

Early Years Professional network

The number of Early Years Professionals (EYP) in Leicestershire has been steadily increasing since the first graduated in January 2007.

There are now 15 across the county, with many more currently working towards the status. To help support one another, and to share practice amongst the group the current EYPs have joined the network.

The meetings are also used as a chance to feedback to the group about various professional development days each member has attended. As not all of the EYPs can access every training session, hearing back from others who did means they keep up-to-date.

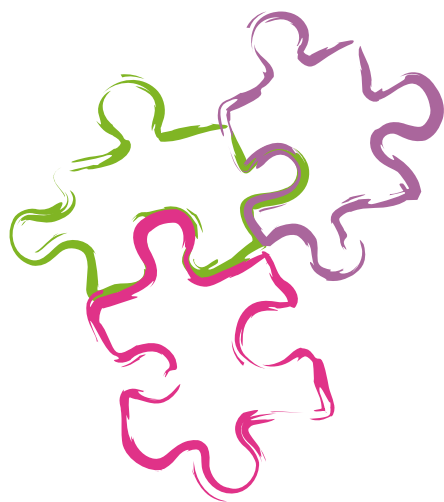
One of the EYPs, Jane Hancox, tells us about two of the professional development days that have been attended so far:

The first was a visit to Pen Green Children's Centre in Corby. Part of the day involved looking around the marvellous facilities which included two nurseries, a separate baby unit, huge and elaborate outdoor play structures and water activity centre, sensory rooms, water rooms and the largest sand pit I've ever seen - complete with pirate ship!

We were fired up by a passionate speech from Dr Margy Whalley who had us thinking about the impact we could make on both children's development and the staff who worked with us... especially in these ever changing times.

The second was a one day conference at Northampton University, which is devising a programme to support the professional development of EYPs. They are introducing a further level 6 professional accreditation in the form of a Graduate Certificate for Professional Development for EYPs. The course would enable us to continue evaluating and improving our practice and being recognised for doing so.

The guest speaker for the day was Elizabeth Jarman who explained the approach of "Communication Friendly Spaces". By considering aspects in our own settings of space, light, colour, noise, storage and resource management, we could help make a difference to learning outcomes for children. Those of the group who attended have taken some of these ideas back to their own settings and have reported back that the ideas really work!





Leicestershire's EYPs meet to discuss the network

The day was rounded off by some storytellers who encouraged us to tell our life story on a stick!

Future events are being planned to help continue our professional development, giving us even more examples of good practice to further enhance the learning and development of children in our care.

If you are interested in becoming an Early Years Professional contact the Workforce Development team on 0116 305 6555.



Leicestershire's EYPs get to grips with story sticks