elliott Rae, presenter, author, and social change campaigner who will be joining us to talk about his insights on fatherhood. Read more about Elliott's thoughts in his blog on our website: [ndna.org.uk/ER](https://ndna.org.uk/ER)

As a celebrated broadcast journalist and presenter, Ashley John-Baptiste promises to be an inspirational speaker having fronted documentaries including Care Home Kids: Looking for Love in which he shared his own personal experience of growing up in care.

And we look forward to welcoming David Johnston OBE MP and hearing what he has to say on the issues that really matter on childcare, special educational needs and disabilities. Don't miss your opportunity to put your question to the Minister.



**So join us for an inspiring conference and celebratory awards party!**

## NDNA\* live virtual classroom training

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

#### **Advanced Safeguarding for DSL** £131/£175, four modules

- Module 1 on 18 Mar; Module 2 on 21 Mar; Module 3 on 25 Mar; Module 4 on 28 Mar
- Module 1 on 15 April; Module 2 on 18 April; Module 3 on 22 April; Module 4 on 25 April
- Module 1 on 13 May; Module 2 on 16 May; Module 3 on 20 May; Module 4 on 23 May

#### **Baby Room Leader** £53/£71, two modules

- Module 1 on 20 March; Module 2 on 27 March
- Module 1 on 17 April; Module 2 on 24 April
- Module 1 on 15 May; Module 2 on 22 May

#### **Brilliant Babies** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 18 Mar; Module 2 on 21 Mar; Module 3 on 25 Mar; Module 4 on 28 Mar
- Module 1 on 16 April; Module 2 on 19 April; Module 3 on 23 April; Module 4 on 26 April
- Module 1 on 14 May; Module 2 on 17 May; Module 3 on 21 May; Module 4 on 24 May

#### **Developing Quality Outdoor Provision** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 04 Mar; Module 2 on 07 Mar; Module 3 on 11 Mar; Module 4 on 14 Mar

#### **Effective Team Leadership** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 04 Mar; Module 2 on 07 Mar; Module 3 on 11 Mar; Module 4 on 14 Mar

#### **Leadership & Management** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 18 Mar; Module 2 on 21 Mar; Module 3 on 25 Mar; Module 4 on 28 Mar
- Module 1 on 14 May; Module 2 on 17 May; Module 3 on 21 May; Module 4 on 24 May

#### **Positive Behaviour in Early Years** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 15 April; Module 2 on 18 April; Module 3 on 22 April; Module 4 on 25 April

#### **Power of Play with Babies** £27/£36.50, one modules

- Module 1 on 22 Mar
- Module 1 on 29 May

#### **Preparing for Your Inspection** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 12 Mar; Module 2 on 15 Mar; Module 3 on 19 Mar; Module 4 on 22 Mar

#### **Quality Interactions with Babies** £27/£36.50, one module

- Module 1 on 26 Mar
- Module 1 on 30 May

#### **Toddler Room Leader** £82/£110, four modules

- Module 1 on 11 Mar; Module 2 on 14 Mar; Module 3 on 18 Mar; Module 4 on 21 Mar
- Module 1 on 16 April; Module 2 on 19 April; Module 3 on 23 April; Module 4 on 26 April
- Module 1 on 21 May; Module 2 on 24 May; Module 3 on 28 May; Module 4 on 31 May

Find out more about LVCs on our website at [www.ndna.org.uk/hub/training-resources](https://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/training-resources)

**Please note there will be a small price increase from 3 April 2024.**

# Start Life Well for a happy, healthier future



**'It takes a village to raise a child'** is a well-known proverb that centres around the importance of the community in supporting our children to learn and develop in a safe and healthy environment.

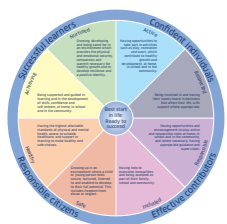
In partnership with families, early years practitioners are at the heart of our children's communities and perfectly placed to instil healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

## Unhealthy statistics

NHS guidelines state that pre-schoolers should have three hours of physical activity daily, of which one hour should be moderate-to-vigorously intense physical activity.

- Despite this the statistics surrounding child obesity are far from healthy:
- Public Health Scotland said 24.1% of children aged around five were at risk of being overweight or obese (2021-2022)
- The Child Measurement Programme Wales 2021/22 report found the proportion of children with obesity varied across Local Health Boards from 10.6% in parts of Powys to 14.1% in Swansea Bay
- The National Child Measurement programme in England 2023 found that 22.3% of children aged four to five-years-old were obese rising to 37.8% of children aged 10 to 11.

Sedentary lifestyles and increased exposure to screen time are having a compound effect on the health and well-being of some of our youngest children.



## A wealth of information

'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) (Scottish Government) uses the Well-being Wheel to promote and assess children's well-being featuring eight indicators including Healthy, Nurtured and Active.

Food and Nutrition for Childcare settings is the Welsh Government's best practice guide delivered as part of the Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales strategy. It gives advice on portion sizes, staying hydrated and sugar intake.

NDNA's PANCo qualification (CACHE Level 4 award) raises the importance of preventing obesity in children. A PANCo is a Physical Activity and Nutrition Co-ordinator, a designated early years practitioner who emphasises the importance of physical activity and healthy eating practices for children's personal development. Through the PANCo programme an early years professional can promote a culture of health and well-being within their setting that children, staff, parents and carers can benefit from.

The PANCo programme provides settings with a framework and a pathway to follow, and because it complements curriculum guidelines, policies and current practice, is more easily adaptable to integrate into existing health and well-being policies. The three-part process starts with the Start Life Well Assessment. This assessment allows the learner to audit the current health and well-being of their setting and enables them to plan a detailed PANCo project that is specific to the needs of their own setting.

Food Matters, published by the Care Inspectorate, includes the Health and Social Care Standards to follow for children and Things to think about for Practitioners. Its My Active World supports practitioners to promote the benefits of active play experiences which improves creativity, socialising, imagination and understanding.

NHS Health Scotland's Setting the Table gives nutritional guidance and food standards, including example menu plans, recipes, encouraging good eating habits and engaging with families.

The Welsh Government has a holistic approach to early child development linking the Curriculum for Wales Early Childhood Education and Care (ECPLC) with the provision Childcare and Flying Start. The play-based curriculum in Wales gives children the opportunity to move as they learn while focusing on the importance of teaching skills that don't come through play alone. Learning skills to play sports is key to a healthy lifestyle in the early years and in the future as adults. A Quality Framework for Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care in Wales details early years development being by age group with a list of informative links (page 37).

## Early Years Practitioners Can Make a Real Difference

With more and younger children taking up places in early education and care settings, the role of the practitioner in promoting the importance of physical activity and developing positive eating habits is more important than ever.

The caring and fun environment of a nursery is where children can learn how to enjoy food, how sociable it is, experience a wide variety of foods and create happy memories in activities such as baking and growing vegetables.

Practitioners can play a key role in championing physical activity, supporting children to develop the necessary strength, stamina and skills they need for games and sports which they will benefit from in later life.

## We asked some of our members how they promote and develop positive attitudes to food and physical activity:

### Rachael Witts, Toadhall Montessori Day Nursery

The large climbing wall at the Academy site is a favourite activity. Team leaders John and Jess are qualified instructors and supervise children as young as two to ride the zip wire, rope swing and enjoy playtime on the monkey bars.

"The children benefit from risky play as they challenge themselves to climb higher while having support staff on hand. Children also have access to a forest school where they make supervised campfires and have fun baking banana splits and jacket potatoes."

Children prepare ingredients for teatime snacks such as cous cous salad and soups. The eat well plate is displayed which staff and children discuss at each mealtime.

### Lorraine Kirkwood, Just Be Kids Nursery

Life is just as active at Just Be Kids where children start the day with Brain Gym, engaging the left and right side of their brains and cosmic yoga after lunch for quiet and well-being time. "As part of learning the 'route to plate', children grow vegetables in the large sensory garden and cook three times a week, baking banana muffins and making soups and salads." Carrot and coriander soup is a favourite on the menu and when in season there's no shortage of strawberries.

Children can enjoy independence and responsibility as they take on the role of hydration monitor, keeping water bottles topped up and are encouraged to self-serve themselves at snack time.

The nursery completed the NHS 'Good Food Good Health' pilot. "The course helped me to look at affordable healthy meals and complete sessions with the children to cook different types of foods."

Well-being is important. The walk and talk staff supervisions have helped lower stress and reduce anxiety and participating in Spider Arts encourages expression through art. The nursery completed an eco-drama course, combining expression with nature and created a fairy garden and cosey hub outside.

### Gaynor Rooney, Dandelion Days Nursery

Gaynor from Dandelion Days Nursery completed the PANCo programme with her Local Authority. She recalls how the PANCo programme was easy to implement and practice in her setting and is now second nature to staff. "The children get involved in cooking and planting vegetables using tubs and hanging baskets as we don't have a lot of space."

Staying physically active is a priority and children have a PE day and engage in activities created by Boogie Mites, Funky Feet Music and Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle.

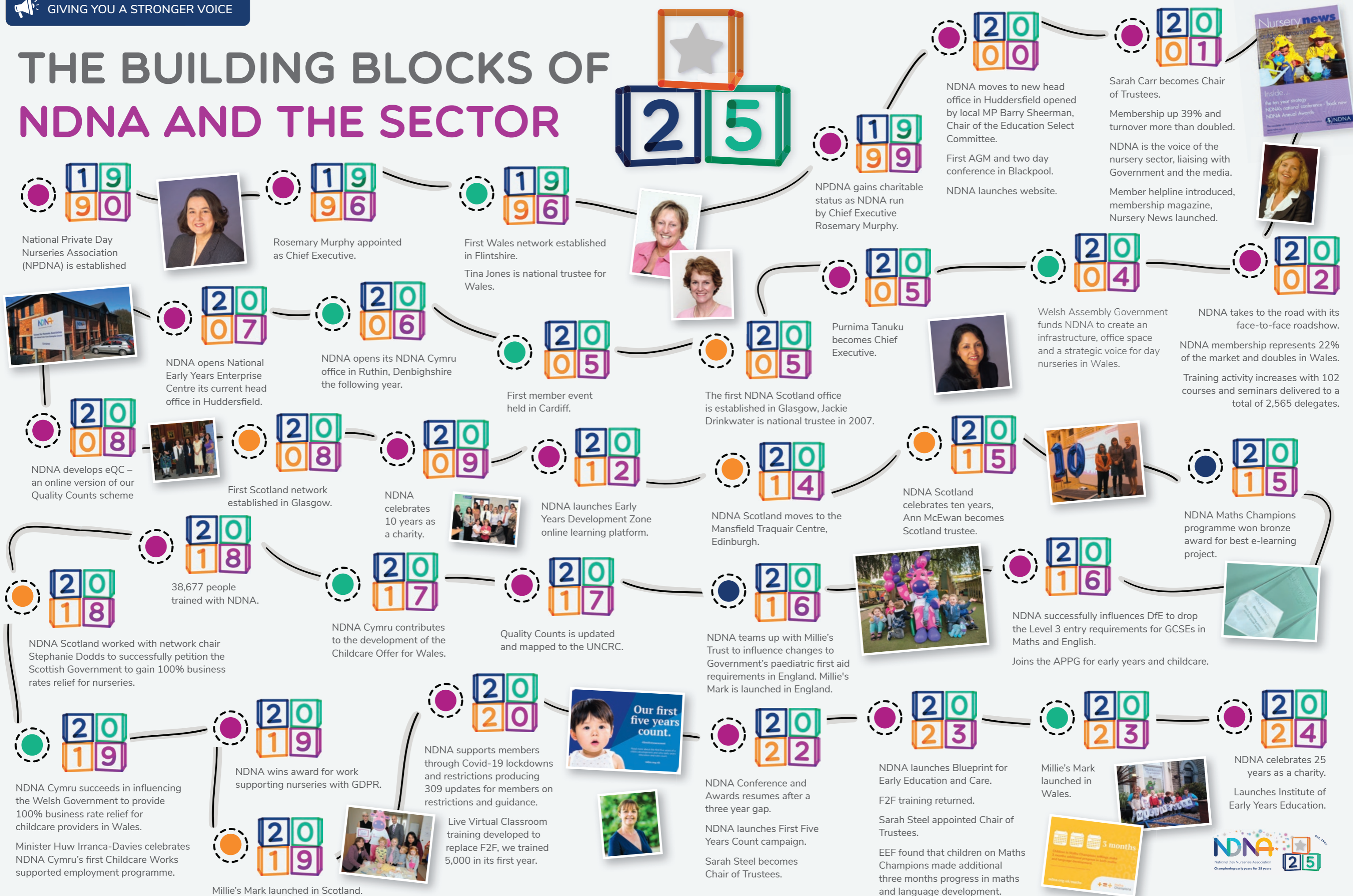
Since completing the course, Gaynor is more aware of sharing healthy recipes with families, taken from the NHS Healthier Families website. The nursery promotes the importance of healthy lunch box ideas and suggests sugary swaps.

Dandelion Days Nursery is part of Vitamin Angels:

[ndna.org.uk/VitaminAngels](http://ndna.org.uk/VitaminAngels)



# THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF NDNA AND THE SECTOR



# At the heart of our business

*Teepee Day Nursery in Bracknell, Berkshire is committed to promoting well-being and is delighted by the impact this has had on their children, families and staff.*

## Q As a multi award-winning nursery, what do you credit your success to?

At Teepee Day Nursery, we uphold rigorous standards to instil confidence in every team member. Our dedicated team is characterised by unwavering commitment, passion, and a reflective approach in all aspects of their work.

We are firm believers in the significance of obtaining accreditations as they not only keep our practices relevant but also infuse our team with fresh knowledge.

## Q What makes Teepee Day Nursery unique?

We take great pride in being a small boutique-style nursery that endeavours to cultivate a warm, family-like atmosphere. Our dedicated team is exceptionally passionate about their work, consistently going above and beyond to ensure our families feel genuinely valued.

Our team comprises a wealth of knowledgeable and experienced individuals, working collaboratively with the shared goal of providing the very best for our children. With the children at the core of all our endeavours, we have developed our own curriculum. Through ongoing reflective practice, we have crafted a curriculum audit, which serves as a tool to ensure the incorporation and coherence of our educational practices. This dedicated approach underscores our commitment to creating a nurturing and enriching environment where every child can thrive.

## Q Why is it important to promote emotional well-being in your setting?

Promoting well-being is paramount as it lays the foundations for children's lifelong development. Early years is a crucial time when positive experiences contribute significantly to emotional and social growth. A nurturing environment during this time fosters optimal brain

development, laying the foundations for academic success and essential life skills.

## Q How do you make your nursery a place of emotional well-being and support for your children, staff and parents/carers?

We are committed to creating a supportive and enriching environment where each child can thrive physically, emotionally and socially.

We recognise the pivotal role parents play in a child's early development, and we strive to create strong partnerships.

Through ongoing professional development and a shared commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive atmosphere, our team ensures that every child, feels seen, heard, and valued.

## Q What key strategies do you use to nurture effective communication and language development in your children?

At Teepee Day Nursery, we adopt a diverse approach. A cornerstone of our strategy involves creating a rich language environment. During our training journey, we developed our own peer observation tool that specifically focuses on language and communication. This tool has proven instrumental in enhancing our team's communication by providing clear areas for improvement.

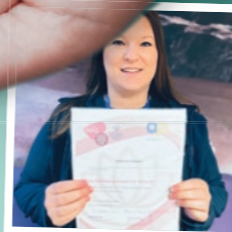
Prioritising continuous professional development for our staff remains paramount. We are dedicated to keeping our team updated on the latest research and best practices in language development, cultivating a culture of continuous learning within our setting.

## Q How do you support the communication skills of your children with identified speech, language and communication needs?

At Teepee Day Nursery, we are dedicated to providing comprehensive support for children with identified speech, language, and communication needs. The first step involves conducting thorough assessments to pinpoint the specific requirements of each child, forming the basis for individualised plans with clear goals and targeted strategies.

## Q How do you create a communication friendly environment and how important is it to have the appropriate resources available to children?

The skills acquired throughout our accreditation journey empower our team to effectively identify delays and support children with communication difficulties. Our team acknowledges the critical importance of exposing children to new vocabulary, exercising patience, and providing ample time for their development. This newfound knowledge has been shared with our families, offering them valuable hints and tips to ensure consistent support both at nursery and home. Through this holistic and proactive approach, we aim to create an environment that fosters optimal communication development for every child in our care.



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](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna)

# Spring has sprung

"Change is the very nature of nature."

Ilchi Lee

As nature awakens from its winter slumber the air, once crisp and cool, now carries the subtle warmth of transformation, breathing new life into the dormant wildlife around us. Spring is here and it heralds a season of change, new-life and natural wonders.

Amidst the pages of our spring issue, the life cycle of a frog becomes a captivating story of metamorphosis. From the tiny, jelly-filled eggs clinging precariously to the aquatic vegetation on the water's surface, we invite you and your children to witness their miraculous journey through the tadpole and froglet stages to their final appearance as frogs.

Undoubtedly, spring is a period of change which manifests in so many wondrous ways. Our planting activity gives children the opportunity to use their small green fingers and watch with awe as their carefully sown seeds come to fruition in a herby sense sensation; smelling, touching and tasting the plants that they have grown.

Spring is a gentle reminder to us all that change is not only inevitable but beautiful, especially the miraculous beginnings of new life. However, the changes around us extend beyond flora, fauna and vibrant landscapes. Springtime has a remarkable impact on humans, both physically and emotionally. The longer days and increased exposure to sunlight triggers the production of serotonin, a natural mood enhancer, as well as endorphins which promote feelings of happiness and well-being.

The surge in sunlight gives us increased energy and a sense of vitality after long dark evenings curled up, sipping hot chocolate on the sofa. Spring is also a time when communities come together for spring fairs, flower shows, Easter and Holi, people venture outdoors and a collective sense of optimism permeates the air.

As the world outside blooms into life, we are in a privileged position to sow, with love and care, the seeds of learning, emotional intelligence, resilience and compassion, to ensure that our children not only blossom but stand tall in the ever-changing seasons of life.



## You will need

- Pictures of baby and adult animals
- Video of the life cycle of a frog
- Camera (optional)
- Open space.

## Spring into action!

The following activity focuses on movement, promoting physical development and also enhancing children's connection to nature, their imagination and expression of ideas, their language development and their understanding of the process of change in springtime.

Show a video or pictures of some baby animals alongside images of the adult animals, e.g. lamb/sheep, kitten/cat, chick/hen, tadpole/frog. Find out if the children can identify the adults/young.

Discuss if the adult animal looks the same and if they have the same name. Find out if the children can match the young to the adults. Check children's knowledge and understanding from their responses.

Focus on frogspawn/tadpole/froglet/frog, watch a video of the evolution of a tadpole, if possible. Describe the metamorphosis as they grow their back legs, their front legs and finally grow into a frog. Talk about the way they move at each stage of the cycle, e.g. without legs, with legs, as a frog.

Ask the children to demonstrate the movements and narrate what you see to model the language they require to describe their movements, e.g. "I can see you wriggling", "I can see you bending/stretching your legs, nibbling the algae" etc.

Ask open-ended questions for them to consider, such as, "Where does its tail go?", "I wonder when it can eat flies?"

## For older children

Take photos of the children imitating the movement of an animal, find an image of the animal. Make a book to mix and match the photos and images.



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.

## Growing without a garden

No garden? No problem! Maximise the space you do have by being creative:

- Hang tyres from posts, fill with compost to plant trailing flowers, strawberries or tomatoes
- Nail guttering to a wall or fence
- Fill an old pallet, old boots, wellies, tubs or sand pits with soil to provide planting opportunities.

## Egg-citing eggs

Set up the cooking area with plenty of adult supervision.

Ask the children what the eggs are and where they come from. Let them feel the eggs and tell you what they know – eating and cooking them, seeing them hatch etc.

Tell them they are going to see how eggs change when we cook them, could they make predictions and share their ideas?



Demonstrate cracking an egg into a bowl, then let the children crack their eggs. Encourage observations about what they see, smell and feel. Try separating the yolk and carefully pass it to those who want to feel it. Can they pass it on without breaking it?

Show how to whisk the yolk and the white together, add in chopped herbs. Place the whisked eggs in a bowl for microwaving, or in a pan on the hob. Observe the changes as the eggs transform from liquid to solid. Discuss the changes: how they look, smell, feel and taste.

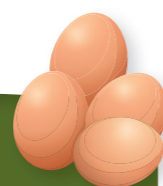
Use open ended questions to encourage critical thinking and problem solving, e.g. "What happened when.....?", "What would happen if...?", "Why do you think ...?"

### Try this with older children:

Repeat the experiment with a chocolate egg. Discuss the differences with the children.

### You will need

- Microwave or hot plate
- Fresh herbs (optional)
- Fork or whisk
- Bowl
- Eggs.



## Promoting nutritional food choices by:

- Planting edible plants e.g. herbs, strawberries, carrots for children to grow and eat
- Offering children choices e.g. food to add to pasta/rice like tomatoes, courgettes, cheese
- Creating a relaxed, sociable environment for snack and meal times
- Embedding and sharing your healthy eating and nutrition policy
- Creating time for your PANCo, or interested practitioner, to discuss menus with the cook.



## Herb haven

Growing herbs introduces the concept of growing food and offers a chance to witness the life cycle of a plant.

Show children some fresh herbs. Encourage them to use their senses and share what they can see, feel, smell and taste. What do they already know about herbs? Show children the seeds/cuttings and soil, let them explore and describe their experience.

After explaining the planting process, let each child plant their seeds/cutting. Fill the pot 2/3 full of compost. Take a small pinch of seeds and sprinkle on top of the soil, adding another thin layer of soil, so seeds are lightly covered. Or poke a hole in the centre of the pot and gently add the cutting, closing the compost around the stalk.

Lightly spray with water. Label the pots. Check daily to ensure the soil is moist (if the soil is dry, water it).

Have a tasting ceremony when the herbs are ready for sampling. Bon appétit!

### You will need

- Labels
- Metal spoons
- Spray bottles
- Potting compost
- Small pots/containers
- Herb seeds or cuttings, e.g. mint, chives, lemon balm.



## Case study: Growing up green

Imagine a nursery where the learning space isn't confined by four walls but stretches across 33 acres of vibrant farmland. Welcome to Natural Nurture, the farm-based nursery where children aged between two and five years engage with nature on a profound level, fostering a deep connection with themselves and the world around them.

Natural Nurture exemplifies the essence of 'hands-on' learning. Whether it's planting seeds, harvesting crops, caring for the animals, digging soil or collecting eggs, all the children actively participate in the agricultural rhythm of the farm. The children become naturally attuned to the weather and how it impacts on resources and learning experiences.

"Children know that they can't use their Poohsticks if there's been hot sun for days as the water level will be too low," explained Tracey Poulton, the nursery's founder who is passionate about children reconnecting with nature.

The practitioners cultivate an 'I can' culture, emphasising the importance of self-belief, confidence and independence. "All the children put their own Scandinavian style kit on when they arrive," Tracey says proudly. They also independently remove it if they get too hot and take it to its designated space where it won't get trampled into mud or mowed by a mower.

Children are empowered to use initiative, make decisions and learn from their experiences. They are taught how to build fires, use tools and, along with rules, are taught how to risk assess to keep themselves safe. More experienced children support the less experienced, engendering supportive relationships between each other.

At this farm-based nursery opportunities for learning are as boundless as the fields around it.



## A worldwide festival

Easter is a Christian festival that signifies new life, hope and renewal. This celebration, which took its name from the goddess of crops, Eostre, pays tribute to the renewal of the earth and the rebirth of life. It is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in the world. The date for Easter celebrations changes each year, as the festival is held on the first Sunday after the last full moon in March. This year it is on 31 March.

Beyond its religious roots, Easter is a cultural celebration, bringing families and communities together for Easter egg hunts, church services and festive food. Egg painting is a popular activity, but did you know that the idea of painting eggs comes from Ukraine? The decorated eggs are known as 'pysanky' which translates as 'to write'.

Whether observed for religious reasons or as a springtime festival, happy Easter!



## Home learning ideas

Encourage your families to engage with the topic of spring, new life and growth by suggesting a hunt for signs of spring. Combining exploration, creativity and discussion, this activity enables children to connect with the vibrant elements of spring in a fun and joyful way.

It can be in the garden, at the park or on a journey to the shops. Collect items such as leaves and flowers (from their own garden), spot things like butterflies and lambs, listen for sounds like birds and frogs. Suggest that they create a collage and discuss what they've seen or heard to reinforce learning and enhance language skills.



## Easter egg rolling

Egg rolling is a tradition that goes back over 150 years. Children would roll their decorated egg down a hill to see whose egg would break first. Avoid broken eggs by offering children plastic or hard-boiled eggs. Use wood, guttering or slopes outdoors to provide an incline for the egg roll. Encourage children to roll their eggs and see which egg rolls the furthest. Explore the angles of the incline to see the effect this has on the distance travelled.





## Make a big splash for nature with a mini-wetland with WWT, the charity for wetlands and wildlife

**T**he UK is in the midst of a biodiversity crisis and many people feel powerless to make change – but there is one way nurseries around the country could do their part, by building a mini-wetland and enthusing pre-school children about the superpowers of even the smallest wetlands.

Wetlands are wildlife hotspots, supporting more life than any other habitat on earth, and mini-wetlands like ponds are often more nature-rich metre for metre than larger water bodies such as rivers and lakes.

Ponds support two thirds of all wetland plants and animals found in Britain and research has shown that these small wetlands in built-up areas can support similar levels of insect life to their rural counterparts.

As well as adding a calming corner and a nature-filled area in your nursery's outdoor space, a mini-wetland can prompt amazing discoveries for even the youngest of children. Your pre-schoolers can discover the huge variety of life that dwells in, around and below water, get hands on with frogs and newts, and see how some insects completely change their form as they develop from larvae to fully grown adults.

Even truly tiny bodies of water, like a buried plant pot, a discarded hardhat or an old sink can give life to your outdoor space that is safe, freely observable and extremely cheap to build and maintain.

A YouGov poll commissioned by WWT found just one in ten parents said they currently had a pond, so the potential for your children to see something they wouldn't see at home, in even the smallest, simplest mini-wetland is significant.

### Here is some information on some of the most popular mini-wetlands for children:

Drainpipe rain gardens collect water when it rains and slow the flow of water into drains when they might otherwise be under strain.

Adding a few plants and decorating the sides with logs or stones can create a feature that is attractive to all kinds of wildlife while only taking up a small amount of outdoor space.

A barrel pond is a slightly larger container that features a selection of wetland plants adapted to live at different depths of water.

Barrel ponds can attract all manner of insects, larvae and birds looking for a drink or a place to cool down, provided you give them an easy way to get in and out of the water such as a raised log or stone.

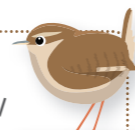
A traditional wildlife pond is the largest mini-wetland most nurseries would be able to build, but for creating these super-powered habitats you could be rewarded with a huge range of wildlife, from birds taking a bath or a drink to amphibians like frogs or newts spawning in spring.

These will support an abundance of insect life that might go on to serve as prey for local birds, bats or other insectivores.



### Find out more:

WWT's website ([www.wwt.org.uk/mini-wetlands](http://www.wwt.org.uk/mini-wetlands)) has a wealth of easy-to-follow resources to help you build a variety of mini-wetlands at your nursery and guidance on what your children might observe, with a printable set of spotter sheets and a guide to wetland plants.



### Meet the author

Elliot Cassley, Media and Communications Officer at WWT



# Sensory spectacle

## HOPE is all you need

Author: Cheryl Warren

Do you know a child who spins?

Do you know a child who seeks close firm contact with others?

Do you know a child who loves to jump and bounce?

Do you know a child who loves to make the loudest noises, the louder the better?

If so, you may have a sensory seeker in your setting! Sensory seeking play and behaviours are common preferences and traits of differing neurotypes, traits that may be an indicator of autism spectrum condition. According to NHS England, "Recent studies suggest prevalence in between 69% to 90% of autistic people have sensory sensitivities," either as seekers or avoiders. It's common for us to be able to identify the sensory avoiders, those children who put their hands on their ears when the room gets too noisy, the child who has a limited beige diet, or a child who is triggered by a busy, crowded space. But can we identify the sensory seekers, and once we do, how can we understand and better support them?

Sensory processing refers to how our nervous system receives and then processes information and stimuli around us. The brain and body take on all of this new information through messages sent from the sense organs and depending on how they interpret it, create a motor or behavioural response. And this is what we then identify in our children, through their play and behaviour.

We have our five main senses, sight, touch, taste, sound, smell and taste. But it's really important we are aware of the additional three senses that, once known we can better understand and provide for our children.



### Vestibular

Linked to special orientation and balance. A child who spins, may have an underdeveloped vestibular system and require the spinning to feed the body's need for input.

### Proprioception

The awareness of the body in space and the strength required to complete tasks. A child who seeks close firm physical connection from others or who prefers to be barefooted may have an underdeveloped proprioceptive sense and require weighted blankets, deep compressions or tight hugs to feel the body's need for input.

### Interoception

The awareness of the body's internal state – hunger, thirst, temperature etc. A child who doesn't want to wear their coat when outside in the winter, may have an underdeveloped interoceptive sense and therefore not be impacted by the cold weather.

Understanding the unique sensory profile of each of our children enables us to provide for their bodies' sensory seeking needs. Our children are not behaving this way as a sign of defiance, or to push boundaries, our children are responding to the messages being sent to their body and their brain. Observe these sensory seeking behaviours, understand the 'why' behind them, and you will provide a safe space for that child to be their true authentic self.

### NDNA member benefits with Hope

- ✓ 20% off one order
- ✓ 15% off every future order
- ✓ Up to 70% off over 200 essentials
- ✓ Free delivery

Please contact us to claim these benefits. T/Cs apply.

Find out about your NDNA member benefits with Hope at [hope-education.co.uk/NDNA](http://hope-education.co.uk/NDNA)



## Ask the experts...

Amanda Richardson MBE, Founder and Director of Policy of Action Cerebral Palsy, has over thirty years' experience of working with children with special educational needs in mainstream and special school settings.



Amanda Richardson

### Q What is cerebral palsy, and how does it affect individuals?

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is the most common physical disability in children, caused by abnormal development or damage to the brain and/or central nervous system before, during or soon after birth. CP primarily affects muscle tone, movement, balance, co-ordination and posture but can impact many other areas of a child's learning and development.

### Q Are there different types of CP, and how do they manifest?

There are four main types of CP:

- **Spasticity:** high tone (stiffness) with tense muscles, the most common type
- **Dyskinetic:** (dystonia) characterised by fluctuating tone creating constantly changing involuntary movements
- **Ataxic:** poor sense of balance, often with a wide gait and overly swaying motion
- Mixture of these presentations.

See NHS guidance here:  
[www.bit.ly/NHSCP](http://www.bit.ly/NHSCP)

### Q What are the key signs to look for in young children and when?

While every child develops differently, it is important to recognise the key warning signs:

- If a child is not meeting their normal motor developmental milestones for their age/stage, particularly if they are not sitting by eight months and not walking by 18 months (ages to be adjusted for babies born prematurely)
- If a child feels floppy, stiff or a combination of both
- If a child is not kicking their legs or moving their limbs up when lying down

- If a child is not able to bring their hands together
- If a child is not using one side of their body as much as the other
- If a child is distressed by or not reacting to movement, touch, sound or smell
- If a child is not making eye contact or following movements with their head and eyes
- If a child has difficulty feeding or swallowing.

Action Cerebral Palsy has launched a public awareness campaign about the early warning signs **If In Doubt, Check It Out**. There's more detailed information, posters and parent information leaflets.  
[www.actioncp.org/signs](http://www.actioncp.org/signs)

### Q How should early years professionals who suspect a child may have the condition broach the subject with parents/carers?

If you notice a child displaying any of these warning signs, please encourage their parents or carers to speak with their Health Visitor or GP. There may be other reasons why the child is showing these signs, but it's important that child is assessed by an expert healthcare professional. Parents do not need to wait for a formal diagnosis to start intervention and treatment.

### Q Are there specific resources or strategies for inclusive education to support early years professionals?

In addition to locally available expertise, NDNA has a number of good resources on Movement and Physical Development - [www.ndna.org.uk/my-resources](http://www.ndna.org.uk/my-resources). The key to inclusive strategies for children with motor delay is to ensure that the child's posture is correctly supported in any activity. If the child is able to stabilise and support their core and maintain a symmetrical position, they will feel more secure and able to use their arms and hands for play and exploration. This may require grab rails, foot boxes or "rises" and supportive floor seating.

### Q What support is available for the emotional and social well-being of individuals with cerebral palsy and their families?

However worried a parent might be, they are not alone and there is help available at every stage. Healthcare professionals can signpost parents to local services. There are many online forums and websites which can give parents information and support.

### Q How can a setting best support the child once they have a diagnosis in place?

Once a child has a diagnosis, and depending upon whether an education, health and care plan is in place, they will be offered NHS therapies such as physio, occupational, and speech and language. Speak with the parent/carer to find out what the child is accessing, what activities they are doing and their therapy goals. The child's therapy team may be able to train a member of staff in supporting the child and providing activities to reinforce their ongoing work. [www.bit.ly/EHCPGOV](http://www.bit.ly/EHCPGOV)

Get involved with Action Cerebral Palsy's early years education professional online survey here: [www.bit.ly/EYEPOS](http://www.bit.ly/EYEPOS)  
Find out more: [www.actioncp.org](http://www.actioncp.org)

Read Amanda's full, more detailed blog here:



# where SIMPLICITY & CHAOS unite



## Managing funding just got easier...

come say hi! →



# Bloom with our spring training

## Safeguarding Children in Wales

This course has been designed to help you develop a greater understanding of safeguarding legislation and procedures in Wales.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures build on the statutory guidance of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. This course has been developed in line with Group B standards of the national safeguarding training, learning and development standards. It helps you understand your expectations as a childcare practitioner should you have reasonable cause to suspect a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or harm. It will give you extra reassurance and confidence in your practice to recognise signs of harm and implement the procedures for reporting any concerns you might have.

The course has been designed to meet the Group B requirements outlined within Annex C of the National Minimum Standards for regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years (NMS).

### Key topics:

- Legislation, national policies and codes of conduct related to professional practice
- Working in ways that safeguard children from abuse, harm and neglect
- Factors, situations and actions that could lead or contribute to abuse, harm or neglect
- How to report, respond and record concerns or allegations related to safeguarding.

[ndna.org.uk/SafeguardingWales](https://ndna.org.uk/SafeguardingWales)



## Listen to me! Children's views on children's rights

NDNA Scotland developed a toolkit to support you to gather children's views on children's rights to further your practice and enable critical reflection. This toolkit has special focus on gathering the views of babies and infants and involving them in rights conversations.

Our toolkit has gathered significant interest since it was developed, and we are proud to say that the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland uses our techniques to gather the voices of babies and infants in their participation work.

Login and have a look at our dedicated web page for our UNCRC toolkit resources and information: [ndna.org.uk/UNCRCToolkit](https://ndna.org.uk/UNCRCToolkit)

## Factsheets updated

Our early years advisers have updated around 50 factsheets to reflect recent changes in the EYFS, the new Ofsted inspection handbook and safeguarding guidance. These factsheets include Ofsted Learning Walk, Photographs in Nursery and Safeguarding Children with SEND.

We have also updated our suite of factsheets for parents to support the home learning environment such as Parents - a Guide to Promoting Positive Behaviour and Parents - a Guide to Weaning and Toileting.

Find out more here: [ndna.org.uk/Factsheets](https://ndna.org.uk/Factsheets)

## Revamped Championing SEND

We have updated our Championing SEND programme in which a staff member receives training, support and mentoring to embed best practice in their setting.

Each year the numbers of children with additional needs coming into nursery increases. The programme, available to settings across England for now, focuses on the role of the SENCo, staff confidence, learning environment audits, webinars and a bank of resources.

Find out more:

[ndna.org.uk/SEND](https://ndna.org.uk/SEND)



## Get peace of mind

Do you have an inspection on the horizon? Want to make sure you are doing everything you can to create the right learning environment for your children?

Our Review of Quality Practice is a bespoke assessment to ensure you are offering the highest quality provision. An independent assessor with experience in inspecting in England, Scotland or Wales will spend a day in your setting assessing your quality against your current framework.

After the visit, they will send you a report summarising which areas are working well and where they have identified there's room for development. The review is particularly supportive for staff members who haven't been involved in inspections previously because it gets them used to speaking with an external expert about their setting.

This fresh pair of eyes looking at your policies, strengths and weaknesses gives you peace of mind. We also offer a bespoke service aimed solely at managers. Find out more: [ndna.org.uk/ROQP](https://ndna.org.uk/ROQP)



## Hello from Jane

Spring is a welcome relief from the darkness of winter. The wonder of new life is always a joy for young children to discover and explore. We are, however, aware that you face the same issues as last year and we continue to push for change in funding rates and workforce challenges.

To help us do that we have a new National Trustee for Scotland who has already met with Natalie Don MSP, Minister for Children and Young People and Keeping the Promise. We also bring news of our new Childcare Works programme in East Ayrshire and what our plans are to support you implement the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act when it comes into force later this year.

Jane

Jane Malcolm  
Policy Manager,  
NDNA Scotland



## Childcare Works Ayrshire

We were delighted to bring NDNA's successful supported employment programme "Childcare Works" to East Ayrshire in January this year. NDNA has run this programme in Wales for many years now with considerable success in supporting new people into the childcare sector.

Our first cohort in Scotland are currently midway through the programme with trainees having completed their classroom training and moving out into placements in nurseries. We hope to be able to bring you news of their success in our next Nursery News.



## New Trustee for Scotland

Susan Hill from Wellside Nursery in Falkirk has joined us as the new Scotland trustee. Susan was previously on the Board of Directors of the Scottish Independent Nursery Association until it merged with NDNA in 2005. Since then, she has been actively involved as an NDNA Network Chair, playing a vital role in being a voice for and bringing together the early years community at a local and national level. Her nursery were also the recipients of the NDNA Nursery of the Year (Scotland) in 2023.

CEO Purnima Tanuku said: "We're delighted to announce the appointment of Susan Hill as our Trustee for Scotland taking the reins from Ann McEwan. Susan has exceptional business leadership experience in the early years sector and has shown an ongoing commitment to supporting NDNA Scotland and our members."



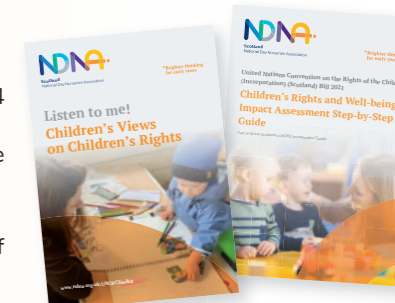
## UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

We were delighted in December 2023 when the Scottish Parliament unanimously passed the revision to the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill 2021, following the Supreme Court judgement. This was a truly significant day for the children of Scotland and will pave the way for stronger realisation of rights for our children and young people in Scotland. Finally, on 16 January 2024 the Bill was given Royal Assent and is now an Act of the Scottish Parliament. The Act will come into force from 16 July 2024.

We have always believed those who work in Early Learning and Childcare are way ahead of the game as we already take a rights-based approach to work with children in ELC settings. However, to ensure that you are all prepared to implement it into your work, we have been working away on training and resources that will support you. We are aiming to run this training prior to 16 July 2024 so that you feel confident when the Act comes into force. At present we have the UNCRC toolkit and our Listen to Me: Gathering Children's Views on Children's Rights which you can access for free as a member in the member area of our website.

This is a landmark piece of legislation for Scotland and its children and young people. You should all be proud of your part in realising the rights of our children and young people. We became part of Scotland's history on 16 January 2024.

Further information will be sent to you with regards the UNCRC training.





## Ministerial welcome for Millie's Mark

Toadhall Montessori Nursery in Cardiff welcomed Deputy Minister for Social Services Julie Morgan MS in January to congratulate them for being the first setting in Wales to be awarded Millie's Mark.

Millie's Mark is the gold standard in paediatric first aid for childcare providers and is now available across all three nations.

Julie Morgan said: "I hope more settings in Wales consider working towards Millie's Mark accreditation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those I have met today who were fundamental in bringing Millie's Mark to Wales."

Dan Thompson from Millie's Trust and NDNA's Purnima Tanuku, Sarah Coates and Gail Murphy also attended along with Millie Giraffe.

## Croeso Gweinidogol i Marc Millie

Ym mis Ionawr, croesawodd Meithrinfa Toadhall Montessori, Caerdydd, Julie Morgan, AS, Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol. Roedd yn ymweld i longyfarch y feithrinfa ar fod y lleoliad cyntaf yng Nghymru i gael eu gwobrwyo gyda Marc Millie.

Marc Millie yw'r safon aur ar gyfer cymorth cyntaf pediatrig ar gyfer darparwyr gofal plant ac mae nawr ar gael ar draws y dair cenedl.

Meddai Julie Morgan: "Gobeithio bydd mwy o leoliadau yng Nghymru yn ystyried gweithio tuag at ddyfarniad Marc Millie. Hoffwn gymryd y cyfle i ddiolch i'r rhai rwyf wedi eu cyfarfod heddiw am iddynt fod yn sylfaenol gyfrifol am ddod a Marc Millie i Gymru."

Hefyd, roedd Dan Thompson o Millie's Trust a Purnima Tanuku, Sarah Coates a Gail Murphy o'r NDNA yn bresennol yn ogystal â'r Millie Giraffe.

## New Trustee for Wales

NDNA has appointed Nikola Masters, owner of Osbourne Lodge Nursery in Pontypool, Torfaen as the new Trustee for NDNA Cymru. Nikola opened Osbourne Lodge Nursery in 1998 and has continued to lead the nursery with her team of local staff for the last 25 years.

Nikola has acted in the role of NDNA Southeast Wales Network Chair for many years and has a good understanding of the early years sector at a local and national level.

NDNA's CEO Purnima Tanuku OBE said "We're delighted to announce the appointment of Nikola Masters as our Trustee for Wales. Nikola has exceptional business expertise and a real understanding of the pressure and challenges facing the early years sector now."

## Ymddiriedolwraig newydd i Gymru

Mae NDNA wedi penodi Nikola Masters, perchennog Meithrinfa Osbourne Lodge ym Mhontypwl, Torfaen fel yr ymddiriedolwraig newydd i NDNA Cymru. Agorodd Nikola Feithrinfa Osbourne Lodge yn 1998 ac mae wedi parhau i arwain y feithrinfa gyda'i thîm o staff lleol am 25 mlynedd.

Mae Nikola wedi gweithredu fel Cadeiryddes Rhwydwaith NDNA yn Ne Ddwyrain Cymru am nifer fawr o flynyddoedd ac mae ganddi ddealltwriaeth dda o'r sector blynyddoedd cynnar ar lefel lleol a chenedlaethol.

Medda Prif Weithredwr yr NDNA, Purnima Tanuku OBE "Rydym wrth ein boddau i gyhoeddi penodiad Nikola Masters fel ein ymddiriedolwraig i Gymru. Mae gan Nikola arbenigedd busnes eithriadol a dealltwriaeth gwirioneddol o'r pwysau a'r hgeriau sy'n wynebu'r sector blynyddoedd cynnar ar hyn o bryd."



## Free Welsh Language support

The Welsh Language Development team provide group and one to one support via webinars and virtual meetings. We share Welsh stories, songs and activities for practitioners and children.

We use a variety of platforms on which to share these further afield, on the NDNA website and on our private Facebook page. Bilingual factsheets, policies and procedures and accident forms have been developed by the team and are downloadable from the website along with many other resources such as posters and videos.

We support settings who embark on the Welsh Promise, helping them work towards the Active Offer. Our team also supports Welsh Language learners as they embark and progress on the Camau courses.

We offer continuous support via telephone and email to embed the Welsh Language into settings.

For more information or to access the support we provide, e-mail [cymraegiaith@ndna.org.uk](mailto:cymraegiaith@ndna.org.uk)



## Cefnogaeth Iaith Gymraeg am ddim

Mae tîm Datblygu y Gymraeg yn darparu cefnogaeth i grwpiau ac unigolion drwy webinar a chyfarfodydd rhithiol. Rydym yn rhannu storïau a chaneuon Cymraeg a gweithgareddau ar gyfer ymarferwyr a phlant.

Rydym yn defnyddio amrywiaeth o lwyfannau i rannu'r rhain, ar wefan NDNA, ac hefyd ar ein tudalen Facebook preifat. Mae taflenni dwyieithog, polisiau a gweithdrefnau a ffurflenni damweiniau wedi cael eu datblygu gan y tîm ac maent ar gael i'w llawrlwytho oddi ar y wefan ynghyd â llawer iawn o adnoddau eraill megis posteri a fideos.

Rydym yn cefnogi lleoliadau sy'n cychwyn ar yr Addewid Cymraeg, yn eu cynorthwyo i weithio tuag at y Cynnig Cymraeg. Mae ein tîm hefyd yn cefnogi dysgwyr Cymraeg fel maent yn cychwyn a datblygu ar y cwrs Camau.

Rydym yn cynnig cefnogaeth parhaus ar y ffôn a drwy e bost, er mwyn sicrhau bod y Gymraeg yn cael ei sefydlu mewn lleoliadau.

Am fwy o wybodaeth neu er mwyn derbyn cefnogaeth, e bostiwch [cymraegiaith@ndna.org.uk](mailto:cymraegiaith@ndna.org.uk)

## Consultation on the Professional Registration of the Childcare and Playwork Workforce

The Deputy Minister for Social Services announced the launch of the Welsh Government consultation on professional registration of the childcare and playwork workforce.

The consultation is seeking views from those managing or working in childcare and playwork settings across Wales. The full consultation document outlines what a workforce register is, how it could impact the childcare and playwork sector and proposes who should have to join a register. If this proposal were to go ahead there would be further consultations to work out the details of how the register would operate in practice. [www.bit.ly/PRCPWWS](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPWWS)

All of those working in the sector are encouraged to provide their views by the closing date of 7 March 2024. FAQs are also available. [www.bit.ly/PRCPWFAQs](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPWFAQs)

NDNA Cymru will be completing its own response based on members views. [www.bit.ly/PRCPW](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPW)

## Ymgynghori ar Gofrestriad Proffesiynol Gweithlu Gofal Plant a Gwaith Chwarae

Mae Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol wedi cyhoeddi lawnsiad ymgynghoriad Llywodraeth Cymru ar gofrestru'n broffesiynol y gweithlu Gofal Plant a Gwaith Chwarae

Mae'r ymgynghoriad yn gofyn am farn y rhai sy'n rheoli neu'n gweithio mewn gofal plant a lleoliadau chwarae ar draws Cymru. Mae'r ddogfen ymgynghori llawn yn amlinellu beth yw cofrestr gweithlu, sut gallai effeithio y sector gofal plant a gwaith chwarae ac yn cynnig pwys ddylai orfod cofrestru. Os bydd y cynnig yma yn mynd yn ei flaen, byddai ymgynghori pellach er mwyn gweithio allan y manylion a sut byddai'r cofrestr yn gweithio yn ymarferol. [www.bit.ly/PRCPWWS](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPWWS)

Annogir pawb sy'n gweithio yn y sector i fynegi barn erbyn y dyddiad cau sef 7 Mawrth 2024. Mae atebion i unrhyw Gwestiynau hefyd ar gael. [www.bit.ly/PRCPWFAQs](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPWFAQs)

Bydd NDNA Cymru yn cwblhau ei ymateb ei hun ar sail barn aelodau. [www.bit.ly/PRCPW](http://www.bit.ly/PRCPW)



*Hello gan Sarah*



Diolch i pob un ohonoch wnaeth gwblhau ein arolwg cyflwr y sector.

Mae canlyniadau yr arolwg yn ein cefnogi yn ein gwaith lobïo ac yn ein cynorthwyo i fynegi pryderon ynglŷn â cynaliadwyedd y sector. Mae'r sector gofal plant yn oll bwysig i sicrhau bod ein plant ieuengaf yn cael y cychwyn gorau mewn bywyd ac yn galluogi teuluoedd i barhau i weithio – onibai amdanoch chi ni fyddai hyn yn bosibl.

Mae tîm NDNA Cymru yma i'ch cefnogi! Cadwch mewn cysylltiad â ni drwy ein sianelau cyfryngau cymdeithasol neu drwy [wales@ndna.org.uk](mailto:wales@ndna.org.uk).

*Sarah*

Sarah Coates, Rheolwraig Partneriaethau Polisi a Strategol, NDNA Cymru

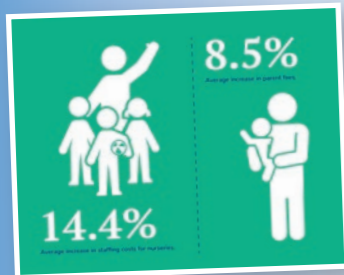
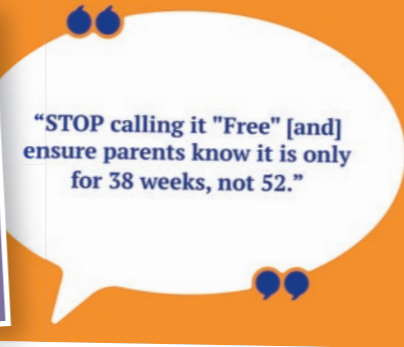
*Hello from Sarah*

Thank you to all those who completed our state of the sector survey. The results from these surveys support us in our lobbying work and help us to voice the current concerns regarding the sustainability of the sector. The childcare sector is so important to ensure that our youngest children have the best start in life and to enable families to continue to access work opportunities – without you this would not happen.

The NDNA Cymru team is here to support you! Please keep in touch via our social media channels or at [wales@ndna.org.uk](mailto:wales@ndna.org.uk)

*Sarah*

Sarah Coates, Policy and Strategic Partnerships Manager, NDNA Cymru



## State of the sector ahead of big expansion

NDNA took the temperature of the PVI nursery sector across England ahead of next month's two-year-old funded places expansion – and found it was not in the best of health.

At the time of the survey – when many councils had not yet set funding rates, more than half of you said you were unlikely to, or were unsure if you could, offer more places as a result of the expansion. The majority of you said you believed there was demand for places that you couldn't meet.

There was some evidence that hard fought for increases in the funding rates had improved the situation but that these rates have still not reached the right level. Last year from 98% of providers told us your three and four-year old rates did not cover costs, this has fallen to 83% this year. On the two-year old funding, 59% said these rates don't cover their costs.

As a result the overall business outlook has improved, with 73% expecting to make a loss or break even this year, compared with 83% last year, when inflation was still spiralling. We can also see how hard you are working to keep fee increases down for parents with the average staffing bill increase at over 14% while fees to parents are expected to go up by 8.5%.

NDNA's CEO Purnima Tanuku OBE said: "Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in our survey and give us this crucial data that we need to lobby Government in the run up to the expansion of funded places.

"Your comments made for difficult reading but nearly all of you said that raising the funding rate in line with inflation or wage bills would be the most important action the Government could do to support you.

"Although the picture has improved slightly for some nurseries compared to last year, it's clear that the sector isn't thriving and certainly isn't growing sufficiently to be able to deliver on the Chancellor's promises from last year's Budget.

"I have used this information in our discussions with the Minister, senior civil servants and shadow ministers so they are clear of the sector's current state. We will continue to fight for an end to business rates and for a fair landscape for nurseries to operate in."

See more here [www.ndna.org.uk/survey](http://www.ndna.org.uk/survey)



## Business rates: Please support our petition



With costs spiralling and the Government set to buy up to 80% of children's hours in nursery it is time to raise our collective voice against this unfair tax

on early education settings. The expansion to two-year-olds and then babies in September means that all rooms in your settings will soon have funded children in them. This makes business rates even more counter productive. As well as lobbying key policy makers, we have worked with members to restart this petition to secure 100% relief for nurseries.

If this is not included in the Chancellor's Spring Budget we need everyone to sign and share the petition to make sure the Government and MPs know what a difference this could make to children and the sector. [ndna.org.uk/BusinessRates](http://ndna.org.uk/BusinessRates)

## Look out for our latest council underspends report

Our investigations team has been busy collating all the responses from our Freedom of Information research asking all local education authorities in England whether they have an underspend or an overspend from their early years funding budget in 2022-23. If they have unspent funding, what have they done with it?

Our investigations so far have uncovered around £230 million not reaching providers from 2018 to 2022. This money is often rolled on into the following year's council budget or used to offset deficits in other parts of their schools budget (DSG).

We expect to publish our report later in the coming weeks.



## Could you be a Maths Champion?

It's not too late to sign up for one of our fully funded Maths Champions programmes. We have funding from the DfE and Mercers charity to pay for programmes in the London area and also across England.

We have new cohorts starting with us in March, April, May and June.

Come and find out about how everyday activities provide fruitful mathematical opportunities for children's development.

[ndna.org.uk/Maths](http://ndna.org.uk/Maths)



# THINKING ABOUT WHAT'S AHEAD FOR YOUR NURSERY?

Know your options.

Know your market.

Know your expert.



Christie & Co's experience and expertise can support you in making the right decisions for your business' future.

Whether buying or selling, speak to the experts:

[childcareandeducation@christie.com](mailto:childcareandeducation@christie.com) | 0203 846 0623



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T&Cs: The member benefits are only available to active NDNA members. To claim your exclusive discounts you will be required to provide proof of your NDNA membership. Whether you are a new customer or an existing customer you will need to contact us to add these benefits to your account. If you cancel your NDNA membership your Hope benefits will be withdrawn. The 20% promotion is valid off one order before 31st March 2024 and can be used at any given point within the year. The 15% discount will be applicable on every order, excluding items that are not eligible for further discount. The savings of up to 70% will be clearly displayed as a 'contract price' when you log in. The pricing of these product could change at any given time. You will receive free delivery on all orders with no minimum spend. Next day delivery is available on stocked items when requested prior to 2pm. The promoter reserves the right to vary or withdraw any offers at any time without notice or cause.