

Early Years and Childcare Team News

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Richmond upon Thames
Children and Young People's Trust

Dear colleagues

At the time of writing this, I am aware of all the changes that are around for us in the childcare and education field. There are the changes at national and local government level with both, naturally, leading to review of policy. We shall certainly be feeding any changes to you that might directly affect the work that you do. I am confident, however, that any change has the firm foundation of excellent practice across early years in the borough!

We are pleased that Welcare, on Twickenham Green, is to provide the main children's centre for the St Margaret's, Teddington and Twickenham quindrat. They will work together with the other four centres in the borough to provide the same core services. This will give a better range of integrated local activities to families in that area.

I am sure you join me in wishing **Anna Bartlett** (Heathfield Children's Centre Manager) and **Viviana Scott** (Ham Children's Centre Manager) well whilst on maternity leave. Cover is **Vicky Smythe** for Heathfield and **Ellie Young** for Ham.

We have a new representative of the private, voluntary and independent providers - **Beverly Williams** - and you can contact Beverly via the early years mailbox early.years@richmond.gov.uk.

The Early Years team has moved offices and is now on the first floor of the Civic Centre. This move brings together the Early Years and Childcare team with School Effectiveness, the Family Wellbeing Service, Sports and Leisure, Systems and Support, Buildings Development and Finance into one general area. Already this is leading to a greater joined up approach to common issues.

So change all around and more to come no doubt.

Sue Ritson

Head of Early Years and Childcare

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• 0-20 years • 0-20 years • 0-20 years •

The childcare sufficiency assessment

Childcare plays a crucial role in the lives of most families. Not only does it enable parents to work and sustain their family income whilst they have very young children, but a growing body of evidence also shows that good pre-school childcare gives children a flying start and leads to better outcomes as they move through school.

The CSA is a detailed investigation and measurement of the nature and extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within each local area. It enables local authorities to identify where there are gaps in the market.

The assessment should not only look at the current position, but also consider trends or developments that are likely to affect future demand and supply. Each assessment will be regularly reviewed to ensure that assumptions remain valid.

We undertook our first CSA in 2007 and are now required to undertake another one.

Sufficiency action planning (CSA)

Once we have completed the sufficiency assessment, we will develop an action plan, showing how and when we propose to tackle any issues arising out of the assessment. As with any action plan, it will be important to be specific about the actions that are needed, the rationale for each action, how it will be delivered, who will be responsible, when it will be done by, and how it will be resourced.

Just as with the sufficiency assessment, it will be important that the action plan is monitored and regularly updated to ensure that it takes account of changes.



Market management

In carrying out our market management role, the London Borough of Richmond will consider the following benchmarks of sufficiency.

- Sufficient places overall: there should be enough places to meet the needs of working parents or those who are training to work, and enough places to allow eligible children aged 2, 3 and 4 to use the free childcare, even where parents aren't working or training.
- Childcare places should be of high quality (reflecting judgements made by Ofsted, Early Years Quality Improvement Support Programme (EYQISP) and any local schemes that indicate a setting's quality rating and improvement path).
- There should be sufficient flexibility, with places being available at the right time where reasonable (for example, in the early morning, late evening, at the weekend, or during school holidays), to fit in with working patterns.
- Places should be sufficiently accessible, so that parents do not have to travel too far to access childcare.
- There should be a sufficient range of provision, with the balance between the various types of early years and childcare provision appropriate to meet the needs of parents identified through the sufficiency assessment.
- There should be sufficient knowledge and information about the supply and quality of places and how to access them.
- Childcare places should be sufficiently affordable.
- Childcare settings should be sufficiently inclusive and meet particular needs.
- Childcare settings should be sustainable.

As part of the assessment we will be consulting with

- children
- parents
- childcare providers
- employers
- governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of schools other than maintained schools
- governing bodies of institutions within the further education or higher education sectors
- neighbouring authorities
- organisations representing the interest of people in the first four points, or other organisations with an interest in the provision of childcare.

Karl Hildebrandt

Childcare Market Manager

020 8891 7585

Attachment Theory: implications for practice

I'm sure many of you will agree that it was a privilege to hear Sir Richard Bowlby talk at the Attachment Conference on 10 May. With passion and conviction, Richard outlined the work of his father, Dr John Bowlby, the founder of the body of knowledge that became known as Attachment Theory. Three hundred and fifteen providers were escorted on a journey to discover the importance of attachment theory for understanding daycare, and creating a climate to support young children's emotional wellbeing.

Attachment is an emotional bond to another person. The earliest bonds formed by children with their primary caregivers (usually the mother, but not always) have a tremendous impact on their future emotional wellbeing. The primary caregiver is the person a child develops their main lifelong emotional bond, and who they seek comfort from when distressed. The fundamental theme of attachment theory is that when a mother is available and responsive to her infant's needs, she establishes a sense of security. Over time the infant knows that the mother is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to explore the world.

Secondary attachment figures refers to a few special people in a child's life for whom they have developed a predictable, safe and affectionate bond, like fathers, siblings, grandparents, and the child's key person in daycare. The vital importance of secondary attachment figures was stressed, as they increase the child's resilience and act as a secure base in the mother's absence. If a child loses a secondary attachment figure, although very upsetting, the secure base of the primary care giver remains. Richard warns that one of the common risk factors of future mental health issues is placing a child under 3 in daycare without a secure secondary attachment from a key person. He stressed the statutory nature of the role of the key person.

Drawing from the work of Mary Ainsworth (The Strange Situation), Richard outlined the characteristics of attachment - secure, insecure, ambivalent and avoidant. Typically, **securely** attached children exhibit distress when separated from caregivers and are happy when they return. Such children will seek comfort from their primary caregiver when distressed and know that their needs will be met. **Insecurely** attached children find it difficult to accept reassurance and to trust caregivers. An **ambivalently** attached child usually becomes very distressed when the primary caregiver leaves. These children cannot depend on their needs being met by their mother. When offered a choice, **avoidant** attached children tend to show no preference between the primary caregiver and a stranger. Here, children have learned that relying on a primary caregiver may result in punishment so they learn to avoid seeking help in the future.

Richard warned that when a baby or toddler is unable to access their primary or secondary caregiver, psychological defences will be activated. Cortisol levels will increase and attachment seeking response will be heightened, often triggering a 'fight or flight' response. Some babies and toddlers may cry briefly, while others more so. Likewise some scream and become visibly distressed, become overly compliant or dissociate where the baby or toddler learns to turn their mind away from the present situation. Long



periods without access to any attachment figure can leave babies and toddlers more vulnerable to developing social and emotional problems in the future.

In a daycare setting, we are therefore aiming to avoid triggering attachment seeking behaviours, and babies and toddlers becoming overwhelmed by the stress of daily separation from their primary attachment figure.

Suggestions for good practice:

- Actively encourage babies and toddlers to develop a lasting two way secondary attachment bond with a key person.
- Ensure a second key person, who is familiar to the child and parent, is available in the first key person's absence.
- Ensure that babies and toddlers are accompanied by their primary attachment figure while developing a secondary attachment bond.
- Ensure the initial settling-in days are kept short whilst their secondary attachment bond is developing. Introduce a few minutes of separation and gradually increase the time.
- When home visiting, make certain the key person affectionately greets the mother to give a clear message to the child that the key person is safe.
- Ensure that babies and toddlers' secondary attachment needs are always met, maintained and monitored.
- Consider the challenge for practitioners to become personally close enough to individual children to help them feel sufficiently contained, whilst maintaining professionalism.
- Consider how working closely with children evokes powerful emotions, positive and negative within staff.
- Support parents in maintaining their primary attachment bond to their children.

Can you and your team suggest any more?

Janet Roberts

Early Years Consultant

Sustained shared thinking

The Department for Education, recently issued a booklet entitled *Learning, Playing and Interacting (DCSF 2009)*. The document gives case studies and strategies that illustrate how pedagogy, provision and assessment are interwoven. It also describes how play sits at the centre of good provision and how the skilful practitioner can develop this. During the last round of Early Years Link Cluster meetings, Nadia De Jesus and I introduced this document and focused on one of the themes discussed, that of 'sustained shared thinking'.

Sustained shared thinking has been identified as one of the key features of high quality provision, and is one of the key elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2008).

From birth, children are making sense of the world around them, their natural curiosity and questioning, for example how? what? when? who? where? and why? allows them to gather information, create ideas and opinions, and form conclusions based on their unique experiences.

Sustained shared thinking is best described in the Effective Provision for Pre-school Education (EPPE) research which studied the effects of early education on young children's development.

'Sustained shared thinking is where two or more individuals work together in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate an activity, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend the understanding.' (Siraj-Blatchford et al, 2004)

Research shows that children whose thinking skills have been nurtured in the company of supportive adults will do better than children whose thinking has developed alone. Emphasis is given to thinking skills throughout the four themes of the EYFS – a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development, where it states: *'warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources'* (DCFS, 2008 Learning and Development - Creativity and Critical thinking card).

What are thinking skills?

The possession of knowledge, including knowing, thinking about and discussing thinking. They encourage children to learn to think for themselves, and they support learning for a real reason in a highly motivating environment.

Jenni Clarke (2007) explains how thinking skills are usually divided into six areas that are interrelated and complement each other.

- **Enquiry skills:** children ask questions and use the answers that they receive to allow them to plan more questions.
- **Information processing skills:** allow children to do something with the information they have gathered – what is valuable and worth retaining.
- **Reasoning skills:** children can form opinions based on the questions and answers linked to the experiences undertaken.
- **Evaluation skills:** enable children to look at the information received and to think about its relevance, and decide if they agree with it or not.

- **Problem-solving skills:** are where children recognise that something has changed and that the change will make a difference.
- **Creative skills:** here, children look for alternatives and do not always accept the first answer. They identify many ways to discover and explore.

Thinking takes time. Children will get engrossed and may want to spend more time on a project. Therefore, allow scope for flexibility in your planning, so that children can initiate their own learning, follow their interests, and discover in a highly motivating environment where thinking skills can flourish.

High quality environments, where positive trusting relationships are fostered, enable children to experience contact with adults aware of children's interests. They support and challenge children's thinking by getting involved in the thinking process with them. Adults that ask and offer encouragement through the use of open ended questions, stimulate children's thinking; they can make comparisons and connections in their learning. These in turn form connections in their brains.

The best outcomes for children's learning occur where there are opportunities for child-initiated play to occur. This will happen with sensitive adults who naturally respond to children in an environment where resources are displayed in an attractive and interesting way they enable the children to become motivated to use, explore, experiment and investigate them. *'In effective settings, the balance of who initiated the activities, staff or child, was about equal, children were encouraged to initiate activities as often as the staff. Similarly in effective settings the extent to which extended child-initiated interactions was important. Almost half of the child-initiated episodes which contained intellectual challenge, included interventions from a staff member to extend the child's thinking.'* (EPPE Report, 2004)

Conclusion

Embedding thinking skills in early learning is crucial, as most of the growth of the brain occurs in early childhood. It is therefore vital that practitioners introduce, nurture and encourage thinking skills at this stage. It can change children's lives, and gives them transferable skills that they can use throughout their schooling and beyond.

Helen McNally

Early Years Consultant

References

- Clarke J (2007) *Sustaining Shared Thinking*. Featherstone Education Ltd. Lutterworth.
- Siraj-Blatchford I, Sylva K, Melhuish E, Sammons P, Taggart B (2004) *EPPE: Final Report*. DfES and Institute of Education, University of London: London.
- Learning, Playing and Interacting (DCSF 2009)* can be downloaded from www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk.

Children's Centre News and EYFS Profile

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

If you are a setting, and have children staying with you who would be in Reception year in a maintained school, it is currently a statutory requirement that all private, voluntary and independent schools complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for those children who become 5 in the summer term. You are also required to attend the local authority moderation training events throughout the year and will receive a moderation visit. We try to keep track of where settings have kept children on, but can only see this by going through all the NEG returns each term and ringing you to check they are still with you. So that we can support you with this process from early on in the academic year, we are asking you to contact us to tell us when you have children of this age. We will then signpost you to all the relevant training events and ensure you receive the Moderation Handbook. From September 2010, please contact **Melanie Adams** to let her know that you need to be involved in this process m.adams@richmond.gov.uk **020 8831 6267**. If you are an independent school or setting that normally has children in this age range, we do not need you to contact us.

Thank you for your help.

Rachel Turner

Early Years Foundation Stage Strategy Manager

News from Barnes, Mortlake, Kew and East Sheen Quindrat

Staff appointment

A new outreach worker **Katy Walsh** for the quindrat will be starting in early June. She will be able to make greater contact with families in the areas.

Family Fun Day

There was be a Family Fun Day for the Quindrat on 3 July at Lowther Primary School. The day was a fun filled event with lots of games and free goodies. For more information, email norrthbarnescc@richmond.gov.uk

Family link courses

If you are interested in taking part in the Family Links parenting course and you live in the Kew, Mortlake or Barnes area, please email the children's centres at northbarnescc@richmond.gov.uk or croftwindhamcc@richmond.gov.uk

Information Day

North Barnes held its first information day on 16 April. There were stands with lots of providers giving out information to the community. The children's centre got positive feedback from those that attended and they hope to hold another one in autumn.

Stay and play

Our sessions run by the Childminding Network in Barnes provide activities which include play dough, paint, sticking and song time. They are particularly interested in meeting childminders where they can provide support and information and also anyone who is thinking about becoming a registered childminder.

Cook4Life

Our cooking courses, which run for five weeks, are proving popular. They provide parents and carers with the skills to cook easy, cheap and healthy food for their families. They are also a great place for parents to meet others, especially if they are new to an area.

News from Ham and Heathfield

Our Family Learning sessions at Ham and Heathfield Children's Centres have been a great success within the community. We have had a number of courses funded, including Paediatric First Aid and Messy Play.

At Ham Children's Centre, one of our most popular Family Learning courses is the family hair care course run by hairdresser and college tutor Jackie McCulloch. The mums who took part really enjoyed the courses, some have gone on to do Level 2 and others have put their names on the waiting list for Level 3.

The courses have really helped in boosting the mums' confidence and at the same time they have met other mums in the area and learnt new skills. Some of the feedback we had is below:

"Got to know a few of the girls that live by me that I had never spoken to before."

"Thank you so much for letting me get over my hair phobia, and to learn for the first time in my life something decent with my hair... very useful with my two little girls. Nowadays, I sit in the sitting room and do the rope-plait on my own head."

"She [Jackie] is an inspiring person. She taught me a lot about different styles, haircare and techniques. We learnt about the ESOL course and my confidence has just rocketed."

"I would like to have the third module in order to learn more about hair maintenance, hair accessories and more."

At Heathfield Children's Centre, Vicky Smyth recently ran drop-in gardening sessions. The sort of activities they did were: planting sunflower seeds, planting beans, planting and tasting herbs, making scented bags, decorating plant supports, cress egg heads and planting pansies.

The sessions were really popular with parents and well attended. The children really enjoyed filling their own pots with earth and planting the seeds, and there was lots of enthusiasm shown for the upcoming family gardening course. Everyone took home their plants and the most popular activity with some of the mums was the scented bags! Some of the parents and carers said they would try some of the activities at home with their children.

Six parents have also nearly completed their Level 2 numeracy course that they have been working hard on since September 2009. We will keep you updated on their success.

Family Information Service

The FIS team has been through many positive changes since the last newsletter.

At the beginning of May we moved with the rest of the Early Years team to the Civic Centre in Twickenham. The Civic Centre has a comfortable atrium with easier access for families with buggies and wheelchair users. FIS operates a drop-in service for both families and practitioners, during office hours.

Paul Forrest became *FIS Manager* in August 2009. Paul has spent most of his career working in various information services, most recently as a public library manager. Paul is dad to Eleanor (7) and James (3). Paul is lucky to have a fabulous childminder and nursery looking after James, near his home in Harrow.

Gurdeep Dhillon has been busy training new recruits, answering enquiries and keeping all our information up-to-date. In the coming months, Gurdeep will be focusing on providing FIS services to families in Whitton, Heathfield and Twickenham.

Katrina French joined the FIS team in April. Katrina also works on a project with young parents, based at a children's centre in Clapham. As Katrina and Gurdeep job share, you will be seeing more of her in Whitton, Heathfield and Twickenham.

Laura Budgen was recruited in February. Laura, a mother of two, lives in the borough, and has lots of first-hand experience of using childcare. Laura previously worked for Careconnect Learning, the health and care hub for Learn Direct. She has operational experience of working in a government-led organisation offering advice and guidance to learners. Laura will be developing contacts and doing outreach work in Barnes and Sheen.

Ruth Sewell was also recruited in February, having previously worked for Richmond Council in Youth Justice and with adults with physical disabilities. She will be concentrating on working with families in the Hampton and Teddington areas.



Chloe Reece is currently on maternity leave after having her second child in January. She is due to return to work in November.

We welcome opportunities to take our service out into the community. Wherever you might be in the Richmond Borough. If you work with families who you think could benefit from FIS information and advice, please get in touch.

In the coming months we will continue to update our information about local services for children. If you have given consent for your service details to be published on the internet, you can check them on the following website <http://childcarefinder.direct.gov.uk/>

If you can't recall filling out one of our FIS provider profile forms, and need business now or in the future, don't hesitate to get in touch by phone, in person or by email. We are open Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm, with an answerphone service outside these hours.

Family Information Service

Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ

020 8831 6298 • fis@richmond.gov.uk

www.richmond.gov.uk



Childminding support

The Childminding Support team now offers home visits and/or phone and email support to childminders, and ensures they feel confident and supported in the delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

The support will be designed around childminders' individual needs, for example:

- implementation of actions and recommendations from a recent Ofsted inspection;
- preparation for a forthcoming Ofsted inspection;
- knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and child protection;
- observation, planning and assessment;
- risk assessments;
- recording complaints; plus
- advice and support on other areas identified.

Childminders are also encouraged to attend cluster meetings to meet with other professionals and share good practice.

The support will be as follows:

Helen Swan

07957 996095 • h.swan@richmond.gov.uk

Quindrat areas: Kew; Mortlake, Barnes and East Sheen; Ham and Richmond

Lucy Chester

07985 156502 • lucy.chester@richmond.gov.uk

Quindrat areas: Hampton and Hampton Hill; Heathfield, Whitton and West Twickenham

Margaret Monori

020 8831 6229 • m.monori@richmond.gov.uk

Quindrat area: St Margaret's, Twickenham and Teddington.

The Childminding Network

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Childminding Network was originally approved as a National Childminding Association (NCMA) Children Come First quality-assured network in March 2004.

Since the first inspection, the network has gone from strength to strength and now has 60 members including 17 who are accredited and on the Directory of Providers. This allows them to access the government funding for parents of 3 to 4 year olds and support the pilot project for vulnerable 2 year olds.

The network is reapproved every three years and has recently been inspected and reapproved for a further three years. The reapproval process involves the co-ordinators putting together a portfolio of evidence of the previous three years work, which the assessor evaluates. The assessor then spends a day with the co-ordinators inspecting documentation, asking questions about the network, and visiting childminders. This year, the assessor chose to visit one new network childminder and an accredited childminder. The assessor was impressed by the quality of both childminders. We would like to thank Suzie Rowe and Michelle Hatton-Smith for putting up with us all!

We have received a summary of the NCMA Children Come First assessors report which praises the comprehensive aims of the network, the quality of and excellent guidance given by the co-ordinators and the overall development of the network. The assessor also commented on the service which is valued highly by network members and parents alike. This was fed back to her directly through questionnaires that were completed by all network childminders.

We celebrated this achievement at an event at York House in May.

Helen Swan

Childminding Network Co-ordinator



Communication friendly spaces

Recently I attended a course, Communication Friendly Spaces (CFS) which was one of the best courses I have been on for a long time. A basic subject that they covered was 'declutter'. This is one we all battle with, as we believe the more resources the parents and Ofsted see, the better. Not always true. The way we use our resources is actually more important and more effective.

They also talked about going back to basics and using what you have, not buying more to create rich learning environments. For example, an unused corner of the room can be made more inviting by throwing down a rug, adding some textured cushions and some very specific books that the children in your setting might enjoy. A table on the side can be used as the basic structure of a den, either made by you or with the children, with blankets, off cuts of fabric and pegs. Simple!

Once you have done this, stand back and watch the children enjoy! There is no right way or wrong way to use the corner. It is just suppose to encourage them to talk. Not always to you, but to each other, and you should just stand back, listen and enjoy. Observe the conversations and in doing this, your observations will be done and you will also hear their imagination at work, being expressed in their own language! This will in turn help you to plan adult-led specific activities for each child to reach their potential!

We all worry about Ofsted, well on our course we were shown that Ofsted is on board with communication-friendly spaces and supports them. In between day 1 and day 2 of the course, I was inspected by Ofsted. I was all fired up from my course and chatted to my inspector about some of the changes I wanted to try, and surprising, she knew what CFS was all about! Once I tried my first idea and spoke to the parents about it, they were interested to see how it worked. Now two and a half months down the line and three different changes later, they look forward to coming in each week to see what has happened, and to feed back what their children have had to say.

We also received resources bags to share these with our families. I have still to implement this but my parents can't wait to take home a goody bag and see how they and their child can use the resource.

Purdey Davis

Accredited network childminder



Why is play important?

"Letting children go out and play is one of the best things that parents can do for their children's health."
Mackett 2004

"By playing, children learn and develop as individuals, and as members of the community."
Best Play, NPFA 2002

"The right to play is a child's first claim on the community. Play is nature's training for life. No community can infringe that right without doing deep and enduring harm to the minds and bodies of its citizens."
David Lloyd George



An open tent for those who want a little more space.



Tent with Winter theme and books.



A cosy sofa with lights, net, cushions, theme books and children.

Play

Playbuilder

We have seen the opening of 11 new natural play spaces for children aged 8 to 13 across the borough, just in time to coincide with the sunshine. The sites have been very busy, with lots of children and young people enjoying the new facilities.

Play Rangers

Our team of Play Rangers are delivering open access, free play sessions at a number of venues across the borough. They have been out in all weathers and children have been enjoying the opportunity to play out in the fresh air, snow and rain. Now that the weather is improving the number of children at each session is increasing, we average 20 children a session. The sessions are aimed at children aged 8 to 14, but all children are welcome and, if any after-school clubs would like to bring a group to their local session, we would be delighted.



Play Day 2010

Playday is a national event held each year to celebrate and promote children's right to play. This year's theme is 'Our Place' highlighting the fact that children will always find a place where they feel comfortable and can make their own in which to play. Here in Richmond upon Thames we will be holding our main event at York House Gardens on 4 August from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Children and their parents or carers can turn their imaginations loose on the scrap cardboard, bamboo canes, sheets, tarpaulins and various other bit and pieces to construct dens, and hidey holes in the sunken garden. Let's hope we get the sunshine again this year. Please spread the word to parents and other practitioners and come along and join in. All ages welcome to come and play.

Please see website for further details.
www.richmond.gov.uk/play_rangers



Every child a talker

Recognising the importance of communication and language rich environments in early years provision

The 'Every child a talker' (ECaT) programme was launched in Richmond upon Thames in March 2010. The early language consultants leading this programme are **Clare Catt** from the *Early Years* team and **Vanessa Gordon**, *Speech and Language Therapist* from NHS Richmond. The London Borough of Richmond has funding from the DfE for one year (April 2010 to March 2011), to establish this programme. The aim of the programme is to build on existing effective practice, to create sustainable improvements and enhance capacity for early language expertise.

Twenty settings (private, voluntary, independent and maintained) have been chosen to take part in this national programme which focuses on strengthening children's early language development. Research shows that some children do not experience the rich, well planned communication and language provision that is necessary to support their development. One practitioner in each

setting will be identified to take the lead and become the early language lead practitioner (ELLP) for their setting to enhance children's language and communication skills. They will receive advice, training and support from the early language consultants and other key partners to support them in developing the very best early language provision within their setting, and are also to support parents in creating language learning in the home. The knowledge, skills and expertise the ELLPs gain through the programme will support them in training their own team as well as disseminating and supporting learning in others settings so that every child in the borough really is a talker.

We aim to develop a model to cascade throughout the borough using the expertise of the trained ELLPs supported by identified key partners.

For general information about this programme please contact Clare or Vanessa, by email: clare.catt@richmond.gov.uk; vanessa.gordon@richmond.gov.uk or by phone on **020 8831 6267**.

Early Years Foundation Degree

In 1993, I gained a BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care. Twelve years later I completed an APEL level 3 Certificate in Work with Children and in 2006, I began studying for a Foundation Degree in Early Years with the Open University.

I chose to study with the Open University as the distance learning option suited me best and allowed me to fit by studies in around my full time job.

After my first year of study, I successfully gained a Level 4 Certificate in Early Years Practice. I followed this with two more years of studies, including completing two 60 point modules in one year! Whilst this is not an option that I would recommend as it involved a lot of hard work and commitment of time, the end result was that I gained an Early Years Foundation Degree.

During the final year of the Foundation Degree the Open University announced that a module had been released to top up the Foundation Degree to a BA.

The rewards and sense of achievement that I had gained from completing the Foundation Degree spurred me to continue.

My knowledge and understanding of children's care, learning and development has grown immensely. In practice, I became more reflective and a deeper understanding of child development theories has enabled me to gain a clearer perspective of the needs of children and the impact that adults and their environment have on their lives.

I learnt about new methods to apply to my practice that support 'listening to children' that are really beneficial in meeting their needs, promoting children's rights and shaping provision.



Even though I am no longer working directly with children, my new knowledge and understanding has given me a thirst for learning, a feeling of pride and opened up new career opportunities for me.

After finishing the BA top up in October, I had to wait until mid-December for my results. I was thrilled when they came in and found that I had passed. I really felt that all my hard work and dedication had paid off. By completing this module I was also awarded a certificate by Working Together for Children.

My next step is the final module for an Honours Degree, which I started in February 2010.

Claire Grayson BA EY (Open)

Training Coordinator (Early Years)

EYFS in a home based setting using the High/Scope approach

Sixteen childminders from Richmond upon Thames and Childminding Network Co-ordinator, Lucy Chester, attended the eight module course 'EYFS in a home-based setting using the High/Scope approach' held at the Alexander Hotel, Twickenham. The course was run by early years trainer and consultant Monica Wiltshire.

The eight modules were:

- An Introduction to the course and each other and active learning
- The learning environment
- The daily routine
- Plan-do-review and activity time
- Positive relationships – supportive styles of interaction
- Positive relationships – effective communication
- Areas of learning and development, observation and record keeping
- Parents as partners, and presentation of certificates

Participants received a study guide and completed an assignment and reading after each module to reflect on their learning. The eight modules were spread over four months to allow for implementation, consolidation and review.

The course links child development and practice, and participants took away practical strategies which will have an impact on children's wellbeing, learning and development. Some of these include using more real and open-ended play



materials organised so they are accessible to children to foster independence and decision making; differentiating between adult and child initiated activities and introducing High/Scope's Plan-Do-Review; supporting language from children by using questions sparingly, using encouraging words and a problem solving approach to conflict and doing observations 'in a fun way rather than as a chore'.

The photograph above shows Module 7 Areas of learning and development, observation and record keeping. In this activity, from left to right, Shila, Tabitha and Sioux made bubbles with kitchen utensils and fly swats and then represented what they had done either with a song, dance, picture or story. They then marked off the aspects of learning and development that occurred. They found out that when there are enough, engaging materials, a choice of how to use them and with support from each other and the trainer there will be high levels of involvement, language and learning occurring naturally that does not need to be imposed. Relating this to children, the childminder's role is to create an environment in which developmentally important experiences can occur, are recognised, supported and built upon.

Childminders attending the course said:

- It has made me reflect in general on my whole practice by mainly:
 - Setting out different interest areas each day
 - Planning and recalling times albeit very informally
 - Tidying, sorting and re-designing my toy storage cupboard – at last!

- The assignments were perfect for capturing the learning, not too daunting and quite enjoyable to reflect.
- I have rearranged my learning environment.
- Very aware of having open-ended materials for young children to play with.
- ... clearer labelling and de-cluttering.
- I have set out my house differently. I have given children more control of what they can do and when, making the art and craft items at their level. Formalised my routine to include tidy up time so I am more free at the end of my day. I've stopped praising as much, it's very difficult!
- ... not to rush things through, listen to what the children have to say.
- Better time management for children through plan-do-review which leads to a clearer idea of children's interests, which leads to more enjoyable adult led activities for the children.
- A better routine and more input from the children, rather than just me organising everything.
- Already have sorted out all the toys and resources and re-housed them with the children of course, with child-friendly labels. All the toys are now accessible to the children
- Ensuring materials and resources are available for children's specific interests and providing enough of them.

Childminders were presented with their certificates on Tuesday 8 December 2009 by Jenny Howell, the manager of Richmond Childminding Association.

Monica Wiltshire
Early Years Trainer and Consultant



Richmond Borough's Children's Speech and Language Therapy Telephone Advice Service 020 8973 3512

We offer

Advice and information on children's communication and language development.

Information on our service and how to access help.

We want to hear from

Parents and people working with children.

How to reach us

Register your query on **020 8973 3512** and a speech and language therapist will contact you within a week.

The Richmond Borough's Children's Speech and Language Therapy Telephone Advice Service offers:

A quick way to access our service for advice and information on anything to do with children's speech, language and communication development.

The opportunity to ask a qualified speech and language therapist questions about your child's talking, understanding, concentration and any other communication issues.

No referral is necessary – just call **020 8973 3512** and leave a message with your contact details. A speech and language therapist will return calls each week so you will hear from us soon after your call. If you already know your local therapist it is preferable to call them directly at your local clinic of health venue.

You may also like to visit www.talkingpoint.org.uk for useful tips, ideas and information for parents and professionals on communication, speech and language development.

Dates for Diary

Daycare Forum

Wednesday
13 October,
2.00 to 4.00pm
Terrace Room,
York House,
Twickenham.

Provider Forum

Wednesday
17 November,
4.30 to 6.30pm
Richmond Room,
Curriculum and
Training Centre,
Twickenham.



Contact information

Early Years And Childcare Team phone list

Head of Early Years and Childcare	020 8891 7554
Family Information Service	020 8831 6298
Office Manager	020 8831 6267
Workforce Development Manager (Early Years & Family Learning)	020 8891 7215
Training Administrator	020 8831 6394
Finance Assistant	020 8831 6188
Finance and Administration Assistant	0208 831 6398
Business Support Manager	020 8831 6268
Childminding Network Co-ordinator	07985 156 502
Childcare Market Manager	020 8891 7585
Daycare & Childminder Provider Support Officer 'work from home' only mobile	020 8831 6229 07903 349 722
Childminding Network Co-ordinator	07957 996 095
Qualifications Centre Co-ordinator	020 8831 6152 Mob: 07908 462297
Administrative Assistant	020 8487 5282
Lead Area SENCo	020 8831 6357
Early Years Consultant	020 8831 6162
Early Years Consultant	020 8831 6171
Early Years Consultant	020 8831 6306
Out of School Provider Support Officer	020 8891 7512
NEF Project Officer	020 8831 6184
Foundation Stage Strategy Manager	020 8831 6261
Outreach Worker for 2 year olds	07904 556399

Contacts		
DHC Stay and Play Plus	Richmond Childminding Group	020 8891 6090 020 8892 8725
Foundation Degree/NVQ Early Years Professional Status	Claire Grayson	020 8831 6152
Quindrat cluster groups	Rachel Turner	020 8831 6184
Professional development workshop	Anita Bhangoo Julia Head	020 8891 7504
Childminding network	Helen Swan Lucy Chester	07957 996 095 07985 156 502

