

Sure Start Agenda

How are we
doing?



Recruitment

Our new
interactive
website is
launched



ICT In and Around the Home

Cut-out and
keep Section

Spring 2005

partnership **news**





Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of 2005!

This year promises to be a busy and exciting time for us all and the work that we are involved with, and it is a year likely to be packed with changes.

From February Lisa Christensen takes up her post of Director of Children's Services and what was formally Education and the children's part of Social Services will amalgamate under one directorate. We look forward to the start of this new service and the implementation of the Every Child Matters Agenda. We are confident that the Sure Start Agenda will become an integral part of the thinking and the priorities of Children's Services.

It is excellent news that the final two Neighbourhood Nurseries, Bowthorpe and Seagulls in Gorleston have opened and can begin to make a real difference for families and children in their local communities. Congratulations to all involved and to best wishes to these projects as they begin to deliver their services. Also to all the other Neighbourhood Nurseries who have opened previously and continue to work hard.

We feature in this issue an introduction and summary of the Governments 10 Year Strategy for Childcare, called "Choice for parents, the best start for Children. The document is a clear endorsement of the priority of children and families. Anyone wishing to read a copy of the Strategy can obtain one by calling the Childcare Information Service.

Our priorities remain constant and include the continuing emphasis on, developing new childcare places, recruiting new childcare workers to meet the ever increasing childcare places; and on ensuring that we continue to offer a wide and varied programme of quality training opportunities to meet the needs of the childcare workforce.

We are continuing the development of 10 Children's Centres and looking to more and more involvement of schools in providing childcare.

Good Luck with the coming term and with the big agenda that we are involved in delivering and hope that we all can look forward to becoming an integral part of Children's Services.

Best Wishes

Marcelle Curtis

Marcelle Curtis
Head of Early Years and Childcare Strategy

joiners, leavers and movers

Welcome to

Sarah Spall

Childcare Development Officer

Sarah O'Donnell

Childcare Development Co-ordinator at Earlham High Full Service Extended School

Tina Prince

Childcare Information Service Manager

Emily Ball

Training Advisor

Lisa Harrison

Kitemark Administrator

Jackie Cook

Administrator, Western Team

Julia Little

Administrator, Western Team

Annabelle Tibbs

Administrator at County Hall

Goodbye to

Angela Oxenbury - Information Officer - Childcare information Service (P/time)

Congratulations to

Sue Brown - Senior admin at County Hall

Cheryl Burge - Senior Development Worker, Central and North team

Teresa Frost - Senior Development Worker, West team
who have all been promoted to more senior posts

contents

Contents Page	3
News Section	4 - 5
Useful Numbers and Diary Dates	6
News from the Teams	7
Sarah Spall Interview	8
Old MacDonald - Good News Story	9
Partner Focus	10 - 11
The Government's 10 Year Strategy for Children	12
Ofsted - What's Available and Where Do You Get It?	13
2004 - 2006 Sure Start Agenda	14 - 15
Training Update	16 - 17
Vacancy Matching Service	18
New Recruitment Website	19
Every Child Matters Update	20
What's Happening in our Foundation Stage Settings!	21
What, No Computer?	22 - 23
How Do I Use ICT?	24 - 25
Resources	26
Cut Out and Keep Section	27 - 29



Innately Musical - Keeping the Box Unlocked

17th March 2005

Bridge to Music are hosting a one day conference sharing the experiences, research and evaluation of a pilot project and the impact on Sure Start families and nurseries in the Great Yarmouth area. The team will be joined on the day by their partner project from Northumbria University and international line-up, including some of the most prolific researchers and practitioners in the field of Early Years Music. Places are limited and early booking is advised. Conference price is £35 per person including lunch and refreshments. Contact via email at office@bridge2music.freemove.co.uk. A number of subsidised places are available. Please contact Rachel Elkin on 01493 743013 for more details.

Sustainable Development Fund

The aim of this fund is to help groups develop sustainable provision of services. It is envisaged that the groups will be using the fund to develop or enhance the services they currently operate, in order to achieve long term sustainability. The funding is for group-based care in disadvantaged areas and pockets of disadvantaged, but that there is a small amount available for other groups/settings. Any maintained, voluntary or private settings in Norfolk can apply and there are 3 main criteria:

1. Evidence of need for childcare in the area, evidence of demand for childcare and the commitment to providing one short term full-time equivalent place for Job Centre Plus customers (for a period of not less than one month)

2. Applications should be for £500 or more. An income and expenditure account and a balance sheet must be provided by the project.
3. The applicant must provide a business/financial plan showing how the funding forms part of a progressive move towards viability, and a detailed action plan of how this will happen.

More details are available from your local childcare development worker. Contact details are available on page 6.

Children Act

The Children Act 2004 received royal assent on 15 November 2004. The new legislation is accompanied by the launch of a major strategy document, Every Child Matters: Change for Children, which is intended to set the direction for the major programme of change in the delivery of children's services.

Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project

Clear evidence has emerged that the earlier children have access to high quality early education the better they perform later. These findings have been published by the EPPE project who collected a wide range of information on over 3,000 children, their parents, their home and the pre-school settings they attended.

Centres were selected from five regions (one of them- Norfolk) to ensure a wide ranging sample. These findings had a key influence in the governments 10 year strategy for children. The following is a summary of the key findings, and information about EPPE can be found at www.ioe.ac.uk/projects

Some of the key findings:

- Pre-school experience, compared to none, enhances children's development
- The duration of the experience is important, with an earlier start (before 3yrs) being related to better intellectual development
- Full-time attendance led to no better gains than part-time provision
- Disadvantaged children can benefit significantly especially if they attend centres that cater for children from mixed social backgrounds
- The quality of home learning promoted intellectual and social development in all children.
- The home learning environment is more important than parents social class. What parents do with their children is more important than who they are

Childcare Approval Scheme

Sure Start announced on 8 December 2004 the new Childcare Approval Scheme. The new scheme covers home based childcare and childminders catering solely for children aged over 7 (family members will not be eligible for the approval scheme).

Nestor Primecare Services LTD have been awarded the contract to run the Childcare Approval Service on behalf of the DfES and will be known as the Approval Body.

Childcarers can apply for approval from 4 January 2005, and approvals will be effective from 6 April 2005. The Childcare Approval Scheme Helpline is 0845 7678111. To download the information leaflet visit:

<http://www.childcareapprovalscheme.co.uk/index.asp>

or www.surestart.gov.uk/childcareapproval

Childcare and Extended Schools

In line with the Government's agenda, the development of childcare as an extended schools activity is a high priority. Following the recent conference, where the development teams organised and ran a series of workshops there are a series of twilight sessions planned. At these sessions the groups will look at the outcomes from the conference, discuss the issues around developing and running childcare and meet with their local development worker. All sessions will start at 4:00pm. If you are interested in any of the following session please contact Early Years & Childcare Team, Room 117, County Hall, Norwich, telephone 01603 22342. More details on page 13.

UK Study Week in Reggio Emilia

2nd - 6th May 2005

Reggio children have been able to offer a study week during 2005 for a visit by UK early childhood practitioners and advocates.

The programme will include a combination of presentations, meetings, slide shows and videos, and visits to schools and infant-toddler centres. Topics will include:

- The child and the child's school
- The school as a system of interactions and relationships
- The environment and the educational space
- 'progettazione': observation and documentation
- the hundred languages of children
- parents' involvement in the life of the school
- exchange of experiences among the study tour participants
- encountering the town of Reggio Emilia - a guided tour, etc.

More details of the programme will be available nearer the time.

The Participation Fee, which includes administration and support, will be £995. Other costs to bear in mind are flights, accommodation, lunch and evening meals. Please find on line application form on Sightlines website www.sightlines-initiative.com

Equality Bill

The government's proposed legislative programme for the next session of parliament, set out in the Queen's speech on 23rd November 2004 includes a single commission for Equality and Human Rights, replacing the existing commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission and Disability Rights Commission.

Parentline

Parentline Plus is a leading independent provider of services for parents. They encourage parents to see asking for help as a sign of strength, work with them to offer practical solutions and suggest ways to manage their particular situations and difficulties.



A Hands-On Experience by Us

Last Term Fen Border Sure Start invited childminders, pre-school workers and others who work with pre-school children to join in a craft day at Emneth Central Hall with the aim of producing a 'work of art'.

The thinking behind this piece of art was to give Early Years Practitioners the chance to explore their own creativity using a very simple idea that had previously been used with 360 children in a Hertfordshire Primary school.

Using recycled art works from the children in our care, we measured and cut to size strips, which were then used to make small collages. Re-using the children's artwork was a very important part of the project because it gave participants a chance to place their children's work into a different context, giving them ideas and inspiration to take back into their work environments. It's also a peculiar experience cutting up artwork your child has done or bought home, so this added to the challenges of the morning. All the materials used on the collages were employed in a children's workshop celebrating Food Fortnight being held that same afternoon. This was so participants had a hands-on opportunity to work in the same way, and with the same materials as the children.

The results were lovely and reflected, (as all creativity does), each individual that was in attendance that morning.

Norfolk Quality Kitemark Update

To date approximately 80 settings have been taking part in piloting the scheme. We are pleased to report that 14 settings have successfully completed and more are expected to complete by the end of March. Participants include childminders, schools, playgroups, nurseries and out of school care. In late 2004 a series of induction sessions took place where new starters received the updated version of the workbook and guidance developed from feedback by those involved in the pilot scheme. The scheme will be "officially" launched this term - look out for more details.

Forums 0.

Last issue we included a questionnaire about the future of the Forums. Thank you to all who filled this in and returned it. All forums dedicated a session to discuss the future of forums during November and December 2004

and January 2005. The Head of Early Years and Childcare, Marcelle Curtis, attended all of the sessions and gave an overview of current developments as an introduction to a wider debate. A report based on the outcomes of these discussions and the questionnaires will be presented to the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership Advisory Group for discussion and recommendations, and will be published in the next issue of Partnership News.

Norfolk's Neighbourhood Nurseries are all Open!

Congratulations to all concerned. It is fantastic news that all of Norfolk's Neighbourhood Nurseries are now open! Well done to all who have worked on these projects to ensure that they are now able to receive children. The training team have been working hard planning and promoting specific training and professional development programmes to support the staff in these settings. A member of the training team will be visiting all NNI's this term to talk to them about their staff programme. Visits have already started, but for more information about what is available please contact them on 01603 62 22 92.



Children's Centres Update

Work continues on the development of the first phase of Children's Centres and there are 10 planned for Norfolk. All the local plans have been agreed. One of the requirements of Children's Centres is that they make an appointment of a qualified teacher. A small working party within the Norfolk County Council Early Years team have been looking at the issues and working on the job descriptions etc. It is hoped that adverts will be able to be published in the Spring term.

Useful Numbers and Diary Dates

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

Future Forum Dates

Norwich Forum:

12th April 2005, 4.30pm at Thorpe Hamlet Sure Start
5th July 2005, 6.30pm at Bowthorpe Sure Start

Childminder Information Sessions

Wymondham High School, Folly Road, Wymondham

Tuesday 1 March 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Edith Cavell Room, The Annexe, County Hall,

Martineau Lane, Norwich

Monday 14 March 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Priory, Priory Plain, Great Yarmouth

Monday 21 March 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Cloverhill Village Hall, Humbleyard, Bowthorpe,

Norwich, NR5 9BN

Tuesday 12th April 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Alderman Jackson School, Marsh Lane, Gaywood,

King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 3AE

Thursday 14th April 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Seagulls Sure Start Centre, Magdalen Way, Gorleston

NR31 7BP

Monday 18th April 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Queensway Community Junior School, Hillary Road,

Thetford IP24 3DP

Tuesday 26th April 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Dereham Neatherd Community High School, Norwich Road, Dereham, NR20 3AX

Thursday 28th April 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Fakenham Junior School, Queens Road, Fakenham

NR21 8BN

Wednesday 4th May 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Edith Cavell Room, The Annexe, County Hall,

Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL

Monday 9th May 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Priory, Priory Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 1NJ

Wednesday 18th May 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Alderman Jackson School, Marsh Lane, Gaywood,

King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 3AE

Monday 23rd May 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Cromer Junior School, Norwich Road, Cromer,

Norfolk, NR27 0EX

Tuesday 24th May 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Diss High School, Walcot Road, Diss, IP22 4DH

Wednesday 8th June 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Seagulls Sure Start Centre, Magdalen Way, Gorleston

NR31 7BP

Monday 13th June 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Edith Cavell Room, The Annexe, County Hall,

Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL

Tuesday 14th June 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Queensway Community Junior School, Hillary Road,

Thetford IP24 3DP

Thursday 23rd June 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Alderman Jackson School, Marsh Lane, Gaywood,

King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 3AE

Monday 4th July 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Dereham Neatherd Community High School, Norwich Road, Dereham, NR20 3AX

Wednesday 6th July 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Earlham High School, Earlham Road, Norwich NR4

7NU

Wednesday 13th July 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Priory, Priory Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 1NJ

Thursday 14th July 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Holt Community Primary School, Norwich Road, Holt,

NR25 6SG

Wednesday 14th September 7.30pm to 9.30pm

The Edith Cavell Room, The Annexe, County Hall,

Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL

Thursday 15th September 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Alderman Jackson School, Marsh Lane, Gaywood,

King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 3AE

Wednesday 21st September 7.30pm to 9.30pm



Childcare Information Service

Welcome to the Spring update from the Childcare Information Service. We are pleased to welcome Tina Prince to the team as Childcare Information Service Manager. Tina joins us with a wealth of experience in the delivery and management of information. She has experience of management of large databases as well as a remit for Customer Care Standards, Freedom of Information and Data Protection issues. Tina has moved from a central role within the Children's Services and as such will be able to link the CIS more effectively to the wider NCC teams and to begin the integration of the CIS in the new look Children's Services. We wish her well in her new role and hope that she will be able to meet with as many of you as possible over the coming months.

The European Social Fund (ESF) project that we reported on last issue and that we were so heavily involved in, in the autumn term has progressed. We are pleased to report that we have finished our data collection process and achieved our target of speaking to and collecting data from 90 women thinking about or who had returned to work. The research is being collated and we look forward to being able to share the findings sometime in the summer term.

A key priority for the coming terms is to extend and widen the outreach remit of the CIS and to be in contact with more individuals and talk more widely about the services we have available. We hope to be able to visit as many new settings and groups as possible as well as support events and opportunities all over the county. However we will be looking closely at the work of the development teams and linking with their plans and developments. We will be supporting the development of Children's Centres and the awareness raising of childcare as an extended schools activity. We are still present at regular Jobcentre Plus clinics where we pick up and deal with a range of queries. Please contact the CIS if you would like support at an outreach event, and we look forward to seeing many of you over the coming year.

News from the Teams

Development Teams

We are entering 2005 with a clear objective and plan for the development of childcare places. We are busy with our current projects, assisting in the development of viable groups who will be able to offer parents and carers wider and greater choice for the care and education of their children.

During last quarter, October to December 2004, we developed 209 new childcare places.

This term we have run some very successful childcare in extended schools twilight sessions with a large number of schools attending and showing interest. We aim to build upon the initial interest shown, by helping these schools develop good quality childcare groups on their school sites.

We are linking closely with all our support teams within Early Years and Childcare and the wider County Council and Partnership to ensure that the places that we develop and open are of good quality and sustainable long term.

We are also continuing to support and advise existing groups throughout the county with their issues as they develop their services. A busy and exciting time!

Area Senco Team

We ended the Christmas term by saying farewell and thanks to Chris Baldwin, Area Senco in the West of the county. Chris has retired and plans to spend more time travelling and with her family - recently expanded with the arrival of a grandchild. The 0.5 FTE vacant post was advertised last term but we did not have sufficient applications to interview. However, what looked like misfortune turns out to have a brighter side,

as we find that we can afford a full-time post and are advertising for that in the new year. So in the longer term the West will have more Area Senco time.

As you may already know, Liz Player has been promoted to Senior Teacher and is co-ordinating Area Senco work in the West and North. She will help cover for Chris until we appoint, and other Area Sencos will help to make sure that Chris's settings continue to receive a service from us. If anyone is concerned about the cover arrangements please contact Liz (01692 409517) or Linda Shiner (01603 458191)

We are looking forward to expanding our training programme in 2005 - watch out for the new edition of Training News. Also in 2005 we plan to take forward a project, probably in the south east, focusing on children with communication, speech and language difficulties. We hope to appoint a speech and language therapist who will be able to offer advice, especially for those children where settings receive enhanced funding through the Pre-School Funding Panel.

The Area Senco team had a busy year in 2004 and we expect the same in 2005! We try to improve the service we provide and welcome your comments on what we offer. Recently we did a small scale review of our work in supporting the transfer of children from non maintained pre-schools into school and will be picking up on your feedback to that questionnaire. We are planning a questionnaire to all early education providers sometime in the Spring Term. We will send you a SAE so please help us to help you by returning the form.

Sarah Spall

is the new Childcare Development Officer for Early Years and Childcare and she is responsible for managing the Area Development Teams and takes the lead for the Children's Centres Agenda. In this issue we hear from her and find out a little more about her background, her short term aims and the longer term views she has

Sarah, tell us a little bit about your professional background?

I have a background in health. I originally trained as a Midwife and Health Visitor and have therefore been involved in the delivery of services right at the beginning of a child's life. I have seen how important it is to have the right services available to support new parents and children, and what a positive outcome that has on their future development.

From there I was involved in setting up the "Home Start" scheme in Norwich, supporting families in their local communities, and a programme of volunteer workers, themselves parents, who are available to offer help and support on a range of issues for families.

More recently I have been the Project Manager at one of the Sure Start Local Programmes, where my role has been to bring together a wide variety of services for families and children and to ensure it is able to work on a local level.

Your role is extremely challenging - how are you getting on?

Since I started I have been in the process of getting to grips with the enormity of the task that the Early Years and Childcare Team have to deliver. The wide variety of strands of the Sure Start Agenda, the partnerships that we are making and the role of the County Council in delivering this for the people in Norfolk. Having said that I feel that now I am on top of that and wanting to get on with the job!

What made you sure that this role was for you?

Having worked in a variety of services and most recently having been Programme Manager within a local Sure Start Centre I am convinced

of the importance of offering childcare places to local families, and of bringing services related to children, together in a one-stop shop. This is the ethos of the Children's Centre Agenda and I want to be at the forefront of developing and delivering that for families in Norfolk.

What are your short term goals?

My short term goals are basically ensuring that we are developing and delivering new childcare places by 2006. My role is to ensure that Norfolk County Council helps to develop quality, affordable, accessible places, which will help parents back into work or training. We need to help projects succeed and become sustainable long term. It is an enormous task, but we have a wealth of professionals who are in the business of delivering this type of work.

And your longer term ambitions?

The work we do today and in the coming months will ensure the long term success of the projects, and my longer term aim, is to see a Children's Centre in every community. This development will aim to deliver good quality care and education for children, language and speech therapy, health advice and guidance and

opportunities to pursue careers and training, available in the community for the community.

Our work is also integral with the extended schools agenda and the close links with the development of childcare places. This is key and it will be one of my main areas of focus.

So with the free time you have - what do you like doing?

Free time?! Last year I had my first baby, Rupert, and my spare time is largely taken up with him. When I am able, I love to be outside and go walking and sailing.

What is the biggest challenge you face?

I suppose like many, many other women out there, my biggest challenge is combining work and family life. I have a challenging job and a fantastic family. Given that, I feel I am able to fully appreciate all the issues around the Sure Start Agenda and as well as empathising with the issues, being involved in creating solutions to them.



Old MacDonald - Good News Story

Jobcentre Plus Joins Forces with Norfolk County Council to Fill Childcare Vacancies

Jobcentre Plus and Norfolk County Council have teamed up to offer a wider audience for the County's childcare vacancies. During the last 12 months providers have seen a significant increase in the number of candidates applying for vacant posts. One particular success story is the Old MacDonald's Children Centre in Banham, which opened in January 2005.

Old MacDonald's Children Centre is a brand new purpose built 40 place nursery, funded by the New Opportunities Fund and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), set in a beautiful rural location.

Maxine Germany, a Partner in the Old MacDonald's Children's Centre alongside her sister-in-law Lisa Germany said: "Using Jobcentre Plus and the vacancies supplied to them by Norfolk County Council meant we saved money by not having to advertise in newspapers. We were able to see candidates who were interested in working with children. All three main posts were filled in this way."

Louise Gedge, Childcare Partnership Manager for Jobcentre Plus in Norfolk commented: "Originally Maxine had problems recruiting for these jobs, but when the vacancies were advertised nationally on the Jobcentre Plus website, many more people were able to access and apply for them".

One of the successful candidates who has just started work at Old MacDonald's Children Centre is 21 year old Matthew Statton. He was offered the post of room leader. Matthew says "I needed to relocate to either Cambridgeshire or Norfolk so I used Jobseeker Direct as well as the jobpoints at my local Jobcentre Plus office at Borehamwood.

I found this service easy to use and was able to find exactly the type of job in the right location I needed. I don't think I would have found this position as quickly or easily without the help and support of staff at Jobcentre Plus"

Throughout Norfolk, via the Jobcentre Plus partnership, online and in the local papers, local provider vacancies are published. A Vacancy

Matching Service where provider jobs are matched to potential candidates is also offered. These searches can be specific to the person, and relate to pay, area, qualification etc. For more information on the Vacancy Matching Service or to advertise your childcare jobs through the Jobcentre Plus job points, please call the Childcare Information Service on 01603 62 22 92.



Other Useful Websites

www.norfolk.gov.uk

www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com

www.dwp.gov.uk



Partner Focus



Childminding Matters support registered childminders and parents all over Norfolk through our telephone advice line, conferences, seminars and our free termly newsletter, which is sent to registered childminders. We also set up approved childminding networks to give childminders an opportunity to enjoy extra support, national approval under the "Children Come First" Kitemark and guidance to become accredited in providing early education for 3 and 4 year olds.

Childminding Network "Sing Along"

The Norfolk Childminding Network Cluster groups from Gorleston and Great Yarmouth met on Monday 8th November for a special morning of music for the children in their care and raised £50 for Children in Need in the process!

As you can see from the photograph, everyone enjoyed getting together to sing songs and play instruments. The "sing along" was held at the family centre on Gordon Road, Southtown and organised by Gorleston and Great Yarmouth's Network Co-ordinator, Jackie Leech. Jackie hopes to make such events a regular feature of the network calendar.

Photo taken by
Bill Darnell,
Great Yarmouth Mercury

Childminding Conference

Childminding Matters annual county conference for childminders will be held on Saturday the 11th June 2005, in Norwich. Booking forms will be sent out to all registered childminders in the next edition of Childminding Matters' newsletter, "Between You & Me". There is a free crèche and lunch is provided. Our annual conference provides a great opportunity to meet other childminders and share good practice.



Support for Childminding Groups

Two new part-time posts, have been created to support the work of the busy County Liaison Officers. Part of the Childminding Support Worker's role will be to provide greater support to the childminding groups around the county. Initially, they will be getting in touch with the group contacts and identifying any changes of details. They then hope to visit groups to find out what support the groups would like - e.g. ideas for sustaining membership, business advice and other information. If you would like to join a group, start a group or find out more, please contact Jo Paterson on 01603 745205.

WEETU, Working with Childminding Matters to Support Childminders

WEETU (Women's Employment Enterprise and Training Unit) offers childminders two types of loan to help them set up or develop their business.

An interest free mini-loan is available to new childminders to help meet registration costs, repayable when the Start-up Grant is received. Application forms can be obtained from WEETU and the loan cheques could be released within two weeks.

A loan of up to £1000 is available via WEETU's Full Circle programme to help childminders to develop their businesses and the programme provides additional business support e.g. for writing a business plan.

For more information contact Tricia Davies on 01508 491776, or email: tricia.davies@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,

e mail: info@childmindingmatters.org.uk
website: www.childmindingmatters.org.uk



Hello's and Goodbye's

At Christmas, Christine Clark retired as Chair of the County committee, after serving for 7 years. She was given a fantastic "send off" with local, regional and national colleagues attending. Christine has not disappeared completely and will continue to represent the Alliance on the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and Early Years and Childcare Forums.

We welcome Margaret Dewsbury who stands in as chair until the AGM in the Summer. Margaret knows the Alliance well, having previously been county chair and a tutor. She is enthusiastic and committed and is looking forward to working with us. Margaret and Christine can be contacted via the resource centre on 01603 767525.

In November our Admin Assistant Sue Richards moved on. Many thanks to Sue for all her hard work and we wish her well for the future. Her post will be advertised in the New Year.

Parent and Toddler Projects

Lloyds TSB and the Network fund projects end in February 2005. Thanks to Sharon Bradfield and Diane Stead for their work and commitment over the past year. From March 2005 toddler groups needing help are advised to ring the resource centre on 01603 767525.

The Community Fund three year project for North and West Norfolk is progressing well. Parent and Toddler Development Officers, Kerri Fryer, Colette Wilkinson and Jo Parnell are visiting groups to help with Health and Safety issues and offering free family workshops.

Future Events

North East Coastal Branch are holding their **SUMMER FUN DAY** on **THURSDAY JUNE 16th** in **NORTH WALSHAM**. Other Branch and County events are being finalised - Look out for details in our next newsletter.

National Alliance News

Feeding Young Imaginations - Nutritional Guidance For Under Fives

All members should have received the new Nutritional guidance for the under fives booklet

The booklet has been developed in partnership with the British Nutrition Foundation. It focuses on nutritional information on providing a balanced diet for young children, as well as practical tips for meals and snacks.

This booklet is also available on line: www.pre-school.org.uk/food

DIARY DATE:
The Alliance
National AGM
is Friday June
17th 2005 in
London.





The Government's 10 Year Strategy for Children

On 2 December 2004 Chancellor Gordon Brown published his pre-budget report. Alongside this the ten-year childcare strategy, 'Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare' was published

The strategy aims to make more coherent the initiatives developed over the last 7 years as part of the national Childcare Strategy, to re-align and increase the funding streams allocated to childcare and to meet both parents' needs for flexible, affordable childcare and children's needs for high quality provision. The government's headline objectives for the strategy are: choice, availability, quality and affordability.

The main points are:

Choice

- Increase in paid maternity leave to 9 months from 2007 and 12 months by end of next Parliament
- Right to transfer part of this leave to the father by end of next Parliament
- Increase in the number of children's centres to 2,600 by 2008 and 3,500 by 2010

Availability

- New duty on local authorities by 2008 to secure over time enough childcare places to meet local demand
- Increase in hours of funded nursery education for 3 and 4 year olds from 12.5 for 33 weeks of the year to 15 for 38 weeks by 2010 and, eventually 20 for 38 weeks.
- An out of school childcare place for all 3 - 14 year olds from 8 - 6 every weekday by 2010

Quality

- All full day care settings to be professionally led (graduate, level 5)
- Creation of a 'transformation fund' of 125 million each year from 2006 to support investment by local authorities in high quality, affordable, flexible and sustainable childcare provision
- Radical workforce reform
- Reform of the regulation and inspection regime

Affordability

- Increase in limits of childcare element of Working Tax Credit to £300 per week from 1st April 2005. Maximum proportion of costs that can be claimed goes up from 70% to 80% from 2006 with plans to increase this eventually

To download the 10-year strategy visit:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre_budget_report/prebud_pbr04/assoc_docs/prebud_pbr04_adchildcare.cfm

Ofsted - What's Available and Where Do You Get It?

Inspections Without Notice

Ofsted will be contacting all childcare providers early in the new year to inform them of the changes to future early years inspections. In March Ofsted will write to all 106,700 day nurseries and childminders to help them prepare for the new style inspections that will come into place from April next year.

From April 2005 Ofsted will:

- Inspect nurseries with no notice period and childminders will receive a few days notice to ensure they are in as they often take children out during the day.
- Introduce a new straightforward grading scale of outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate. The same scale is being introduced for nursery education for three and four year olds, schools and colleges.
- Put providers judged inadequate into one of two categories. Those with capacity to improve will be inspected again within 6 to 12 months. And those who need enforcement action to make them improve will receive a follow-up inspection no longer than three months after the previous one, or in serious cases even earlier. In extreme circumstances we will cancel registration.
- Ask providers to fill out a self evaluation form. The purpose of the form will be to help childcare providers think about the quality of care that they provide and to give inspectors information to help their discussions with providers during their inspection.

- Inspect those childcare providers that provide satisfactory or better provision less often so inspectors can focus on providers about whom we have concerns. Also reduce the number of inspections to those that provide both childcare and education. To help Ofsted do this the Government is currently considering whether to consult on extending the maximum period between inspections from two years to three.

Before making these changes Ofsted consulted provider representatives, local authorities and a wide range of stakeholders. Details of the consultation are available on the Ofsted website at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=3745>

Childcare Approval Scheme

This scheme will enable parents to access financial support to help pay for nannies.

What the Scheme does:

- Verifies that the nanny has a childcare qualification or has attended an induction course, which is deemed appropriate
- Verifies that the applicant has undergone appropriate first aid training within three years prior to the date of approval
- Carries out an enhanced CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check including a POCA (Protection of Children's Act) list check. The childcare approval body then assesses whether the CRB disclosure or entries on the POCA list contain information that would make the applicant unsuitable to work with children
- The scheme applies only to childcare in England.

Nestor Primecare Services Ltd has been awarded the contract to run the Childcare Approval Service on behalf of the DfES and will be known as the

Approval Body. The scheme will operate on a cost recovery basis charging an approval fee of £96 including VAT (this includes the CRB charge for an enhanced disclosure.)

Applications will be accepted from 4th January 2005 although the scheme itself does not come into effect until 6th April 2005. For further information please telephone the helpline on 0845 7678 111 or visit

www.surestart.gov.uk/childcareapproval

Please note that Ofsted does not administer the scheme.

End of the Home Childcarer Approval Scheme

Take-up of this Ofsted run scheme has been limited and the DfES have now announced that this scheme, where Ofsted approves registered childminders as home childcarers, will come to an end. Ofsted will continue to have responsibility for existing home childcarers until 31st December 2005 but they will not accept new applications after 6th April 2005. DfES have said that all existing Home Childcarers will be contacted.



The 2004-2006 Sure Start Agenda: where are we?

How are we doing?

We are approaching the half-way point of the Sure Start Agenda 2004 - 06. What follows is a summary of achievements to date and a look forward to what we hope to achieve over the next year.

The Sure Start Agenda is broken down into 4 clear priority areas. Many of these areas of work continue to do well and build on the work, which has been achieved collectively to date.

1. Integrated services for young children and families

Early Education

A funded half time place at an early years setting registered to provide Foundation Stage education became a statutory entitlement for all 3 year olds in April 2004. Whilst all 3 & 4 year olds are entitled to a funded half time place and sufficient places are available across the County there are still some areas where the provision is not easily accessible. The intention is to ensure that there are sufficient places for all 3 & 4 year olds across the county and that parents have a good choice of providers to meet the needs of their children.

Children's Centres

Providing the core services of a children's centre and build on to provide fully integrated services. Providing integrated services means bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support services. So far Norfolk has one designated Children's Centres, one at Thorpe Hamlet. Further work is ongoing towards nine more centres due to open before 31 March 2006. All of the developments build on existing resources in Sure Start local programmes, Neighbourhood Nurseries, Maintained Nursery Schools and Early Excellence Centre. By 31 March 2005 12 Neighbourhood Nurseries will have opened, providing affordable childcare in areas of disadvantage. In support there will be a wide and varied training programme, which will assist the qualification and development of staff in these settings.



Introduction

Sure Start is a Government Programme, which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by:

- Increasing the availability of childcare for all children
- Improving the health, education and emotional development of young children
- Supporting parents in their role as parents and their aspirations towards employment

2. Creating and sustaining childcare

Creating new childcare places

Childcare provision can be with a childminder, a day nursery, an after school club or a holiday playscheme. The area development teams lead this ongoing development. A key priority is the development and involvement of childcare as part of the extended schools agenda. A key conference took place in December 2004 for teaching staff & governors. A workshop was held on childcare and issues raised. Development teams are to follow up on the outcomes and have set a series of twilight sessions where teachers and governors can find out about how to develop childcare on their school site.

Work is also ongoing in helping existing & new providers develop extended childcare services for young children i.e in pre-schools, local authority nursery schools and nursery classes, private provision.

Norfolk has been working hard ensuring that arrangements are in place for the management of the out of school childcare provision. Guidance for the Sure Start funding stream and the application process are available through the development teams and contain a clear set of criteria.

Childcare for teenage parents

Key to the delivery of childcare for teenage parents is the development of strategy for teenage parents and strong links with other agencies. 2005 will see the continuing development of links with the teenage pregnancy strategy and a strong local presence with Sure Start local programmes enabling the continued success of childminding networks and their ability to reach teenage parents. Childcare Information Service's continue to promote the Care 2 Learn programme which support childcare costs for teenage parents wishing to return to work or enter education.

Support the recruitment and retention of childminders

Childminding matters deliver this part of the Sure Start Agenda for the local authority. There is widespread support for childminders throughout the county as they progress from initial interest to full registration. Recruitment of new childminders and the offer of taster sessions and career and training advice. Start Up grants and ongoing sustainability funds are widely promoted as is the information, advice and guidance of local county liaison officers. Childminding Matters also work hard to promote, train and advise individuals in Norfolk about the possibility of becoming home carers. Currently this is in its infancy.



Working with partners it is Norfolk County Council which plans and co-ordinates these services for the county to meet the 2004-06 targets set out in the National Sure Start Guidance

In 2004 Norfolk Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) has evolved in to a smaller advisory group. The group meets regularly with a clear set of members and terms of reference.

Ensure the sustainability of childcare provision

Norfolk works hard to offer childcare businesses a wide range of advice and support services. These include monitoring of the childcare development, business, marketing, training, recruitment, childcare information services and the guidance of a range of professionals looking at the quality of the provision itself. The Sustainable Development Funding stream is also available to offer providers crucial funding to support the development of services to ensure long-term sustainability.

Offer business support to childcare providers

Norfolk has a Business support officer in post that has specific responsibility to help childcare providers become viable and sustainable businesses. The business support officer delivers advice, training and mentoring as well as a sign poster to other key business organisations and funding sources. Support is also available through the local out-of-school clusters, where local groups can receive advice and also share information and good practice.

Promote affordable childcare to help parents into work

Development teams and the Childcare Information Service have put key strategies in place to ensure that accurate information about working tax credits are available to parents. Links with the local inland revenue service have been made and information seminars delivered to childcare providers throughout Norfolk.

"Ready reckoners" designed to help parents calculate tax benefits have been widely distributed and tax information packs with online based information has been given out to childcare providers.

Continuation of the provision of information

Key to the development of good quality affordable childcare places is the continuation of information to parents and providers. This includes advice and training to prospective childminders and day care providers, on the pathway to registration and beyond.

The set of improvement objectives for the Childcare Information Service, to aim for model standards by 2006 focus on the increased awareness and take-up of services by parents, improvement of the quality and consistency of CIS services and greater parental satisfaction with the information provided and increased accessibility of information.

Also important is the development of a strong local marketing strategy, that not only seeks to meet the model standards and the ongoing development of service requirements, but that makes sense locally to communities and the County.



3. Ensuring quality, access and inclusion

Support children's learning and development

All settings delivering Foundation Stage are given support from a team of Link Teachers and Area Sencos. There is a clear strategy which assists in the identification and support of children with special needs and disabled children

The pre-school funding panel initially developed to look at support for pre-school aged children has been extended to include school aged children accessing childcare provision.

Work to increase the use of libraries by families and young children

Work with the library service is ongoing with key focus on the promotion of this service to parents and young children. Links have been made to ensure that the library service can act as a source of informal information. The main links with libraries is through the provision of information by the CIS and by SSLPs.

4. Developing the workforce

Recruit new childcare workers

Since April 2004 the recruitment strategy has been a key focus. The new recruitment team are working hard to ensure that the strategic vision for Norfolk can be translated to a clear local strategy to support the recruitment and retention of new childcare workers. This strategy is shared with key local partners. Regular taster sessions are being offered to interested individuals with advisors on hand to offer more in-depth information and career orientation. Strong emphasis is placed on tracking and monitoring to ensure that there is a low "drop-out" rate and that local support and advice are available.

Support in finding work

This is offered in Norfolk through the vacancy matching service where job seekers are matched against local provider vacancies. Early indications are that the users of the service find it helpful, cost-effective and for providers are filling vacancies, with over 1/4 of all jobs filled by candidates put forward from the Vacancy Matching Service

All activity is supported by a strong and effective marketing campaign, with a presence on local radio, in local press, on county wide buses, via roadshows and online web based activity.

Joint working with Jobcentre Plus and the Childcare Partnership Manager is up and running and there is specific concentration on minority and hard to reach groups.

Support the growth and development of the childcare sector ensuring level 2 and level 3 qualified individuals

There is a comprehensive training programme available throughout Norfolk, which has recently been published. It has a wide and varied range of course to ensure that level 2 and 3 courses can be accessed throughout the County.

Key emphasis is based also on the understanding and implementation of the Birth to Three Matters Framework and the development of this in our childcare settings

There are courses aimed to support the National Standards for registration such as child protection, first aid and health and safety. There are also are courses designed to support professional development form a key part of the training programme and help to improve the quality in childcare groups.

In this phase of delivery of the Sure Start Agenda there is a clear integration of the Foundation Stage training programme and the advertisement and delivery is fully part of the wider programme on offer. Norfolk is working hard to ensure that all foundation stage practitioners are able to access a minimum of 4 days training a year.

The complete programme is available in "Training News" which lists all the courses and costs for the current programme April 05 - March 06.

...Training Update...

Birth to 3 Matters

We have now begun delivery of training around the county, to support settings using the Birth to 3 Framework. Three awareness raising sessions have been held so far, accessed by 75 practitioners. Feedback has been very positive, the message being given was that the Framework should not be a watered down version of the Foundation Stage but rather that it should be valued for itself, as it recognises nought to three as a particular stage. Follow on training is being offered to look more closely at the aspects and components of the Framework. If you are interested in accessing this training then please refer to the 2005/6 edition of Training News.

Birth to 3 Information Sharing

This is the opportunity for you to ask practitioners and other professionals about using the Birth to 3 Framework, share good practice and discuss problems you may be experiencing.

Q: What play and experiences can I offer children under three in my setting?

A: For young children to feel competent they need to be able to take the lead and direct their own play. Therefore, planned play opportunities and resources must be based on children's interests and closely matched to their skills and abilities. Providing open ended materials, objects and resources readily available in the setting e.g mirrors, will allow the children to develop at their own pace and allow for repetition.

Q: Should I change activities every day?

A: Very young children will learn a great deal through repetition; having the opportunity to experience the same resource or activity over and over again. It encourages children to become increasingly independent and make their own choices. So, ideally, no, you will not need to change activities every day.

Q: How closely should the Birth to 3 Framework link with the Foundation Stage?

A: The Birth to 3 Framework is not intended to be a watered down version of the Foundation Stage, and it is not appropriate for settings to be using the Foundation Stage curriculum as a basis for the under threes. Birth to 3 is not a curriculum, but a Framework and should be valued as such.

Q: So, what should I be thinking about when planning for the under three's?

A: Use the resources you have available, making sure young children have the opportunity for repetition. Think about their stage of development and give support by offering flexible routines. Look out for the training available in Training News if you would like further support in using the Birth to 3 Framework.

Look out for further comments in the next edition of Partnership News. To include your comments please e-mail the Training Team on eytraining@norfolk.gov.uk

Training Update

We have some last minute availability for a few courses running in March. We have listed them below. If you are interested in booking a place on any of these or want details of other courses available please contact the training Team on 01603 622292.

An introduction to Special Educational Needs for Childminders.

This one day course is designed specifically for Childminders and Homecarers. It gives you the opportunity to gain an understanding of Additional or Special Educational Needs. It explores what is meant by SEN, inclusion, relevant legislation and the SEN Code of Practice.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
2131	Alderman Jackson School, Kings Lynn	5th March 05	9.30-3.00

Why Can't I eat worms?

This is a half day course on behaviour management for all childcare workers. It will explore what is unacceptable behaviour, the reasons why children behave in an unacceptable way, observing and assessing children's behaviour, managing unwanted behaviour and promoting positive behaviour.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0754	South Green Hoe Middle, Swaffham	5th March 05	9.30-1.30

Bridge to Music

This is a fun, practical workshop for all early years and childcare practitioners, but particularly those working with children under 5. It aims to give participants confidence when offering music activities within the setting, and ideas for developing and providing the necessary tools and resources.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0823	Bell Hotel, Thetford	9th March 05	6.30-9.00

Personal Development

This workshop is aimed at all childcare workers who wish to improve their own personal and work development. It will enable participants to set their own personal goals, develop self confidence and help in planning career development. Topics covered include interview techniques, writing and developing a c.v and career development.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0862	Diss High School	10th March 05	7.00-9.00

Basic Food Hygiene

This course enables all childcare workers providing snacks, food and drink within their childcare setting to meet recognised health and safety regulations. Having successfully completed a 30 question multiple choice assessment, applicants will receive the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Basic Food Hygiene Certificate

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0763	The Worship Centre Bowthorpe, Norwich	17th March 05	9.30-5.00



Child Protection

The aim of this course is to raise awareness of child protection and the need for S.A.F.E. practice when working with children. It will enable all childcare workers to become familiar with the policies of the Norfolk Area Child Protection Committee and of their role within these, and their own organisation's policies and procedures.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0788	Cromer Junior School	23rd March 05	7.00-9.30

Story Boards

This workshop aims to give underpinning knowledge to practitioners currently studying NVQs in Early Years Care and Education level 2/3. Pictures speak a thousand words - this workshop looks at how to gather ideas and resources to create original or traditional stories using visual aids, from which the story can be shared using your own words.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0867	Nth Walsham High School	24th March 05	7.00-9.00

ADHD (for Childminders)

This course is designed specifically for childminders and homecarers. It will give participants the opportunity to gain an understanding of ADHD. It will explore what is ADHD, the three key areas of difficulty, the danger of diagnosis, a brief account of medication, positive behaviour management, positive reframing, working with parents and support and resources.

Course Code	Venue	Date	Time
0753	Cromer Junior School	19th March 05	9.30-1.30
0749	South Green Hoe Middle Swaffham	26th March 05	9.30-1.30

There are a number of support services available to providers of Early Years and Childcare Services, but sometimes it may seem confusing for settings to know which person to contact with regard to certain queries. In order to help you make the right decision we have put together information on the roles of Link Teachers and Area SENCOs so you can see at a glance how they can help.

The Role of the Link Teacher

Link Teachers are qualified teachers with experience and expertise in working with children in the Foundation Stage. The purpose of the job is to enhance the quality, care and education for young children by providing advice support and training to practitioners registered as part of Norfolk Early Years development and Childcare Plan.

How can the Link Teacher team help?

- By having a clear caseload of settings to support on a regular basis.
- By offering support to new settings.
- By regularly visiting throughout the year.
- By listening to ideas and thoughts about practice and training needs.

Advice can also be offered on:

- The Foundation Stage Curriculum and activities.
- The learning environment, resources and room planning.
- Pre Ofsted preparation.
- Post Ofsted action planning.
- Resources from The Early Years Resource Base can be delivered and support for their use offered.
- Observation and Assessment.
- Planning and Record Keeping.
- Involving and working with parents.
- Staff deployment.

- Care standards.
- Adapting the programme and the environment to include all children.

Link Teachers can also support by:

- Modelling activities and resources.
- Observe sessions and give supportive feedback.
- Work alongside practitioners in settings.
- Suggest sources of information or support.
- Share successful ideas.

Training Support through:

- Supporting and enabling the local clusters.
- Attending staff meetings to look at specific areas of learning.
- Running workshop sessions for practitioners and parents/carers.
- With your support identify future training needs and the development of the training programme.

Individual Link Teachers may offer specific skills from their own training and practice. They may also be able to offer other support at your request if it is linked to Curriculum development. Do not be afraid to ask for your needs to be catered for.

The Role of the Area SENCO

Area SENCOs are qualified teachers with specialist training and skills in working with children with additional or special educational needs. The overall role of the Area SENCO is to empower all those working in early education settings to respond to the diverse needs of children in their care and to ensure the inclusion of all children.

The main responsibilities of the job are:

- To offer advice and support on identification, assessment and intervention for children with additional or special needs
- To support the setting SENCO in drawing up and implementing the setting's SEN policy and in working within the SEN Code of Practice

- To help early years providers develop their knowledge and skills through training, both on an individual setting and wider basis
- To build links between settings, the LEA, Social and Health services and to facilitate partnership work between parents / carers, setting staff and support agencies

How We Work

Like Link Teachers, Area Sencos are assigned to work with geographical clusters of early education settings.

- We offer general consultation visits about SEN, inclusion and behaviour related issues.
- We respond to requests for advice on individual children referred to us, and help settings prepare Individual Education Plans.
- We help setting Sencos plan and run statutory reviews for children with Statements.
- Area Senco support assistants can provide regular short term support to help include a child and help develop strategies to establish effective practice.
- We work with settings and parents / carers to plan transition for children with additional needs moving into school.
- We run Behaviour Forums, helping settings share information and disseminate good practice in working with children whose behaviour is problematic.
- We run an annual Conference for setting Sencos and deliver local training sessions.
- We have a small but increasing resource library of books and some equipment which can be loaned to help in your work with children with additional needs.

Area Sencos and the support assistants are there to help providers meet the needs of all the children in the setting. If you have any questions about what we do or want further information please contact your Area SENCO.

Vacancy Matching Service

The Vacancy Matching Service scooped the best Advertising Campaign Award at last years annual Archant Recruitment Awards. It has been great to gain regional recognition.

Feedback from providers has been very positive with over 30% of all vacancies now being filled through the Vacancy Matching Service. One issue that has arose however, is the perception that the Vacancy Matching Service offers the same type of service that you would expect from an Employment Agency. Currently, the main benefit offered by the Vacancy Matching Service is that it saves advertising costs as the Recruitment Team search the database of candidates for matches and advertise your vacancy on your behalf. The service does not however, vet each candidate held on our database and this will be the providers' responsibility.

So far we have over 400 candidates who are actively seeking work within childcare on our database. We are continuing to implement procedures, which ensure that we have up-to-date information and our service continues to be as effective and useful as possible.



"I was told by my former employers that my hours were due to be cut so I began to seek alternative employment. I started at the Sure Start website and found a phone number for Norfolk Early Years and Childcare. I called up and they directed me to their website: www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com

The site was very easy to navigate and I found a vacancy for a Manager at Old Macdonald's Children's Centre, which I applied for and was appointed! I really like the way the vacancies are categorised into 'Managers,' 'Supervisors' etc, it makes it much easier to look at the jobs you are interested in. I still use the site now and view the jobs each week - just to keep abreast of local salaries etc!"

Jayne Boxall - Manager, Old Macdonald's Children's Centre.



Little Bunnies Day Nursery have used the Early Years Vacancy Matching Service and have found it to be an excellent service which has resulted in the recruitment of good quality qualified staff at no expense to the nursery. The Early Years & Childcare Team provided prompt service and consistently kept up to date with the recruitment progress with follow up calls. They were able to adapt their service to meet the staffing needs and requirements of the nursery. Little Bunnies Day nursery would not hesitate to use this service again when next recruiting and thank Early Years for their good work.

Donna Jarvis - Proprietor

The NEW Recruitment Website

www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com

In line with taking our recruitment service forward, we have developed an interactive vacancy bulletin board, which will replace the Word document listing we currently use on www.norfolkchildcare.info

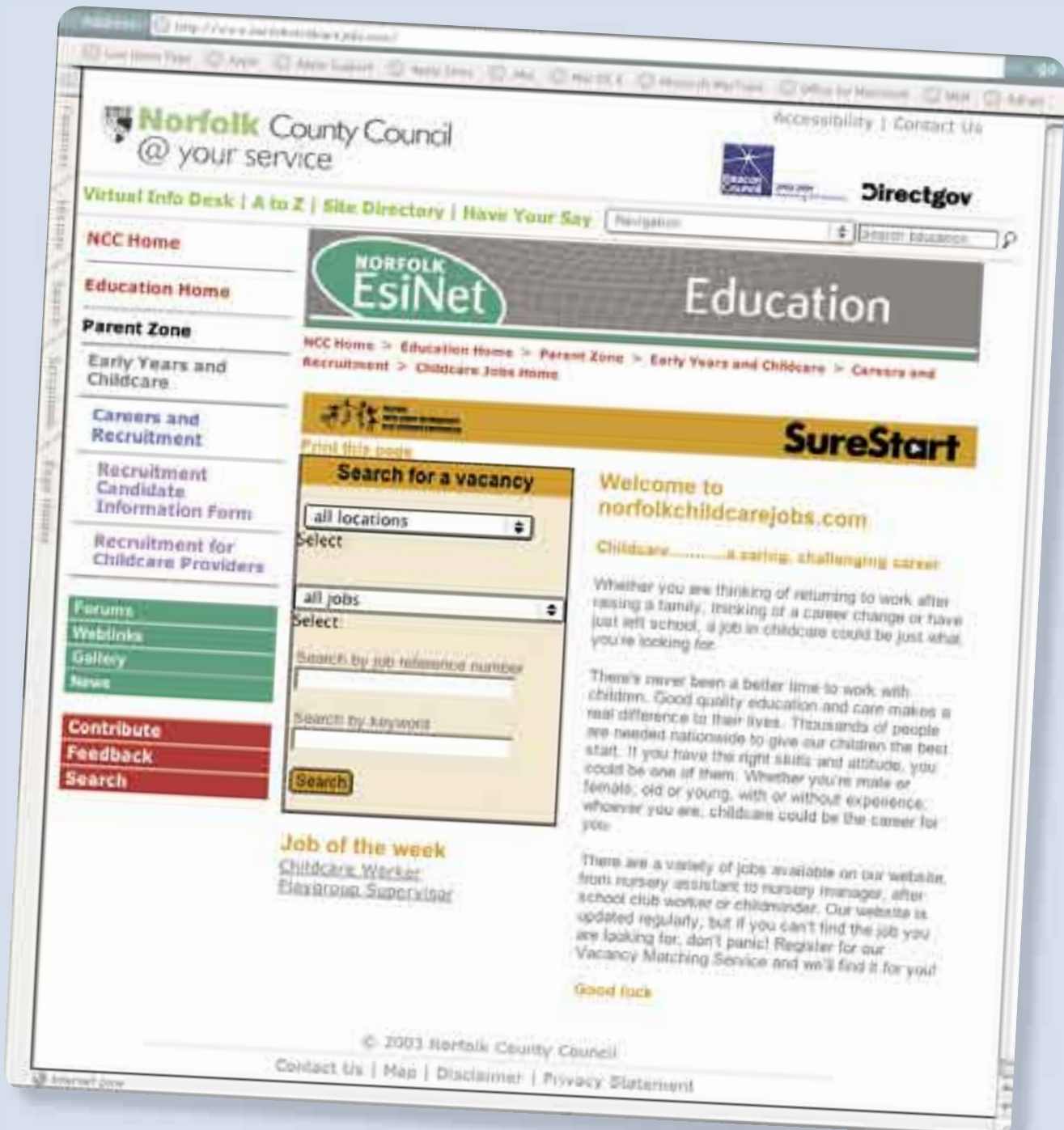
Candidates will be able to log on, search for vacancies by area, job type or reference number, view vacancies, and where a provider email is provided, apply online using a standardised form, which replicates the normal information

supplied on a CV or application form. When a candidate cannot apply online, the normal reply details are given e.g. telephone number, postal address. With this online facility available we would encourage all providers to supply email addresses, as this will standardise the application process, making candidates easily comparable.

Vacancies will be uploaded instantly and there will no longer be a 12 noon deadline for the following weeks bulletin. However, we must

stress the importance of returning your evaluation forms as if an evaluation form is not received for any outstanding closed vacancies, we will not be able to upload any new vacancies on to the recruitment database or website.

The website will also highlight job(s) of the week. We will use this to promote vacancies that have proved difficult in filling and this will work on a first come first served basis.



Every Child Matters - A Brighter Future for Children and Young People in Norfolk

Project Update January 2005

The aim of the Every Child Matters sub-project teams over the last four months was to provide the new Director of Children's Services with information and options to take the integration of services forward.

Lisa Christensen formally takes up her post on February 1st and that will mark the start of the new Children's Services department at the County Council.

This briefing summarises the teams' updates and sets out their plans for Phase Four. To get more information on the individual sub-projects visit www.norfolk.gov.uk click on Every Child Matters Update where you will find a copy of this report. By clicking on the words in bold you will get through to the individual team reports.

Work on The Vision - The Vision sets out the aspirations of Every Child Matters. The wording and message of The Vision was agreed after extensive consultation with stakeholders, practitioners and children and young people themselves. We are currently consulting on an image for that Vision and a programme to promote it.

To see our consultation in full - and we encourage everyone to take part - log on to www.norfolk.gov.uk and follow the links to the Every Child Matters survey.

Examining our Resources - this project was commissioned to get a sound baseline understanding of the current resources (including human, financial, property etc) in relation to all agencies working with children and young people aged 0 to 19 in Norfolk.

In Phase Four this information will be refined and used to support the development of successful preventative and integrated working.

Realistic Outcomes for Children and Young People over the Next Five Years

From that has come a logic model which will now form the basis of further discussion, in particular at a number of multi-agency workshops for some 200 participants. Participants from the first workshop will also be promoting the logic modelling approach within their own organisation.

Making Better Informed Decisions

They reported to the Board that they have now developed an information sharing charter - a high level statement of intent - which will be put to all major childcare services for adoption. Work on detailed information sharing protocol is being held back until Government guidance is received in March.

The board agreed the approach to the directory of services for children and young people searching existing databases via a new enquiry screen.

Work to devise a new Common Assessment Framework will go forward in line with Government guidance, which is expected in March, and in the light of 'trailblazing' authorities.

Planning and Commissioning Services Jointly in the Future

These proposals will need the formal agreement from agencies but work is proceeding on developing a timetable and a mechanism to establish the partnerships.

Plans are also underway to increase the involvement of children, young people, their families and carers in shaping service provision including conferences for young people during this month and next month.

Workforce Development - there is still a lot of progress to be made on workforce development and it is vital to get it right if we are to secure a co-ordinated and effective approach which ensures the achievement of the highest standards of service.

A main objective for the team was to establish a ten-year broad vision plan for workforce development in Norfolk. There has been some detailed work to collect information on the current workforce profile within the county as well as to draw together all the workforce related activity on a national scale, which will also be a major factor in progressing work but more work is needed.

Pursuing 'Quick Wins'

Work on one of the identified 'Quick wins' - the development of the Children's Service Directory - is well underway and will be continued. Ultimately, it will provide a single directory that draws together information about all the organisations involved in children-related service provision.

The pilot 'community' at Methwold which brought together as many local practitioners as possible to explore practical and operational issues around planning and delivery of services in areas of sparse population will also carry on.

How we will measure our success - a recurring issue raised by agencies involved in planning and delivering services to children and young people is the plethora of performance indicators, measures and targets to which they work.

To date they have been working on mapping current performance measures, examining the implications of the measures proposed for the new inspection regime and exploring the possibility of using an overarching measure of well-being to map our progress in securing positive outcomes for children over time.

What's Happening in our Foundation Stage Settings!

Drayton Village Pre-School - Staff and families at Drayton Village Pre-School are celebrating the opening of their new outdoor area. The children now have access and can explore and investigate the natural environment. The outdoor area has really enhanced aspects of KUW and heightened their curiosity, observation and questioning skills with the first hand experiences. They were so busy and intent on their play that they didn't even want to stop for a snack!!

Sunbeams Pre-School, Bramerton - Outstanding practice -Snack times are happy and social occasions, the routine is familiar to the children who take full control of this part of the session by deciding when to have their snack, selecting their name, washing hands, finding a seat, choosing what to eat and drink and serving themselves.

Adults contribute by facilitating the process according to individual needs.

Stoke Holy Cross Pre-School - Children learning about other countries and cultures in a meaningful and exciting way. During the theme on Africa - the children made clay pots and paper fans to sell at the African market. The market is set up with peas, lentils, rice and vegetables, flowers and fabrics - for the children to buy. Later they sample fruits as told in the story 'Handa's Surprise' and dance and play instruments to African music.

Gayton Goslings Newsletter 'Gosling's Grapevine' included this letter from a parent helper who had been asked by the committee to write a critical report about her visit to the session..

The title of the letter is.....

Want to find out more about what goes on inside the Gayton Goslings Playgroup? Please read on....

I volunteered to do a parents rota with the task of writing a "critical" report about the playgroup session. How can you criticize something so good?

The session was full of activities, the register being one in itself. Afterwards the children were given a choice of which activity they would like to do.

I was assigned to teaching children to sew the first letter of their name onto card, an activity I shared with Carley (lets just say the next course will be sewing)

After the children had played and all helped tidy up Gregory paid them a visit to tell them a story, with a little help from Alison. A very involved group activity. Then it was time for a game of musical chairs, lots of fun and laughter.

Coming to the end of the session it was time to quieten down with a discovery game, something that involved looking at everyday objects to see what the children thought of them. Then to finish off a sing song.

The staff at Gayton Goslings have achieved something we all want, respect from the children whilst teaching them to respect each other and everything around them whilst still giving them the freedom to be children.

Overall the session was structured, whilst fun. We all hope that our child is well behaved when out, they are because they want to be, they want to help, play and more importantly you can see in their faces that they don't want to let the staff down. They are pleased with themselves when they do something good.

The one thing I would suggest Goslings do is write down a list in the kitchen of what the children have done ie:-

Today's activities were.....

Today's story was....

Today's snack was....

This way parents can talk to their child and be more involved in what they have been doing. I had no idea you could fit so much into two and a half hours. To summarize, Alison and the staff are a true asset, helping the children grow and learn.

Keep up the good work! And to all the parents who say, "I must put my name down on the parents rota" you MUST. It is an enjoyable time.

Thanks to the children for a lovely afternoon.

Langham Glass had not had a playgroup visit before but welcomed us all. The children were able to get quite close to the action and saw a robin, paperweight and avocet being made. One man blew a glass ball and smashed it on the floor - it went bang like a balloon. The children could feel the heat from the furnace and were fascinated by the whole experience - the demonstrator was careful to include all the children. What a brilliant visit!

Foulsham and Bintree - Foulsham and Bintree playgroup visited Langham Glass in connection with their Music and Sounds theme of 'blowing'.

Treetops, Thetford - have furnished and equipped the entire Nursery with Community Playthings equipment - it is beautiful. They have an Artist who is going to come and work with them on developing their entrance area as well as work with the children.

Kenninghall - have a new computer - the children were independent on the old so I'm sure will adapt to the new.

East Harling Playgroup - have established an inviting mark- making area next to their cosy book corner. They have a plastic toolbox with pads, diaries, envelopes, paper in different shapes and sizes, pens and pencils. One little girl was making hairdressing appointments in the diary!

Little Saints, Weeting Pre-School - A member of staff has been very creative and made a selection of clothing form around the world to extend their dressing up clothes /multi-cultural provision. The supervisor and other members of staff wore a beautiful sari and kimono to join in! Photos are on display for parents.

Brockdish and Needham Pre-School - have established a very successful area for physical play available throughout the session. The children can find their name on a clipboard before they join in.

Contributions to this page can be made by contacting the Partnership News Marketing Team on 01603 62 22 92 or by emailing: vicki.hall@norfolk.gov.uk



Only towards the end of the Foundation Stage is there an expectation that children will experience computers

What, No Computer?

ICT is a specific strand of learning within 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' in the Foundation Stage curriculum. The early stepping stones in that strand talk about children showing an interest in ICT and knowing how to operate simple equipment with examples of what children do, referring to playing with remote control cars and pushing the button at pedestrian crossings. Only towards the end of the Foundation Stage is there an expectation that children will experience computers. Also ICT is important in many other aspects in all the areas of learning.

The key to children enjoying ICT is to build on their experiences in the modern world. Some adults will find programming a video recorder or organising a new mobile phone a challenge whereas young children will take things in their stride- lacking prejudice or inhibitions about new technology. ICT is all around children in the modern world and often an important part of their lives.

Before looking at how we can use ICT to support the different areas of learning, it is important how it can be used to bring role play to life. The easy option is to furnish the home corner with the wooden sink and the wooden cooker- children will be used to DVD players, video recorders, flat screen television sets, CD players and remote controls to make all of these things work. In the kitchen they will experience or see a whole new range of gadgetry- juice makers, bread makers, microwave ovens, coffee makers, coffee 'frothers' to join old friends such as the washing machine, kettle,

toaster or sandwich maker. Bring role play to life by including this technology in your role play- ask the children to make the equipment; the foil covered cardboard box easily becomes the DVD player in the child's imagination- representation is as good as reality.

Think how much further other role play can be made real- the supermarket or shop have their scanners, electronic tills with digital displays, security cameras and screens, systems for announcements about the latest bargains and supervisors that wear hands-free microphones and earphones. More recently displays that tell you that 'cashier number three is free' seem to be appearing in a wide range of outlets.

Simple toys and inexpensive ICT equipment can support the Foundation Stage curriculum in a variety of ways. Some examples and suggestions below show how such equipment can support one or more areas of learning.

Walkie talkies can support children's speaking and listening and can be an





important part of PSED. Role play outside can be supported by telephones- children on bikes and trikes calling the garage or AA for assistance.

Wind up toys are often given away with meals at fast food outlets or can be bought very cheaply. Encourage children to wind them up, set them going and observe the path they take- can the children describe the movement or represent it on paper. This is an excellent way into shape, space and measure in mathematical development which children will enjoy. Similarly remote control toys such as cars or boats are an exciting way into mathematical development with children using hand eye co-ordination to move controls which have a distant but instant response from the toy; children are developing fine motor skills and using simple 'tools'.

Cassette and CD players not only provide stories to develop children's enjoyment of stories but music for creative development, children 'responding to sound with body movement'. Children can record each other or sounds that they like and share them with adults and other children. A child's 'sense of place' can be developed by encouraging him or her to record sounds or pictures using cassette recorders or inexpensive cameras. Digital cameras can provide an instant record of place, something a child has made or stages in the process on the way to an end product.

All this and not a computer in sight!



Wind up toys are often given away with meals at fast food outlets or can be bought very cheaply. Encourage children to wind them up, set them going and observe the path they take



How Do I Use ICT?

How I Use ICT - a Childminder Perspective

When Lisa Evans of Lingwood, Norfolk, was asked how she used ICT within her setting, she commented that her computer is always available for the children to use with supervision, for games and educational programmes. They enjoy making cards, invitations and using the computer to draw with.

Lisa also commented that her computer is invaluable to her business.

On a planning and research level, Lisa uses sites, such as www.dltk-kids.com to help plan activities and gain more information on topics within the setting. Lisa also has her own e-mail address, so parents can contact her anytime and uses the computer for her invoices, accounts and tax returns. All correspondence for the setting is complied using the computer. The initial interest pack, which new parents receive and information shared with parents to keep them up to date, are also put together on her computer.

Lisa regularly does her grocery shopping on-line and purchases equipment, through websites such as Galt. She has found that many companies don't charge delivery, making it a very economical way to shop and when the bills are received Lisa pays via her Internet banking account.

Jackie Leech, The Norfolk Childminding Network, Great Yarmouth Cluster Co-ordinator



How I Use ICT - a Nursery Perspective

At Park Lane Nursery all children are encouraged to work independently on the computer. Staff have sent the following tips:

- Choose very simple programmes that use basic mouse control.
- Choose programmes that have a child lock that prevents the child from coming out of the programme.
- Remember take advantage of TESCO 'computer for schools' vouchers.
- Encourage confident children to support less able children

Recommended games:

'Morris the worms ABC' (The Productive Play Company)

Teddy Games' (Inclusive Technology)

'Switchit weather' (Inclusive Technology)

Park Lane Nursery, Downham Market



How I Use ICT - a School Perspective

Early in 2003 I attended an ICT for the Foundation Stage course run by Prioritas based at St Gregory's Alley Norwich. I can honestly say I was thoroughly inspired and have not looked at Early Years ICT - or the Stepping Stones for Knowledge & Understanding of the World (KUW) in the same way since! On my return to school I questioned my existing provision for ICT. Apart from the class computer, an aging listening centre, an electronic cash register and a temperamental roamer the provision looked dismal. I also realised I relied too heavily upon the computer. After securing a portion of the budget to develop Early Years ICT (£100) I was able to go bargain hunting.

During activity time the children now choose from a variety of remote control cars, water tray boats, submarines, bubble maker and even a jet skier. The inhabitants of the role play house and trailer can chat via walkie-talkies. The small world builders tray has incorporated a remote control train set and a JCB. Our afternoon snack bar has been transformed by the addition of a junior smoothie maker machine where the children can chop fruit, pour milk and juice and share their 'delicious' creations! Adults and children collect evidence of all manner of activities and achievements using the school digital camera and movie making program.

We are particularly fortunate at St Michaels in that we have a trolley of class laptops and each class enjoys the benefits of an interactive white board. These were of course in addition to the £100 but between visits to Argos, Netto and Westgate we are attempting to fulfil each stepping stone in the Early Years!

St Michaels Primary, King's Lynn - Mrs Clifton



How I Use ICT - a Parents Perspective

At home I use ICT in many ways during general day-to-day activities and play times. For example, together we programme the washing machine, pressing buttons that set the wash cycles as well as the "start" button. We use the microwave, setting the time and the levels to help heat up the lunch and of course my 3 year old can use the basic buttons and the remote controls for the video and DVD player. ICT's role has become an integral part of daily life in the home, and my child is almost quite surprised when an item doesn't use an element of ICT!

Of course there are times when he plays on the computer, often backing up the themes and topics he is doing in his nursery. He can play games that encourage mouse and keyboard skills and is confident and able to control what is happening and what he wants to happen on the screen.

I would encourage other parents to think about their daily routines and the type of ICT they are using. ICT isn't just computer games but can extend to a range of activities that young children can start to become involved in.



Resources

Review of Learning and Teaching using ICT

This CD-Rom has been produced by the Primary National Strategy as part of a wider project to help early years settings and primary schools make better use of ICT across the curriculum.

The information is divided into each of the six Areas of Learning and there are a selection of video clips showing children and practitioners working together with a variety of resources. These include : using a digital camera, promoting independent computer use and using a musical playmat.

One clip is called ICT and Role-Play, this shows children playing with Home Corner equipment ie toaster, microwave and telephone, however these all have an additional ICT element.

This is a good resource to share with colleagues and parents. Early Years practitioners working in schools should receive this in a pack of 6 CD Roms. Link Teachers will be distributing it to the non-maintained sector.

Ref No is DFES 0384-2004-GCDI.

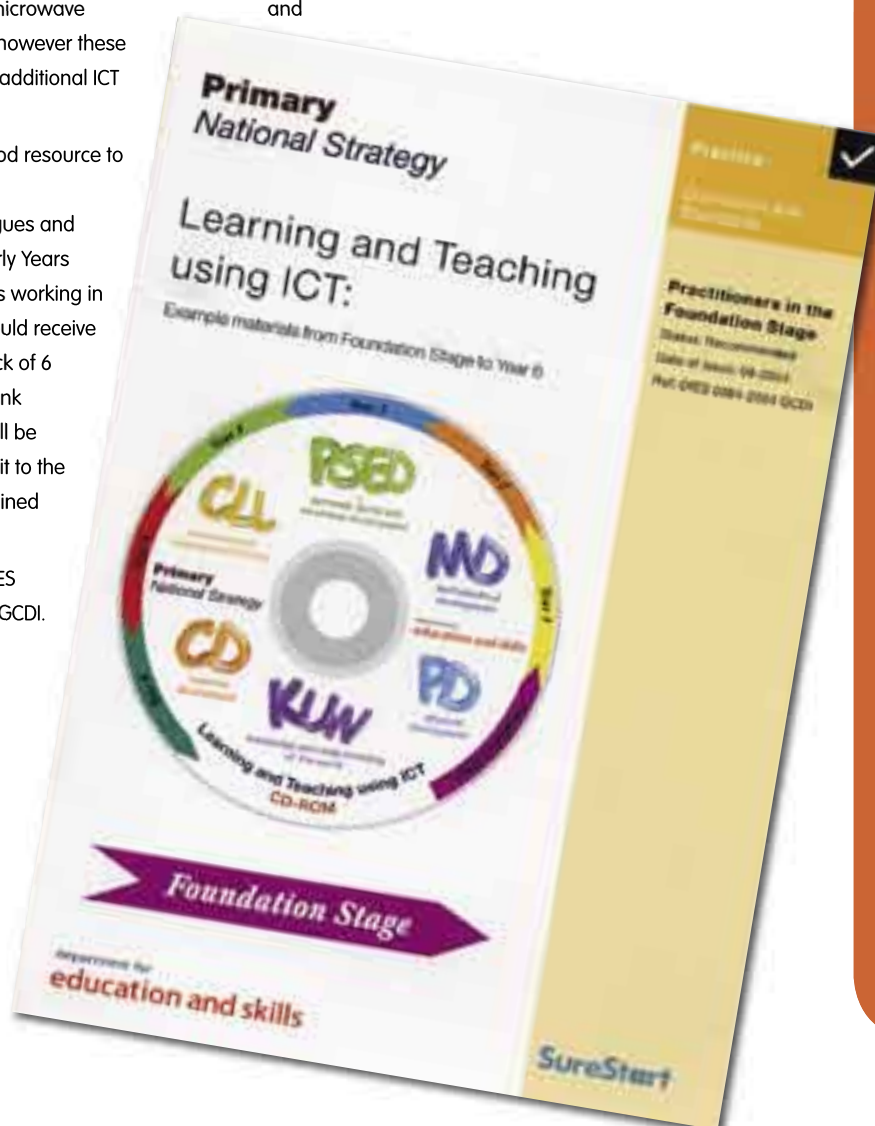
'Bells, Buzzers, Levers and Switches'

ICT is an integral part of children's everyday lives. This session will explore ways of using ICT tools across all areas of learning and teaching in the Foundation Stage. Look out for this in Training News.

Role-play Dates 2005

**Kings Lynn PDC Thursday May 26th,
Friday May 27th 2005**

**Forum, Norwich Friday 1st July,
Saturday 2nd July 2005.**



Other Useful Resources for ICT

Books

Belair Early Years ICT (ISBN 0 94788251 0)

Scholastic Skills for Early Years (ISBN 439 01840 4)

Useful Websites

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies

www.earlybirdsmusic.com

www.dottieandbuzz.co.uk

www.enchantedlearning.com/rhymes

www.vtc.ngfl.gov.uk

www.postmanpat.co.uk

Roamer Website www.valiant-technology.com

www.atschool.co.uk

www.worldbook.com/fun

MAPE - www.mape.org.uk/kids

www.becta.org.uk

www.kented.org.uk/ngfl

www.funwithspot.com

www.ladybird.co.uk - Ladybird books

http://sonywonder.com/wonderland/webtime

www.groveroad.herts.sch.uk - Creepy crawlies

www.lil.fingers.com/colors

www.bobthebuilder.org

www.funschool.com

www.icom.ca/daycare/

www.sesameworkshop.org

www.hitchams.suffolk.sch.uk

www.bgfl.org

www.muddlepuddle.co.uk

www.alphabet-soup.net

www.peterrabbit.com

www.boowakwala.com



ICT in and Around the Home

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



ICT in and Around the Home

ICT in the Foundation Stage is based around why things happen and how things work.

Children are naturally curious and their homes and local environment are a wonderful place for them to begin exploring to find out "Why?" and "How?" Don't worry if you don't always know the answer, learning together can be fun.

Around the home



Lounge

- Allow your child to switch on the TV/ Video/DVD with the remote control, under your supervision. Ask how they think it works.
- Use language such as on/off, eject, rewind, fast forward, double click etc.
- Talk about the lights and their switches, how do they work?
- Use the telephone with support.
- If you have access to a camcorder, video your child and let them see themselves on television.

Kitchen

- Encourage your child to help you load/unload the washing machine and press the buttons.
- Provide a variety of different shaped sized whisks/spoons, etc for them to play with at the kitchen sink with soapy water.
- Put a garlic press and a rolling pin together with some play dough.



Toys and Gadgets

- Compare remote control cars with friction cars
- Show how batteries are put into toys and let your children play with a range of different battery operated toys.
- Let them investigate with a torch.
- Provide them with their own disposable camera and let them take their own photographs.
- Let children operate their own cassette deck whilst listening to stories and songs.



Out and About

- Talk to your child about street lights, how do they turn on and off?
- Press the button at the crossing and encourage your child to look for the green man before safely crossing.
- Take your child up and down on an escalator.
- Take your child in a lift and allow them to press the buttons.
- Talk about automatic supermarket doors-How do they know when to open/close?
- In the supermarket-checkout the checkout! Pass the barcode under the scanner to show the price.



As you can see ICT is all around, there is no need to be reliant upon a computer.

Norfolk Childcare
Information Service

01603 622292

www.norfolkchildcare.info
www.norfolkchildcarejobs.com



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language please contact Janet Evans:
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and we will do our best to help.