

Summer Term No 1

Updates and news for Early Years setting SENDCOs, SEMH and SLC Leads in Torbay Early Years settings

Portage Home visiting Updates



Age Range 0-3 ½

We have decided to take the step to relook at our referral pathway and the age range of children that the Portage Team will be working with. We intend to work with young children aged from birth to 3 ½ years with special educational needs. Currently, what we know from parents, is that they wish they had met us sooner i.e. before their child is in the last year of nursery. We also know that with a positive transition into a nursery & with the support from a familiar practitioner, parents feel more confident that their child's needs will be met.

What we have done so far

Steps have already been taken to start this earlier intervention pathway. The 3 Portage Home Visitors in Torbay will be starting with children going to school in 2023, this summer term and are in fact already seeing some of our very young children with complex needs who are due to start school in 2024. We are hoping to prevent long waits on waiting lists and better timely allocations.

So far, this academic year, the 3 portage home visitors will have supported 97 families with a

bespoke home visiting service!

Changes to the duration of support

Most families will have a period of support for two terms. The first term will involve assessment of the child's needs at home, working with other professionals, including visiting settings and putting in place home strategies led by parents/carers priorities.

The second term will involve joining SENDCOs at ILDP meetings, reduced home visits and offering parent/carer workshops.

Parent/Carer Workshops

The Portage team will offer 4 workshops to small groups of parents/carers involving the following topics:

1. Sleep
2. Visual communication
3. Attention skills & engagement
4. Play

Then what happens?

Following a period of bespoke home visiting, families will have continued support through their Setting SENDCO, the Area SENDCO (myself), other health and educational professionals, the Portage Facebook page and parents can book into a Small Steps Group to see their own Portage Home Visitor, to catch up and gain any further advice.

Small Steps Groups this summer term

Zig-Zag Children's Centre Torquay –
Alternate Friday Mornings 10-11.30

The Beehive Children's Centre Paignton –
Alternate Friday afternoons 1.00-2.30

Small Steps Group For children with SEND

Here is a timetable so you can support parents with when they are on. Remember parents MUST book with Action for Children as there are limits on places: 01803 210200.

Staff: Linda Hayden – LH; Sarah Moore – SM; Annette Smith - AS; Judith Thomas – JT; Bronnie Dinneen – Action for Children Volunteer (each session)

Date	TQ	PGN	Staff
29/04/22	☺		JT & LH
06/05/22		☺	All – Makaton session
13/05/22	☺		JT/SM
20/05/22		☺	JT/AS
27/05/22	☺		JT/LH
Half Term			
10/06/22		☺	SM/AS
17/06/22	☺		LH/SM
24/06/22		☺	LH/AS
01/07/22	☺		AS/SM
08/07/22		☺	JT/LH
15/07/22	☺		AS/SM

Transitions into school – 2022

For all our children and their families with SEND, early preparation for school is best practice. Following on from our SEND Forum, we have updated the Enhanced Transition Plan to reflect the school SENDCOs requests for information. This can be found on the Torbay Council SEND Inclusion in Early Years web page [SEND Inclusion in Early Years - Torbay Council](#)

Please complete the first sections with the family, including the One Page Profile and share this with the school SENDCO ahead of an arranged meeting with them. The message from the school SENDCOs, is to arrange a meeting about children with SEND in this first half of the term.

Other useful things



See and Learn - Down Syndrome Education International. This is a programme using a visual route to speech and language development. The Portage Team will be starting to use this programme with our young people with Down Syndrome. If you would like to learn more and are supporting a child with Down Syndrome in your setting, please contact the Portage Team and myself portageteam@torbay.gov.uk



Cerebra Guide – Cognitive Differences: Inflexibility and Impulsivity A guide for parents – This is Cerebra’s latest useful guide which is packed with information and useful, thought-provoking strategies. Part 3 covers interventions that can be implemented by parents to alleviate the associated effects of cognitive differences: Managing distress and

anxiety, balancing routine and flexibility; discussing flexibility with your child explicitly; change signalling; improving executive function (cognitive skills training, scaffolding, physical activity, mindfulness & storytelling). This guide is free to download from [Cognitive Difference: Cognitive Inflexibility and Impulsivity - Cerebra](#)

Childminders Surgery 10.5.22 at 6.30-8.00 pm

Please note the date for the next Childminder Surgery and book on via ILearn.

Judith Thomas and Katie Mackle will be available at this session to anonymously discuss any individual children with additional needs who are causing concern.

This is dedicated time for Childminders to share concerns and through peer and advisory teacher support have an opportunity to formulate a plan to support the child.

We would like to encourage all childminders to attend particularly if you were considering there may be a need to contact Judith and Katie regarding a child in your care. Both Judith and Katie are experiencing reduced capacity so this is the most effective way of discussing individual children's needs. The surgeries were devised to provide a route for childminders to regularly access support from the advisory teachers.

Please can you share this message with your colleagues to ensure maximum attendance as previously, the surgeries have been cancelled on occasions due to poor attendance.



Words for Life: Five Talking tips for under two's... great for parents and practitioners!

https://wordsforlife.org.uk/activities/five-talking-tips-from-first-words-together/?mc_cid=489d4c5d51&mc_eid=ac40ae300a

Follow First Words Together's [talking tips for under twos](#) to support your little one's talking practice. These activities can easily be done at home to build confidence in your child's communication.

Memory game



Ofsted publish five-year strategy and DfE delivers spring 22 early years education recovery

'There is a strong statistical relationship between early childhood experiences and a range of life outcomes, from educational success to well-being and good health'

Ofsted acknowledge the impact of the pandemic on young children's development particularly in the prime areas within the

[Education recovery in early years providers: spring 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

7-12 June 2022 is Baby and Infant Mental Health Awareness Week – a great way of raising parent's and practitioner's awareness of the importance of babies social, emotional and wellbeing needs.

