



## EYQI Updates

**Lidia Wolos** 01744 67 1051/mobile 07784360762

**Gemma Oakes** 01744 67 5397/07706991364

**Kate Campbell** 01744 671834

**Amanda Quirk** 01744 674175

EY Quality and Inclusion Team

[EYHUB@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:EYHUB@sthelens.gov.uk)

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/EarlyYearsHub>

### Week beginning 15.12.2025



As we approach the festive season, we want to take a moment to thank all our early years providers for your incredible dedication and hard work throughout the year. Your commitment to giving children the best possible start in life is truly inspiring, and we deeply appreciate everything you do to support families and communities.

We hope this Christmas brings you time to rest, reflect, and enjoy special moments with loved ones. Wishing you a joyful festive season and a happy, healthy New Year. We look forward to continuing our work together in 2026!

Warmest wishes,

**The Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team**

**Contact details for the Christmas period:**

**Lidia Wolos** [Lidiawolos@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:Lidiawolos@sthelens.gov.uk) / mobile 07784360762

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### Upcoming training announcements

**Our training booklet is now available for Spring term 2026** (please see attached) or you can view on our website [Training - St Helens Borough Council](#)

We have lots of training opportunities for all providers, links to book on the training sessions are in the training booklet. If you have any questions about any sessions please email [EYHUB@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:EYHUB@sthelens.gov.uk)

## **Don't forget if you haven't already to book your place on the upcoming Wraparound conference- Last few places remain!!**

We're thrilled to invite you to our **Wraparound Conference** in the New Year – a must-attend event for schools and private settings offering breakfast and after-school provision!

All of the information about the conference and the booking link can be found here [You're invited to The Wraparound Conference 2026](#)

### **✦ Two incredible guest speakers:**

- **Rebekah Jackson-Reece** (Out of School Alliance) – Gain strategic insights into how wraparound, the free breakfast programme (rolling out in April), and HAF all fit together.
- **Alice Sharp** – Bringing the afternoon to life with practical ideas and a fun-filled session you won't want to miss!

☒ **Free to attend**

☒ **Lunch included**

☒ **Packed with practical tips and strategic guidance**

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January- 9am-2:30pm**

**Brewdog Stadium- St Helens**

### **Who should come?**

- School Business Managers
- Headteachers
- Wraparound Practitioners
- Nursery Managers
- Childminders

This is your chance to connect, learn, and be inspired: strategic and aimed at headteachers. Rebekah will focus on how the wraparound fits with free breakfast and HAF, looking at what has worked well and sharing some best practice, whilst the afternoon is hands on and practical.

If Business Managers and Headteachers or Managers prefer to attend the morning session and lunch only, that's absolutely fine – we just want to make this a full and successful day for everyone!

**Don't miss out – places are limited! Book your place- [Wraparound Conference! Tickets, Totally Wicked Stadium | TryBooking United Kingdom](#)**

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## **Sustainability**

### **Top tips for a responsible switch off:**

- Label switches clearly to avoid confusion
- Use prompts, like posters or colour coding:
- Green - equipment that can be switched off by students
- Amber - equipment that can be switched off after checking with a member of staff

- Red - equipment that should not be switched off
  - Create checklists so nothing is missed - [see Energy Spark's checklist as an example](#)
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## Climate Action Plan

### There's still time to start your climate action plan

You've probably heard that all education settings are expected to have a [climate action plan \(CAP\)](#) by the end of 2025. This captures the steps your setting will take to become more sustainable, and reduce your environmental impact.

If you've not had a chance to start yours, don't worry! You can still sign up for our free, 5-day email course, designed by sustainability and education specialists. Each day, you'll receive an actionable step that will help you:

- Feel confident about what a CAP is
- Identify the right actions for your setting
- Pick quick wins to build momentum fast

[Sign up to our free 5-day email course.](#)

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## Nominee Training for Early Years inspections

We've published a training video explaining the new role of nominee for early years inspections under our renewed education inspection framework. The role of the nominee is to support with communication, coordination and collaboration throughout the inspection. This is set out in our [early years inspection information](#).

The nominee role is not compulsory. We won't expect childminder settings to have one and settings will not be disadvantaged if they choose not to have a nominee.

You can watch the video on our YouTube channel [here](#).

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## New Guidance Published

The [Early Years Operating Guide](#) now includes links to additional guidance for inspectors:

- Principles for carrying out early years inspection and regulatory work without notice
- Principles for deciding when more than one inspector is needed for early years inspection and regulatory activity

We're sharing this information to ensure transparency about our approach in these situations.

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## OPSS issues Safety Alert on baby sleep pillows

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) has issued a Safety Alert to warn about the risks associated with baby sleep pillows.

The Safety Alert advises that baby sleep pillows should not be used, as they pose a risk of suffocation and increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Babies should always be placed to sleep on a firm, flat mattress, free from pillows, soft bedding or other items.

Baby sleep pillows are sometimes marketed with claims that they can improve sleep or help prevent flat head syndrome; however, there is no evidence that they are safe for use and they can obstruct a baby's airway or cause overheating. Everyone who cares for children are urged to stop using baby sleep pillows immediately and follow safer sleep advice to reduce the risk of harm.

Childcare providers are encouraged to share the safety alert with parents and carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/product-safety-alerts-reports-recalls/product-safety-alert-baby-sleep-pillows-psa8>

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## Toilet training

### [How to support babies and young children with toilet training in your early years setting.](#)

New article added to the Help for early years website.

#### **When to start toilet training?**

Most children are ready to start toilet training from around 18 months, but the process of introducing children to sitting on a potty can start from as young as 6 months.

Children should stop using nappies between 18 and 30 months. Research shows this is best for children's bowel and bladder health.

Some children will learn to use the toilet quickly, while others will need more time and support.

Waiting to start toilet training until after 30 months can make it harder for them to learn this new skill. Most children should be out of nappies before starting Reception year in school. The only exception should be children with a diagnosed medical need, such as a bowel or bladder condition.



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## Sustainability of Funding- Guidance and Resources

Childcare Works have created recorded guidance and resources for providers, schools and childminders to use when navigating the sustainability of early years funding, and to support in adopting a whole-business perspective when it comes to funding. You can find these on the [HUB](#).

These resources recognise the diversity of the early years sector and focus on the practical tools that can be applied to a range of contexts. They are designed to support providers in feeling more confident with planning, decision making, and sustaining high quality childcare provision and include:

- **Customer Lifetime Value (CLV):** understanding the predictable value of a child's funded journey from 9 months to school.
- **Portfolio Economics:** recognising how funding rates and ratios work together in group-based providers to balance costs and income across age groups.
- **Cashflow Predictability:** using regular funding payments as a stable foundation for staffing, planning, and quality.

[Learn more here](#)



## **National conversation on SEND reform**

The Schools White Paper will be published early next year and will set out our proposed reforms to the SEND system. Building on extensive engagement over the past year, the Department for Education has launched a national conversation on SEND reform.

DfE wants to hear views, experiences and insights from as many people as possible in the coming months. The national conversation encourages everyone from parents to those working in schools, colleges and early years to get involved and help build a consensus on what works to help deliver lasting reform. Every voice will help shape the system our children and young people deserve.

This will be followed by a period of formal public consultation and further engagement following publication of the Schools White Paper early next year.

### **How you can get involved**

#### **Online events**

Join one of five sessions and submit your questions on the key principles guiding SEND reform. You can attend as many as you like. [Sign up here](#).

#### **Share your views online**

Contribute ideas and feedback directly online at [www.gov.uk/dfe/SEND-conversation](http://www.gov.uk/dfe/SEND-conversation)

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## **Action for early years settings, schools and local authorities; Share your views on the staffing of breakfast clubs.**

We are working with the [Open Innovation Team](#) to understand how primary school breakfast clubs are staffed and delivered. This work will support the expansion of the [free breakfast club programme](#).

Your insights matter! Whether your school runs a large, small, or informal breakfast club, your experience will help shape future DfE policy, guidance, and support for schools. This is not limited to Early Adopter Schools - all schools are welcome to take part. Participation is voluntary, and all responses are anonymous. No individual school will be identified

We would love to hear from school leaders and support staff in state-funded schools that currently run or plan to run a breakfast club. You can take part by:

- completing a short online survey
- joining a focus group or brief interview

Please [complete the survey](#) by 30 January 2026 and share the link with colleagues involved in breakfast provision.

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**[Whats on in St Helens- Spring 2026](#)**

## New programme 'Talking with your toddler'

The Library outreach team are delivering a pilot scheme "Talking with your toddler" in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) and Speech and Language UK.

The model is for library services to deliver this **universal level** programme to parents/carers due to the unique relationship library services have with communities. There will be videos to watch and to discuss during each session that support parents with their child's speech, language and communication development.

Please see the details below:

Please see the information here:

### **Talking with your toddler programme delivery**

***Thatto Heath library 10am - 11am***

*Tuesday 13th January 2026*

Rhymes and songs

***Parr children's centre 2pm - 3pm***

Wednesday 14th Jan: Session 1 Everyday routines

Wednesday 21st Jan: Session 2 Sharing books

Wednesday 28th Jan: Session 3 Rhymes and songs

Wednesday 4th Feb: Session 4 Symbolic noises and first words

Wednesday 11th Feb: Session 5 Talking more than one language

**(6 childcare spaces are available for the sessions at Parr children's centre only and space for up to 10 parents/carers at both locations)**

***Please note on booking to enquire about childcare availability during session\****

**Email or call to book your space**

**01744 676977**

**[paulineglover@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:paulineglover@sthelens.gov.uk) or [benholmes@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:benholmes@sthelens.gov.uk)**

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## Education and Learning newsletter

[Education and Learning Weekly Newsletter](#)

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**PVI MS Teams Forum for private nurseries and childminders:** [Here](#)

**Schools MS Teams Forum:** [Here](#)

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EY Quality and Inclusion Team  
Atlas House  
PO Box 512  
ST HELENS  
WA10 9JX