

**Children's
Centre
Phase II**

Find Out More
On Page 6

Creativity

Fantastic
Cut-Out And
Keep Section

**Free ECM
information
leaflet**

Have You
Got Yours?

Autumn 2005

partnership news





Welcome

joiners, leavers

Welcome to the autumn edition of Partnership News. We are nearing the end of our implementation cycle 2004-2006 with still lots of work to be done! Whilst we continue to make good progress with development of childcare places, we need to be very conscious of meeting the demands of parents in local areas and supplying the type of provision that is required. Key to this is awareness raising about the benefits of using childcare for the entire age range 0 -14.

We are also meeting with a number of established childcare groups who are finding it difficult to become sustainable. Our support, particularly around business, marketing and training issues is becoming more and more crucial, with resources being allocated to ensure groups receive the help and guidance they need. Financial help is available in the form of Sure Start funding to develop good quality sustainable schemes.

With the summer now over we hear that the Summer Holiday Playschemes brochure that was distributed at the end of the summer term has been well received. We hope to be able to offer a similar service next year and that groups noticed an improvement in occupancy and awareness.

We are busy with the development of plans for Phase II of Children's Centres and the guidance that was published at the end of July imposes very tight timescales upon us. We are expected to have identified all of our Phase II Children's Centres by November 2005. We have included more detailed information in this edition on Page 9. Please make sure you find out about what's happening. However, with three centres already designated we are still continuing to work hard to ensure the designation of the remaining seven that are planned as part of Phase I.

The consultation of the future structure of Children's Services has now been completed, and we are delighted that Fred Corbett has taken up the post of Deputy Director and has responsibility for Early Years and Childcare and Extended Schools as part of his remit.

So as ever, congratulations to all on the hard work already completed and hope that the summer has bought renewed energy with which to tackle the work ahead.

Best wishes

Marcelle Curtis

Marcelle Curtis
Head of Early Years and Childcare Strategy

Hello to

Lorraine Houseago

Training Administrator

Sonia Haylett

Regional Coordinator - ESF Project team

Joanne Cooper

Regional Administrator - ESF Project team

Karen Rushmer

Local Administrator - ESF Project team

Becky Lawn

Recruitment and Marketing Administrator

Emma Carway

Kitemark Mentor

Jayne Boxall

Development Worker (West)

Niall Scott

Data Systems Administrator

Congratulations to

Hayley Colman

New Recruitment & Marketing Admin/Outreach Worker

Goodbye to

Olwyn Venn

Senior Childcare Information Officer

Lesley Kurudere

Training Administrator

Welcome back to

Becky Southerland

Administrator - West Team

contents

Contents Page	3
News Section	4 - 5
Children's Centre Update Phase II	6
News from the Teams	7
Norfolk Quality Kitemark	8 - 9
Training Update	10 - 11
Summer Camp Competition	12 - 13
Recruitment	14
Toy Library	15
Partner Focus	16 - 17
Get Out More	18 - 19
Creativity - It's not all about Art	20 - 21
What's Happening in our Foundation Stage Settings?	22
Cut-Out and Keep Section	23 - 25



Fen Border Sure Start - 'Sustaining Achievements For The Future'

Fen Border Sure Start first received funding in April 2002 to develop activities to improve and enhance opportunities for families and young children living around the Norfolk/Cambridge border. This was to be a stepping stone toward a Neighbourhood Nursery in Wisbech (Cambridgeshire) and Emneth Nursery School (Norfolk) initially, but progress now towards Children's Centres. Each year it has held a reference group presentation to review the progress of the Sure Start and contribute to future plans. Marcelle Curtis, Head of Early Years and Childcare Strategy in Norfolk and Vicki Lant, Head of Services, Cambridge Care and Education Partnership jointly hosted the event. They were pleased to be joined by many of our partners, eleven of whom gave individual presentations of their work within Sure Start, as well as hearing of the development of the Oasis Centre, Wisbech into the newly built Village Children's Centre and plans for Emneth Nursery School to develop into a Children's Centre for this part of Norfolk. Sadly we said goodbye to Valerie Heath, programme leader, who has been seconded to the Extended Schools Team.

Up-Date On Childcare Development

We continue to make progress, but progress is slow. The long-term aim is to ensure that we have a robust, healthy, good quality, sustainable childcare stock of places in Norfolk. Currently we

have an average of 9.20 childcare places per 100 children. This compared with an average across the East region of 10.98 and a national average of 9.35 places. Norfolk is currently ranked as 118 across the country (out of 150). Over the coming months development staff across the county will be concentrating on the continuing status of our childcare stock to determine what is required to ensure its long-term health and sustainability. At the same time we will focus on compiling plans for further developments, and the support groups require by to make this happen.

Support may be in the form of additional marketing advice, finance and business help or support with grants etc. Hand in hand with this needs to be a strategic plan to find ways of actively engaging with parents helping us to determine a better understanding of the supply and demand of places. Part of this will be the increase in the activity of promoting the services and opportunities available to families.

Extended Schools

We are delighted to report the joining of the Extended Schools team with the Early Years team, who will now come under one head of Strategy, Marcelle Curtis. We now have in place the five area managers, who are located across the county and who already link very closely with the Early Years and Childcare staff. Following the very successful conference at the end of last year, and the follow-up twilight sessions, ran by the local area teams, we are noticing that more and more schools are showing an interest in developing out-of-school childcare. We now have copies of the publication of a prospectus 'Extended Schools: At the Heart of the Community' which will help us further develop our links.

Ten Year Strategy - For Childcare

Guidance for Local Authorities was published by the DfES in April 2005.

The ten year strategy 'Choice for Parents, the Best Start for Children', sets out the Government's ten year strategy to create a sustainable framework for high quality integrated Early Years and Childcare services for childcare, health and advice and support all children and families. This new guidance builds on Sure Start guidance for 2004-06 and will help local authorities plan for the delivery of the new agenda in 2005-06 and beyond. New, more detailed guidance will be issued in autumn 2005.

National Sure Start Month

National Sure Start Month was very successful and we delivered an exciting program of activities and events, across the region. Check out some of our competition winners on the centre spread of this edition.

Ofsted New Inspection Arrangements

From April 2005 Ofsted began inspections of group day-care settings with no notice period and inspection of childminders with a few days notice. Your spring addition of Partnership news gave more details of the changes including the need to fill in a self-evaluation form. Ofsted will send all settings the form, but please note receipt of a form does not mean your inspection is imminent, everyone should receive one soon!

Forums - Consultation Update

Over recent months a number of people have been looking at the future of the Forums, and consulting on the best way forward. However following the consultation article in Partnership News, to which response was very poor the attendance continued to be low. It was therefore decided not to continue with forums in their current format and through other opportunities to continue to discuss options. There was one more meeting during the summer term where Marcelle Curtis attended and explained the future structure and the opportunities for partners to continue to be able to link in. Anyone wishing to see a copy of the recommendation report, please contact the Childcare Information Service.

Regional ESF Project

Following our successful European Social Fund bid we are pleased to welcome our three new members of staff, Sonia, Joanne and Karen to the team. The project has already started and will involve delivering recruitment and training advice and guidance and opportunities to enrol for level 1 & 2 courses across the entire eastern region.

Our partners, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire/ Peterborough, Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk join with us to offer the opportunities over the next two years.

Consultation On Draft Code Of Practice

This consultation is seeking views on the draft Code of Practice on the provision of free nursery education. In particular, DfES is interested in comments on the implementation of the commitments to extend the entitlement to free early education, as outlined in Choice for Parents: A 10 year childcare strategy.

These commitments include - From April 2006 the minimum fee entitlement of 12.5 hours a week will be extended from 33 to 38 weeks for all three and four year olds - From April 2007, the minimum free entitlement will be extended to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks, for the first cohort of children and parents will be able to use the free entitlement flexibility of 15 hours a week for 38 weeks will be in place for all three and four year olds, on the way to a longer term goal of 20 hours a week for 38 weeks. Consultation period finishes on 30 September, via the DfES website. During September we are involved in a number of sessions with partners; King's Lynn 15/9; Great Yarmouth 22/9; Norwich 27/9 and 28/9. Thank you to all involved.

Extended Bookstart Scheme Includes Early Years Settings

Starting in Autumn 2005, the extended Bookstart programme will last for three years and will offer not one, but THREE Bookstart packs for all children, at ages 6 - 9 months, 18 months and 3 years.

The Bookstart Treasure Chest (complete with secret compartment!) is designed for children aged 36-48 months and includes two picture books, a set of stickers, a colouring pad, coloured pencils, and guidance material for parents and carers.

This pack is intended to be given out by Early Years providers in Early Years settings, and all Norfolk libraries will also receive boxes of the Treasure Chest as Bookstart secondary providers.

Norfolk Library and Information Service is co-ordinating the Bookstart programme in Norfolk and over the next five months will be contacting each Early Years setting to discuss delivery schedules. Meanwhile, initial deliveries will be sent out to some Early Years settings in October, November and December and these venues will be notified by mail as appropriate.

Bookstart allows Early Years providers the opportunity to share the simple premise that children who have an early introduction to books benefit educationally, culturally, socially and emotionally.

For further details, please look at www.bookstart.co.uk or email Julia Weaver at julia.weaver@norfolk.gov.uk.

Children's Workforce Strategy Consultation

The Children's Workforce Strategy was published for consultation by the DfES on 1st April 2005, and sets out the Government's vision for the children's workforce, and a number of national and local actions to realise this vision for the workforce. The consultation closed on 22nd July 2005. Thank you to all who contributed.

The strategy is published alongside two linked documents: the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce and the Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People (CAF). The document also aims to share good practice and provides helpful tips and case studies.

Childcare Bill Consultation

The Childcare Bill Consultation has been published by the DfES. In summary it outlines the way in which the government plans to implement their policies and to ensure that they can offer every child the best start in life, and that parents can have more choice about how to balance work and family life. The government hope that this is the first step in turning policy commitment into fully implemented strategy that will take effect from April 2008. Consultation closes on Friday 7 October 2005.

Fantastic New Booklet

The Childcare Information Service continue to promote childcare options to parents and families and most recently via a new booklet aimed specifically at helping parents to understand more about their childcare options. Copies are available free from the Childcare Information Service.



Children's Centres

integrated services for young children and their families

Background

Children's Centres are a crucial part of the Government's 10 year childcare strategy and key to delivering improved outcomes for children.

Phase II of Norfolk's Children Centres strategy is to develop and open up to 26 new centres by March 2008. The focus will be on developing services for the 30% most disadvantaged areas. The aim is to create a network of Children's Centres across the County by 2010.

Local Authorities are taking the lead on Children's Centre developments, but will be working in partnership with key agencies and parents and carers to create permanent, mainstream community services.

What is a Children's Centre?

A Children's Centre is a place where services for children and families come together. They can be stand-alone buildings or a group of buildings. They:

- Serve a community with about 800 children under five years old, daily from 8.00am to 6.00pm for 48 weeks per year
- Are located in or serve children and families in disadvantaged areas
- Bring together services for young children
- Support parents/carers in their parenting and in their aspirations towards employment
- Provide health advice and support and aim to ensure that the foundations of good health are laid down early
- Link closely with schools, health centres, community centres and family centres
- Work towards Sure Start Public Service Agreement and Service Development Targets

What will they provide?

- Early years provision (i.e. integrated childcare and early learning)
- Family support and parental outreach
- Child and family health services
- Parental involvement
- Links with Jobcentre Plus
- Links with schools and Childcare Information service
- Support for childminders
- Other services may be provided depending on local need.

What funding is available in Norfolk?

- £3.9 million - capital
- £3.9 million - revenue
- £1 million - rural uplift

Children's Centre targets.

- Reach 30% of children living in the Children's Centre area on a monthly basis
- Reach 100% of children living in the Children's Centre area on a yearly basis
- Improve children's communication; social and emotional development so that children reach a good level of development by the end of the Foundation Stage
- Reduce the proportion of children living in households where no-one is working

Consultation

During September and October the Early Years and Childcare Team, in consultation with partners and stakeholders will be identifying the needs in the 30% disadvantaged areas and looking at existing services and buildings on which to build.

By early October it is expected that these will have been identified and the consultation paper and options document published. The consultation deadline will be the 18th November 2005 and by the end of November 2005 preferred options for Children's Centre development will have been identified. More detailed plans will continue to be developed in partnership with key stakeholders and parents/carers by March 2006 and beyond.

For further information please contact your local area development office:

Norwich 01603 62 22 92

East 01493 33 57 40

West 01553 66 76 20

North 01603 62 22 92

South 01493 33 57 40

Childcare Information Service

The CIS 'Health Check' carried out by Opportunity Links confirmed that Norfolk CIS are meeting and in most areas exceeding the model CIS standards 2003-2006.

The Childcare Information Service have implemented a comprehensive data maintenance program that will ensure that we are able to provide a value added service to parents and providers. Accurate and up-to-date information is key to improving the quality of information and advice and in providing a consistency level of service, which in return will achieve greater parental satisfaction.

We have also developed a comprehensive outreach plan, which proactively support the growth and sustainability of childcare provision; this also puts Norfolk ahead of many other CIS's in the country. Our outreach service will provide parents, providers, schools and employers with information on WTC, Childcare vouchers and salary sacrifice.

The next phase of development within the CIS is developing the roles of the Information Officers. This will be achieved by linking CIS Information Officers with area Development Teams and the outreach programme. Our aim is to increase local knowledge and understanding of what is happening on the ground, and will also increase parent accessibility to the information, it is hoped that this will enable parents to make informed choices when choosing childcare for their children. The importance of local knowledge and delivery will increase with the opening of Children's Centres where our service will be delivering information and advice at a very local level.

The vision for the CIS is that both providers and parents acknowledge and recognise the valuable role that the CIS play in promoting and accessing quality childcare in Norfolk.



News from the Teams

Development Team

The Development Teams are very busy developing and opening childcare places across the county and plan to open another 400 during the quarter April to June 2005.

Building on the success of our extended schools twilight sessions we are working closely to create childcare places with many schools and are delighted to be working alongside the new Area Extended Schools Managers with this work.

A large part of our work continues to be supporting and monitoring our existing settings, ensuring they are providing inclusive high quality provision.

We appreciate that many childcare settings are experiencing low occupancy rates at present and we are working closely with our Marketing Team and Childcare Information Service to provide the appropriate support to raise the awareness of the available childcare places. We aim to hold localised events to promote this. If your setting has low attendance please contact your Development Worker.

Some groups are telling Development Workers that late payment or unpaid fees are causing cash flow difficulties, which often when combined with low occupancy, leads to sustainability concerns for the setting. To prevent this situation occurring we would advise all settings to ensure that they have a charging policy which parents are aware of when they complete a contract with the setting. This policy should clearly state how and when fees should be paid and any penalties that would be incurred if the agreed procedure were not followed. Again if you would like any support with this please contact your Development Worker.

News from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership Advisory Group

This column will be a regular feature of Partnership News in which I'll try to keep you informed about our meetings and issues the EYDCP is involved in.

We've had two meetings this year where, as well as getting progress reports from Marcelle, we have discussed the consultation about the

Early Years and Childcare forums, and met with the chairs to decide their future. We received a summary of the government's 10 year strategy and are kept informed of the progress of Every Child Matters in Norfolk. Recently we have been consulted about the proposed structure of the new Children's Service. We are looking forward to hearing the director, Lisa Christiansen, at the November conference

As the chair I'm representing the Partnership on the progress of Children's Centres. There is an immense amount of work going on, building working partnerships as well as centres. Last month I went round the new building for Bowthorpe and West Earlham - a converted pub - which will be finished soon and will provide a lovely setting for local children and families - only 7 more to go! Then we'll have to plan how to meet the DFES' expectation that there will be 26 more to develop!

I also attend the Schools Forum, which has to be consulted about financial arrangements for the Educational Services. The other members represent headteachers and governors of primary and secondary schools and we have lively discussions about funding and the way it is weighted. It is good to have issues affecting younger and older children debated by the two sectors together since it increases understanding on all sides. I think my responsibility is to be aware of any issues which may affect three and four year olds, wherever they are provided for. This will become an even more significant body for us once the funding for Children's Centres is part of the local authority budget.

It is a pleasure to chair the Kitemark panel and to enjoy the accounts of things children are saying and doing. We appreciate the evidence of quality work around the county and I was sorry not to be able to be at the presentation of the award. I understand that it was a splendid event - congratulations to the team of mentors and verifiers as well as the award winners.

The Advisory Group have taken part in planning the November conference, in some staff appointments and in quarterly meetings where progress and problems are debated. Please contact me if there is anything you have any concerns about, or would like any information.

Dorothy Wedge
Chair of the Partnership

Norfolk Quality

The Norfolk Quality Kitemark was launched at an awards evening held at Weston Park Conference centre on March 22nd 2005.



SureStart



The evening was a great success with over a hundred people from across the range of early years and childcare settings attending to celebrate with those who had achieved accreditation through the award.

Marcelle Curtis, Head of the Early Years and Childcare Strategy, congratulated the Settings

who were receiving the award acknowledging their achievement and outlining the part played by the NQK in raising quality throughout Norfolk. She then presented the plaques and certificates to the eleven Settings who were present to collect their award. Janet Morgan, Quality Assurance Coordinator, outlined the expectations of the Scheme, what it involved, the support available and the areas that are focused on. She explained that the cost of taking part in Norfolk's Quality Assurance Scheme was one of the lowest in the country at present and very good value for money considering the level of support and quality of materials included.

She thanked the Mentors and the Settings for all their hard work in contributing to the pilot phase of the NQK and looked forward to welcoming others to join the scheme.

The Settings receiving accreditation to the Norfolk Quality Kitemark were:

- Alphabet Nursery
- Cascade Nursery
- Giggles Nursery
- Jack and Jill Playgroup
- Meadow Farm Nursery School
- Mrs Trudy Deacon
- Newton Flotman Pre-School
- Pavilion Pre-School Nursery
- Phoenix Montessori Nursery (West Norfolk) Ltd
- Springboard Nursery School
- Sprowston First School
- Terrington St Clement Playgroup
- The College Children's Centre

Speeches were given by:

Gill Martin - Sprowston First School, Jill Day - Springboard Nursery school and Clare Harris - Phoenix Montessori Nursery School, who related their experiences of undertaking accreditation through the Kitemark and offered their top tips to Settings considering undergoing accreditation

Gill Martin Reception class teacher of Sprowston First School, the first maintained school to be accredited through the award told an attentive audience ' We started the Kitemark in 2002 and it took us 2 years to complete. We found it hard work, but it enabled us to work together as a team, answering questions, gathering evidence and assessing our work.

We found that you need to be honest and rigorous. However it was well worth it. At Sprowston one of the definite pros was that it had a definite impact on the rest of the school, and helped raise our profile. Despite the fact that we have completed, we continue to use the Kitemark principals to make changes and improvements Clare Harris talked about how the Kitemark had helped draw her staff team together adding that her top tip was to share the workload with the team so that everyone feels involved and part of the process.



Kitemark

Jill Day commented on how the NQK complemented and prepared them for the Ofsted inspection giving the staff confidence in the work they were doing.

The evening ended with a group photograph for those receiving the award and an opportunity for those attending to talk informally with Mentors and settings involved in the NQK.

What is the Norfolk Quality Kitemark?

It is a quality assurance Scheme developed and supported by Norfolk County Council. The scheme is targeted at all Childcare, Education and Playwork settings in Norfolk and has achieved national recognition through its endorsement by Investors in Children (IiC).

Settings who undertake the Kitemark embark on a journey that helps them improve the quality of their provision. This rigorous process demonstrates their commitment to reach high standards in every respect of their practice.

What does it involve?

The scheme focuses around a Workbook, designed to help providers improve the quality of services they provide. As part of the scheme, settings will be asked to collect evidence in response to a series of questions. These questions are divided into a number of modules each looking at a different area. Modules are standardised and verified before the final award is made.

What support will I get?

When Settings start, they are given a workbook and a detailed guidance booklet to help them. Additionally, a Mentor is appointed to help and guide you through the process. This person will be experienced and qualified in your particular area of childcare, early years education, or playwork and will support you throughout the process.

What areas will I be focusing on?

The workbook will take you through a number of modules looking at areas such as:

- Welcomes, farewells, and transitions
- Working with parents, carers, families, friends and the community
- Meals, snacks and celebrations
- Care Play and learning experiences- indoor and outdoor

What happens when I successfully complete?

All providers who have completed (or who are working towards completion) will be entered on the Childcare Information Service database, and publicised to parents, carers and the general public.

Additionally the award and logo can be used on marketing and publicity information.



How long will it take me?

You can progress at your own pace, but it is expected that most childcare settings will complete the Norfolk Quality Kitemark Scheme in 12 to 18 months.

How much will it cost?

There will be a charge of £30 per module for group settings and of £10 per module for childminders.

If you would like more information or wish to register your interest in joining the Scheme please contact the Childcare Information Service on 01603 622292 or visit www.norfolkchildcare.info



Frequently asked questions

Why do I need to sign up for this?

- To improve the quality of the services I am offering to children
- Help to sustain the services that I am providing
- Recognition of high standards of practice and hard work
- Indication to parents of quality childcare



...Training Update...

The Training Team have recently welcomed a new member to our team.

Emily Ball is the Training Advisor for the Early Years and Childcare Team and her key role is to provide information, advice and guidance on training, professional development and qualifications, to those working, or wishing to work within the early years and childcare sector. Emily has extensive experience of working in pre-schools and schools. And, having recently completed the Diploma in Childcare and Education at City College understands the commitment of undertaking a level 3 qualification.

Emily is particularly responsible for:

- Providing Information, advice and guidance over the phone and in person at events such as careers fairs and shows.
- Having access to a wide range of info (historical qualifications, websites, Training News, contacts with colleges and providers etc)

- Attending the final session of courses to give next step advice to students.
- Being part of a team with a wide knowledge base on qualifications and professional development courses.
- Working closely with other members of the Early Years and Childcare team and training providers to maintain high standards of recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Helping to promote quality childcare staff through advice and guidance on continuing professional development.
- Access to documentation and information which can be sent to those who require it.

If you need impartial training advice to enable your career progression then contact Emily on 01603 622292.

Birth to Three:

Last term we completed the first of a series of four day courses supporting the implementation of the Birth to Three Framework. The course is called 'The 4 Aspects' and feedback from those attending was very positive. The course was delivered by Jan Hughes, from Elementary Education, a training provider based in Birmingham. Jan will be delivering more courses over the next year around the county. Please see the current edition of Training News for further details.

Please note: It is important to have attended an introductory day before the 4 Aspects or Planning courses that are available. People who have attended an introductory session will be given priority on the follow up training.

Birth to Three Information Sharing

Q. What should our Birth to Three environment look like?

A. The environment for your Birth to Three children should have lots of familiarity for the children and have out familiar toys on a day to day basis. The familiar toys can be rotated around the room but they need to be out for the children to access, as some children may fret if they are not there.

When displaying things on the walls of the room keep the lower half of the wall for children and the top half of the wall for adults.

On the lower half of the wall put up things that children can be active with i.e. sensory items, mirrors, accessible toys, photos etc. On the top part of the wall put up pictorial information boards, photos of the children with evidence of Birth to Three etc. Themed displays are not necessary, they just take up adult time.

Q. What will Ofsted be looking for?

A. Ofsted will be looking at the adult interaction and communication with the children. Staff need to be down on the floor with the children interacting and communicating with them.

Birth to Three plans need to be kept simple and plan towards individuals needs rather than specific topics.

One planned opportunity a week is all that is needed, leave it out all week and just tweak it if needed. Children learn from revisiting again and again!

Q. Is it necessary to have a routine in the Toddler Room?

A. No. A routine does not meet the children's individual needs. Each child should have their own individual routine that works with them, not one that all the children follow.

Whatever you are doing question who it is for?

If the answer is children - Do it!

If the answer is staff/parents - Don't do it!

You may have questions about implementing the Birth to Three Framework in your setting, maybe because you are new to the Framework and unsure how to go about using it, or maybe you have attended some training and need some further advice. Perhaps you just want to ensure you are providing the best possible care for the under threes in your setting or want to know more about the transition to the Foundation Stage. If so, please contact Kirsty Woods, Training Co-ordinator, who will pass on your queries to Jan Hughes of Elementary Education. Jan will be able to provide an answer to your concerns or queries.

Managing Medicines

DfES has recently produced guidance on Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years settings. This document sets out a clear framework within which local authorities, local health trusts, schools and early years settings can work together to develop policies to ensure that children requiring medicines receive appropriate support.

Guidance from the document will be incorporated into the relevant sections of the SEN training programme, advertised in the current edition of Training News. However, if you would like a copy, a link to the document will be made available from the Sure Start website. It is now available from <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/ec/DfES-1448-2005.aspx>

Training Update

We have some last minute availability for courses running in September.

We have listed them below.

If you are interested in booking a place on any of these, or want any further details, please contact the Training Team on 01603 622292.



Exploring Challenge And Risk In Play (Playworkers)

This workshop allows participants to explore the issues around risk in play whilst developing ideas for incorporating challenge and risk into their own play setting.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
2432	The Priory Centre	05-Nov-05	10.00am - 2.30pm

Business Side of Childminding Workshop

This course will explore: Managing your business, Marketing, Costs and finance, and Self Assessment.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
2498	Alderman Jackson School	15-Oct-05	9.30am - 1.30pm
2499	North Walsham High School	05-Nov-05	9.30am - 1.30pm

Listening To Young Children

The Course will Emphasise the importance of listening to young children and supports practitioners to build on their existing skills of listening to young children.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
2527	Wensum Lodge Hotel (Fakenham)	27-Jan-06	9.30am - 1.30pm
2529	George Hotel	01-Nov-05 21-Mar-06	9.30am - 3.00pm 9.30am - 1.30pm
2530	North Walsham Community Association	28-Nov-05 27-Mar-06	9.30am - 3.00pm 9.30am - 1.30pm

Introduction To SEN For Childminder's

This course will give Childminders and Homecarers the opportunity to gain an understanding of Additional or Special Educational Needs, and understand their role in supporting these children.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
2455	Breckland Lodge	12-Nov-05 04-Feb-06	9.30am - 3.00pm 9.30am - 12.30pm
2456	Hamond's High School	26-Nov-05 04-Mar-06	9.30am - 3.00pm 9.30am - 12.30pm

Planning In The Foundation Stage

The course will cover the basic principals in planning and involve working with other practitioners and sharing ideas and skills.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
5PN028	Imperial Hotel	28-Nov-05	9.30am - 3.00pm
5PN031	West Norfolk Professional Development Centre	01-Dec-05	9.30am - 3.00pm

Developing Observation Skills In The Foundation Stage

This course explores different ways to observe and how to plan and use observations to support the assessment and planning process.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
5PN054	Imperial Hotel	24-Jan-06	9.00am - 12.00pm
5PN055	Imperial Hotel	24-Jan-06	1.00pm - 4.00pm

As many of you are aware we released the new yearly training programme in March 2005. Courses listed in here span right through until the end of March 2006. However due to the popularity of some courses, and in many cases where demand exceed supply, we have made a few changes. These have been issued in the Training News Update. Please make sure that you get a copy and check out any new course availability as well as updates and amendments. If you haven't yet seen a copy, please contact the Training Team on 01603 62 22 92.



Summer Holiday Scheme

Here are just some

0-8 Years Old



es Brochure Competition

of the many entries

8-14 Years Old



Recruitment

www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com

Since its launch in January this year, the new Early Years and Childcare Recruitment Website has been going from strength to strength. With over 60 jobs online at any one time, you are guaranteed to find a huge range of childcare related jobs that span the whole of Norfolk.

A recent addition to the service is the ability to monitor and track the use of the website. For example, we now have the facility to count the number of viewings each vacancy receives and we can monitor how many people are applying, either via email or by downloading an application form.

Whilst the vacancy is being advertised, we are able to feedback all these figures and keep the provider informed of how successful the job advert is proving and if anymore needs to be done to make the vacancy appear more appealing to prompt more applications.

Just ten days after the counts were introduced, figures showed that between them, the 68 vacancies had received a staggering 1040 'hits'. Also 40 people had downloaded a form applied online; that's 40 people who may not have otherwise done so.

To make this part of the service successful, we are keen that providers supply us with an email address where applications can be forwarded.

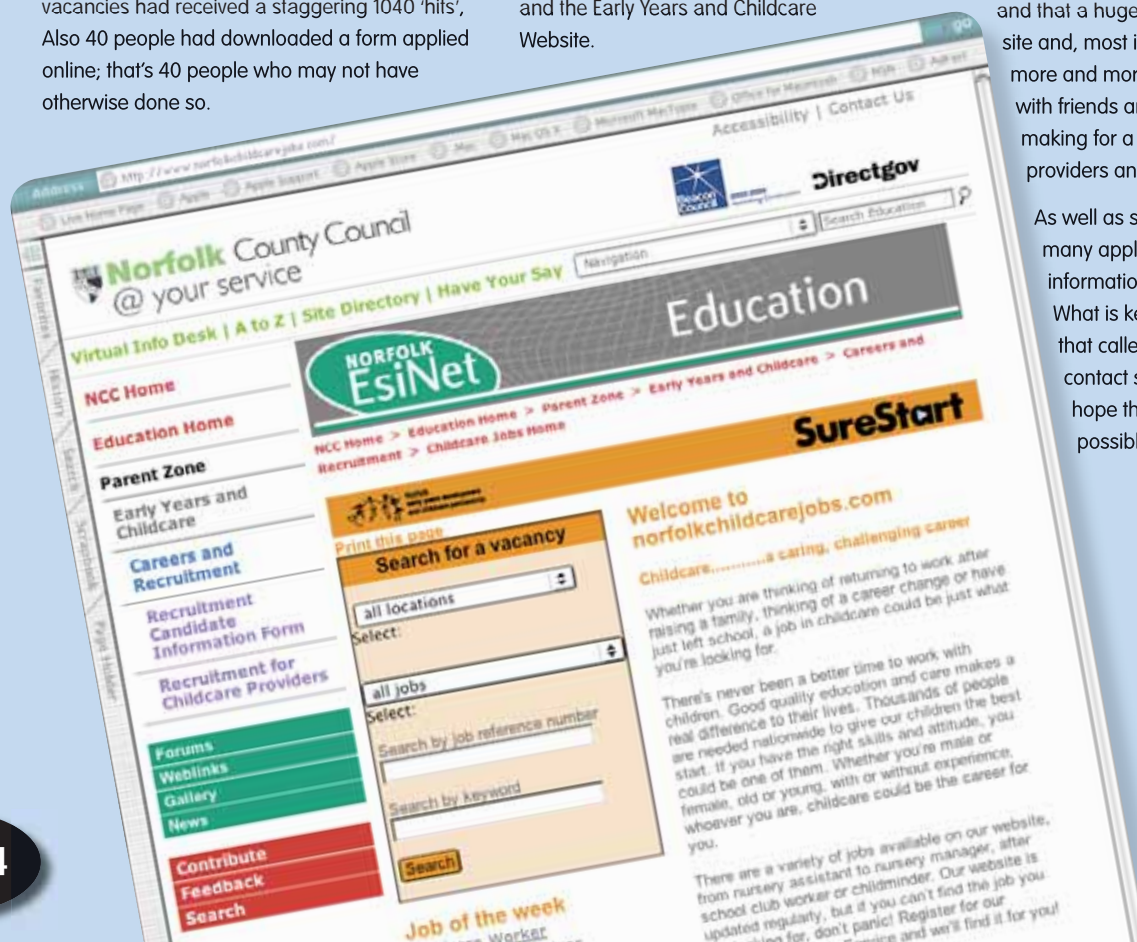
Applications will then all be received in the same format, which is helpful during the shortlisting process.

From February to the end of April this year, Vacancy Matching Service applicants were monitored to see how they were hearing of the service. Top came newspapers, thanks to a massive press campaign we ran in February. The second most popular way of discovering the service was via the Internet and the Early Years and Childcare Website.



This shows how use of the Internet has grown and that a huge number of people are using our site and, most importantly, viewing the jobs. With more and more people using PC's at home, with friends and families or via libraries, this is making for a very user-friendly service for both providers and users alike.

As well as supplying an email address many applicants like to phone to get more information about a post before they apply. What is key from the evaluations received is that callers have not always been able to contact settings or leave a message. We hope that more settings can make this possible for potential applicants.





Toy Library

New Toys And Equipment For After-School Clubs From The Hamlet Centre Toy Library

How can the Hamlet Centre support your After-school club?

The Hamlet Centre Trust is a local charity working with children and young people with special needs in Norwich and Norfolk. We have recently been fortunate to receive a donation of toys and equipment from Norfolk County Council. These are ideal for Out of School and Youth Clubs and are available for loan for a nominal charge through our toy library. Just come along to our Centre in Ella Road, just five minutes walk from Norwich railway station and have a look for yourself! Amongst the items there are games, puzzles, lots of instruments and musical toys, a karaoke system, marble runs, Persona dolls and equipment for children to play cooperative games together, such as parachutes and cooper-bands. In addition new toy library members will have access to a wide range of other toys including educational, construction, imaginative play and lots of things designed for children with special needs. We can help with equipment ideas and support for children with special needs included in mainstream clubs.

Opening hours

We are open Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 4.00pm during term time. If you wish to visit during school holidays it is best to phone first and make an appointment, as we are very busy with play schemes and need to plan time to give you our full attention.

What does it cost?

You can borrow toys for up to four weeks and they start at as little as 30p per toy per week.

It is up to you to fetch the toys from the library and to make sure that they are returned on time as other groups may be waiting for them. We look forward to welcoming many new groups as members of our library and to working together to give children the use of a good variety of toys and equipment, excellent leisure opportunities and a lot of fun!

For more information phone Marian or Terri on 01603 616094. We look forward to meeting you.



Partner Focus



Childminding Matters supports registered childminders and parents all over Norfolk through our telephone advice line, conferences and seminars and a free termly newsletter to registered childminders. We are also setting up approved childminding networks to give childminders an opportunity to enjoy extra support, national approval under the "Children Come First" kitemark and to become accredited to provide early education for 3 and 4 year olds.

Childminding Conference - What It Means To A Parent!

I was delighted to have helped with the organizing of the Childminding Matters conference held earlier this summer at the Ramada Hotel. This is of special interest to me as my two children have been looked after by the same childminder for almost 9 years. When I asked my daughter Hannah, 9, what she liked best about going to the childminders, she said, "meeting and playing with other children" and my son Adam, 6 said he enjoys it because "I can play outside with the other children in the summer and I get lots to eat!!" My colleague who works with me in the same office also uses the same childminder and has been doing so for two and a half years. Katie, 3 and Jack, enjoy going to the childminders because they can play with playdough, read books, play with other children and go to childminders playgroup.

It is so reassuring to know that your children are being cared for by someone who has made it their choice to look after children, nurture and educate them and ensure their well-being, pre-school years and during primary and middle school years.

It is nice also to see that men have taken on the role of childminding as this helps children associate with men as well as women. My childminder is a caring and dedicated person who really enjoys looking after children and that really shows in how happy they are and how much they enjoy going to her home and meeting up with the other children who are also in her care. She has taught them many things, and it is a comfort to know that they are happy while I am at work.

Theresa Muddel
Conference and Events Sales Manager
Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Norwich

What's Going On At Weetu?

For the past two years WEETU have been working closely with Childminding Matters to ensure you can access any of our services that might be of interest to you.

Childminder Loan

If you're registering as a childminder but finding it too expensive we can help. We offer loans up to £100 to help with registration costs to be repaid when you receive your start-up grant. Look out for the form in your application pack or ring Debbie on 01603 216 398.

So far we've lent £4,380 to 69 people and it's "quick, easy and straightforward".

Do You Want A Bigger Childminding Business?

Have you dreamed of having your own nursery? Maybe we can help...

Is Enterprise For Me? and Business Skills are free courses which will help you look at your business idea and give you the skills you need to run your business. We can also lend you money to help you start your business. We're running courses in Norwich, Dereham, Coltishall, Great Yarmouth and Cromer this year. For more details ring Julie on 01603 216 398.





Campaign Against Unregistered Childminding

We often find that there are unregistered people caring for children aged under 8 years for more than 2 hours a day, for reward, even though they are taking children into their homes rather than caring for them in the parents' homes. If the children in question are not related to the carer this practice is illegal and undermines the valuable work that registered childminders do.

To promote registered childminding the Early Years and Childcare team of Norfolk County Council and Childminding Matters have devised a new poster with the title:

"Quality childminding gives you genuine peace of mind"

The poster is aimed at parents and explains that by choosing a registered childminder they can expect someone who is regularly inspected by Ofsted, is fully trained and insured and who will offer a child-safe environment, geared to learning and development.

Not only do we want to promote registered childminding but we also want to warn parents of the possible dangers of using unregistered care. An unregistered childminder will not have had the criminal record bureau checks, health checks, the first aid and childcare training and they won't have any public liability insurance, so this could put any young children they care for in a very vulnerable position. Another consideration is that parents would not have a proper contract with

any unregistered childminder, so, if there were difficulties with the standard of care or payment, they would have no legal recourse.

We have started distributing the posters in areas across the county. If you would like a poster put up in your area please contact Childminding Matters on 01603 615667 and advise where you think it might be appropriate to place a poster and we will arrange this or you could email us at: info@childmindingmatters.org.uk or visit our website at www.childmindingmatters.org.uk.

Office Opening Hours

Childminding Matters' office is open between 9.30am and 3pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30am to 1.30pm on Fridays.

Please contact the office on 01603 615667, email info@childmindingmatters.org.uk website www.childmindingmatters.org.uk



Latest News

We've been very busy in the Pre-school

Learning Alliance county office and the months are just flying past.

The new Office Administrator, Sharon Bradfield, was appointed in March and is settling in. Her role is to manage the office, provide information to enquirers and prepare newsletters and promotional materials.

Luckily she has been working as one of our Parent and Toddler Development Workers over the last year and has had experience of covering the office so she is rapidly getting to grips with her new workload.

The storage area has been tidied and re-organised so the loan equipment is easily accessible and waiting to be borrowed by groups.

Ring us on 01603 767525 to find out what we have to offer.

Celebration

Lisa Christensen, the new Director of Children's Services, kindly came to our Evening of Celebration in April to present certificates to all

the students who had completed the Pre-school Learning Alliance courses in 2004.

The event, held at Park Farm, Hethersett included a meal and the chance for students to dance the night away with friends and family.



Details of many of our courses can be found in the new Training News. If you require training in a subject not currently offered please tell us what you need. We are here to provide a service to you. We currently offer everything from introductory courses for beginners to Level 4 Awards in Management, plus training for people interested in becoming tutors. Tel: 01954 232327.

AGM

The theme for the AGM this year was the Future for Pre-schools and we invited two speakers, one to give a local government view and one to give the National Pre-school Learning Alliance perspective.

We invited Lisa Christensen to tell us about her vision for pre-schools and how they can contribute to the Governments ten year plan. Then we asked Lin Ashby, Regional Executive Officer, Team Leader, to tell us about a recent pilot scheme that PLA conducted in another part of the country and current ideas for development within the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The organisation has certainly moved a long way from the voluntary, community groups set up by parents in 1960 - 70 yet many of the basic activities provided for the children are still the same.



Get Out More!

Children are natural explorers and collectors from an early age and need to touch, smell, observe, hear and taste the world around them in order to make sense of it, to understand it. This is a need that we as practitioners must respect and nurture.



By being aware of the creativity in children and encouraging it in all aspects of the curriculum we can keep it alive and developing so that creative thinking children grow into creative thinking adults. When children are investigating outdoors you can expand their range of materials to include really messy ones like mud or sloppy sand and water that need not be contained in a tray or natural objects like sticks and leaves, flowers and stones, feathers and seed heads. They can experience large scale work or make tiny worlds. They can make a miniature garden or home for a small toy and watch to see it change under the effect of weather and time.



This sort of creative play can give rise to discussion with other children and adults about problems such as how to stop pieces from blowing away as well as many opportunities for talking about the size, colour and texture of natural objects.

Photographing what a child has done creates the opportunity for reflection later especially if there is a series of prints showing how the work developed. I think that it is very important to appreciate the thinking that has gone into an investigation and even when there is an end product it is the process that we should value. This is a lovely way to observe the child and to talk about what has been experienced and to share this with parents.

There are several artists who work in the environment and reference to their sculptures could be made in displays. Andy Goldsworthy talks about each of his works as a discovery and his love of the environment shines through as he uses delicate petals or huge chunks of stone or wood to build, wrap or join. His sculptures will

decay or erode eventually and he sees this as part of the natural process. Children who have experienced a sand castle being washed away by the sea might relate to this.

Working on a large scale can be quite a challenge and sometimes children need an adult to provide the stimulus. Here are three to try.

1. In a large space, start with just one round object such as a flower or stone. Make a circle of objects around it. Encourage the children to make the next ring using whatever materials are to hand or have been collected. Talk about colour, pattern, size and texture. (This can be repeated as an indoor activity using seeds, pasta or other small objects.)
2. Make a framework with sticks and encourage children to fill the spaces with found materials according to colour - the variations soon become apparent and will lead to discussion about how one leaf is darker/yellower/brighter than the next.
3. Linear patterns can curve and curl around a space like a road map, a journey or a story.

Promoting Creativity Outdoors

Children who see adults enjoying being creative will feel more comfortable with their own experiments.

What if you do not have an outdoor area? Then bring the outdoors in by collecting masses of natural objects and storing them in accessible trays so children can still choose what they want to use and invest in a builder's tray which is big enough to allow several children to play together and will contain any messes.

Remember to carry out risk assessments and take into account any allergies your children may have and then you can get out more and enjoy the experience.





Creativity - it's not all about art

Keeping children, their ideas, views and feelings at the centre of everything that we do.

The response to the Pre-schools and Infant Toddler Centres of Reggio Emilia, Italy can vary widely. From the totally inspired to the fed up - however, something that is true for so many people who have read about Reggio Emilia or been lucky enough to visit - is that creative, child centred learning is alive there and it is thriving! As a result of a unique combination of a heart felt, powerful image of a child as a 'rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent and most of all connected to adults and other children' with unanimous support from the municipality - these children work in an environment that not only respects but survives upon children's ideas, views and feelings. This results in children who regularly express their 'hundred languages' in so

many creative ways - sometimes with the support of artists or a teacher - through the visual arts, drama, dance, music, science - the list goes on.

So how do we keep children, their ideas, views and feelings at the centre of everything?

We can listen to children and value what we see and hear. All too often we, as adults, assume that we know what children are trying to communicate, we answer for them and even put words into their mouths. Our intentions are good but we sometimes forget that we are approaching the child's world with an adult perception. But, by listening carefully to their explanation that,

for example, goes alongside a particularly special piece of mark making - and not assuming that is a spider or smiling face, we could be embarking on a much more exciting journey. You as the adult are an integral part of this journey - once engaged on this journey with children we can support and guide them as their ideas develop - encouraging their creativity and individuality along the way.



Listening is easy to say but is it hard to actually do?

Mary Jane Drummond reminds us to think hard about whether we are truly open to listening to children - are we prepared for anything we then might hear or observe. More to the point will we value it, interpret it and act upon it - all of which need time and space. Coram Family have been working on the framework 'Listening to Young Children' there is a training package that surrounds this exciting work and is a tremendous opportunity for anybody interested in this type of work. This will work seamlessly with Birth to Three Matters and integrated Education, Care and Health.

Pioneering and exciting work in this country

We have talked and talked about the wonderful ethos of Reggio Emilia. We have been inspired by their attitude to child centred learning and we continue to search for a way forward. Some counties have decided that they are all talked out and have started to act on their passion. Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Newcastle have taken that next step. Early Years settings in Birmingham have been working on a project that they have called 'How to Catch a Moonbeam and Pin it Down' - what a wonderful title for a really inspiring project! In this project they wanted children, artists, educators and families to all work together over a longer period of time. They allocated two years, 29 settings, 6 artists, 3 artist documenters. They also had Professor Christine Pascal on board as the project researcher. The project is now nearing the end of its cycle and the final report will soon be out. The work that has taken place in Birmingham (and Newcastle) has shown how the next step can be taken. In the meantime we need to continue to be passionate about creativity and listening to children, value individuality and (in the words of Lesley Staggs - National Director for the Foundation Stage) WE NEED TO BE BRAVER!



What's Happening in our Foundation Stage Settings?

Blofield Nursery

Blofield Nursery is delighted to be the first nursery in Norfolk to be assessed and accredited in the art of baby signing by the popular "Tinytalk" group.

Nursery staff are using "Tinytalk" signing with all the children right from the youngest at 6 - 7 months through to the Foundation Stage.

The nursery staff team are very excited and children and parents are all responding well. Signing has given positive and good links to the QCAs

Communication, language and literacy and can high-light in particular:

Use words and or gestures, including body language such as eye contact and facial expression, to communicate.

Use action, sometimes with limited talk, that is largely concerned with "here and now"

Clackclose Pre-school

Clackclose Pre-school held a coffee morning and video session. Videos were made by a company specialising in supporting topics and themes. The children at Clackclose were filmed riding in a jeep as if they were on safari to go with the current theme on African animals.

Each child was filmed separately. It was all very exciting and parents could decide whether or not to buy their child's Safari experience on video - all did! Great idea and a brilliant ICT experience for those children watching the process of filming. (Company has a website for further information www.Kidsclubadventure.co.uk).

Neatishead and Barton

Neatishead and Barton Playgroup use cushion covers with zips as interest bags, treasure bags, rhyme sacks, storysacks etc. No more having to sew up draw string bags- these are ready made for you and come in different colours, textures, shapes. You can also get beautiful multicultural covers which contribute to your cultural environment. Excellent for outside play too - fill them with writing or drawing resources; with scarves, books, or musical instruments - the possibilities are numerous.

Visit to Castle was a brilliant idea!

We took a group of twelve children to Norwich Castle via Sprowston park & ride. We made passports for the children which we stamped each time they entered a new zone e.g. main keep, natural history and art and exhibition zones.

The children really enjoyed learning about history from hands on experiences and nobody was bored!

Comments from the children about their favourite part of the day -

"I remember the naughty man" (how the prisoners were treated)

"Penny dropping" (wishing well)

"I liked riding on the chariot" (Anglo-saxons)

The staff were extremely helpful and we'd highly recommend an outing to the castle as an idea to other pre-school groups.

Blofield Day Nursery

brought some pots and pans from a car boot sale, painted them and have strung them up on the fence outside with wooden spoons and sticks tied on as beaters. The children are having a great time with these instruments, they didn't cost much and even the babies in prams are having fun and being musical with them!!

Hockering Playgroup

After the closure of Hockering Playgroup last year, remaining funds from the charity have been donated to two local groups - Mattishall Pre-school and Swanton Morley Under-5s group. Mattishall Pre-school will probably put the money in their "new building" fund. Similarly, Swanton Morley are raising funds for new premises, but will also be putting some of the money towards the summer trip for their children. There are only a few pre-school children in Hockering village at present, but several do now attend Mattishall Pre-school.

Creativity

Cut out and keep section for parents/carers

Sing with your child during everyday tasks - 'this is the way we brush our teeth' etc to tune of Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush. Make your own songs up and encourage your child to do so to.



Use kitchen equipment as 'instruments' for your band! A wooden spoon sounds great on a saucepan, tin of peas, etc.

Listen for sounds indoors and outdoors - what can you hear? Record the sounds and make up a story using them.

Get baking - rolling out pastry, making shapes and baking. Adding decoration to home made biscuits or bought ones. Decorate a pizza base with cheese etc its fun to eat your creation!

Join in with your child's play to value their imagination and support their language development. It's fun too!

Make up stories together - based on one you know or your own creation.

Buy items from a local charity shop or get relatives to have a turn out so that imaginative development can be supported through 'pretending' e.g. scarves can be used for throwing and catching skills (a greater surface area to catch ensures increased success) Clothes for dressing-up - children love sparkle, sequins etc. Materials such as throws with animal prints for den building.

Make a treasure chest from an old shoe box and encourage your child to store treasures such as:- a feather they found in the park - talk to them about where they think it came from, how the creature lost it etc a smooth stone found on the beach - talk about how it feels, what does it remind them of etc, a napkin from a friends special celebration - talk about why it is special, perhaps your child could create their own special napkin. The list is endless! Paint, Playdough etc can be bought locally from toy shops/supermarkets - let your child explore the media.



In the garden - explore the natural resources, dig and explore the mud, build dens, smell the seasons, listen to the sounds. Collect together twigs, leaves etc and make pictures on paper, in mud. Video/photograph your child and friends playing - when watching tell the story of the recording/photos. Make a scrapbook as a permanent record.

Collect all sorts of scraps - paper, material, card etc. Provide glue, sellotape, felt pens, scissors and just let your child create!!

Keep and use cardboard boxes and cardboard sheets, (large and small) and see what happens! Electrical stores can be approached for really large boxes, these can be stored flat.



Resources

Charity shops can be a wonderful source for props to support role play, dance etc



Clay:

School catalogues of local suppliers e.g. Arterial Engineering, Blakeney

Modroc:

School catalogues or art shops

Face paints can enhance role play, drama, dance, imagination.



Home made Playdough recipe:

- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 cup salt
- 2 tbsp cream of tartar
- Colouring
- 2 cups of water

Mix ingredients and cook over a low heat, stirring. When mixture leaves the sides of the pan, remove from the heat. Knead. Store in an air tight container when cool.

You can add bits and pieces to explore texture.

You can add oils to explore smells e.g. peppermint etc



Creativity

This section offers great ideas that you can share with your child or children at home



Useful Numbers

Norfolk Childcare Information Service 01603 62 22 92

For information on available childcare, training and recruitment and developing your services.

Area Offices:

King's Lynn 01553 66 76 20

Yarmouth 01493 33 57 40

Norwich 01603 59 84 84

Childminding Matters 01603 61 56 67

Norfolk County Childminding Association. Offering a support service for childminders in the county.

NEYSN 01603 21 93 00

Norfolk Early Years Support Network. Offering help and support for providers of early years education/childcare.

PLA 01603 76 75 25

Pre-school Learning Alliance. The local branch of this national charity offers support for early education and the development of children.

NATLL 020 7387 9592

National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries.

4 Children 0207 512 2100

4 Children. Offering help and support for 'out of school' childcare providers across the UK.

Ofsted

General enquiries 0845 601 4771

Complaints 0845 601 4772

Job Centre Plus

Childcare Partnership Manager - Louise Gedge

01603 636030

Norfolk Childcare Information Service

01603 622292

www.norfolkchildcare.info
www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com