

Suffolk County Council’s Early Years and Childcare Service

The Early Years and Childcare Service works to ensure that all families in Suffolk have access to high quality childcare places to give their children the best possible start in life. The service provides support, guidance and challenge to all early education and childcare providers. Support is offered to providers to help them continuously improve and develop their practice. We provide a bespoke service to vulnerable families to enable them to access early education and childcare. Staff with a specialism in early education funding also work within this service and they process claims and payments to providers.

Please see our [Early Years and Childcare Strategy](#)

Support offered to Suffolk’s early years and childcare providers

We provide support to all early years and childcare providers in Suffolk. This includes pre-school playgroups, day nurseries, childminders school nursery classes and out of school provision.

The majority of our support is targeted toward those providers who are members of Suffolk’s List of Providers (LoP) of funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. Information for List of provider settings can be found on:

[Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)

What support can I expect as a childcare provider in Suffolk?

Information, advice and assistance- available to all childcare providers

- online via [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)
- by contacting the Suffolk Family Information Service either
 - by email: childcare.planning@suffolk.gov.uk
 - by using one of the referral forms which can be found on [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)
 - call 0345 60 800 33 and leave a voicemail message. A member of the service will return your call.

EYFS in Suffolk [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)

This area contains information, guidance and materials to support you, including:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2, 3 and 4 year old funding • Training and qualifications • Inclusion • Childminders • Support for Business and Governance • Committee Information • Professional Referrer Info | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of Providers Info & Updates • EYFS in Suffolk – look here to find information which will help you develop your quality of education. • Schools- Early Years Information • Safeguarding and health • Leaflets |
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Contact

We aim to contact all childcare providers at least annually. For those providers delivering funded early education more frequent contact will be offered.

Targeted Visits

These visits will be set up to provide support about a specific need identified by the Early Years and Childcare Service or Ofsted. Examples could include:

- Inadequate or RI settings to support Ofsted action plans.
- Sufficiency development to help increase the number of places or expand the provision.
- Support and advice on sustainability.
- Marketing audit to help promote the provision and fill spaces.
- Identified specialist need, for example business and governance.
- Specific programmes of support to improve quality of education.

Responsive Visits

These visits are in response to a request/referral from a childcare provider. Examples could include:

- Committee and business issues.
- Follow up to pre-Ofsted checks.
- Individual child support.
- Joining the LoP.
- LoP Compliance.

List of Provider, Keeping you up to date meetings. (LoP) meetings

These are held three times a year.

All members of Suffolk's List of Providers are invited to attend these meetings in order to receive updates on current local and national initiatives

They are typically held in the Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich and Lowestoft areas each term for LoP members.

The information is shared in presentation form on [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#) before the meetings take place.

After the meeting, providers often have the option to stay on and take part in a short discussion with our staff about Ofsted trends or other topics of interest

Broadcasts and Alerts

Information is communicated via emailed broadcast alerts. Recent broadcasts are also published on [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)

Target Support meetings (TSM) for LoP members

These meetings provide specific support, guidance and information relating to a specific area of practice. TSMs may be provided countywide, in a specific geographical area or for a particular group of childcare providers.

Training

We provide a range training and continuous professional development opportunities for all early years and childcare providers. Many of these are subsidised and can be accessed

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here www.suffolkcpd.co.uk

Other support available

Foundation Stage Forum

In order to offer extra support to all our practitioners SCC has funded full membership of the Foundation Stage Forum. This gives you online access to:

- A national support network of Foundation Stage professionals
- Membership of a hugely active community of teachers, practitioners and other providers and professionals
- A 24-hour resource for people in similar settings and situations
- Downloadable resources, e.g. planning and policy templates, topic-based focus plans and articles on all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Your own local forum, for meeting up online with practitioners from your area

See information on joining the Foundation Stage Forum via the link below:

[Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)

The Early Years Key Practitioner Scheme

The purpose of the scheme is to improve outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage through sharing good practice.

Key Practitioners, who work in a range of different settings are happy share their practice with others by receiving visitors to their setting or by visiting practitioners.

You can find out more about via the link below [Early Years – Suffolk Learning \(1sixty.net\)](#)