



Northern Lights

Early Years Stronger Practice Hub: North East



As a DfE designated Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, our remit is to work directly with the sector to provide advice, share practice through local experts, and offer evidence-based professional development for all early years practitioners of children from birth to reception.



Department
for Education





WHAT'S INSIDE

Meet Emma, the Director of our Early Years Stronger Practice Hub	4
Launch Event success	5
An introduction to Northern Lights	6
Help shape professional development ...	8
EEF programmes.....	9
Official partners and other partnerships	10
NPQEYL information.....	11
Coming soon and contact details.....	12

WELCOME TO THE NORTHERN LIGHTS EARLY YEARS HUB



My name is Emma Whelam-Tate and I'm honoured to introduce myself to you as the Director of the Northern Lights Early Years Stronger Practice Hub.

I started my journey in Early Years as a nursery nurse working in a deprived area of Sunderland, supporting children and families with English as an additional language. This opportunity sparked a deep-rooted passion for the sector and I knew then that this is where I was meant to be.

Through further education, I progressed to a senior practitioner and then into teaching, specialising in child development and early education with the 0-5 age range.

My passion for the sector and working with others excelled my career into leadership, where I have had the privilege of leading a team of nine practitioners and 90 children, as well as working with and supporting a large range of settings across region.

I firmly believe that high quality professional development and collaboration with others can unite the Early Years workforce as we come together to achieve greater outcomes for our children.

I look forward to becoming a familiar face and working with you all through the Early Years Stronger Practice Hub.



OVER 100 ATTEND OUR LAUNCH EVENT

We were delighted to see over 100 early years practitioners at our Launch Event in March - the buzz in the room was heart warming.

Delegates who attended the event at The Fed in Gateshead were able to network face to face with other practitioners who all shared the same passion - early years.

Practitioners got hands on whilst taking part in workshops linked to themes around early years and childhood development.

We would like to give a huge thank you to our hosts; Sunningdale Special School, Playology Beach School, Inspiring Foundations, and Boldon Outdoor Nursery School for an AMAZING afternoon, you really were inspirational!



AN INTRODUCTION TO Northern Lights

Northern Lights Learning Trust is a thriving multi-academy trust that educates over 3,000 pupils from the age of 2-16 across Wearside and Teesside.

At Northern Lights, we are passionate about making a difference every day and believe that children should be active, confident, independent and resilient learners who are inspired by their environment and the curriculum we offer. We want them to aim high, achieve great things and embrace future challenges with the confidence to step out of their comfort zones. We are a Trust where children's individual talents and dreams are nurtured and celebrated by all.

Our DfE accredited Northern Lights Teaching School Hub plays a significant role in Initial Teacher Training, the Early Career Framework, National Professional Qualifications (including the NPQ Early Years Leadership), support for new Headteachers, Appropriate Body services and provision for high-quality, evidence-based continuous professional development and training for teachers and leaders. Working currently with over 300 schools across the region, we feel well placed in supporting schools in a world where education is changing so rapidly.

Throughout the pandemic, the youngest children in the most disadvantaged areas of England were among the hardest hit by lockdowns and social distancing. A responsive

programme of support for staff and children has been developed by the Government to assist recovery and address the disruption of Covid-19 through the DfE Recovery Programme.

What is the DfE EY Covid Recovery Programme?

The programme is funded through the £153m Early Years Covid Recovery package that the Government announced to address the impact of the pandemic on the youngest children, focusing on those most disadvantaged.

The Stronger Practice Programme includes the Online Child Development Training, a free child development training for all EY practitioners; the Experts and Mentors Programme providing in-setting support to the workforce; and the Stronger Practice Hubs, all underpinned by the EYFS reforms.

What is an Early Years Stronger Practice Hub?

'A strong provider of pre-reception early years education with sound expertise and knowledge of the evidence base on what works to support child outcomes - trusted local experts that other early years providers can look to for advice and support'

- The SPH works directly with the sector to identify priority needs and provide responsive professional development

- The SPH will create opportunities for collaboration and practice sharing across the whole EY sector through
- The SPH will work with the sector to identify strong settings who will become a base for bespoke support.

The DfE overarching aim for the hub is:

'To help pre-reception early years settings adopt evidence-based practice improvements to address key Covid recovery issues, and build trusted networks for sharing effective practice'

We aim to do this by:

- Providing high quality professional development to practitioners to improve outcomes for pupils in disadvantaged areas and our young and vulnerable children who have been impacted by Covid
- Creating networks of support across the sector to provide evidence informed practice to improve outcomes for children
- Working with LAs and the expert and mentors programme to identify settings to support with bespoke support, advice and sharing best practice.

The role of DfE, NCB and the EEF in the SPH

- Education Endowment Foundation are the Evidence Partner and will provide



hubs an evidence-based Framework on what works to support child outcomes, to underpin the work of the Hubs, and support hubs to translate evidence into practice

- National Children's Bureau as Delivery Partner will lead the relationships with the Hubs, providing oversight and quality assurance. Also facilitate best practice and intelligence sharing between the Hubs
- The Department for Education work closely with NCB and EEF to ensure the government vision for Hubs is met.

Northern Lights guiding principles

- Evidenced informed
- Shared ownership
- Collaborative learning
- *Everyone* has a voice

- Inclusive and accessible
- Creative and inspiring
- An Early Years legacy.

What is the Northern Lights SPH vision?

Our vision is to work with the whole Early Years sector with children from birth to pre reception and practitioners from childminders, the PVI sector, maintained nursery schools and early years settings within primary schools. This will unite the workforce to create a successful Stronger Practice Hub which will support our young, vulnerable and disadvantaged children as we recover from the impact of Covid-19. Our SHP will provide a 'buzz' of regular activity within the sector as we work towards uniting the workforce to overcome current challenges through

engaging and responsive social media, online learning portals and face-to-face events. We will work in collaboration with our SPH partners and associates to provide high quality professional development that is based upon local intelligence and is responsive to the needs of the communities we serve. We will proactively share best practice examples of evidenced informed practice which will support practitioners to improve outcomes for our children. Through the delivery of our EEF programmes, we will educate the Early Years workforce by providing quality professional development which is aimed at supporting children's learning and development in the areas that have been significantly impacted by Covid.

How we will support you

As a Stronger Practice Hub, we understand the needs and challenges currently facing the Early Years sector and we appreciate how difficult it can be for practitioners to engage in professional development. Our aim is to provide accessible opportunities for everyone and we will work in a way that works for you.

We aim to provide a range of learning platforms from face-to-face events, online learning, blogs and case studies, regular and engaging social media posts, webinars and video exemplification material that will support practitioners to apply evidence to practice.

PLEASE HELP SHAPE FUTURE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

What you told us -

- 60% of practitioners ARE not part of an Early Years network
- 100% of practitioners said being part of a network would be beneficial
- ALL practitioners who completed the questionnaire said that they would like to be part of a network group to share good practice.
- 84% of practitioners said that they would like to access face-to-face professional development
- The main areas for development YOU identified were Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional Development and SEND.

We are very passionate about successfully serving our region and to ensure we provide appropriate and responsive support which meets the needs of the Early Years sector, we need to hear from you.

Please help to shape the future of professional development and complete our survey by scanning this QR code:



EEF PROGRAMMES

Northern Lights Early Years Stronger Practice Hub are currently recruiting places for the following EEF programmes. **Programmes are FREE to your setting!** If you would like to know more information about the funded EEF programmes or how you can get involved, please get in touch.

Our Programmes



Early Talk Boost is a targeted intervention aimed at 3-4 year old children with delayed language helping to boost their language skills to narrow the gap between them and their peers.

The programme aims to accelerate children's progress in language and communication by an average of six months, after a nine week intervention.

Children who are selected to take part in the intervention will attend three sessions per week during circle/story time, each lasting 15-20 minutes delivered by an early years practitioner.

The sessions include activities that cover the foundation skills in speech, language and communication that children need for learning and understanding new words, as well as having conversations.

Communication Friendly Settings



Elklan Communication Friendly Setting (CFSe) accreditation is awarded to settings that have trained and support all their staff in communication and language development.

Accreditation can be achieved in one year and can be renewed after three years. It is the most cost-effective strategy available for whole-setting capacity building in communication.

- Becoming a CFSe involves three steps:
1. 1 in 10 practitioners complete Elklan's 'Speech and Language Support for 3-5s' and/or 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3s' course at Level 3.
 2. At least one of these practitioners, cascades training to ALL staff in your setting using our course 'Communication Counts'. They are known as Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs). We provide the teaching notes, mentoring and resources to facilitate this and support LCPs to achieve Level 4 accreditation.
 3. Embedding of the training will be demonstrated through an audit at the end of the programme, evidencing the impact on practices and policies within the setting.

Communication Friendly Home Based Settings

Elklan's Communication Friendly Home-Based Setting (CFHBS) award examines all aspects of the Home-Based Setting, including the physical environment (inside and out), interaction styles, how language is modelled and the opportunities and resources that are provided to support the development of language, communication and learning.

The process aims to enable those caring for children in their own home to consider the opportunities, resources and personal interactions provided and to reflect on areas for development, with guidance from an Elklan tutor. The childminder or foster carer is given a manual full of ideas and strategies to promote language, communication and learning in the home and help to gain the award.



OFFICIAL PARTNERS AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

As an Early Years Stronger Practice Hub for the North East, we are proud to already be working with many partners across the region.

Working collaboratively will allow us to provide the best support and advice to all settings across the North East; working stronger together to share expertise and practice to ensure all children, from birth to four, are supported through the DfE's Covid Recovery Programmes.

Please contact us to discuss how we can work with you and your setting/s.



Lead setting

Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy

We are delighted to introduce Beth Stockdale, an Ofsted registered 'Outstanding' childminder, as official partner of Northern Lights Early Years Stronger Practice Hub. Beth offers high quality childcare in a welcoming home from home environment. She aims to follow a child led/adult guided approach to learning where she supports and extends children's learning through their individual wants, needs and interests, whilst following the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Beth is passionate about promoting confidence, resilience and independence; creating solid foundations for a child's future. She enables curiosity, awe and wonder through inspired education and play with a great love for the natural world. We are delighted to be working with Beth - watch this space!

Official partner

Sunningdale Specialist School

Childminder partner

Beth Stockdale - First Steps

Partnerships

Together 4 Children

Gateshead LA

Hartlepool LA

Newcastle LA

North Tyneside LA

Playology

Boldon Outdoor Nursery

Inspiring Foundations



Sunningdale
School



NPQEYL INFORMATION

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!

DID YOU KNOW: 60% of practitioners expressed an interest in completing a National Professional Qualification for Early Years Leadership while it is fully funded.

As part of the DfE's wider Covid Recovery Programme, Early Years, all practitioners working in a nursery setting are invited to undertake a DfE accredited professional qualification in Early Years Leadership, fully funded.

Who is it for?

Leaders and aspiring leaders who hold a full and relevant level 3 early years qualification who lead a private, voluntary or independent nursery, are head teachers or leaders of a school-based or maintained nursery, childminders with leadership responsibilities, or other early years foundation stage leaders, such as reception class teachers or early years coordinators.

What does it involve?

A comprehensive programme, strengthening leadership skills and supporting effective curriculum design to enhance child development. It also trains leaders to support children impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Participants will cover the following seven areas: culture, additional needs and SEND, organisational

management, working in partnership, child development, curriculum and assessment, professional development and implementation.

How is it accessed?

Northern Lights Teaching School Hub is a Delivery Partner, in partnership with Ambition Institute and the model we offer includes:

- Two live conferences (six hours long each – facilitated by our experts)
- Nine (six week) courses of self-study completed at a time that suits you – around one hour per week.
- Six two-hour online clinics (facilitated by our experts)
- One two-hour assessment clinic (facilitated by our experts)
- Nine online community sessions (peer led sessions).

As a local delivery partner, we will use Ambition Institute's high-quality content and materials and put the knowledge into context of the region, managing your experience on the programme through facilitation and day-to-day support.

How can you be part of the next cohort?

Contact tshinfo@nllt.co.uk to sign up to either October 2023 or February 2024 cohorts – the last two fully funded cohorts confirmed from the DfE.



Northern
Lights

TEACHING SCHOOL HUB



Ambition
Institute



Department
for Education



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A PART OF A LOCAL NETWORK OF EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND AREAS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

NORTHERN LIGHT EARLY YEARS STRONGER PRACTICE HUB NETWORK IS COMING SOON!

**PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST IN JOINING HERE:
EYHUB@NLLT.CO.UK**



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Keep in touch!