

Early Years Recovery Programme: Expression of interest for regional Area leads to provide support to Mentors and Experts who are supporting early years settings following the COVID-19 pandemic– deadline Friday 10th December 2021.

Context

The earliest years are the most crucial point of child development and attending early education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and supports children’s social and emotional development.

Evidence tells us that the quality of education and care in early years has the biggest impact on children’s outcomes within a childcare setting. As such, we have designed a recovery programme for early years focused on supporting practitioners and leaders, who are key to addressing the impact of the pandemic on the youngest children.

One of the ways we are supporting early years practitioners, leaders and whole-settings is through a package of bespoke support to be delivered both in the setting face-to-face and virtually. The offer to settings will include leadership support, coaching for leaders, mentoring for practitioners and whole-setting support depending on individual setting’s priorities and needs.

Eligible early years settings will be able to request the support of an early years Expert and Mentor in their region.

The role of the ‘Expert’ will be to provide support to the setting leader with the main focus of supporting children to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and others. The role of the ‘Mentor’ will be to provide remote support to practitioners, as they complete a new online child development training package, as well as providing more general support focusing on improving practice and curriculum to support children following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The role of the ‘Area lead’ will be to act as a first point of contact to around 10 mentors and/or experts, in your region. Experts and mentors may require this support for various reasons, for example when delivering a difficult message or where practitioners or leaders are not engaging fully with the programme.

Area leads may claim up to 3 days per term to provide this support to mentors and/or experts. Area leads will also be allocated their own setting to support, for a further 3 days per term.

The project will be available nationally next academic year (2022/23). However, initially, we will be piloting the programme in two Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC) regions, Lancashire and West Yorkshire and the North of England. Local Authorities within each region can be found in the table below:

Region	Local Authorities
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Bolton, Bradford, Bury, Calderdale, Halton, Kirklees, Knowsley, Lancashire, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Sefton, St Helens, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wakefield, Warrington, Wigan, Wirral
North of England	Cumbria, Darlington, Durham, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, North Yorkshire, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, South Tyneside, Stockton-on-Tees, Sunderland

More information on the national programme, and support for childminders will be announced in due course.

Responsibilities and experience

We are looking for early years leaders with at least three years' experience and are currently working in a leadership role in a school, nursery school or other early years setting that is Ofsted rated good or outstanding (or equivalent independent school inspection rating). We will also accept applications from staff currently working in early years roles within Local Authorities (LAs), for the role of Area Lead and/or Expert.

Given the focus of this programme is on providing peer-to-peer and setting-to-setting support, we intend to focus first on applications from people currently working within settings, and will then consider applications from LAs.

Applicants must have a Level 6 or above early years qualification and have agreement from the setting manager/owner/head teacher to take part in the project.

Area leads should be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of child development and have a clear understanding of the revised [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) framework 2021](#) and it's application in a variety of settings, including Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) nursery settings and childminders.

Area leads will be expected to travel within their RSC region to support eligible settings leaders and practitioners within their settings as well as build relationships quickly and easily using remote technology, such as Microsoft Teams. Experience of coaching is desirable and we would particularly welcome applications from those with experience of supporting others in the early years sector.

As an Area lead, you may support mentors and experts in your locality with:

- Advice on having effective discussions with their mentees/settings/setting leaders
- Being a sounding board for the mentor or expert, where there are issues or blockers to the planned support

- Supporting the mentor/expert in dealing with the settings they are responsible for, helping them to overcome any potential issues
- Providing an escalation route for any safeguarding issues arising

For the pilot programme, the Department for Education (DfE) will be procuring a training partner who will be responsible for initially training pilot Experts, Mentors and Area leads. DfE will also be procuring a delivery partner, who will be responsible for matching the appropriate Experts, Mentors and Area leads to settings requiring support, as well as ensuring the adequacy of the candidates by way of short telephone interviews and conducting DBS database checks to confirm eligibility.

As an Area lead, you will be required to:

- Attend up to 4 days of face-to-face training, as set out by the training partner, prior to delivering support.
- Be available for a total of 6 days per term. This includes 3 days to support allocated mentors and/or experts and a further 3 days per term to support 1 setting.
- Participate in a short telephone interview and submit information for a DBS check.
- Work collaboratively with the delivery partner and Local Authorities throughout the programme.

The department is providing funding of up to £600 per day for this work as an Area lead, this includes any travel and subsistence costs incurred. Payment will be made to the school or setting an Area Lead works in, in the form of a grant. Successful applicants invited to our training event will also be reimbursed for this.

Please note: If your application is not successful to be an Area lead, you may still be considered for the role of Expert or Mentor in your locality.

Please indicate in your application form below if you would like to be considered for other roles.

The Expert role is likely to include:

- Supporting leaders to identify strengths and weaknesses within the setting and providing guidance in action planning to overcome any areas for development
- Supporting leaders to identify children most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic including those with significant time out of the setting and advising how they can be best supported
- Supporting leaders with implementation of the revised EYFS framework including reducing unnecessary tracking and paperwork

- Supporting leaders to plan, deliver and refine effective curriculums, and offer advice on how to use the new Development Matters guidance
- Supporting leaders to develop new approaches to effective and proportionate day-to-day assessment, as well as 2 year progress check if needed
- Providing targeted support on early language development or areas of learning and development within the EYFS framework
- Supporting leaders with staff CPD which may include delivering all staff training
- Providing advice for supporting children with Special Education needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Providing advice for support children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Supporting settings to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged children and others.
- Supporting settings to build strong relationships with parents and carers
- Advising leaders on appropriate whole-setting interventions and offers and helping deliver these

As a Mentor, support may include:

- Supporting practitioners to identify strengths and weaknesses within their practice and providing guidance to enable improvements in their practice
- Supporting practitioners through our new online child development training
- Supporting practitioners to identify children most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including those with significant time out of the setting and advising how they can be best supported

In addition, mentor support may also include:

- Supporting practitioners with implementation of the revised EYFS, including reducing unnecessary tracking and paperwork and having meaningful assessment conversations
- Providing advice for supporting children with Special Education needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Providing advice for supporting children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Supporting practitioners to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged children and others.
- Supporting practitioners to build strong relationships with parents

Successful applicants should be available to start supporting schools as part of this programme from April 2022.

We invite you to submit a short expression of interest, using the form below, outlining your relevant skills and experience and your capacity for this role.

Please submit your expression of interest form to the relevant mailbox for your region, by Friday 10th December 2021.

North.eyrecovery@education.gov.uk

LWY.eyrecovery@education.gov.uk

Please also direct any queries you may have about the pilot programme, to the relevant mailbox for your region.

Expression of interest (EOI) form – Area lead

Name:

School/Nursery/Setting name:

Manager/Headteacher/Owner's name:

Postcode:

Local authority:

Please use the table below to describe your skills and experience.

Question	Response
<p>1. Referring to the responsibilities outlined above, please give details of your relevant experience</p> <p><i>You should look to include the following in your response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Relevant experience including where you have supported others in the sector if appropriate</i>• <i>Clear evidence you have a sound understanding of child development</i>• <i>Clear evidence you have a sound understanding of the reformed Early Years Foundation Stage framework</i>• <i>Experience of using a coaching model of support if applicable</i> <p><i>(Use this space to provide sufficient evidence to answer this question in no more than 800 words)</i></p>	
<p>2. Please list relevant qualifications for this role, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Early years/child development qualifications (L6 and above)</i>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>QTS if applicable</i> • <i>Additional relevant qualifications such as MA, MSc etc</i> • <i>Leadership/coaching qualifications</i> • <i>Recent relevant CPD completed</i> 	
<p>3. Please use this space to confirm your DBS status.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name • Name of your organisation • Date of birth • Certificate number <p>Please also confirm you give consent for DfE and their appointed delivery supplier/partner to check the status of your DBS. Please select Yes or No.</p>	<p>I consent for DfE and their appointed delivery supplier/partner to check the status of my DBS.</p> <p>Yes / No</p>
<p>4. How many hours per term are you able to commit to this role, alongside other commitments?</p>	
<p>5. In which local authority areas are you able to provide support? (Please list, paying particular reference to the areas identified in the 'context' section of this EOI)</p>	<p>I confirm, as an Area Lead, I am willing and able to travel the local authority area(s) I have specified to visit practitioners and managers on site, in their own setting.</p> <p>Yes / No</p>
<p>6. Which particular specialisms could you offer to support a setting?</p>	

<p>For example, expertise in SEND, working with children with EAL, supporting children's early language, maths etc?</p> <p>Please give details and any qualifications/training/experience you have relating to your specialisms.</p> <p><i>(Max 750 words)</i></p>	
<p>7. We are looking for a small number of Area Leads to take part in user research to support the development of our online diagnostic tool.</p> <p>If you would like to be involved in this, please indicate in this box and we will follow up with you, with further details. (Yes / No)</p>	
<p>8. If your application for the Area Lead role is unsuccessful, would you like to be considered for the experts or mentor role? The day rate for experts is £500 per day and for a mentor is £400 per day.</p> <p><i>Please state 'no', 'expert and mentors', 'expert only' or 'mentor only'</i></p>	
<p>9. Please provide the name of your manager/setting owner/head teacher and confirm you have their agreement to take part in this programme.</p>	<p>I confirm I have my manager/setting owner/head teacher permission to take part in this programme</p> <p>Yes / No</p>

Please submit your expression of interest form to the relevant mailbox for your region, by Friday 10th December 2021.

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Your application will be assessed by a panel alongside other applications. We expect to respond to you during February 2022. You may also be contacted by us before that date to discuss your capacity and deployment.

We will arrange training for successful applicants where you will have the opportunity to hear more about the programme.

If you have any further queries please email the above mailbox.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Early Years Recovery Team

