



AfC changes planned for 2024

Achieving for Children is in the process of establishing Family Hubs in Kingston and Richmond. This will see existing Centres and Services being remodelled and co-location with partners being implemented. The current phase is developmental with Local Advisory Boards and working groups established.

There will be one pilot hub in each borough, with an aim to launch these in April 2024 with joined up program delivery and some co-location.

Future hubs will be identified and implemented over a two year period.



**achieving
for children**

Existing referral pathways into Children's Centres, Youth Service, Parenting and Early Help will remain until at least September 2024

Communications about any changes to referrals (as required) will be shared closer to the time. Until then please continue to refer families to existing services as you do now and via the Single Point of Access (SPA)



Ofsted Annual Report published

Ofsted carried out 12,300 full EYR inspections in 22-23. Eighty-five per cent resulted in a judgement of good or outstanding for overall effectiveness. Across all judgements, childminders are more likely to be good or outstanding than nurseries and pre-schools. [The report](#) highlights recruitment and retention difficulties for Early Years settings.

Local Poverty Support

[Citizens Advice Richmond](#)

[Citizens Advice Kingston:](#)

[BBC Children In Need Emergency Essentials Programme](#)

[Connected Kingston](#)

Richmond council Cost of Living [Support Hub](#)

Kingston Council Cost of Living [Support Hub](#)



Useful resources for EY practitioners

USEFUL STUFF



The DfE has lots of free resources for Early Years practitioners [here](#), including free training and materials to improve your practice across a range of areas including safeguarding and welfare.

Watch out for waterbeads

Water beads, used as sensory toys and decorations, are dangerous for small children, warns the Child Accident Prevention Trust. The beads, which are brightly coloured can



swell up to the size of golf ball if swallowed posing a serious health risk to babies and toddlers. They are brightly coloured and soft to touch, making them especially appealing to the children they may harm. Older children use them in water guns, so please tell your families with older children of the risks and to keep these away from their toddlers and ensure stray beads don't escape from the container.

Toy Box warning



Following the news from America of four year old twin sisters dying from suffocation inside a wooden toy box, parents in the UK are warned of the potential danger these boxes pose. The twin sisters got out of their beds in the night and climbed into their toy box to snuggle up with their soft toys. It is thought the lid closed while they slept, depriving them of oxygen because the cedar wood box became airtight when closed. When choosing a toy box it is always safest to have

no lid at all, but if it does have a lid it must have air holes. It is also important to consider if the contents of the box might block air holes. Boxes, like the one in the picture, are dangerous if a child gets inside.

Toy boxes are a useful way to keep toys suitable for older children out of reach of younger ones, but do advise your families to choose with care and consider safety first.

Domestic Abuse News



Physical violence is just one type of abuse – domestic abuse can be any behaviour which is used to harm, punish or frighten someone, or make them feel bullied, controlled or intimidated. This includes mental, sexual, financial and emotional abuse and other harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), so called “honour” based violence and forced marriage.

Support for victims of domestic abuse

Richmond borough – Refuge (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor(IDVA) and Outreach Service) **020 8943 8188** Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

Kingston Borough - Domestic Abuse Hub, support and advocacy for survivors of DA: **0208 5476046** (Mon – Fri 9.30 – 5pm)

Concerned about a child, call the SPA: **0208 547 5008** (Mon – Fri 8am-5pm)

Early Years Safeguarding Forum

The Early Years Spring safeguarding forum will be online on Wednesday 20 March from 7pm-9pm and can be booked on the AfC Learning Portal [here](#)

Save the date: 26 March 2pm – 5pm Partnership safeguarding event in Twickenham

We are hosting a face to face multi agency safeguarding event in Twickenham on the afternoon of 26 March at Clarendon Hall, York House. Focusing around the complexities of Child Exploitation. From next week you will be able to book your place [here](#) by searching KRSCP Partnership event.

No to racism

[This Advice](#) from the Early Years in Mind team is useful when tackling the issue of racism with young children in your settings.

We need to stand firm against all forms of hate, racism and discrimination. Children saying things to each other needs careful management, in a similar way you would manage bullying incidents. Consider the AfC schools anti racism pledge, view it [here](#). Although it is designed for schools it could be useful for Early Years too.



No Fair Start

[This report](#), A Fair Start For All by the New Economics Foundation and The Social Guarantee, says over 1.5 million children in England reside in areas where there are more than three children under five for each early years space. “A Fair Start for All labels these areas as “early education and childcare deserts,” encompassing 44% of all under-fives in England. The research shows that most closures occur in already disadvantaged areas with the lowest Ofsted ratings.

Concerns rise as the government plans to expand funded hours, potentially impacting vulnerable children

due to the sector’s existing strain. Tom Pollard, the report’s author, emphasizes the government’s role in funding 80% of provision in England, urging it to benefit those who need it most.

Neil Leitch, CEO of the Early Years Alliance, warns that economically poorer children, who benefit most from early education, are often denied access. Severe underfunding has left nurseries struggling, particularly in deprived areas, leading to more closures. Urgent government action is needed to ensure infrastructure, funding, and a workforce strategy are in place to provide affordable, accessible, and quality early years provision for every child, regardless of background.

The Autumn Budget’s impact on Early Years settings



Whilst the increase to the national minimum wage might help with recruiting to the Early Years sector, Neil Leitch, chief executive of the Early Years Alliance, warned that Early Years settings may be challenged to meet new wage responsibilities without receiving extra finances needed to fund them, especially with the forthcoming roll out of the extended early entitlement offer, which begins in April with 15 hours for 2 year olds..

Financial pressures on Early Years could be compounded by increasing the staff wages without a back up plan to increase funding for Early Years at the same time as expanding the offer from April 2024. You can read about the roll out of increase childcare offer [here](#).



Do you have Young Carers in your setting?

If you know a child is in a caring role, refer them to the local Young Carers groups for Kingston and Richmond. Caring responsibilities have a huge impact on young people and these groups can offer valuable support.

020 3031 2754 Kingston Young Carers Project

020 8867 2383 Richmond Young Carers Project



Cruse Richmond Bereavement Support Service



Cruse has a strong, experienced group of volunteers, all having moved across to providing telephone and Zoom support, to new and existing clients. They can offer regular support to people within weeks of having registered with Cruse Richmond and are able to support families and children through bereavement. All volunteers undergo an extensive training programme and are experienced in providing emotional support to the bereaved - whenever and however that bereavement occurred. Leave a voicemail on **07495 777401** or email referrals@cruserichmonduponthames.org.uk. They will respond within 24 hours (not including weekends) to offer initial support and explain how to get regular telephone or Zoom support sessions with one of their volunteers.

Kingston Bereavement Service

Please contact us on 020 8547 1552 or email

info@kingstonbereavementservice.org.uk

For immediate help, you can call the CRUSE National Helpline on 0808 808 1677

Mental Health support

Charlie Waller organisation has lots of free guides and resources for professionals working with young people. Have a look [here](#)

Child Death Helpline

Sadly colleagues across all partner agencies may at some time be affected by the death of a child known to their service or involved in responding to their death. Besides internal employee support mechanisms which all are encouraged to explore, professionals may also find it helpful to be aware that the child death helpline is available to speak to if you are affected by the death of a child on 0800 282 986. For more information you can visit <https://www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk>

Concerns about adults working with children

If you have any concerns about an adult working with children you can contact the LADO service on 020 8891 7370 or 07774 332 675 or email:

LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk

The LADO referral form is now online and can be accessed via our website [here](#).

When making a LADO referral remember that if there is a safeguarding concern for a child you will also need to make a SPA referral for the child. This [LADO training](#) event on 12 July is from 6.30-8.30pm. Click the link to book your place.