



Nottinghamshire  
County Council

# Early Years and Childcare Partnership News

March 2010

In this Issue: Single Funding Formula, Free Entitlement update, Play Builder Project and much more...

## Single Funding Formula



Nottinghamshire County Council has been accepted as one of 56 local authorities to deliver Single Funding Formula (SFF) from April 2010.

The SFF is intended to support the extension of the free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds, and to address inconsistencies in how the offer is currently funded across the maintained and PVI sectors.

The Government has delayed the compulsory start date to April 2011, but has allowed local authorities to apply for pathfinder status if they feel ready to begin the SFF from April 2010.

In Nottinghamshire the Early Years team has worked closely with the finance team managing school budgets to arrive at a SFF which we feel is reliable, simple and unbiased. The changes will have a much greater effect on the maintained sector as the SFF will bring them more into line with what is already delivered to the PVI sector – the main change being the move to a termly headcount.

A key element of our joint working was to estimate the costs of delivering the Nursery Education Funding entitlement, and then complete an impact assessment on all settings to estimate how each one would be affected. We discovered all PVI settings would gain from the SFF whilst the vast majority of schools would only see a small percentage loss or gain from the common formula.

Budgets are yet to be set for the next financial year, but further information will be provided when available.

For more information contact David Rogers, Business & Finance Support Officer on 07977 210151 or email [david.rogers@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:david.rogers@nottsc.gov.uk)

## Events

### Nottinghamshire Early Years and Childcare Services Conference 2010



This year's conference is taking place on the 12 June 2010 at the East Midlands Conference Centre 9.30am to 4.30pm.

To book your place, please fill in the booking form delivered to your early years setting, or visit [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk) to download a form online, or contact Stefka Senoussi on 0115 977 3042.

### National Childminding Extravaganza 2010



This year's Extravaganza is taking place on the 15 June 2010 at Rufford Abbey Park, Ollerton from 10am to 2pm.

The event is free with lots of fun activities. For more information contact Julie at Nottingham and County Childminding Association on 01777 871 073.

### Barnardo's Big Toddle 2010



The Barnardo's Big Toddle is the UK's biggest charity event for children under five. You can organise your own 'toddle' during the summer holidays or join Barnardo's organised Toddle at Rufford Park, Ollerton 15 July 2010 at 10am. Entry is free.

To register see the Barnardo's Big Toddle website: [www.bigtoddle.co.uk](http://www.bigtoddle.co.uk) or call 0845 270 9900.

## Contact details

The Early Years & Childcare Services team have recently moved offices. See back page for new contact details.

## Safer food, better business for childminders



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has produced a 'Safer food, better business' pack especially for childminders. The pack gives simple, straightforward advice on food safety, including information on feeding babies and children, cooking, cleaning, chilling and looking after a child with a food allergy.

If childminders provide meals, snacks or drinks (apart from mains tap water) for children or babies, reheat or cut up food provided by a parent/carer, they must now comply with food safety and hygiene regulations. 'Safer food, better business for childminders' will help them do this.

If you would like to order a copy of the pack, call FSA Publications on 0845 606 0667 or email [foodstandards@ecgroup.co.uk](mailto:foodstandards@ecgroup.co.uk)

## Childminding network Meetings for June 2010

- Ashfield - Wednesday 3 June, The Summit Centre, Kirkby in Ashfield
  - Bassetlaw – Wednesday 9 June, The Crossing, Newcastle St, Worksop
  - Mansfield – Thursday 17 June, venue to be confirmed
  - Gedling – Monday 21 June, Arnold Library, Front St, Arnold
  - Rushcliffe – Wednesday 23 June, Edwalton Primary, Wellin Lane, Edwalton
  - Broxtowe – Thursday 24 June, venue to be confirmed
  - Newark – Tuesday 29 June, Lecture Theatre, The Dukeries, Ollerton
- Ring NCMA on 0844 225 2053 to book a place.

## Preferred Providers List reminder

The closing date for the Preferred Provider List (PPL) applications is noon on Monday 12 April 2010. If you require an application pack please contact Nottinghamshire Families Information Service on: Freephone: 0800 781 2168  
Email: [fis@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:fis@nottscc.gov.uk)

## Feedback from the provider questionnaire on the extended entitlement



Thank you to all who completed the questionnaires. Of the 118 circulated a total of 62 have been returned; 41% from PVI settings and 59% from the maintained sector.

A range of methods were used to consult with families; the most popular being questionnaires and face to face meetings.

### Key findings

Most of the providers recognised the benefits of the new offer. Whilst the first delivery was challenging they felt that the extended entitlement had the potential for raising outcomes for children and will benefit families in the long term.

### Benefits

The benefits identified by providers included; increased possibilities for extending the planned learning environment, opportunities for children to experience lunch time provision and improved transitions into schools.

### Challenges

The challenges of delivering

the flexible entitlement were common across the sectors and issues included; staffing, planning and lack of space. Providers have addressed these issues by improving communication and teamwork, altering shift patterns, reorganising session/planning times and, in some cases, increasing staffing.

Nottinghamshire County Council is keen to hear the views of parents on the flexible entitlement and will be surveying a sample of families whose children accessed the 15 hours free entitlement during the spring term.

Providers continue to respond positively to the new agenda and most schools and settings now have models in place ready for the universal roll out in September 2010.

If you have any queries and/or would like further support and guidance please contact Helen Ruff, Free Entitlement Development Coordinator on: 0115 977 74294 or [helen.ruff@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.ruff@nottscc.gov.uk)



## If you wish to submit an article for Partnership News

Contact: Vicky Windsor-Beck on 07956 438 068, or email [victoria.windsor-beck@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:victoria.windsor-beck@nottscc.gov.uk)

## Taster courses running



Do you know a parent or have a voluntary worker who is considering working towards a recognised childcare qualification?

**“Thinking of Working with Children?”** courses start on week commencing 12 April, and run for eight weeks (excluding half-term) within local Children’s Centres.

The taster courses are free, fun and informal and will offer information about childcare as a career.

We’ll look at; different qualification routes, how to gain funding and complete the Childcare Training Project. The course also supports learners to work towards their NVQ Level Three, while completing twelve

voluntary hours within a full day care setting.

The courses start at:

- Hawtonville Children’s Centre, Newark: **12 April 2010**, 9.15am to 12.15pm
- East Sherwood Children’s Centre (Bilsthorpe), between Newark & Mansfield: **13 April 2010**, 12.15pm to 3.15pm
- Arnbrook Children’s Centre, Arnold: **15 April 2010**, 12.15pm to 3.15pm
- West Bassetlaw Children’s Centre, Worksop: **16 April 2010**, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

All of the courses are provided with free childcare facilities for parents. To book a place on the course, contact 0115 977 3266.

## Owner, leader & manager briefings

Owner, leader and manager briefings are an excellent opportunity for you to hear from Children & Young People staff who guide the development of our Early Years and Childcare Services within Nottinghamshire. Previously topics discussed have included:

- updates from National Strategies
- recommendations from Ofsted
- new projects and related funding
- the extended entitlement

- vetting and barring
- workforce development opportunities and funding.

The briefings are a resource that we can use to ensure that staff working with children and families have up-to-date information to best support their practice. They are also a valuable networking opportunity to meet others with similar roles.

The next owner, leader and manager briefings are on **13 May, 19 May and 25 May 2010**. For more details please see page 1 of the Summer Term TADO.



## Employment law course

**“Recruitment and Retention within the Childcare Sector”** is a course which aims to give committee members and setting managers up-to-date advice on the new employment law changes for April and October 2010. It also aims to improve staff recruitment and retention within childcare settings.

This free course offers:

- advice and guidance on new employment law and legislation that may affect your childcare setting
- information and tips on best practice and good business planning, with staff management issues explored
- ideas on recruitment and retention issues, as well as advice regarding staff inductions and appraisals provided
- templates for employment contracts, job descriptions and person specifications in-line with the new employment law changes.

The course will run: Tuesday 8 June 2010: 9.30am to 3.30pm at Patchings Art Centre, Calverton, NG14 6AT.

To book a place on the course contact: Charlotte Hurst, Childcare Workforce Development Officer on: 0115 977 3966.



## Childcare Recruitment Campaign change of address

The Nottinghamshire Childcare Recruitment Campaign team have moved and are now based at County Hall. Please send post to Nottinghamshire Childcare Recruitment Campaign, followed by the address on the back page.

To place your childcare vacancies contact the new number: 0115 977 3266.

To contact Charlotte Hurst, Childcare Workforce Development Officer regarding recruitment and retention issues, training courses or employment law, call: 0115 977 3966.

## FIS weather the storm

As snow fell through the county this January, closing schools, freezing pipes and grinding roads to a halt – one service moved up a gear to keep their front line service open to the public.



Jean Howard, Information Officer for Nottinghamshire Families Information Service (FIS) explains how the FIS kept their helpline open during the coldest winter for years:

*"Usually there are two Information Officers on the helpline phones on any given day, but because of the rural location of our office, there were days when neither officer could get through the icy conditions.*

*However the FIS have developed a procedure to deal with unusual circumstances like this.*

*Information Officers are enabled to work from home. When bad weather strikes one of the duty officers will set-up a recorded message on the FIS helpline which diverts callers to their home-based number.*

*They take all calls that day, but email the other duty officer details to search so the service keeps running smoothly.*

*We feel it's vital to keep the service running during times when parents and carers may be struggling to access services in other ways."*

To contact Nottinghamshire Families Information Service: Freephone 0800 781 2168. If ringing from a mobile: 01623 520 694 (standard rates apply). Email [fis@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:fis@nottscc.gov.uk)



## Information on Full Core Offer

Within Nottinghamshire we have 50 Children's Centres who have all now reached full core offer status. This means they are all now working with partner agencies to deliver services within their communities and are able to signpost families to activities for under 5's in their area. Our thanks and congratulations go to all the staff, partner agencies, parents and volunteers who have worked so hard to achieve this.

*Fiona McManus receiving letter of confirmation*



## Playbuilder Project



The Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) has allocated over £1 million funding to Nottinghamshire County Council to refurbish, extend or build new play areas for children and young people in the seven districts across the county. The developments are taking place over a period of three years – from October 2008 to April 2011.

To receive funding from the DCSF, Nottinghamshire County Council gathered the thoughts and feelings of local communities and linked in with members of the District Play Partnerships to gain a representation of local community needs.

They visited a variety of children's settings and young people's groups, including those with disabilities, asking about existing play space and what could be done to improve it. Access, inclusion and environmental factors were the main focuses taken into consideration.

At the end of the project there will be a total of 25 new, refurbished or extended sites, four more than the DCSF were requesting.

Some sites and parks have existing "Friends of Play" groups, but new groups and play associations are also expected to be involved.

If you are interested in helping or supporting children's play in you local area please call Play Development Worker Linda Cobb on 01636 593947.



## Jane Moore and Jo Sharpe join the team

Partnership News would like to welcome Jane Moore and Jo Sharpe into their new roles working as part of the Early Years Team, while also wishing Fran Lee and Frances Hunt best wishes as they leave Nottinghamshire County Council.



*Jane Moore & Fran Lee*

Jane takes over from Fran Lee as the new Early Years Adviser, Enjoy and Achieve Lead for Children's Centres.

Jo takes over from Frances Hunt as the new School Improvement Advisor and Early Years lead.

Jane Moore Tel: 01623 404 322  
or email: [jane.h.moore@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:jane.h.moore@nottscc.gov.uk) Jo Sharpe Tel: 01623 434 137 or email: [joanne.sharpe@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.sharpe@nottscc.gov.uk)



*Jo Sharpe*



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### Contacting us

email [ey&cc@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:ey&cc@nottscc.gov.uk)

phone 0115 977 4226

fax 0115 977 2437

post Early Years & Childcare Services,

Children and Young People's Services, County Hall,  
West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

internet [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk)

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