

The Great North Early Years Stronger Practice Hub

January Newsletter and Key Dates for your Diary



Welcome!

Our newsletter will cover how we can help you and your setting through evidence-informed practices. Click below to access the areas of interest.

There are new dates for your diary so please ensure you check them out!

Please note, when you scroll to the bottom of this newsletter, the message might be clipped. Please press 'View entire message' to see the full newsletter.

Recent Events

Dates For Your Diary

Blogs

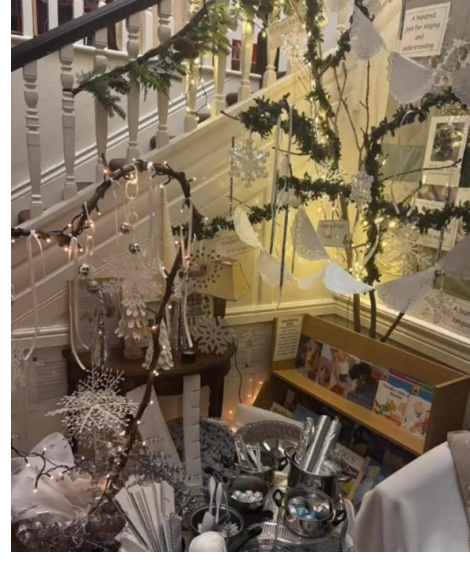
DfE/NCB News

Other News

Bespoke Support

Our Recent Events

A Flying Start to the New Year!



Happy New Year! We hope you have had a brilliant start to 2026 and we are looking forward to continuing to work with you all!

The Hub has been working full force to ensure a strong start to the year. We kicked off January with our **Online North East Professional Development Showcase**, presenting our offer alongside other key hubs in the region to give educators a clear view of the full CPD landscape.

Inclusion & SEND Support

A huge thank you to Abi and the team at Fusion Learning (Cleaswell Hill Specialist School) for launching our first online inclusion network. The focus on **Visual Timetables** was a massive success! Abi also launched the **Bespoke SEND Support offer** in Northumberland, which has already received high praise from educators on the ground. Additionally, the team delivered two brilliant Autism Education Trust sessions focused on play and toileting.

Training Highlights

- **Literacy:** We saw phenomenal uptake for the 'Unlock Early Writing Success' webinar with WISE Academies, accompanied by amazing feedback.
- **nasen:** Thank you to nasen for delivering the first three parts of the 'Golden Key' training—we look forward to the finale next week!

Network Success

It has been wonderful to see our community grow through our various networks. The **Online Leadership Breakfast Briefing**, the **New/Aspiring Early Years Leads network**, and our childminder networks with **Hartbeeps and Brockbushes** were all well-attended and full of engagement. **Field House Nursery** also hosted a wonderful open settings network which was a great success!

Dates for your Diary

Please see below for a range of **fully funded** CPD available to book. Unless stated otherwise, these sessions are open to all childminders and educators working in Early Years settings.

[See all our events](#)

Tuesday 3rd February 3.45pm-4.30pm

Online Inclusion Network: An Introduction to Colourful Semantics with Abi McCarthy from Cleaswell Hill Specialist School

[Learn more](#)

Thursday 5th February 6.30pm-7.30pm

Under 2s Network - From Spark to Story: How Baby Fascinations Shape Planning at Goosehill Early Excellence, Morpeth

[Learn more](#)

Tuesday 10th February 4.00pm-5.00pm

Open Settings Network - Ashley Academy in South Shields

[Learn more](#)

Saturday 14th February 10am-12.00pm

The Power of Music in Early Years: A Practical Training Session with Tiny Tweeties at Durham Leadership Centre

[Learn more](#)

Thursday 19th February 6.30pm-7.30pm

Castle Kindergarten (Hylton Castle) Network - The Power of Focus Stories in Developing Children's Learning

[Learn more](#)

Tuesday 24th February 3.45pm-4.45pm

Online Inclusion Network: The Power of PECS

[Learn more](#)

Wednesday 4th March 8.00am-8.40am

Online Early Years Leadership Breakfast Briefing Network

[Learn more](#)

Wednesday 4th March 1.00pm-4.00pm

Network for New/Aspiring Early Years Leaders at Croftway Academy, Blyth

[Save the Date!](#)

Wednesday 11th March 8.00am-8.40am

Online Early Years SEND Breakfast Briefing Network

[Learn more](#)

Wednesday 11th March 1.00pm-4.00pm

Network for New/Aspiring Early Years Leaders at Lighthouse View, Seaham

[Save the Date!](#)

Thursday 12th March 3.45pm-4.30pm

Online Inclusion Network: An Introduction to Maths with Manipulatives

[Learn more](#)

Thursday 19th March 3.45pm-4.45pm

Webinar - 'Strive for Five: Enhancing Language Through Conversation' with Stella Jones from Town End Research School

[Learn more](#)

Thursday 19th March 4pm-5pm

Tuesday 31st March 3.45pm-4.45pm

Seasonal Forest School Network with
Goosehill Early Excellence in Bothal Woods

Online Inclusion Network: Social Stories and
Comic Strip Conversations

Learn more

Learn more

Maths Champions

The National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) are delighted to have secured funds to deliver the Maths Champions programme through the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Department for Education (DfE). The 12 month online programme has been evaluated by the EEF with York and Durham University and has been proven to boost children's Maths and Language attainment by an average of 3 additional months. As part of this DfE-funded scaled delivery, the programme will be available at no cost to participating settings.



Improve children's outcomes by three months through becoming a Maths Champion in your setting.

Express your interest here:
www.bit.ly/GREATeoi



The Great North Early Years Stronger Practice Hub



Express your Interest

Childminder Network Sessions



These sessions are FREE for childminders and for children 0-5 years. They will give you the opportunity to network and build relationships with like minded individuals, whilst supporting the children to engage in fun & interactive singing and storytelling sessions with a highly trained and skilled Hartbeeps Imaginator.

We have organised a termly childminder network in the following venues:

Rising Sun Country Park, Benton

Thursday 5th March at 9.30am - Click [here](#) to book.

The Haven, Kenton

Thursday 19th February at 9.45am - Click [here](#) to book.

Blyth South Beach HQ

Wednesday 10th March at 10.20am - Click [here](#) to book.

Lanchester Community Centre (10.00am-11.00am)

Friday 20th February - Click [here](#) to book.

Spennymoor Community Centre (1.30pm-2.30pm)

Wednesday 11th March - Click [here](#) to book.

Sherburn Community Centre (1.00pm-2.00pm)

Wednesday 11th March - Click [here](#) to book.

Blogs

Unlock Writing Success Blog Series



Writing presents a **hugely complex task** for our youngest learners. This series of blogs explores key messages from the **DfE Writing Framework** and **Ofsted's Strong Foundations in the First Year of School** report, emphasising why securing early writing skills is **crucial for a child's educational journey**.

Part 1: The Important Role of Oral Composition

Part 2: The Crucial Connection of Transcription

Read the Blogs

DfE/NCB News



Reception-year quality

R by Regions Group DfE

Playlist · 6 videos · 8,635 views

Play all

DfE Reception Quality Webinar Series

During the 2025 autumn term, the [Department for Education](#) delivered a series of 6 regional improvement for standards and excellence (RISE) webinars on reception quality led by sector experts, including the [Education Endowment Foundation](#) Ofsted [Childcare Registration](#) and English Hubs. The aim of these free webinars is to support schools, trusts and local authority leaders to increase the number of children who achieve a good level of development (GLD) at the end of their first year in school .All 6 webinars are now available to watch on demand by clicking [here](#).

Special Approach to Making it REAL open access webinars

Please find below links to the next dates for the Special Approach to Making it REAL open access webinars:

5th Feb 2026- 9.30am-11.30am- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1972539756511?aff=oddtcreator>

24th Feb 2026- 7pm-9pm- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1972540773553?aff=oddtcreator>

These are workshops providing practitioners with an overview of how to support the home learning environment for families with children with SEND.

Other News

Could Your Setting Inspire Others?

We're inviting settings to volunteer as hosts and highlight the EYFS principle of Enabling Environments — those thoughtfully designed spaces that help every child thrive.

If your setting would like to take part, please get in touch below!

Nominate yourself now!

Bespoke Support

Empower your setting or school with our flexible and responsive bespoke support services! We understand that every setting has unique challenges and aspirations, which is why we offer tailored guidance precisely aligned with your individual needs. Whether you're preparing for a SEND Review, seeking to develop a robust Early Intervention Strategy, or aiming to enhance your Early Years provision through a comprehensive audit, our experienced team is dedicated to helping you achieve your specific goals.

Our bespoke support can be booked to address a range of specific requirements, including:

- 1. Bespoke support for individual schools as per request:** Tailored solutions designed to address your unique challenges and priorities, drawing on the latest research evidence.
- 2. Supported NASEN SEND review with an Early Years peer:** Collaborative review from an Early Years Practitioner who has completed the NASEN SEND Reviewer training. Supportive action planning drawing on EEF Early Years and SEND documentation.
- 3. Early Intervention Strategy development:** Assistance in creating and implementing effective strategies to identify and support children with emerging needs. Map out the resources and training available in your locality to support children with SEND. This session draws on the advice from EEF SEND documentation.

Availability for our bespoke support is limited, and we are committed to prioritising settings and schools located in areas of disadvantage or those providing crucial support to vulnerable children. Don't miss this valuable opportunity to invest in your children's futures and cultivate a thriving learning environment. Contact us today to discuss your specific needs and secure your bespoke support package. Let us partner with you to make a meaningful and lasting impact.

[Request bespoke support](#)



We are proud to work alongside Town End Research School to raise the profile of using evidence-informed practice and research to strengthen Early Years settings and improve outcomes for children.

[Learn more about Town End Research School](#)

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