

If you have queries about any of the above, please email

eyservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk

1 December 2023

'Have Your Say' Update

Dear Childminder,

You may be aware that we recently held a Have Your Say event for Childminders at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel. We want to engage better with you as a sector and this event was the first step to better working relationships to support you and the children you care for.

We would like to thank everyone who attended and we were thrilled that 54 of you gave up Saturday morning to have your say. Whilst this is a good starting point, there are over 250 childminders in our county and we want to hear everyone's voice.

Please read on and let us have any thoughts, ideas or comments if you have not already done so.

We have noted below a brief recap of the day under the headings of;

- Understanding the Childminder Role
- Support
- Training
- Childminder Conference.

We also have available typed copies of the flip chart notes that were collected. If you wish to have copies of these, please contact us. If you wish to add your views to any of the points below, please email EY Service inbox and we will collate these.

Understanding the Childminder Role

The first exercise was to consider the pros and cons of being a childminder. This identified common themes as detailed below that will help us to better understand how to support you individually and as a sector.

Top 5 positives to being a childminder Top 5 negatives to being a childminder

Being own boss	Isolation
Flexibility and freedom	Accessible training
Relationships with families	Funding
Support from other CMs and groups	Support
Consistency and support for children	Lack of professional status and respect

As a result of the first exercise, we had a discussion around support and training needs of the sector which we have detailed below. Again, if you have any suggestions/ideas you wish to add, please let us know.

Support

Suggestions about the potential of an App to cover training, support and all things.

- Website needs to be updated and easy to find everything.
- No criteria for visits – Childminders wants to request these without it being part of a 2 year Quality & Inclusion visit
- Evening visits from EY Service staff to Childminders
- Requests for regular Network Meetings
- Toddler groups not welcoming/open to Childminders
- Link all various community groups on one site so that we can all connect together

Training

- Bite size sessions to be delivered on line from 7.00pm – 8.00pm from Monday – Thursday.
- Factual – information giving training ideally can be delivered on line
- Sessions longer than this up to ½ day should be face to face ideally on a Saturday morning.
- Option of recorded training that can be available at any time
- Suggested recorded sessions included:
 - Graduated pathway
 - Professional Practice
 - Themed network meetings
 - Ofsted themes – updates
 - FAQs
 - MeLearning platform – lots of resources and training

- Childminding UK

Childminder Conference

The final exercise of the morning was to discuss a Conference specifically for Childminders. We have provisionally booked Saturday 18th May 2024 at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel for this event and it was agreed that the conference would last a full day. There will be a charge for this and we anticipate £50.00 per person to contribute towards the costs. This will include refreshments, lunch, a key note speaker and a choice of 2 workshops (one in the morning and one in the afternoon). Please let us know if you are interested so that we can start to plan numbers and finalise guest speakers.

Due to popular demand, we are delighted to let you know that Neil Griffiths (Story Sack Man) will be our key note speaker. Unfortunately Greg Botterill is out of the country and therefore not available to attend. We are, however, busy discussing workshops with potential presenters in the following areas:

- Nurturing and self-regulation
- Schemas
- Forest School
- Speech & Language
- Mental Health and Well-Being

We also used the Have Your Say event as an opportunity to explain some of the changes we are introducing to the EY Service structure. One of these is the permanent appointment of a 0.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) Quality Lead with a focus on childminders. This exciting opportunity will increase the skills and knowledge of the whole Service regarding supporting childminders (*Update - we are delighted to announce that we have appointed to this post and she will be starting with us on 2nd January 2024*). More details will follow shortly.

We are now working our way through the many actions identified as a result of the event but, should you have anything else you wish to raise with us, please let us know as soon as possible.

Kind regards

Jane

Jane Shotbolt

Quality & Inclusion Team Manager

Early Years Service

**Shire Hall
Westgate Street**

Gloucester

GL1 2TG

Tel: 01452 427548

Mobile 07741 096921

Email: jane.shotbolt@gloucestershire.gov.uk



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