

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN THE PRESCHOOL YEARS

Guide for education colleagues

The problem

- Not being school ready has lifelong implications for health and education outcomes.
- Children in deprived areas are significantly less likely to access high-quality early years provision, deepening regional and social inequalities.
- Education settings often lack the capacity and support to provide early intervention and collaborate effectively with other public services (e.g., healthcare providers).

What you can do as school staff

- **Use Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data** to identify children needing early intervention, collaborating with nurseries and preschools to provide support.
- **Embed language-rich, play-based learning environments** that promote social, emotional, and cognitive development for all children.
- **Provide continuing professional development (CPD) for early years staff** focused on inclusive pedagogy, speech and language support, and culturally-sensitive practice.
- **Partner with health, care, and voluntary services** to share information and co-deliver early intervention through family hubs or school-linked services.
- **Encourage parent engagement in literacy, play, and wellbeing**, promoting digital platforms like 50 Things to Do Before You're Five.

Evidence-based insights

30% of four-to-five-year-olds are not considered school ready.

Over **half** of children who were not school ready performed **below expected** in their Key Stage 1 reading assessment.

Examples of good practice that you may wish to explore:

Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)

A 20-week oral language programme in nurseries that improved language outcomes by 3 months' progress for children with poor communication skills.

The ONE Programme

The *Orchestrating Numeracy and the Executive* programme is a 12-week evidence-based nursery intervention that uses fun, game-based activities to build early maths and thinking skills, aiming to reduce socioeconomic attainment gaps and support inclusive learning.

Sheffield Small Talk

An innovative, no cost, speech and language therapy clinic supporting preschool children with SEN(D) to develop spoken language skills, and/or their most effective form of communication, enhancing school readiness and inclusion.

50 Things to Do Before You're Five

Provides ideas for fun, low- or no-cost activities for families with young children resulting in improved communication and relationships between families and children, as well as increased engagement of children.

Check out the innovative approaches outlined in this briefing and **consider implementing these practices into your school.**



Scan the QR Code for the report

Please share this guide and start a discussion in your school about how we can all play our role in building a country that works for all children and young people.