

Considerations – staff working long days will often be tired and unable to take on board new information or concentrate for an extended period of time (most in-setting training is 2-3 hours). Is the space available large enough to accommodate everyone comfortably (see below), will all staff benefit from the chosen training or are there just a couple of people you hope to inspire?

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Virtual Classroom training

Training, as above, can take place virtually, using the Microsoft Teams platform. These may be for people from a variety of settings across the County or arranged just for staff members from your setting or childminder group.

Benefits – Training can be undertaken at the setting or at home meaning no additional travel miles or time. The session can still be interactive as there is the option to use a ‘chat’ function or simply unmute microphones and talk as a group. All handouts and a link to join the session are emailed in advance.

Considerations -The training is usually up to 2 hours if delivered virtually and longer courses may take place over 2 or more sessions on different days. You will need a laptop or other device that has updated recently and is able to support Microsoft Teams and also one that has a camera and microphone function. Wifi needs to be good in order to receive a clear strong signal. It is best of no more than 3 people ‘share’ a screen but it doesn’t seem to work well if more than one device is being used in the same room.

E-Learning

Benefits – can be undertaken at a time convenient to learner and setting, can often be started and saved to finish later, no need to travel, less need for staff cover, if several staff members complete it and then discuss it afterwards it can lead to some key improvements in practice.

Considerations – learners need to be self-motivated to complete it and to reflect on own learning as a result, it can become a ‘tick-box’ exercise rather than a deep learning experience, no one available to directly answer questions that may arise.

Planning staff training

- Plan your training calendar a term or two ahead even if you can’t book training and events yet. Early Years and Childcare Training put dates online about half a term ahead. For In Setting training it is preferable to book no more than 3 or 4 months ahead.
- Have a clear idea of how much money will be available for staff cpd each term/year.
- Choose training that meets a need at your setting and think about what you hope the outcomes of training will be. Remember to read the course Learning Outcomes as well as the course description as this will give you a better idea of the suitability of the training for your need.
- Consider if venue training for one or two individual staff members would be more beneficial than In Setting or vice versa.
- Don’t overload staff with too much training. We would recommend no more than 2 training courses per term. This allows a period of embedding learning and reflection for few weeks after so that the impact of the training can be gauged.

In Setting training

- Choose your training by looking at the course flyers for a description of the course and proposed learning outcomes.
- Give as much info as possible re suitable times/days, face to face or virtual training preferred etc., so that the appropriate trainer can be allocated
- The max number of participants at face-to-face in setting training is 24. This is to allow for settings with large numbers of staff but it important that the room is large enough to accommodate this number comfortably. For virtual training, the max number of participants will vary from course to course and must be agreed with the trainer beforehand.
- Ideal group sizes in setting are 12-16 people seated on adult chairs. Early Years courses typically involve activities to encourage thinking and reflection, so space is needed for these.
- It is up to you to ensure participants are ready to learn. Learning is difficult if you are tired, hungry, uncomfortable, too cold or hot. Staff will be more open to learning if they understand why they are there and view it as an opportunity for self-improvement.
- Consider the benefits of arranging a professional development day compared to training after work or a Saturday.
- Support and motivate staff by attending training yourself but encourage them to have a voice. Try hard not to do all the talking.

Make learning meaningful

- Before training takes place, encourage staff to fully participate. Link their **learning to the EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning**:

Playing and Exploring (Engagement)

Training may not quite be 'playing' but the best learning comes when people are open to new ideas, when they engage with the training and take a part in conversations and activities, and when they share feedback etc.

Active Learning – (Motivation)

Effective learners are those who are able to motivate themselves to undertake training and who see it as beneficial. Those who are less keen to participate may surprise themselves with how much they enjoy it if they take an active role. They will feel a sense of achievement when they persevere and take on board ideas to improve their practice.

Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinking)

Your trainer will be more than happy if participants ask tricky and thought-provoking questions. Those who take a risk by offering their own ideas, solutions, examples and openly reflect on past experiences, do much to help the group to make decisions about the way forward. Encouraging staff to be critical thinkers on training.

Following up after training

- Suggest to staff members attending any training to write reflections on post it notes during or immediately after the course so they are prepared for giving feedback either via a course evaluation or to share at supervision/staff meetings.
- Discuss individual staff learning at regular supervisions and overall staff learning at whole staff meetings.
- At In-Setting training, make a clear list of actions that come up throughout the training. Set timescales and allocate staff to undertake each action as soon as possible after the training – if there is time, do this with them at the end of the session.
- Use peer observation as a way of practicing new ideas and techniques learned and reflecting on their effectiveness. (See peer observation prompts).
- Allow 4-6 weeks for staff members to consolidate their learning within their daily practice. Set a review date to reflect on the impact of training on individual practice (supervision), and as a whole staff team.

