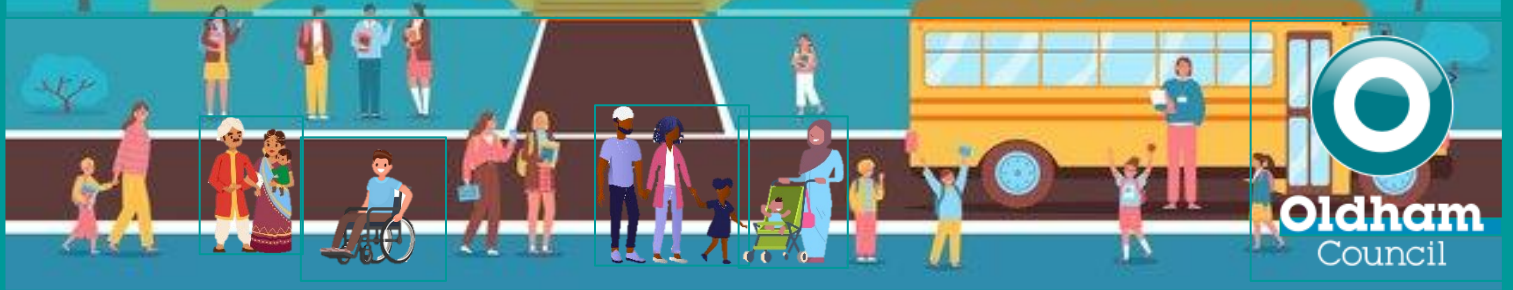


# Briefing to Early Years Settings



<b>Volume:</b>	<b>Summer 2026</b>	<b>Week No:</b>	<b>31-32</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday 21 May 2026</b>
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# Safeguarding

## Strengthening safeguarding through national learning

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review National Panel is an independent body established by the UK Government under the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It is responsible for overseeing serious child safeguarding incidents in England where abuse or neglect is known or suspected, and for identifying learning that can improve how agencies work together to protect children.

On 29 April, the National Panel launched its [new website and online learning hub](#) bringing learning from safeguarding reviews together in one accessible place. Built with input from practitioners across health, policing, education, social care, youth justice and the voluntary sector, the site is free to access and requires no login.

At launch, the hub includes resources across four priority themes

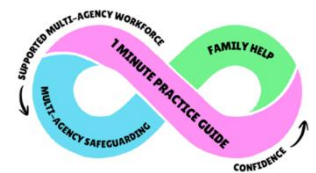
- Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage children
- Child sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Vulnerable babies

Learning is designed to be practical and easy to use, with content available in a range of formats including briefings, animations, infographics, posters and short films. Further themes, such as children missing education, adolescent self harm and suicide, and online harms, will be added over time

A valuable new national resource to support learning, reflection and stronger safeguarding practice.

Point of contact: [Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk](mailto:Mailbox.NationalReviewPanel@education.gov.uk)

## New resources to support practice in responding to child sexual abuse



New resources are available to support safeguarding professionals to identify and respond to child sexual abuse. [Click here to access the resource](#)

These resources are designed to support professional practice and promote consistent, evidence based approaches across services. They include short, one minute practice briefings. Each briefing focuses on key learning and is intended to help practitioners feel more confident when having conversations about child sexual abuse. The briefings can also support the use of best practice in everyday, multi agency work.

The resources have been co produced with survivors, the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, and the North West Multi Agency Learning and Support Hub. This means they are trauma informed, practical, and based on real world experience. Safeguarding professionals are encouraged to use these resources as part of routine practice to support professional curiosity and strengthen the collective response to child sexual abuse.

Point of contact: [OSCP.group@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:OSCP.group@oldham.gov.uk)

## Almost 1 in 4 children experience bullying

As part of its #There4Every1 campaign, the Anti-Bullying Alliance has launched a new animated short film to help younger children understand bullying and feel confident speaking up.



The film uses a playful concept - school bags chatting on a peg - to explore how bullying affects everyone: those who experience it, witness it, and even those who bully others.

Aimed at children aged 4–9, the film encourages talking to a trusted adult and is supported by free classroom activities and guidance for parents and carers

[Watch the video](#)

[View and download resources](#)

**Point of contact:** [aba@ncb.org.uk](mailto:aba@ncb.org.uk)

## Safer Sleep Guidance

Following the DfE's new safer sleep guidance, we've received many questions about our sleep products.



To help you navigate this evolving guidance, we have answered some of the most frequently asked questions about our products. To learn more, [click here](#).

If you need to know which standard each of our sleep products complies with, you'll find additional information and a Declaration of Conformity on each product page:





- [Dream Coracle](#)
- [Cots](#)
- [Rest Mats](#)

We are committed to supporting your work by providing safe, top-quality products that deliver the highest standard of care for our youngest children.

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

## Early Years

### Oldham Early Years Workforce Snapshot Survey

-  [Snapshot Guidance for Childminder](#)
-  [Snapshot Guidance for Group Based settings](#)
-  [Childminder Workforce Snapshot Survey](#)
-  [Settings Workforce Snapshot Survey](#)



GMCA and Oldham have been working with the Early Education and Childcare Coalition (EECC), Coram Family, Childcare and the Growth and Reform network, along with early years settings, childminders and schools to identify key workforce information required to tailor support to the sector.

A new snapshot survey has been launched to gather this data, and your participation is crucial. The more responses received, the more accurate the results will be.

The survey will provide insights into staff turnover, qualifications, pay and more. This will be shared via an accessible dashboard to support your business planning. Findings will also help support Oldham and GMCA plan future support and training for the sector.

Please take some time to complete the survey using the link provided. The snapshot guidance is attached to the briefing should you need to refer to it. You can save your progress, allowing you time to return to the survey repeatedly before finally submitting it.



### [Early Education & Childcare Workforce Snapshot - Greater Manchester Combined Authority - Citizen Space](#)

- **Closing date:** 14 June
- **Incentive:** Chance to win resources for your provision; every completed survey will be entered into a free draw
- **Results shared:** Before the end of the summer term

Your input will help strengthen and support the local early years workforce.

Thank you for your support.

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

## The National Year of Reading 2026

Part of the  
National Year of Reading 2026

GO  
ALL  
IN.

**Reflecting, celebrating, and continuing your reading for pleasure journey**

[Resources for early years, primary and secondary schools | National Literacy Trust](#)

The National Year of Reading 2026 is a powerful moment for settings to reflect upon and refresh the role of reading. A set of professional development resources aim to guide leaders in the early years sector, childminders, headteachers, nursery managers, reading leads, early years leads, and teachers to celebrate the reading for pleasure culture in their setting, and to identify areas for development. Through discussion, reflection and evidence-informed input, practitioners will explore their reading cultures and consider impactful ways that they can support all children to find a connection to reading.

[Click here](#) to access Reading for pleasure: Celebrating and growing a thriving reading culture for children in the early years

If you're just beginning your National Year of Reading journey, download the starter toolkit. It's designed to equip teachers and practitioners with information and assets that will help you inspire your children and implement plans to boost reading engagement effectively.

Please do get in touch to share and showcase your engagement with the National Year of Reading 2026. We would love to hear about it!

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

## Planned Synergy Upgrade

The next planned upgrade of the Synergy system will commence on **Tuesday 26 May 2026**. This means that the provider portal will be unavailable for a period of time. The exact timings will be shared with the sector once confirmed by our IT department.

Apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

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

## Changes to Statutory Sick Pay Guidance

Please be aware of the changes to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) that came into effect from April 2026 through the Employment Rights Act 2025.

From 6 April, all eligible employees will be entitled to SSP regardless of their income. SSP will be paid at 80% of normal weekly earnings for the new weekly flat rate of £123.25, whichever is lower.

SSP should now be paid from the first day of full day of sickness absence, no longer from day four.

To summarise, SSP will be:

- available to all eligible employees regardless of their earnings
- payable from the first full day of sickness absence
- paid at 80% of an employee's average weekly earnings (AWE) or the updated weekly flat rate of £123.25, whichever is lower

All providers should do the following:

- Review their sickness policy
- Check their payroll provider is prepared, if they use one
- Share the changes with employees

For further information, please refer to [Sickness absences that start before and end on or after 6 April 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

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

## Early Education & Childcare Guidance Compliance

 [Invoice Example](#)

 [Simple Invoice Example](#)

The [Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance](#) states that from 1 January 2026, invoices and receipts should be itemised, and local authorities should work with providers to ensure their invoices break down separately into:

- the free entitlement hours
- additional private paid hours
- food charges
- non-food consumables charges
- activities charges

The local authority has requested that providers of the free entitlements (including schools) send a copy of their invoice to meet their compliance checks. If you have not already done so, please send a copy of your invoice to [Free.Entitlement@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:Free.Entitlement@oldham.gov.uk) as soon as possible.

**If you are not charging for additional extras in connection with the free entitlements, please notify the local authority.** We do still recommend, as best practice, that you have an invoice template to show the funded hours only. This is because some parents may need to show evidence of their funded hours to other services such as Universal Credit.

We have attached our local authority examples of compliant invoices. Providers may use these if they wish. **If you are going to use the LA template, please also send a copy of the amended template back to us with your provider details so that we have this on record.**

# Partnerships

## Baby Bonding Group – Parent/Carer Group



### **Baby Bonding Spring Meadows Family Hub 10 June 2026**

Are you a new or expectant parent or carer and feeling overwhelmed?  
Would you like to learn more about how your little one develops and how you play the most important part?  
Enjoy simple, gentle and playful activities which focus on parent, carer and baby wellness.

The next group will be taking:

Date: Wednesday 10 June 2026

Time: 1.30pm – 2.30pm

Location: Spring Meadows Family Hub, Leamington Street, Littlemoor, OL4 2RN.

Places are limited, please email for a space on [parentsupporthub@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:parentsupporthub@oldham.gov.uk)

## Health and Wellbeing

### National Smile Month 11 May – 11 June 2026

#### **Oral Health Websites & Links 2026**



Children's oral health in Oldham is one of the worst in the country and a major concern, although in the 2023/24 survey improvements were seen in the number of our 5-year-olds oral health experiencing tooth decay. During National Smile Month this year we are focusing on **how small habits every day can help protect your teeth, gums and overall wellbeing** by promoting the key oral health messages, all of which go a long way in helping us develop and maintain a healthy mouth.

We are asking partners and agencies who work with families / children to help raise awareness of this year's national theme ['Your Smile is for Life - so keeping it healthy matters'](#) by promoting the following campaign messages:

1. Brush teeth for two minutes, twice a day, with a fluoride toothpaste
2. Have less sugary foods and drinks
3. Visit a dentist regularly
4. Clean in between your teeth
5. Adults can use a mouthwash daily.

For more information and free downloads visit [National Smile Month 2026](#)

[Oldham Best Start Family Hubs](#) will be celebrating National Smile Month by sharing tips and information throughout the month and holding themed play sessions in the hubs during week beginning **25th May 2026**.

Point of Contact: [michelle.clegg@nca.nhs.uk](mailto:michelle.clegg@nca.nhs.uk)

### Infant Feeding and Oral Health External Newsletter - May 2026

#### **Infant Feeding and Oral Health Newsletter – May 2026**

Please find attached the Infant Feeding and Oral Health May 2026 external newsletter from Oldham Integrated Children & Families Service.

Point of Contact: [michelle.clegg@nca.nhs.uk](mailto:michelle.clegg@nca.nhs.uk)

## Sensory and Physical Support Service

### SAPSS Newsletter 12 - Summer term 2026

Please find our newsletter attached. Please can this be shared with families of children and young people in your setting who are known to the SAPSS vision impairment and/or deaf and hearing support teams.

Points of contact: [joanne.jones@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.jones@oldham.gov.uk) and [kay.davies@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:kay.davies@oldham.gov.uk)

## CPD and Training

### Free Early Years Child Development training

The Department for Education's [Early years child development training](#) is a **free, online** programme designed by early years experts to support practitioners working with **children from birth to reception**.

The training has recently been updated to include:

- Additional videos and practical advice for supporting children in reception
- Guidance on supporting the EYFS profile assessment

#### Access the training:

Visit the [Early years child development training](#) to register or sign-in if you already have an account.

## SEND and Inclusion

### Head of SEND and Inclusion

I am delighted to have joined the team in Oldham as Head of SEND and Inclusion this week and am very excited to start to get to know the local schools and systems here in Oldham and identify ways that I can support with SEND and Inclusion across the Local Area. A huge thank you to everyone that I have met so far for the very warm welcome that I have received. I look forward to meeting further partners and stakeholders over the coming weeks and months.



My family and I have recently relocated to the area from Kent, where I worked as SENCO, Outreach teacher, specialist teacher and Director of SEND for many years. I have taught and worked across primary, secondary and special schools, and this has included setting up specialist resource bases for pupils with EHCPs for autism in a number of primary school settings.

In addition to working in schools, I also worked at Canterbury Christ Church University where I led on the development and delivery of the National Award for SEN Coordination, the previous statutory qualification for SENCOs new to post. Over the last few years, I have worked with Kent Local Authority to provide informed support and input from a school leader perspective into their Local Authority SEND and Inclusion improvement journey.

I am already enjoying getting to know more about the local context here and am really looking forward to meeting with SENCOs and school leaders and having the opportunity to visit your various schools and settings.

**Dr Alison Ekins**

## DfE announces 9,500 fully funded Early Years SENCO training places from April 2026

As part of the government's Best Start in Life strategy, to break down barriers to opportunity and improve early identification and support for children with SEND, the Department for Education is very pleased to announce that Best Practice Network (BPN) has been selected as our delivery partner to provide an additional 9,500 Early Years SENCO training places from April 2026 until March 2028.

The first cohort of trainees commenced in April 2026 and recruitment is open for future cohorts now. For further information, including eligibility and to complete your application, please see [Early Years SENCO - Level 3 | Best Practice Network](#)

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

## Community

### Family First Partnership

 *FFP Newsletter May 2026*

Please see attached the **Oldham Families First Partnership Newsletter** for May 2026.

### Family Activity Days

 *SPARK CiC & FFP Family Activity Day Flyer*

 *Relax Kids & FFP Family Activity Day Flyer*

**FAMILY  
ACTIVITY DAY!**

### Spark Oldham CIC Family Activity Day – Tuesday 26 May

Location - Honeywell Business and Community Centre/Medlock Vale Family Hub, Hadfield Street, Oldham OL8 3BP

Time - 1pm–3:30pm

Families can look forward to a fun, free and interactive event, with a wide range of games and creative activities for all ages. There will also be exciting prizes and giveaways, with food and refreshments provided.

[Click here](#) to sign up!

### Relax Kids/Calm Ahead CIC Family Activity Day – Thursday 28 May

Location - Spring Meadows Family Hub, Leamington Street, Oldham, OL4 2RN

Time - 1pm–3:30pm

Families can look forward to a fun, free and interactive event, with a wide range of games and creative activities for all ages. There will also be exciting prizes and giveaways, with food and refreshments provided.

[Click here](#) to book!

### Festival Oldham returns to launch Town of Culture year

Festival Oldham returns to the town centre on Saturday 30 May 2026, bringing a vibrant celebration of creativity, culture and community to kick-start the summer season.



With something for everyone, the festival is a great opportunity for staff, residents and visitors to come together, celebrate Oldham's creativity and be part of the beginning of our Town of Culture year.

[Click here](#) to find out more about Festival Oldham.

## Show your love for The Market during Love Your Local Market 15-30 May

The Market will be buzzing with activity, offering the perfect opportunity to have a great day out for all the family and exploring what our new market has to offer while supporting local businesses.



Visitors can also take part in a special sticker challenge—simply spend £5 at market stalls to collect a sticker, and once you've gathered 10 stickers, you'll be in with a chance of winning some fantastic prizes.

- **Saturday 23 May:** There will be live entertainment from Oldham Theatre Workshop and the Singing Veggies.
- **Wednesday 27 May:** Storytelling and face painting from **12pm to 4pm**.
- **Thursday 28 May:** There will be a Phil Birch book signing and art exhibition from **11am to 3pm** and performances from Jayne's Dance School from **12pm to 3pm** and musical troupe performances from **12pm to 4pm**.

So come along, get involved, and celebrate our local market.

**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.



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)

