

# Early NEWS

Developing Lifelong Learners from Birth and Beyond

February 2024

Jen Teasdale: Service Manager

Welcome to our February Newsletter. We are excited to see you all at our Early Years Conference on the 9th February. Following on from our previous successful conference, we are pleased to be able to offer the sector a number of high quality Early Years speakers to highlight how much we value all the work and efforts that you put in to supporting our young children.

We are thrilled to welcome two new members to our Early Years SEND team, Joanne Jeffries and Lisa O'Hare, Early Years Intervention Officers who will be supporting our PVI's on setting wide SEND and inclusion support.

Please continue to support our plan for childcare by directing your current parents and carers, and also those potential families on waiting lists, to these live questionnaires. This will help us to ensure sufficient childcare places are available to support the upcoming new early entitlements.



HELP US PLAN FOR SEFTON'S CHILDCARE NEEDS

Developing Lifelong Learners from Birth and Beyond

Are you a parent/carer of a child aged one?

Help us plan for the future childcare needs of Sefton families by completing our survey



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## Exceptional Environments...

We would love to produce a book which celebrates our exceptional learning environments across settings in Sefton. This will be supportive to others who may be looking to develop or extend certain areas within provision. Please send us photographs of any areas which you would like to be included within the book, with an explanation of how the area works in practice to ensure high engagement levels and a love of learning. We would love to hear from settings, schools, childminders and out of school provision. This book will be published on our website and viewed by external services and parents and carers. Please email photographs and information to [louise.cheetham@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cheetham@sefton.gov.uk). Please note that not all photographs will be included to ensure a range of provision and areas of learning are shared, but we will do our best.

## Good to know...

### CASES OF MEASLES ARE ON THE RISE...

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth. Please visit [Measles - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) for more information.

### Childcare Information Session for Parents: 22nd February.6-7.30pm

Kim is hosting a session for parents and carers to share clear information about the upcoming new early entitlements. Please share this link with your families:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/f3e5cdde-7049-47af->

### Supporting retention....

In April we will launch a new project across Sefton titled 'Supporting Emotional Health & Wellbeing'. This innovative project has been devised by Liverpool School Improvement and has seen great impact. The work focuses on the emotional health and wellbeing of the child, the practitioner and the family, leading to a culture of positive and well informed practice. The course is accredited with a level 4 qualification attached.

More information will follow regarding this course, please register your interest by emailing [louise.cheetham@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cheetham@sefton.gov.uk)



## Ofsted inspections: what EY providers and practitioners need to know...

Updates have been published on 29.1.2024 to reflect the new versions of the EYFS framework for childminders and schools and group based provision. It is worth looking at these updates for an overview of the changes and additional information which has been added.

Visit [Early years inspection handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### Stronger Practice Hubs

A new website

[www.strongerpracticehubs.org.uk](http://www.strongerpracticehubs.org.uk) has launched to support regional networks of early years practitioners in England to share knowledge, effective practice and evidence-based approaches.

The Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs programme is part of the Department for Education (DfE)'s £180m Early Years Education Covid-19 Recovery Package and is delivered on behalf of the DfE by the National Children's Bureau (NCB).



Thank you for those who attended our bitesize Storytelling sessions in January. We hope to hold another 'bitesize week' in the Summer term, please let us know if you would like a particular focus or theme by emailing [beverley.colford@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:beverley.colford@sefton.gov.uk)



**Prof Ferre Laevers**

Thank you to those who were able to attend our conference with Professor Ferre Laevers and Julia Moons. We have received brilliant feedback from the event which shows the impact which this opportunity has had across the sector and beyond.

We are sure that you will want to use the Leuven scales in your individual settings to inform practice for individual children and cohorts. We plan to host some further training and reflection sessions to bring this work together so please watch this space.

We are asking all participants who attended the event to observe their children and to send over their scores. This information will be collated to build a picture of the starting points for our Sefton Children and will be used as our contribution to the **Children and Young Person's Plan**. We will not be identifying individual schools as part of this exercise; however, we may look at localities to make comparisons. Please be honest in your initial assessments. We know that a multitude of factors impact children's involvement and wellbeing, and this really is our starting point. We want to collect data that is as authentic as possible. Attached is an electronic copy, please complete and email over, or scan your paper copy to [kimberley.evans@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:kimberley.evans@sefton.gov.uk) with the title 'Leuven Scales'



The Ferre Laevers conference was been funded by the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership in recognition that children's earliest experiences influence their future outcomes. Schools/settings that are based in the 8 wards that are being targeted through the project: **(Church, Derby, Ford, Linacre, Litherland, Netherton and Orrell, St Oswald)** and may be asked to contribute to the Evaluation process which is being led by John Moore's University. We thank both MVRP and John Moore's university for this opportunity.

### **Spring Term CPD Opportunities**

Parent Champion Forum	5th February 2024
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: What we need to know in the Early Years	6th February 2024
Sefton Early Years Conference & Strategy Launch	9th February 2024
Seftons DSL and Deputy DSL lead: Day One (PVI only)	20th February 2024 and Day Two 27th February 2024
Monkey Bob: Do you feel what I feel?	21st February 2024
Nursery Provision in Schools Cluster Meeting	4th March 2024
Baby Room Programme (3 week course)	22nd February 2024
Language Champion (2 day course)	26th February 2024
Early Years in Schools Network Meeting	28th February 2024
Subject Lead Training for EYFS:	Various dates 5-8th March 2024
Designated Safeguarding Forum	15th March 2024
Baby Room Forum	18th March 2024
Language Champion Forum	25th March 2024
SEND in the Early Years, Sharing & Developing Best Practice	26th March 2024

**Please book via the Early Years Portal.**

This is a new section of the newsletter which will help us to ponder new approaches and ideas. We encourage you to debate the 'I wonder' prompt as a team if possible. Discuss your personal experiences in relation to the suggestion, and consider carefully how the approach might work in your setting. Remember that new approaches take time to implement for both children and practitioners, and so you might not start to see the impact for a good couple of weeks or even longer. Observe carefully and share reflections as a team— this could be scribbled on a whiteboard or shared in a WhatsApp group. And please, share your experiences with us!



I wonder.... What happens when we strip back the environment?

### Let's discuss...

**The starting point (our intent)...** We know how easy it is for clutter to build up as we work so hard to meet the varied interests and needs of the children. During the pandemic, the stuffed shelves and piles of toys were banished, and practitioners found that children were more engaged and stimulated with less resources available. A new year brings us a fresh start to strip back with careful consideration to what is being offered and why. Every single resource should earn its place within provision. Consider...does it add challenge? Does it appeal to children's interests? Does it support progression in learning?

**The opportunity (our implementation)...** When clutter is removed we should see children who are more engaged. This will also support the interaction of practitioners who will be less overwhelmed. Early Years expert Penny Tassoni, says de-cluttering also has an impact on staff time because 'they constantly find themselves tidying up as toys get strewn around, and children do not learn the self-regulation of tidying away'. Any resources that are specifically for adults should also be tidy, and ideally not within the children's learning space. Embrace the 'less is more' approach for a fresh start to the new year!

**The success (our impact)...** Learning spaces will feel brighter and bigger with clean lines and a calm feel. Children will feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they know where everything goes, and can access what they need easily leading to greater engagement and learning potential.

**Please report back on how you found this. What did you observe? Was there an impact? Did anything interesting happen?**