

What are Early Years and Childcare Providers?

It is important to ensure that when working with families we fully understand the youngest children, as well as older siblings. In Portsmouth, many children under the age of 5yrs attend an early years and childcare provider for at least part of the week.

Childcare providers include childminders, pre-schools, school nursery classes and day nurseries. Children may attend one of these or share care between two or more. Make sure you ask the parent where the child attends.

Many families pay to access childcare, but in Portsmouth we also have a very high take up of the 'free' early education entitlement. This means that some two year olds (both working and non-working low income households and looked after children) and all three and four year olds are entitled to 570 hours per year. Many children take this over 15 hours per week, term time only. In addition, some working families are entitled to additional hours taking them to 1140 hours per year. These additional hours are taken in numerous ways; 30 hours per week term time, 22 hours all year round etc.

Why is it important?

Early years and childcare providers undertake regular observations of children's development. They will identify their next steps and plan to support these. They may have daily contact with parents and every child will have a 'learning journey', which the child's key worker and parent contribute to.

Between the age of two and two and a half years of age, childcare providers are required to complete a developmental check. It is also expected that this is shared alongside the Health Visitors check at the same age.

It's important to ensure that early years and childcare providers are fully engaged in early help and prevention work. They will be able to offer a great deal of information to support our understanding of the child's 'journey' and their voice. In addition, they will be able to provide support towards delivery of the family plan.

How do we do it?

Practitioners will have a wealth of information about the children in their care. Where relevant consent is in place, they will be able to share:

- 'summative assessments', which show periodically how a child is developing against 'expected milestones'
- A child's attendance pattern
- A view of the parent/child interaction and the parents engagement with the provider
- Information about any other practitioners who may be supporting the child (i.e. speech therapist)

For more information:

About early years and childcare providers or to speak about a specific setting, the Early Years and Childcare Team can be contacted at eydelivery@portsmouthycc.gov.uk or you can catch them at the Family Hubs