



Early Years Quality Improvement Team's Weekly Bulletin 20th November 2025

Welcome to this week's bulletin, recent bulletins can be found [here](#)
Keep in touch



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New Managers / Deputy Manager Academy

Are you new to the role of the manager or deputy manager at a PVI nursery?

Perhaps you have only been a manager for the last 6 months or so or have recently become a deputy manager. Let us know and we can offer you some additional support whilst you fully find your feet (no charge).

One of the Early Years Project Officer's will meet with you virtually to discuss your current challenges and offer advice and guidance and you will also be invited to termly, virtual group meetings to network with other new managers for peer support.

What next: just complete this [Microsoft Teams form](#)

New Practitioners Academy

Are you training or been in early years for less than a year?

Join our new practitioners' academy by completing this [FORM](#) and we will be in touch before each session to share the links with you.

These are free to attend and will help you in your new or future role (there is no need to book, just complete the form).

20th January	4 to 5pm
10th March	9.45 to 10.45am
19th May	4 to 5pm
7th July	9.45 to 10.45am

We will chat to you about all sorts of elements of practice as well as giving you the opportunity to ask questions.

We are really looking forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the best profession in the world!

Something to do this week!

Explore these useful resources

When time is short it is essential to have trusted, free resources to support the running of the setting and the quality of practice. Take a look and bookmark these websites.

[Lancashire County Council Supporting Children and Families](#) – Information for professionals who work with children and families in Lancashire.

[Foundation Years](#) - funded by the DfE, it contains the latest news, policy and resources for early years professionals. You can register to receive updates and newsletters

[Liverpool City Region and Beyond Early Years Stronger Practice Hub](#) - find out about the resources and support available and register for their regular newsletter.

[Help for Early Years Providers](#) - Resources, activities and support articles for childminders and practitioners working with children aged 0-5 years.

[Childcare Works Toolkits](#)

There is one for Early Years Providers and another for Wraparound Providers

Categories:

- Business Planning
- Running of Your Childcare Provision
- Business Growth
- Leadership and Management
- Partnership Working
- SEND and Inclusive Practice

Best Start in Life - new website



With the introduction of the government's new 'Giving every child the best start in life' initiative, a new website - [Best Start in Life](#) - has been created. This replaces several previous websites, including Better Health Start for Life, to streamline early years support under one unified brand and parent hub. The rebrand also brings together initiatives such as Childcare Choices, Start for Life, and Little Moments Together.

In your setting, you may want to use the Best Start in Life website as a practical tool to strengthen family partnerships and signpost support. You can direct parents to sections on child development, feeding, sleep, and speech and language. There's also a Childcare Support Checker to help families understand funding options (15/30 hours, Tax-Free Childcare) and links to financial help and benefits guidance. Families can use the website to find Family Hubs for parenting classes, health advice, and community activities. They can also access resources to support their child's transition into reception.

You may want to add the website www.beststartinlife.gov.uk link to:

- Newsletters

- Social media posts
- Welcome packs for new parents

You could also use QR codes on noticeboards or in reception areas for easy access when parents are dropping off or collecting their children.

Share with parents - fake Labubu dolls



The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) is issuing an urgent warning about the growing number of counterfeit “Labubu” dolls being sold in the UK. The viral plush toys made popular by Chinese toymaker Pop Mart have become a global collector’s craze. This popularity has fuelled a surge in fakes; many being sold by third-party sellers via online marketplaces and local shops that are breaking the law.

Trading Standards teams have seized thousands of unsafe counterfeit Labubu dolls in recent weeks. Counterfeit Labubu dolls are poorly made and unsafe. Many contain small, detachable parts such as eyes, hands, and feet, which present a serious choking hazard to young children. Loose stitching and exposed stuffing further increase the risk of suffocation.

To find out more, including how to spot a fake doll, please visit tradingstandards.uk/news-policy-campaigns/news-room/2025/ctsi-issues-warning-about-dangerous-fake-labubu-dolls-flooding-uk-market/

Inclusion Newsletter



[Inclusion Newsletter \(schools and settings\) 18 Nov 2025](#)

In this edition of the Inclusion Newsletter:

- Update on School Commissioned Psychological Advice Reimbursement
- Autism Awareness Workshop
- EBSA Coaching for Schools
- Break Time Registration 2025
- A number of other updates
- CPD, webinars

For accessibility options

- Click on the link to open the sway
 - Click on the three dots (top-right)
- Select 'Accessibility view'

Fully funded PhD Studentship on play: Applications now open



COLLABORATORY
Research Hub

The Collaboratory Research Hub is offering a fully-funded PhD studentship titled:

Reimagining Practices of Play: Collaborating with Nottingham communities to support children's social and educational development through curiosity-driven play

The link is here: <https://collaboratoryresearchhub.ac.uk/reimagining-practices-of-play/>

This project explores how play can be reimagined in local communities to nurture curiosity, belonging, and development in childhood, themes that are central to so much of our collective work in early childhood education and community practice.

The studentship includes:

- Full tuition fees
- A generous monthly stipend
- Support through NTU's collaborative doctoral training model, connecting researchers directly with communities and practice

I'd be really grateful if you could share this far and wide, with colleagues, professional networks, and anyone who might be interested in researching play at doctoral level. It's a brilliant opportunity for practitioners and researchers alike to make a real difference.

Action: Autumn Personal Educational Plans (PEPs) for Children Looked After (CLA) in your setting

The PEP is a statutory document that MUST be completed EVERY term to ensure the regular monitoring and review of ALL Lancashire CLA. It is the joint responsibility of the social worker and the setting to produce a thorough, well thought out education plan for the term that meets the individual child's needs and moves them towards school readiness.

All autumn PEP meetings for CLA age to 2 years - 4 years should have taken place by now.

- Please check you Portal using this link <https://professionalportal.lancashire.gov.uk> and the email address used to register the account by the Virtual School and complete any PEPs awaiting your attention. Save the document as you go and save a PDF copy before submitting the document.
- If the PEP meeting has not been arranged, contact the child's social worker and request the meeting is arranged asap.
- If the meeting has taken place but the form has not been delegated to you, please contact the social worker to request delegation.
- All PEP documentation must be completed and submitted within 2 weeks of the PEP meeting taking place.
- Please state any concerns you have around the child's development and what is being done to support the child with in the PEP.
- Please ensure all education targets are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound) and that EYPP spending links to the child's targets (EYPP is issued for vulnerable children by the authority based on your termly head count).
- Support and new quality assurance standards can be found at [Personal education plans \(PEPs\) guidance - Lancashire County Council](#).

If you are experiencing technical issues or need to make amendments to your portal account, please contact pepqueries@lancashire.gov.uk as soon as possible for support.

The EYs consultant at the Virtual School is required to attend 1 PEP meeting for all CLA due to start reception in Sept 26. Please email sharie.mayren@lancashire.gov.uk with the date of the next PEP for these children in your setting, or if you require any support.

Starting school is a huge moment for children, especially those who are looked-after (CLA), previously looked-after (PLA) and those who may have a social worker. These children have often experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or trauma and may need more support with this important transition.

Why do we need to consider this cohort of children?

- These children are likely to be behind their peers during their early years and this gap may widen over time.
- ACEs can affect attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing
- In 2018, 50% of children who had a social worker (CWSW) in the last six years were able to achieve GLD compared to 72% who never had a Social Worker
- CWSW more than 3x more likely to be persistently absent from school, and 2-4 times more likely to be permanently excluded

For ideas to support vulnerable children with the transition of starting school, please see [Pre-school to Reception - Lancashire County Council](#) and don't forget to enter any actions in the Transitions action plan on the PEP.

View the Virtual School's free training offer [Training and events by the Virtual School - Lancashire County Council](#)

Signpost parents/carers of CLA, children with a social worker, children previously looked after, adopted or kinship care [Parents and carers of children looked after \(CLA\) previously looked after children \(PLAC\) and children with a social worker \(CWSW\) - Lancashire County Council](#) for information, educational resources and free training.

Thank you for your continued support of Lancashire's vulnerable children.

Educational Psychology Service – updated posters

Please see attached the updated versions of the posters, unfortunately there were problems with the QR code for the original ones.

Please share the Empowering Parents poster with your families. These sessions take place online in the evenings for all parents/carers of an early years child and are focused on general child development.

Our Wednesday Workshops also take place online and are open to Early Years Practitioners from settings (including childminders), parents/carers and any other colleagues working in early years.

Stronger Practice Hub – Feedback



To continue supporting the early years sector, the Stronger Practice Hub is gathering feedback on any gaps in training you may be experiencing, as well as the impact that using the Stronger Practice Hub has had on your setting so far.

They would like to understand how the hub has influenced your practice, and in particular, how it has supported young children's learning and development. This feedback form will only take a few minutes but will allow them to plan what they may need more of and what already works well. [Tell us how we are doing – Fill out form](#)

Please find attached details of the first of a new series of webinars on **An Introduction to Communication and Language** for those that are **new to early years** or who would benefit from a refresher. Wednesday 26th November, 3.45 to 4.45pm.

Early Years Stronger Practice Hub Newsletter November 2025



Attached to this email is a copy of the Early Years Stronger Practice Hub newsletter for November 2025. In this edition you will find recorded and live face to face training and SEND networks for early years workforce as well as resources for childminders and information on physical and maths

champions.

You can also access the newsletter direct from the Hub here: [LCR Newsletter November 2025](#)

Selected updates from DfE 11th-17th November 2025

- [DfE Update](#) Our weekly newsletter containing actions and information for DfE-funded organisations. Updated: 12 November 2025
- [School-based Nursery Capital Grant 2025 to 2026](#) Information for eligible schools about the School-based Nursery (SBN) Capital Grant for 2025 to 2026. Updated: 14 November 2025
- [Breakfast clubs early adopters grant: 2025 to 2026 academic year](#) Guidance for schools and local authorities on funding for free breakfast clubs for primary schools from September 2025 to March 2026. Updated: 17 November 2025