

RCT CHILDCARE TEAM NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 08 • APRIL 2024

HELLO AND WELCOME

TO THE SPRING EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER.

Get in touch if you have any queries or suggestions for future additions.



Childcare team update

Some of you may know that our Childcare Development Officer, Sian Wood, has been on maternity leave having lots of cuddles with her lovely new baby boy. Rachael and Cerys are doing a grand job of keeping things running until she returns in early summer.

The CSA action plan has now been updated for 2024. This year we'll continue to focus on recruiting childminders and engaging with unregistered settings and Nannies. But we'll also link in with WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) actions, so we'll be working to support Welsh medium services to expand and develop in new areas. The other key priority for us this year is to forge closer links with schools and colleges to promote childcare as a career. The updated plan is available to view at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/csa.

Our team continue to visit parent groups and the timetable for Summer term is now finalised. We can give parents information about the Childcare Offer, how to become a childminder, or signpost them to other, family related, services. If you run a P&T/Ti a Fi group, get in touch with us and we will add you to our schedule. The timetable of our visits is shared via our social media channels every month.

1:1 visits

The childcare team will be contacting you all over the next few months to arrange visits to your settings. These will be an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves to you, to see what we can do to support you and for you to ask us questions. Keep an eye out for an email or phone call from us to arrange a suitable date and time.

National Minimum Standards

As you know, there are some changes to the NMS. Settings must ensure these changes are implemented by **November 2024** to remain compliant. These include:

- **First Aid**

The new ratio is 1 staff for every 10 children to hold a 12 Hour Paediatric First Aid Certificate. If any staff are left in sole charge of children (i.e. Childminding Assistants) they also require a 12 Hour certificate.

- **Childminding Assistants**

Any Assistant working within a childminding setting MUST complete their Introduction to Homebased Childcare (IHC). If an Assistant is working within your setting voluntarily they still need to complete the IHC unit to remain compliant with the NMS. We have a funding package available for Childminding Assistants in RCT, please contact us for more information. Remember this needs to be completed by November 2024 so get in touch with us now so your Assistants have time to complete!

- **Safeguarding**

There are new requirements for Safeguarding training, depending on your role within the childcare setting:

Group A – **ALL** staff working within a childcare setting, but not directly with the children (Admin, Cleaners, Caretakers, Committee Members, etc) must complete a **Group A training course**.

Group B: **ANY** staff working directly with the children must complete a **Group B training course**.

Group C: **ANY** staff with managerial responsibilities (Childminders, Nursery Managers, PIC & RI's, etc) must complete a **Group C training course**.

If staff need to complete a Group C session but have no experience of Safeguarding, they are recommended to first attend a Group B session before progressing to a Group C course.

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh.





Cynnig Gofal Plant Cymru Childcare Offer for Wales

The national system continues to be refined and developed by Welsh Government. There are a few common issues that seem to arise. The team are offering refresher training for providers who deliver the Childcare Offer. These sessions will be informal and give you the chance to ask questions. The timetable is at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/childcareoffer (click on Information for Providers). No need to book – just turn up or log in.

As well as the refresher training, here are a couple of reminders:

- **Funding is paid in arrears. However, you can claim weekly, and we'd encourage you to do this.**
- **Once we've approved parent applications, they must set up an agreement on the system with you for the agreed term time and holiday hours. They must do this by the Sunday each week to be able to claim funding from the week after.**
- **You must approve agreements by the Thursday each week for that agreement to show on your claim on the Friday.**
- **Children can still access the Offer in holiday periods, even if they are full time in school (until the September following their 4th birthday).**

Drop in sessions

We have discontinued our library drop in sessions and plan to replace them with attendance at ad hoc library and leisure centre events, concentrating more on engagement with parents. More information will be available soon.

Remember, if you are hosting any events, we're happy to attend to give information and freebies to parents. Also, if you want any promotional material to display in your setting, let us know and we can send that to you.



Expansion of Flying Start childcare

If you are interested in registering to deliver Flying Start services, you can find out more information by contacting Helen Fisher-Holland on **07824 496497**. You can apply to join by registering on eTenderWales, expressing an interest in **ITT-92447**, answering and submitting the questions.

Training

Our training programme for Summer term is now available. Thanks to additional funding from Welsh Government, we are able to offer extra Safeguarding and First Aid courses, to help you prepare for the NMS changes.

Remember to let us know as soon as possible if you're booked onto a course and are no longer able to attend, as we can then offer that place to someone

else. Non-attendance is still a big problem, wasting money and meaning we can't demonstrate that this funded training is needed by the sector. Last term we saw a **44%** non-attendance rate across all training courses. Therefore, we have been forced to introduce stricter restrictions for non-attendance. If learners do not attend, without exceptional circumstances, **all staff** from the setting they work within will be unable to access any training offered by the childcare team for a period of 2 months.

Provider satisfaction survey

Thank you to everyone who completed our satisfaction survey in Autumn 2023. We're always keen to hear your views at any time, so ring or email us if you have feedback on how we can improve our service. Overall, feedback on the team was positive with 100% rating the service you receive from us as Excellent or Good. Specific comments included:

Survey comments	Response
Continued support for PPE supplies.	Due to restrictions on the use of our funding, this is not something that we are now able to support.
More small capital funding.	Welsh Government has confirmed that we will have funding in 24/25 to run the Small Capital Grant scheme again This will launch in the Autumn, so keep a look out for further information.
Training courses no longer sent to us.	All our training is sent to providers via the FIS distribution list and our closed Facebook page. Make sure your DEWIS account is kept up to date and join our Facebook group – search from RCT Childcare Team.
More reminders prior to training courses.	We will explore if there is a way we can improve communication and reminders before the courses take place.
More play training.	We have previously funded Transition to Playwork. Take up has not been brilliant. We will explore if we can offer some shorter, bite size play training.
Equality and diversity training	The childcare team will look into this and let you know if we can offer any of these courses or signpost you to other providers.
More hands on play based training – story bags, block play, natural resource play, gross and fine motor ideas.	
Wellbeing training – Happy headwork.	
Opportunity to discuss childcare/early years mental health and wellbeing needs.	
New curriculum, assessment framework training.	The Access & Inclusion team in RCTCBC offer a wide range of ALN training. Information is sent out by email via FIS and on our Facebook page. See the separate handout for the summer timetable.
ALN training	
Help and support with ALN queries.	Access & Inclusion have a range of support for settings. Suzanne Davidson , ALN Early Years Lead Officer, and Luci Hooper , Early Years ALN Advisory Teacher, can offer support and guidance. Contact them at Suzanne.davidson@rctcbc.gov.uk or luci.hooper@rctcbc.gov.uk . Settings can also email the Educational Psychology Helpline if they would like specific advice. Email EPS@rctcbc.gov.uk with a brief outline of the query/concern and your phone number and they will make an appointment to discuss with you over the phone.

Access & Inclusion are running the following ALN training events in the summer term.
Email AandIService@rctcbc.gov.uk to book your place.

ALN

Module 3: Working Together in the Early Years

This workshop is designed to upskill practitioners in understanding the principles of working together, which underpins the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, and the subsequent mandatory Code. This course is suitable for any practitioner/professional working with children in the Early Years from Education, Childcare, Health, Social Care and the Third sector. The participant will acquire knowledge to understand the importance of working together as equal partners to achieve the best outcomes for the child and family, understand how to have sensitive face to face conversations, understand when and why to seek advice others and to understand how to avoid and resolve disagreements.

Wednesday 1 May	1.30 – 3.30	Teams
	6.00 – 8.00	Teams

Module 4: The ALN Process in the Early Years

This workshop is designed to upskill practitioners in understanding of the new ALN process as documented in the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, and subsequent mandatory Code.

The participant will acquire knowledge and understanding of the aims of the ALNET Act and Code and the implications for Early Years, how the ALN process will change for children not yet in statutory education, the graduated response of Inclusive Practice in the Early Years, identifying whether a child may have ALN and the evidence to support this and roles and responsibilities in the new process.

Wednesday 10 July	1.30 – 3.30	Teams
	6.00 – 8.00	Teams

Early Years ALNCo Forum

Thursday 18 April	1.30 – 2.30	Teams
Thursday 13 June	1.30 – 2.30	Teams

Referral Process Training

This session will cover the referral form and process for Early Years Forum referral for Early Years children (not attending school). The session will go through the process of completing the referral form, the criteria that needs to be met, the evidence required with a referral and the process of the Early Years Forum. The session is open to anyone working with children in a childcare setting or with a childminder. It would be best suited for ALNCOs to attend but any staff member is also welcome.

Wednesday 15 May	9.30 – 10.30	Teams
	6.00 – 7.00	Teams

Play Plan Clinics

Tuesday 16 April	12.30-2.00	Email Luci Hooper to book a place – luci.hooper@rctcbc.gov.uk
Tuesday 30 April	10.00-11.30	
Tuesday 14 May	12.30-2.00	
Tuesday 28 May	10.00-11.30	
Tuesday 11 June	12.30-2.00	
Tuesday 25 June	10.00-11.30	
Tuesday 9 July	12.30-2.00	

Early Years ALN Conference

This session will be an opportunity for settings and Early Years school staff to come together and access information, support and guidance for Early Years children with emerging needs and to foster links between pre-school settings and their respective Nursery Classes in schools.

19 June	1.00 – 3.30	TBC
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Childcare Career Choices workshop

Recently, we have run 2 Childcare Choices workshops for adults and young people interested in a career in the childcare sector. They have been very successful and many of the attendees are eager to start their journey's into the sector.

We have created short videos to use at these events, showcasing the variety of childcare settings available to work in. A huge thank you to the settings that agreed to take part in these videos. If anyone would like to view them, go to www.rctcbc.gov.uk/childcareteam (click on Information for Parents & Carers).

We will be running our next workshop in May/June time so if you would like to be involved, either by presenting to the group, offering a work placement or interested in apprenticeship opportunities, please get in touch.



Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The WESP is a key ten year plan to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education for children in RCT. It has 7 main outcomes, but Outcome 1 specifically relates to increasing the number of nursery children receiving their education through the medium of Welsh. Pre-school childcare services are key to achieving this outcome.

Promotion to families and attracting Welsh speakers into the childcare sector are key priorities for the WESP Outcome 1 and CSA action plans for 24/25. If you can help us by offering work placement opportunities or would like to expand your Welsh language services, please get in touch. We particularly want to promote Welsh speaking Childminders, so let us know if you offer this service.

More information on the WESP can be found at www.rctcbc.gov.uk/WESP.



Camau scheme

The Camau scheme has been devised specifically for Childcare practitioners who would like to develop their Welsh language skills.

There are 3 courses available and you will be able to select the most suitable course, based on your current skills and what you want to develop. Each course will take approximately 10 weeks to complete and can be completed at a time that suits you.

For more information please go to:
<https://learnwelsh.cymru/work-welsh/camau>.



Family Information Service



Our emails are sent via the FIS distribution list so keep your account on DEWIS up to date and active, or you'll miss out on important information from us. You will also be missing out on **FREE** advertising to parents who use the FIS database to search for childcare in their area.

To register or sign in to your account, use this link:

<https://www.dewis.wales/secure/login.aspx>

If you have any questions or need assistance with your DEWIS account, please email: **fis@rctcbc.gov.uk**

Facebook

Join our Facebook page to receive the latest news from the team and other partners.

To join, go to...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/childcareteamRCT> or search for **RCT Childcare Team** in the Facebook search facility.



If you no longer wish to receive these newsletters, please let us know and we will take you off our distribution list.

Contact Us ...

Childcare Development team:



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RCT Childcare Team

Childcare Offer team:



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Mae croeso i chi gyfathrebu â ni yn y Gymraeg
You are welcome to communicate with us in Welsh.