

Early Years Recovery Programme: Expression of interest in providing mentorship support to targeted early years practitioners 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 ‘Mentor’ is to work with their mentee to identify which areas of child development and practice they require support with, but the focus and aim must be around supporting children to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and others.

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, including our childminder support will be announced in due course.

Responsibilities and experience

We are looking for early years practitioners with at least three years experience, including experience of leadership or supervision of others and are currently working 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 universities, or similar organisations, delivering Child Development and/or Early Years Teacher Training qualifications, to apply for the role of Mentor.

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.

Early years mentors 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.

Mentors must be able to build relationships quickly and easily use remote technology, such as Microsoft Teams. Experience of coaching is desirable but not essential as training will be provided prior to beginning the role. We would particularly welcome applications from those with experience of supporting others in the early years sector.

The scope of the support and advice could range from:

- 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

Practitioners may also require support with:

- 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

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 a Mentor, you will be required to:

- Attend 2 days of face-to-face training, prior to delivering support.
- Provide 6 hours of support, per early years settings. Each mentor is expected to support 4 Early Years settings located within their RSC region, each term. This equates to around 4 hours per fortnight, per term.
- Mentorship can be delivered virtually, or by phone, and the hours can be organised to suit the mentor and mentee, for example by having fortnightly hourly calls or weekly 30minutes video-calls. There is no requirement to deliver mentoring face-to-face.
- Participate in a short telephone interview and submit information for a DBS check.
- Work collaboratively with your Area lead throughout the programme.

The department is providing funding of up to £400 per day for this work as a Mentor, this includes any travel and subsistence costs incurred. Payment will be made to the school or setting an expert works in, in the form of a grant. Successful applicants invited to our training event will also be reimbursed for this.

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 - Mentors

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 your relevant qualifications for this role. in particular;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Early years/child development qualifications (L6 and above)</i>• <i>QTS if applicable</i>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <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>6. We are looking for a small number of mentors 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>	

7. Please provide the name of your manager/setting owner/head teacher and confirm you have their agreement to take part in this programme.	
	<p>I confirm I have my manager/setting owner/head teacher permission to take part in this programme</p> <p>Yes / No</p>

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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



