

Leading Excellence in Early Years: Quality First Teaching

The [Right from the Start: West Sussex Early Years and Childcare Strategy](#), has been developed to acknowledge the importance that the early years plays in establishing and embedding positive outcomes for children. Early educators are crucial to the support for young children. High quality early years provision, driven forward by strong leadership within the setting, enable all children to thrive and achieve their full potential.

The government's new strategy [Giving every child the best start in life](#) recognises that children's outcomes improve through high quality interactions with adults, outlining the importance of highly qualified educators and leaders. The strategy references a 'golden thread' of evidence-informed practice as key to high quality training and high-quality practice.

[Birth To Five Matters](#) states that:

"Recognising and valuing the role of the leader results in a more reflective and analytical approach to practice that in turn supports a culture of continuing improvement."

This programme aims to support leaders in early years settings to develop their skills in delivering high quality, inclusive practice to improve outcomes for all children and to narrow the attainment gap.

This programme will facilitate your development as a leader with a focus on high quality early learning and care experiences for all children. You will engage in action research with a focus on early identification and support for children and families experiencing disadvantage.

The programme is open to leaders who are wanting to review and develop their practice to improve outcomes for all children. There are places for 12 educators on the programme, and each educator will have a link Early Years and Childcare Adviser (EYCA) to provide support and challenge to them throughout the programme.

Outcomes

If you apply what you have learnt on this programme you will be able to:

- Develop and deliver a strong, positive culture throughout the setting
- Engage in an ongoing quality improvement cycle, using tools and observations to evaluate the quality and impact of provision
- Ensure that the most vulnerable in the setting receive the "first and best" provision to narrow the attainment gap
- Develop the skills they need to support staff to provide consistent, high quality, inclusive provision
- Communicate effectively with parents/carers and partners to achieve the best outcomes for children

To support you in achieving this, West Sussex County Council will provide you with training and support including:

- Seven face to face sessions (one half day and six full days) which will include training from experts in the field, peer support and guidance on implementing the programme in your setting
- £1000 funding to provide release time to attend the sessions and complete tasks in the setting as part of the programme*
- Visits and check-in calls from an EYCA to support with the implementation of the learning and action research

All educators taking part in the programme must:

- Hold a full and relevant early years qualification to at least Level 3
- Have good knowledge of child development and experience in supporting children's learning and development in early years
- Have some experience of leading practice in an early years setting and be looking to further develop their skills in this area

The educators engaging in the programme must commit to:

- Engage with the programme positively and be open to challenge and making changes within their setting in response to the learning
- Ensure that they can attend the whole of each session in full and face to face
- Conduct action research in setting and share feedback on learning and impact with wider group
- Engage with their link EYCA to maximise impact of the programme
- Carrying out the activities of the programme within the timeframes laid out in the programme materials including:
 - Reflective journal
 - Audits, action plans and impact measures
 - Reading and additional training
- Complete course evaluations, including evaluation of programme and its impact 6 months after the programme is complete

* Payment will be made in stages and will be dependent on continued engagement in the programme and completion of evaluations

Overview of the Programme

Activity	Date	Location
Session 1 Introductory session	23 rd September 1-4pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Session 2 Setting Culture	30 th September 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Carrying out activity in setting EYCA phone support		In setting
Session 3 Being a Leader	14 th October 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Carrying out activity in setting EYCA phone support		In setting
Session 4 Identifying and support children with vulnerabilities	4 th November 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Carrying out activity in setting Two EYCA visits – one to include setting manager**		In setting
Session 5 Communication and wellbeing	2 nd December 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Carrying out activity in setting One EYCA visit		In setting
Session 6 Supporting Your Team Sharing Your Learning	13 th January 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT
Carrying out activity in setting Two EYCA visits		In setting
Session 7 Celebration and Presentations	3 rd February 9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Horsham Nursery School, Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5UT

** If the manager is taking part in the programme, this will need to be an identified senior professional from within the setting who can provide the necessary support and challenge.

Next Steps

If you would like to take part in the programme, and you have the endorsement of your manager, please complete and return the application form. If you are both the Early Educator taking part and the setting manager, you can still take part in the programme. Please make this clear on your application and identify a senior colleague from the setting who will be providing you with support and challenge as you complete the programme.

All applications received before the deadline will be considered against the following criteria:

- Qualifications and evidence of engagement of Early Educator
- Early Educator taking part has not completed, or taking part in, the National Professional Qualification in Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL)
- Numbers of vulnerable children accessing the provision, including those in receipt of EYPP
- Balance of settings and Early Educators to support the delivery and impact of the programme

All successful Early Educators will be contacted and will be asked to complete and return an agreement to confirm their place on the programme.

All Early Educators engaging in the programme are expected to make all necessary arrangements to ensure that they can attend each face-to-face session in full. This includes making alternative arrangements for any pre-existing commitments, including work and caring responsibilities, for each session. Any emergency circumstances that impact on attendance will need to be discussed with the programme leads and mitigations put in place. They will also be expected to carry out activities within the setting, engage in reading and preparation for the course and with EYCA support visits.

Before applying, please note that funding is dependent on the Early Educator's continued engagement and, where an Early Educator is unable to attend the course in full, it may be necessary to remove them from the programme.