

Welcome to the Early Childhood Service Newsletter for the Autumn Term. We hope you all had a lovely Summer! Thank you to all those settings who have provided stories for our “good news/celebrations” section please keep them coming!!

Early Childhood Service update

We would like to wish all our childcare providers and partners a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. 2019 has been a very busy year for the Childhood Service Team, we would like to thank all of those involved in the new developments introduced over the past year.

Some successful events that have taken place include the Early Years Peer Review back in February, the SENCo accreditation award training in September and the launch of the Early Years training brochure in the

Autumn term.

2020 promises to be equally busy, with cohort 3 of the SENCo accreditation award training starting in January, the Launch of the “Hungry Little Minds” campaign also in January, review of the Children Ready for School Pledge, New Strategy Development in Spring and follow up Early Years Peer Review in March.

We hope you will support any new initiatives introduced and continue to strive to provide the best possible support and care for children across the Wirral.

Wirral Early Years Conference 2019

The Wirral Early Year conference was a resounding success, the focus this year was supporting children’s communication and language development.



Feedback states that practitioners have been inspired by hearing of innovative ways to engage and tune in to children’s interests, especially from the inspirational keynote speaker Alice Sharp, who has a unique way of sharing her wealth of knowledge and experience.



Wirral National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) network

Karen Lane

Wirral NDNA network is a group of NDNA members who are like-minded nursery owners or managers who are passionate about childcare and are committed to providing high quality childcare in the early years.

The Wirral NDNA network has grown from strength to strength since starting a few years ago. We meet on a regular basis to discuss childcare, early year’s issues, the challenges and our achievements. We have invited a number of speakers in to talk to the group on a range of topics, including health and well-being and training. As a group we have a stronger voice which helps us influence local childcare issues.

The Local Authority recognises the network and has consulted with us on changes that may have an impact on the early years childcare sector. We keep up to date with current issues with a view to affecting decisions taken by regulators and authorities.

Adding your voice to our collective voice can only make our influence (and yours!) stronger in these times of challenge. Contact us at wirral@network.ndna.org.uk, work with us and help to improve and publicise the amazing work that we all do! The next network meeting is Thursday 9th January 2020 at 9.30am at The Oldershaw Academy, Valkyrie Road, Wallasey CH45 4RJ - we would love you to join us.

Wirral Childminding Association (WCMA)

Nikki Griffiths (Chair)



IN NOVEMBER the Wirral Childminding Association (WCMA) reached its 3rd Anniversary from being re-established, the association is a group of Wirral Childminders who meet regularly to support local childminders.

This group also enables childminders to be represented at Local Authority meetings, offers training sessions for safeguarding and first aid and many more small evening courses to add to your Continuous Professional Development at reasonable prices.

The group always welcomes new childminders, as they understand just how important support is in what can be a lonely job.

They are also offering a children's Christmas party, where there will be entertainment and a personal visit from Santa, your children can meet him and have their photograph taken, its £5 per child if you are interested please contact Kelly Davidson on 07788 216 096 for further information.

If you wish to contact the WCMA for any other reason, such as a childminding query or support you can contact the following:

Chairperson:

Nikki Griffiths (07925 685 360)

Secretary:

Abby O'Halloran

Treasurer:

Judith Wylde

Local Offer Update

Sally Tittle



MY NEWLY appointed apprentice has certainly hit the ground running! In September Poppy presented to the Nursery SENCOs (Special Educational Needs/ Disability Co-ordinators) studying for their SENCO qualification.

Poppy shared the many ways the Local Offer can support Wirral families with the Nursery staff. This enables them to be better informed and equipped to support the children in their care and signpost you the Parent/Carers to timely help and advice.

Poppy has also been selected to represent Wirral as a Youth Ambassador for Merseyside's Crime & Commissioning Group. Safety is a big issue for our SEND young people and Poppy

wanted to get involved to make sure their concerns are heard, and changes made to help our children safe. Poppy has visited several Wirral schools and met with groups of pupils as part of a rolling programme to hear the voice of Wirral's young people.

The children communicate in a variety of ways: group discussion, drawing, drama and sign language. Feedback has been fantastic, and the children really value a grown-up making time for them and showing an interest in them.

The Early Years section on the website has had a facelift over the summer and lots of new information has been added. Why not take a look and let us know what you think? Visit <https://localofferwirral.org>

SEND

WIRRAL EARLY YEARS SENCO AWARD EARLY YEARS SEND TEAM

A Celebration Event was held on 16th September at Birkenhead Town Hall for 21 Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinators from Private, Voluntary and Independent settings who were awarded a Level 3 qualification in Early Years SENCO.

The Senco's had been involved in 12 days of training, run by Liverpool School Improvement and supported by Wirral Early Years SEND Team, exploring the role of the Early Years Senco, hearing from outside guest speakers, visiting each other's settings and specialist provision. They reflected on their practice, completed assignments and were observed carrying out activities with a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

At the Celebration Event, certificates were awarded by Assistant Director of

Education, Sue Talbot who commented that the Senco's knowledge and understanding of their role would enable better transitions for children with SEND into school provision. Presentations by the Senco's highlighted the benefits they had found from the course, increasing their understanding of the role, giving them confidence to work with staff, families and children to promote effective inclusive provision and enabling them to be competent, confident, capable and committed to giving children with SEND the best start in their journey of learning and development.

The Early Years SEND Team are committed to delivering the training biannually to enable Private, Voluntary and Independent settings, Childminders and Early Years staff in schools the opportunity to complete this qualification.

Seacombe Childrens Centre

AT SEACOMBE CHILDREN'S CENTRE we have opened a social supermarket providing support for families and tackling the rising levels of food poverty in the Wallasey constituency.

The social supermarket is one of six hubs in Wallasey providing fresh, frozen and packaged food. The social supermarket is run and led by our parent's forum who have been a valuable part in setting up the community hub.

We purchase the pallets of food from registered charities Fare Share and His Church, the food is close to the sell by date, rather than the food going to waste we sell it at a reduced rate.

The families who are attending can use this opportunity to manage their finances as they

are not spending all their money on food.

Families have been trying food that they have never tried before and becoming more adventurous. One family commented "I would never have bought asparagus as I don't want to waste money on food that my child wouldn't like. Now I know my child likes it I will definitely get it again"

We also work in partnership with Involve Northwest providing additional support to families giving them assistance with benefits, job searching, debt advice and budgeting.

The Social supermarket is open to families that our struggling financially. This is not only something that only affects families on benefits

but is increasingly affecting working families.

Low wages and part time working means that many more families are falling into the poverty trap. To become a member of the social supermarket you can call into the centre and fill out a membership form.

The social supermarket is open to the community on a Monday afternoon and this has been a huge success thanks to the volunteers that support us. We are currently looking for more volunteers so we can open the supermarket more often and provide this service to more families.

If you would like to volunteer and support our community. **Please contact Seacombe Children's Centre on 0151 666 3506.**

#EveryDayCounts

WIRRAL'S children's services have launched a new attendance campaign. The #EveryDayCounts campaign seeks to improve school attendance in Wirral to get better outcomes for children and young people.

In addition to specialised campaign resources being rolled out across the borough, the campaign will accompany the introduction of the Wirral Attendance Service, a dedicated team of 13 attendance officers, working with local schools and partner agencies to support students.

#EveryDayCounts encourages families to speak out and access advice and support for any attendance issues, rather than struggle in isolation.



With broader curriculums, more subjects and increased teaching methods in schools, missing even one day of education could affect a young person's future.

The campaign is based on facts and statistics to encourage attendance. Education and community partners are also encouraged to embrace the campaign by sharing messages and supporting parents where they can.

In encouraging good attendance, the campaign seeks to ensure that young people are protected and can be nurtured well throughout their education.

To learn more about the campaign, visit: wirral.gov.uk/everydaycounts

Good News & Celebrations



Ash House Day Nursery

celebrated their 30th year anniversary in June this year. As a team they took part in the pretty muddy race for life at Birkenhead park and together with the support of parents raised over £1,500. They followed this with a garden party at the nursery. A number of staff that have been with the nursery from the very beginning which I think you would agree is a fantastic achievement!



Ducking Day Nurseries

linked with the Hive and were involved in the Never Be Hungry project raising funds to provide meals for over 50 young people in need. Hampers were also created and given to young people with recipe cards to allow them to prepare meals (see pic).

Money was raised through various activities such as raffles etc.

Congratulations to Busy Bees Day Nursery

in Thurstaston who achieved an Outstanding Ofsted outcome in their recent inspection.



Police visit at Brassey Gardens

The childminders who attend the drop-in session at Brassey Gardens, invited a Police Officer to come along to the group. This was a very effective way of introducing children to those who help us in our community.



Useful links

- If you have families that may require further support, there are various groups that can be accessed within various Children's Centres throughout Wirral. Copies of the Children's Centre 'What's On' timetables of activities can be accessed through the Wirral Borough Council website: www.wirral.gov.uk/early-years-and-childcare/childrens-centres