

# Leicestershire Portage Service

## What is Portage?

The Leicestershire Portage Service is an educational service for very young children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. It is based on the principle that parents are the key figures in the care and development of their child.

The Portage system started in America in the 1970s. Leicestershire's Portage Service has been offered to families since the 1980s. The Portage Service is part of the Early Years SEND Inclusion Team.

## What does the Leicestershire Portage Service Offer?

Following referral children are allocated to a Portage practitioner who will complete an initial parent questionnaire with the parent/ carer at home. Visits are offered on a regular basis and take place in the child's home or their Pre-School setting. Families are given the opportunity to attend sensory play groups in their local area.

The Portage practitioners have been trained on a nationally accredited training course, and they are experienced in supporting children with a range of needs.

Initially the Portage practitioners will assess your child's current development and this information is then used to inform and plan future teaching activities. Long term goals are planned, and these are then broken down into small steps so that children are helped to make progress in all areas of development.

Home based Portage plans or setting Portage plans are put into place depending on the child's own situation. Goals are tailored to meet the needs of the individual child. The emphasis is on the positive – finding out about and building on what a child can do.



The Portage model consists of three main principles:

Structured  
Teaching

Child-Led  
Play

Family  
Focus

## Who is Portage for?

The Leicestershire Portage Service is aimed at children:

- ▶ aged from birth to 3 years of age
- ▶ with significant learning needs or developmental delay

Parents are encouraged to share activities with their child for a short period each day.



## How can the Portage Service be accessed?

Anyone can refer into the Early Years Panel although most referrals come from Health professionals.

If you would like more information or think you know a family who would be interested, please contact the **Portage Managers** on **0116 305 7136**.

Further information can be found on the Leicestershire County Council website **[www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk)** and the National Portage Association website **[www.portage.org.uk](http://www.portage.org.uk)**

Leicestershire  
**SEND**

## Contact us:

**Leicestershire Portage Service**

Early Years Inclusion  
and Childcare Service

County Hall

Glenfield LE3 8RF

Tel **0116 305 7136**