

A unique CPD opportunity for Leicestershire Schools
focused on raising outcomes for all children in the EYFS

All Leicestershire infant and primary schools will receive logins for the “*Watch, Read, Do, Review*” online learning series for the EYFS at the beginning of March 2020. These will be offered at no cost and will expire at the end of February 2021.

There will also be an exciting opportunity for 25 schools to be part of an EYFS project linked to the online CPD resource.

Why? Leicestershire – the context:

Ofsted’s annual reports for the East Midlands region have, over the last years, identified that too many young children are not doing well enough.

e.g. the 2015/16 report highlighted that “those who are disadvantaged by poverty/those who are looked after by the state ... do particularly poorly” and goes on to say that Leicestershire has the second lowest proportion of children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) nationally. Children in Leicestershire who are eligible for FSM and the Pupil Premium (PP) continue to underperform, year on year, in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) at the end of the reception year when compared to their peers and to national figures.

This is therefore a major priority for Leicestershire.

Leicestershire is offering a tried and tested, award winning learning platform on Quality First Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to all Leicestershire infant and primary schools. The intention is to empower teaching staff at all levels to raise outcomes for all children and to narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

The decision to focus on CPD for staff on Quality First Teaching in the EYFS to narrow the disadvantage gap is rooted in research – e.g.

“All of the school leaders identified investing in Early Years as a critical aspect for diminishing differences for Disadvantaged pupils.”

“In all of the schools visited, the most common feature of the strategic leadership was the absolute focus on teaching and learning. All of the Headteachers spoke passionately about their intrinsic role of ensuring that all teaching was at least good and that there was a strive for outstanding teaching across their schools.”

“Leaders invest significantly in additional staffing for EYFS classes to ensure that there are strong role models, highly trained Early Years support staff and teachers delivering an excellent Early Years curriculum.” (*Learning from Success - A research paper: How strategic leadership effectively diminishes differences for disadvantaged pupils in successful Kent schools*)”

This learning platform has been tried and tested previously by LCC in a joint pilot completed in 2017-18 which saw significant impact in all 9 schools involved. Outcomes improved for all children

(GLD 2017 – 65.6%; GLD 2018 – 72.5%) and the percentage children falling in the bottom 20% of the EYFS Profile dropped from 59.9% to 7.2%.

Information about the online learning series - **Watch, Read, Do, Review – EYFS** can be found here: <https://inclusionexpert.com/what-we-do/online-training/mastery/>

The online learning series allows all users to access resources at a time and in a place that suits them – e.g. in the workplace or at home; on a laptop, tablet or phone.

- Each of the 32 modules has a 5-minute video, a short excerpt of relevant information to read, followed by suggestions of approaches to try in the classroom environment with a group of children.
- Modules can be followed in any order and can be revisited.
- Most schools in our project chose to focus on a specific module, often linked to their own action plan, and asked all practitioners to watch the video, read the information and be prepared to try out ideas and to feed back.
- Senior leaders, once they realised the value of working in this way, found time for staff groups to meet for short periods of time each fortnight or month to discuss their learning.
- Schools worked through modules at their own pace and chose modules that fitted in with their own priorities for development.

Here is a summary of the findings of our pilot project in Leicestershire – 9 schools accessed the online learning series across one year and reported the impact:

Staff knowledge and understanding of the EYFS has reportedly developed as a result in all schools.

Senior managers who took part in the learning series now report having a better understanding of the EYFS.

As many practitioners took the approach of working through the learning series together, they report a real focus on learning and a development of “team spirit” amongst staff. Schools reported that teaching assistants and support staff felt more valued and involved.

Some heads/senior leaders/F Stage leads identified the learning series a very useful CPD for new staff members/during times of staff turbulence. They view it as a great way of upskilling teams and individuals.

Please encourage your staff to use the online learning series once your logins are activated (you will receive email notification) and support them to find a way of using it which supports the whole team.

In addition to the online CPD, we are offering free places for 25 schools to access additional face to face training from the author of the online learning series, Dr Sue Allingham. We have arranged for 2 training days over the year. These will be complemented with email advice and support visits to a sample of the 25 schools. See the flyer for “EYFS and the Pupil Premium – Narrowing the Gap in Leicestershire” for further information.