

## **Supporting families starting or returning to EY provision during Covid-19**

### **Welcoming new parents to your setting**

September is a time when lots of providers welcome new parents and children to their childcare provision. As these times are very different to other years here are some suggestions on how you can promote your own provision

Consider:

- positive video tours capturing children already attending, happy safe and playing confidently.
- virtual tours of the environment and facilities and staff who will be welcoming and working with the family
- after hour meetings, one family at a time with chance to clean between visits
- meetings outside - using outside space enables families to meet staff members who will be working with their children and ask any questions
- phoning families - making time to chat, following up any concerns and reassuring parents

### **Settling children into your provision**

Children may not have been apart from their parents and families for a long time so starting at your provision may seem daunting for them. Taking time to settle children will be crucial. Here are some top tips to consider for this new way of working:

- By appointment —offer a 1:1 meeting for children and families to meet with their key person by appointment only so children can come in and become familiar with staff and the learning environment.
- Picnics and outdoor sessions —picnics sessions offered for new families in the grounds before they start. These meetings are planned in order to keep numbers low and practice social distancing between families.
- Using outdoor space —Parents and carers bring their children into the outdoor play area, where key persons will meet and greet so that children are familiar with their new key person prior to starting
- On the doorstep — Offer new families the opportunity to meet them and their child on their doorstep
- 'All About Me' form — continue to complete 'All About Me' and 'Child Passport' forms to gain as much background information as possible. Follow up with a phone call or virtual meeting
- Using technology — this is an ideal way for children and families to familiarise themselves with the setting. Recording and sending out virtual video tours enable children to revisit when they feel confident to do so. Some children may welcome video calls with their new key person and possible new friends who could be starting at the same time
- Online story time — Key persons do regular story times for new starters to watch at home where they feel safe
- Social media and websites —Providers upload video clips and pictures onto the sites for new families to look at as often as they want.

### **Benefits of attending childcare provision even during COVID 19**

Quality Childcare helps children to:

- become more confident
- learn through play and have fun
- learn new words and extend their vocabulary
- experience new activities and learn new skills
- problem solve and test out their ideas
- learn independence and get ready for school

### **Letting parents know that your provision is as safe as possible**

Communicating your processes for keeping children safe is important for building confidence and encouraging parents to take up their childcare and free entitlements at your provision

Inform parents of the key steps you are taking to reduce the risk of Coronavirus transmission e.g.

- Ensuring only symptom-free parents/carers can drop off or pick up
- Making sure hygiene starts at the doorstep
- Being aware of Coronavirus symptoms in children and staff
- Cleaning hands thoroughly and more often than usual
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it'
- Carrying out enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces, toys and equipment
- Minimising contact between groups (for example, children of different age groups who are in different rooms) where possible
- Practicing social distancing with parents and communicating why this is necessary
- Ensuring staffing ratios continue to meet their child's needs
- Ensuring sufficient staff within the childcare provision hold a full Paediatric First Aid certificate
- Ensuring children's welfare and safeguarding is of paramount importance