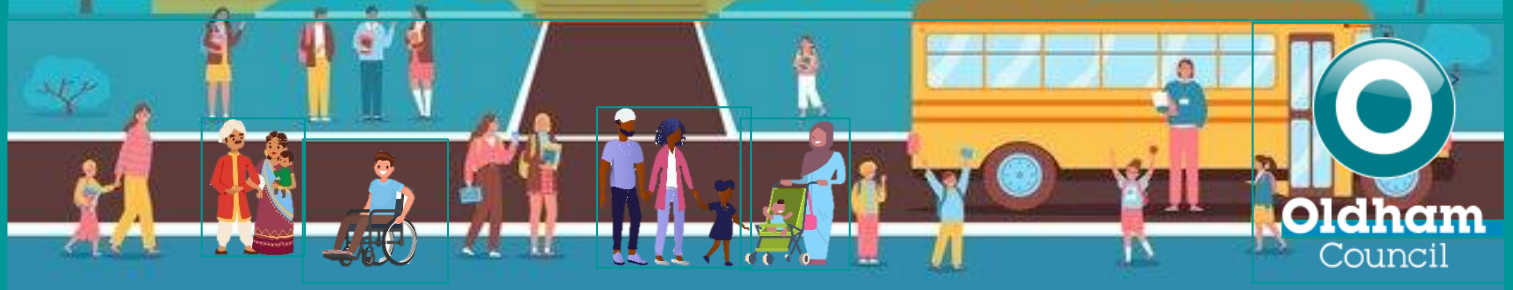


# Briefing to Schools and Early Years Settings



Volume:

Summer 2026

Week No:

27-28

Date:

Thursday 23 April 2026

## Contents

1.	Safeguarding.....	2
2.	Transition .....	4
3.	Early Years .....	6
4.	Partnerships.....	6
5.	Health and Wellbeing.....	7
6.	Recruitment and Retention .....	8
7.	CPD and Training .....	8
8.	SEND and Inclusion.....	10
9.	In the Press.....	10

# Safeguarding

## Olivia Bailey, Minister for Early Education writes to early years sector on safer sleep requirements

Olivia Bailey, Minister for Early Education and Equalities, has issued a letter to early years providers outlining planned amendments to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. The changes aim to make safer sleep requirements clearer and more explicit.

From September 2026 (subject to parliamentary approval), the EYFS will include strengthened guidance on safe sleeping, aligning with NHS advice. Providers are expected to already follow these requirements, including placing babies on their backs, using a clear and separate sleep space, ensuring appropriate bedding, and maintaining regular supervision. The updated wording has been developed with support from The Lullaby Trust, medical experts, and Ofsted. Additional amendments will clarify rules for childcare on domestic premises and add links to updated guidance on screen time and online safety.

You can read the Minister's full letter by following the [link](#)

Point of contact: [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Further advice on safer sleep from the Department for Education

[This guidance](#), created in collaboration with the Lullaby Trust, provides advice to help early years providers create and maintain safer sleep environments for babies and young children in their care.

It includes information on:

- Providing an appropriate sleep space for babies and children
- Safe use of cots, mattresses, bedding and sleep bags
- Supervising children while they are sleeping
- What to do when babies and children fall asleep whilst travelling, managing their temperature, positioning and use of comforters.

The Department for Education has also published answers to [frequently asked questions](#) to help early years providers prepare for planned updates on safer sleep to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, expected to come into effect from September 2026.

Point of contact: [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Keeping children safe in education: Consultation on proposed changes

The Department for Education is consulting on proposed changes to '[Keeping children safe in education](#)', the statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children. If you work in education or a related field, this is an important opportunity to share your views before the planned update in September 2026.

The consultation closes at 11:59pm on Wednesday 22 April 2026 – [click here](#) to access the consultation

## OPSS issues product recalls

On 03/02/2026 [a newsflash went out](#) related to The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) issuing a Product Recall to warn about a safety risk associated with the Hobbycraft Giant Box of Craft.

As of 26 March, the number of recalled products is now 30 from more than 10 separate businesses. OPSS is working with local Trading Standards and the UK toy industry to make sure businesses act immediately. Those that have been identified have been removed from sale and recalled.

All settings should review the products recalled here - [asbestos - GOV.UK](#) and follow the outlined precautionary steps on the relevant product page to dispose of these products safely. For more information you can access the business' contact details within the alert or contact the Citizens Advice Consumer helpline, [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/), or your local Trading Standards department via email [tradingstandards@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@oldham.gov.uk)

**Point of contact:** [tradingstandards@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@oldham.gov.uk)

## Cultural competence in safeguarding

Cultural competence is essential to delivering safeguarding practice that is fair, equitable and respectful. It involves the skills and awareness needed to communicate and work effectively with people from all cultural backgrounds. Culture reflects the beliefs, values and worldviews that shape a person's identity, and is distinct from ethnicity, which relates to heritage or group affiliation.

Learning from the recent Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review into the tragic death of [Sara Sharif \(2025\)](#) reinforces why cultural competence must remain central to safeguarding practice. The review highlights the importance of practitioners recognising cultural influences without making assumptions, and ensuring that assessments, decision making and communication remain child centred and evidence based.

Professionals can access the full [7 minute briefing](#) and [further guidance](#) on the OSCP website.

## Walking in my world

This training is delivered across two sessions, both of which must be attended in full. Using a series of video clips, the course illustrates the lived experiences of children who face abuse and neglect at different developmental stages. Participants are encouraged to step into the child's perspective and consider how these experiences shape their development and worldview. The films follow three viewpoints: an unborn child, a non-mobile preschool child, and a school-age child entering foster care.

**Date:** Tuesday 5 & 12 May 2026

**Time:** 9.30am – 11am

**Venue:** Online via Microsoft Teams

To register email [oscptraining@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:oscptraining@oldham.gov.uk) with your name, job role, & organisation

## One Education – Safeguarding Podcast

One Education's Safeguarding Specialists have a wealth of knowledge, training and experience in facilitating Safeguarding Supervision for frontline staff. Whether it's an opportunity to discuss cases that don't seem to be progressing, or to reflect on decision making relating to referrals, accessing supervision is recognised as best practice within safeguarding in education and is a statutory requirement for multi-agency partners.

Within this [podcast](#), our team discuss why they think safeguarding supervision is so useful to staff and why, most importantly, it has such positive outcomes for safeguarding children.

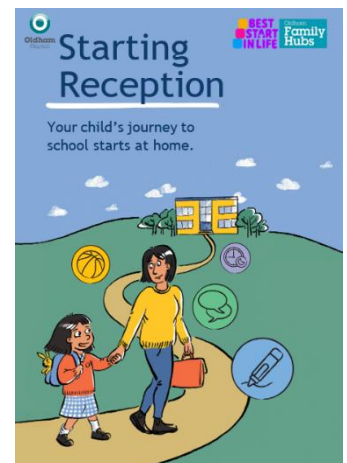
[Click here](#) to listen to more!

# Transition

## Starting Reception

Starting school is an exciting milestone for children and their families. To help make the transition into Reception as smooth and positive as possible, we encourage you to share the [Healthy, Happy and Confident Children | Get ready for primary school | Oldham Council](#) and the Starting Reception booklet [Starting Reception | Oldham Council](#), with families whose children will be starting school in September.

Starting Reception booklet is a free, practical online resource designed to support families in preparing their child for school. It outlines the key skills, routines and small steps that help children feel confident and ready for their first day. Many of these will be skills you are already helping children to practise and develop over the coming months.



Settings may also find it helpful to map their existing planning against the Starting Reception skills, using the guidance to strengthen transition support and ensure children are developing the foundations that will help them thrive as they move on to school.

Please follow our social media pages and share relevant posts on your social media pages, there will be a series of upcoming posts of to support transition, school readiness and Best Start in Life Family Hubs summer offer.

Facebook: [facebook.com/OldhamFamilyHubs](https://facebook.com/OldhamFamilyHubs)

Instagram: [instagram.com/oldhamfamilyhubs](https://instagram.com/oldhamfamilyhubs)

TikTok: [tiktok.com/@oldhamfamilyhubs](https://tiktok.com/@oldhamfamilyhubs)

Point of Contact: [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Early Years Transition - Best Practice Principles Workshop

### *Early Years Transition Best Practice Principles*

Please find attached the **Early Years Transition Best Practice Principles** document, recently developed in partnership with a wide range of professionals. This document has been designed to support your planning for effective transitions and includes ideas to help ensure children experience a smooth, positive transition.

## Best Practice Principles Workshop

Oldham's Early Years Teams and QEST Team invite you to take part in an engaging workshop focused on strengthening high-quality transitions for young children. This session will explore how Oldham's **Early Years Best Practice Principles** support effective transition conversations, enhance universal transition offers, and guide tailored support for children with additional needs.

### What to expect:

- An overview of Oldham's Best Practice Principles for Early Years transitions, promoting consistency and collaboration across settings
- A review of practical tools and resources to support smooth and positive transitions

- Shared strategies, real-life examples, and clear next steps to strengthen your transition offer for all children and families

Whether you're looking to refine existing practice or build confidence in transition planning, this workshop offers valuable insight and practical takeaways.

**Date:** Friday 8th May

**Time:** 1:30 – 2:30pm

**Location:** Virtual session via Microsoft Teams

[Click here](#) to book your place

**Point of Contact:** [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Early Years Transition Hub

Please **Save the Date** to come and join us for our annual **Early Years transition hub**.

We are inviting professionals from schools and PVI settings to come together to share vital information to enable all children to have an effective transition into school.

This year promises to be bigger and better than previous years, so we have moved into a larger space to accommodate the event.

**Date:** Thursday 21 May 2026

**Time:** From 9:30am

**Location:** Smokies Park, Ashton Road, OL8 3HX

**Please use the below link to secure your place:**

[Early Years Transition Hub: Thursday 21 May 2026 | Eventbrite](#)

Please see link to Oldham's Early Years Transition Document [Early Years Foundation Stage Transition | Oldham Council](#)

**Point of Contact:** [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Best Start in Life - Preparing for School Launch

As part of the Government's Early Years strategy, the Best Start in Life campaign brings together trusted advice and support to help families recognise how everyday moments support children's development and build the skills they need for starting school.



Preparing for School has recently been launched as part of the wider Best Start in Life campaign – to support parents in preparing their child for starting school this September. The campaign highlights that being prepared is about developing everyday skills, not just having the right uniform.

At the heart of the campaign is the Steps for School song – a new music video featuring a rap by award-winning teacher-turned-rapper MC Grammar. The video highlights simple, practical steps parents can practice with their child to support their development and build confidence and independence.

You can watch and share the video here: [Steps For School Song | @Best Start in Life + @MC Grammar](#)



We're also encouraging parents to explore the new Preparing for school webpage on Best Start in Life, which brings together helpful guidance and tips: [Preparing for school - Best Start in Life](#)

We would greatly appreciate your support in sharing the video and webpage across your channels to help reach more families.

Further campaign resources will be available shortly via the [Campaign Resource Centre](#), including communications toolkits and social media assets. If you haven't already, please sign up to access and use these materials as soon as they are released in the coming weeks.

**Point of Contact:** [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Early Years

### National Childminding Week Article Opportunity

#### *Childminder Case Study form*

The **Do Something Big** campaign is preparing an article for National Childminding Week in May and would like to feature current childminders to help inspire others considering a career in childminding.

The finished article will be published across National Careers Service and Department for Education channels, offering excellent visibility for those involved.

Childminders who are happy to share their story are being invited to express their interest by completing the attached short case study form and returning it to [Luke.PRESCOTT@education.gov.uk](mailto:Luke.PRESCOTT@education.gov.uk)

**Point of Contact:** [Luke.PRESCOTT@education.gov.uk](mailto:Luke.PRESCOTT@education.gov.uk)

### 'Feature Your Teacher' story den series is coming soon to Milkshake!

This is a fun opportunity to be filmed reading a story to appear on Milkshake as part of the story den series.

If you are interested, please fill out the submission form below and accept the T&Cs and privacy policy for your chance to star in Milkshake!

[Milkshake! Story Den - Feature Your Teacher Submission Form](#)

Please submit your entry by Friday 1 May 2026.

### Early Years Pupil Premium report

Practice review on Early Years Pupil Premium.

The report is based on a survey of 524 individuals working in early years settings and 18 in-depth interviews, this practice review looks at how early years settings understand and use Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). It explores how settings identify eligible children and claim EYPP, how the funding is used, how spending decisions are made, and how settings record and monitor its effectiveness.

To find out more, follow the link;-

[How settings understand and use the Early Years Pupil Premium | EEF](#)

## Partnerships

### A Warm Thank You to Our Private Wraparound Providers from the DfE

As we reflect on the significant progress made since the start of the of the national Wraparound Programme, I wanted to express my heartfelt thanks for the incredible work you've done to expand and enrich wraparound childcare. Your dedication has helped create a remarkable number of new places for families, contributing to the over 105,000 wraparound places delivered nationally and with places still growing.

But the story isn't just in the numbers. It's in the inclusive, high-quality provision you are building. You've ensured that more children can access enriching activities beyond the school day.

Your work alongside schools and the local authority has made this expansion possible.

Your marketing efforts have helped families discover new childcare options, boosting take up and increasing access to financial support through Tax Free Childcare, making wraparound more affordable for families who need it. Thanks to you, parents can head to work knowing their children are safe, supported, and having fun every single day.

You've helped make wraparound feel less like a service and more like a community - warm, responsive, and built around what families really need.

As we transition out of the Childcare Works contract on 1 April 2026 and move into the next phase, with additional investment going into local authority capacity, we want to continue building on this success together, supporting you to keep delivering high quality, accessible, inclusive childcare for every family. We are working hard to ensure you continue to have access to the best practice resources and from the 1 April 2026, most of these resources will be available via your LA contact who will have access to the Early Years and Wraparound Knowledge Hub.

Most of all, thank you for caring so deeply. Everything you've delivered so far is changing lives for the better, and it truly shows.

Hannah Streatfeild and Emily Whitehead, Deputy Directors, Schools Groups.

**Point of Contact:** [jackie.hanley2@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.hanley2@oldham.gov.uk)

## Health and Wellbeing

### Screen Time Guidance Resources

The government has published new, evidence-informed guidance to help parents and carers of children under 5 navigate screen time.

Digital screens are now a normal part of family life. The early years are however critical for development - 90% of a child's brain development occurs by age 5, making it a critical period for the development of social, emotional and cognitive skills.



The advice is informed by recommendations from an expert panel and has also been developed with parents. It is designed to provide practical, clear and straightforward advice to help families make informed choices that support their child's development during the years that matter most.

To support partners wishing to promote this campaign and the new guidance, we have created a suite of resources including a comms toolkit, social assets, digital screens and an infographic. [This is available for download on the Campaign Resource Centre.](#)

#### Some of the key recommendations for parents include:

- Avoid screen time for under 2s and for 2-5 years, try to keep it to no more than an hour a day.

- Choose slow-paced, predictable content as this is better for young brains. Fast-paced, over-stimulating social media-style videos may affect how young children learn to concentrate, so it's best to avoid them.
- Avoid young children using screens alone as it reduces opportunities for social time and active play. Try watching and discussing content together with your child as it supports their development and helps you protect them from harmful content.
- Swap out screens at bedtime or mealtimes for reading stories or playing simple games.
- Children copy everything you do – their brains are like sponges. Be mindful of how often you use screens around your child.

The advice is available for parents to access on the [Best Start in Life website](#), alongside a whole range of other free resources and advice on everything from pregnancy to starting school. The full expert panel independent report, which this advice is informed by is available on [GOV.UK](#).

## Immunisation

### **Attached - World Immunisation Week**

**24–30 April 2026** is World Immunisation Week, celebrating the life-saving power of vaccines and how they protect people of all ages against more than 30 life-threatening, preventable diseases.

Please find information for settings and schools attached.

**Point of Contact:** [kathleen.shields@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:kathleen.shields@oldham.gov.uk)

## Recruitment and Retention

### Help improve the ‘Check an early years qualification’ online service

The Department for Education is inviting early years professionals to share their feedback on the ‘Check an early years qualification’ online service. If you’re a setting manager, childminder, or a practitioner, your experience matters.

We would love to hear about your experience by completing the survey below.  
[https://dferesearch.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bvzLkfocZqllDye?Origin=newsflash](https://dferesearch.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvzLkfocZqllDye?Origin=newsflash)

Your feedback will help us understand what works well and where the service could be improved, so we can better support people working in early years.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [research.early-years-quals@education.gov.uk](mailto:research.early-years-quals@education.gov.uk)

## CPD and Training

### Opportunity for nurseries to take part in an EEF-funded early years trial

Early years settings are invited to help shape national research on supporting young children’s development by taking part in the evaluation of the Positive Early Childhood Education (PECE) programme. PECE is a professional development programme that helps early years practitioners create warm, consistent and responsive environments that support children’s emotional, behavioural and cognitive self-regulation.

The study is funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and independently evaluated by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen). Participation is free and financial contributions are provided to recognise staff involvement.

To find out more, visit <https://www.triplep-parenting.uk.net/uk/pece-program-eef-trial/> or contact [EarlyYearsPECEproject@triplep.uk.net](mailto:EarlyYearsPECEproject@triplep.uk.net). Likewise, if you are an eligible setting and would like to take part in the trial, you can express your interest [here](#).

**Point of Contact:** [EarlyYearsPECEproject@triplep.uk.net](mailto:EarlyYearsPECEproject@triplep.uk.net)

## Department for Education (DfE) – Online Training Materials

### DfE Early years child development training

This free online training is designed to build and improve your understanding of child development. It provides practical tips and ideas to use in your setting to help children aged 0-5 years. The course has 8 modules and the average completion time of each module is 2 hours.

Click here to [access the training](#)

### Help for early years providers

Resources, activities and support articles for childminders and practitioners working with children aged 0-5 years.

[Click here to access](#)

**Point of contact:** [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## GM Reflect - ELearning opportunity to support practitioner development

### *What is GM Reflect?*

**GM REFLECT** is a single competency framework designed to recognise and strengthen the skills and knowledge of the Greater Manchester (GM) workforce, support integrated working, and provide access to further training and professional development across the GM multi-agency early years workforce.

[Click here](#) to find out more about GM reflect

Open access, free to use eLearning modules designed to strengthen levels of confidence across a range of workforce competencies.

[GM REFLECT eLearning - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

**Point of contact:** [early.years@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:early.years@oldham.gov.uk)

## Super Stories – Bring Books to Life! - FREE Live Online Course!

Join our **fun, interactive Zoom course** designed to ignite imagination and creativity in young children through **storytelling magic!** Perfect for Early Years Practitioners, Parents, and Nannies.

Secure your spot now and transform story time into SUPER time.

**The importance of stories, books, song and rhyme for every child**

[Click here](#) to book your place on Thursday 23 April 2026 at 7pm **OR** Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 12.45pm

# SEND and Inclusion

## Preschool Alliance Level 3 SENCO Qualification

Applications for May 2026 funded cohort are now open- please follow the link to register your interest for your place!

<https://www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/early-years-SENCO>

An **Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinator (EYSENCO)** plays a key role in identifying and supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). They work closely with families and professionals to make sure children receive the right support, helping to secure the best possible outcomes in their early development and learning.

Apply by **Sunday 3 May 2026** to start in May.

The Level 3 Early Years SENCO qualification is fully-funded by the DfE for SENCOs, or those due to take up the role of SENCO, working in private, voluntary or independent early years settings, Ofsted-registered Childminders and Childminder agencies. Please note that we have been allocated 9,500 funded places by the DfE over the 2026 to 2028 period. To be eligible, the candidates must meet the criteria outlined by the DfE.

**Point of Contact:** [enquiries@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bestpracticenet.co.uk)

## In the Press

### Oldham to receive more than £2m in funding for SEND support

Oldham is set to receive more than £2 million in government funding for dedicated specialists to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The government has announced the rollout of its new Experts at Hand programme, which sees local authorities given grants to provide advice and direct support to early years education settings, mainstream schools, and further education colleges.

The government has said it is investing £1.8 billion over the next three years as part of the programme, which includes almost £2.4m in funding for Oldham for 2026-2027.

[Click here](#) to read the full article (*The Oldham Times*)

Thank you to colleagues who have contributed to this briefing.

### Submissions and House Style

This document has been produced using a standard house style.

If you are emailing in any articles you want including in the weekly briefing, then please use the [Standardisation & Top Tips document](#) for guidance prior to submitting.

LoveOldham  Keep up to date by [signing up](#) to the council's regular newsletter and by following local social media accounts at [www.oldham.gov.uk](http://www.oldham.gov.uk)

