



Welcome to the ECU Bulletin March 2019

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The NCB Early Childhood Unit (ECU) works to sustain and improve the quality of services for young children through direct work with children's services and settings, and through its national networks. To find out more about the work of the NCB Early Childhood Unit please visit www.ncb.org.uk/ecu.

The ECU Bulletin provides news and information for the Early Years sector, including research, policy and resources. Please click on the title link to see more details of each item. However, in some cases, external websites, such as academic journals, may charge to download or view some documents featured in the Bulletin.

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Policy

First 1000 days of life: HSC Committee Report

This report from the Health and Social Care Committee says that investing in the early years is the best investment any government can make and saves money in the long-term.

- The Committee is asking the government to produce a long-term, cross-Government strategy for the first 1000 days of life, setting demanding goals to reduce adverse childhood experiences, improve school readiness and reduce infant mortality and child poverty. This should be led by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with the support of a small centralised delivery team.
- The Committee then wants all local authorities to develop plans - with the local NHS, communities and the voluntary sector - to implement this strategy, bringing improved support for children, parents and families in their area. Funds should be pooled to deliver shared, agreed actions.
- The report also calls for the Government's Healthy Child Programme to be revised, improved and given greater impetus.
- The Committee recommend the Government should develop a programme which children and parents in need of targeted support can access, building on the Flying Start programme in Wales and the Family Nurse Partnership in Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of England.
- The Government must use the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2019 to shift public expenditure towards intervening earlier rather than later and thereby secure long-term investment in prevention and early intervention to support parents, children and families.

Published 26 February 2019

Regional Attainment Gap report: APPG report

This report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Mobility, highlights how children with poor vocabulary at the age of five are more than twice as likely to be unemployed by the time they reach 34.

According to the APPG, the attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged areas and those from more affluent areas is a key factor behind the 'coldspots' - areas where social mobility is low.

The APPG asserts that national policy change is urgently needed to tackle social mobility 'coldspots' and reverse the geographically unequal impact of austerity cuts.

With regard to the role of early years, the inquiry heard how children hold on to the gains that they make in early years education throughout their lives, making them better learners and therefore progressing further. The report says that current government policy has shifted the focus from good quality early years education to a focus on providing childcare to enable parents to work. This is affecting the quality of early years settings. The report recommends that:

- The government should complete the long-promised review of the children's centre programme and publish a reinvigorated National Strategy on children's centres in 2019. The Government should also ringfence funding for children's centres and ensure that they are able to reconnect with their original purpose, focusing on the 0-5 age range.
- The government should move towards giving early years teachers Qualified Teacher Status, with the increase in pay, conditions and status this would entail, and should invest in improving qualifications for all practitioners in the sector. A dedicated funding pot, similar to the old Graduate Leader Fund, is important to achieving this.

Published 21 February 2019

Children's services funding and spending 2010/11 – 2017/18: report

New figures from the UK's leading children's charities have revealed funding available for children's services has fallen by a third per child in England since 2010. The new analysis of official figures by Action for Children, Barnardo's, NSPCC, The Children's Society and the National Children's Bureau has identified "kids' cuts hotspots" across England – where local councils have faced the biggest real-term drop in this funding.

Councils in London have suffered the largest cuts, with the top five worst-hit all in the capital. Areas such as Manchester (45% drop), Nottingham (43%) and Birmingham (43%) also feature in the country's top twenty "kids' cuts hotspots". Councils are facing a £3 billion funding gap for children's services by 2025 with many services having already been stripped back or shut down.

Over 1,000 children's centres have closed since 2009. The charities are warning that thousands more children and young people could fall into crisis if these cuts continue. The report recommends that central government should:

- Provide additional funding for children and young people's services in the Spending Review to address the estimated £3 billion funding gap facing local authorities by 2025;
- Ensure that there is a clear link between the likely level of need and the level of funding available in each local area;
- Ensure that all local authorities have the resources to sustain a consistent offer of early intervention

The report is available as a [pdf download](#).

Published 26 February 2019

New guidance for schools on relationships, sex, and health education

The Department for Education (DfE) has published new draft statutory guidance for state funded schools. The guidance sets out how schools should teach the new compulsory subjects of relationships, sex, and health education. The new draft guidance requires all state funded primary schools to teach 'relationships education' and 'health education' which includes mental wellbeing. You can read the new guidance [here](#).

Published 25 February 2019

Practice

Change4Life resource on teaching children how to cut sugar

Public Health England has developed resources for early years and primary schools to use as part of its Change4Life campaign. Created for use in English and Maths lessons, the resources will help children and their families understand how much sugar is in their food and drink and encourage making healthier swaps to reduce sugar intake. The Change4Life early years lesson plan includes activities encouraging children to spot sugar cube invaders, use maths skills to find healthier swaps, and learn a new rhyme.

Published February 2019

Reception Baseline Assessment framework: STA documents

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) has made documents on Reception baseline assessment framework available on its website. The main document details the assessment framework for the Department for Education reception baseline assessment. It specifies the purpose, format, content and cognitive demand of the assessment. A supporting document provides some general information about how the framework was developed and the rationale for the framework content. The STA has also uploaded a video to its Youtube channel on the Reception Baseline Assessment explaining how it will work.

Published 27 February 2019

Foundation Years Website

We are pleased to announce that from March 2019, the National Children's Bureau (NCB) will be hosting the Foundation Years website, social channels and monthly newsletter.

Sign up [here](#) to receive the Foundation Years newsletter and website updates straight to your inbox. You'll receive information on the latest sector policy and research, together with Department for Education updates, sector commentary and good practice examples.

Research

Please note that academic journals may charge to download the papers featured in this section. We will also link to free sources when these are available.

Early years providers cost study: 2018

This report by Frontier Economics for the Department for Education (DfE) presents evidence on the cost of delivering childcare in England in 2018, building on and drawing comparisons with similar research using data collected in 2015 in order to help understand how recent policy changes and other drivers of cost have affected the delivery of early years education and childcare.

The report includes an analysis of: the cost and income structure for different types of early years providers; the revenue sources, including parental fees and funding levels; and the reasons why costs vary across the early years market. It also includes a comparison with data collected in 2015 as part of the SEED cost and funding of early education report

Published 28 February 2019

Maintained nursery schools: contribution to early years provision: report

This report by Frontier Economics for the Department for Education (DfE) analyses the delivery costs of maintained nursery schools (MNS) and other comparable providers. It uses existing sources and new data to examine how MNS differ from other early years providers in terms of the quality of childcare offered and provision of additional and specialist services.

Published 28 February 2019

JRF report on Universal Credit

This Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) report - *How can Universal Credit help working parents move out of poverty?* - looked at how Universal Credit (UC) could be changed to reduce poverty among working parents. Research was conducted with working parents on UC and Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches to get their views on the UC rollout, the impact on working parents and barriers to increasing earnings from work. Priorities for change included increasing the amount of UC, allowing claimants to keep more of what they earn, more support with childcare, and reducing the caseloads of Work Coaches.

Published 20 February 2019

SEND

Disability Price Tag report 2019: Scope

Updated living standards research by disability equality charity Scope reveals the extra costs faced by families with disabled children.

Key findings:

- Families with disabled children face, on average, extra costs of £581 per month, with almost a quarter looking at more than £1000 extra;
- Families with one or more disabled children face greater levels of deprivation on average than families with non-disabled children;
- Parents with disabled children are affected by the costs associated with frequent hospital visits, specialist therapies, transport, and toys and equipment;

- Trying to meet these extra costs mean that families with disabled children are less likely to be able to undertake essential activities such as replacing clothes and electrical items.

Published 27 February 2019

Families

Childcare Survey 2019: Coram Family and Childcare

Coram Family and Childcare have published their latest Childcare Survey – the 19th annual survey in the series. The research finds prices have risen by 3 per cent in the last year. Parents now pay an average of £127 per week, or over £6,600 per year, for just a part time nursery place. Prices also vary significantly across the country.

- In England, only just over half of local areas have enough childcare for parents working full time. Less than a quarter of local areas have enough for disabled children and parents working outside the usual 9 to 5.
- Most parents will be able to get some support with paying for their childcare, including from two new schemes introduced in 2017: 30 hours funded childcare for three and four year olds with working parents in England, and Tax Free Childcare.
- While many families welcome this support with childcare costs, others may be missing out on the help that is available because the system is so complex. Some government support has failed to keep up with childcare price inflation: in 94 per cent of local authorities, a full time nursery place for a child under two is now more expensive than the maximum costs supported under Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit. Families in these areas will find that they may end up worse off working, or working more hours.

Published 28 February 2019

Safer Sleep Week – new resources

To mark Safer Sleep week, which this year runs from 11- 17th March 2019, The Lullaby Trust, Public Health England, Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative and Basis (Baby Sleep Info Source, Durham University) have launched a range of resources for parents and health professionals. The resources provide information and guidance for parents on reducing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and will support health professionals to have effective conversations about safer sleep.

Published 11 March 2019

Health and Wellbeing

Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative: best practice case studies

Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative's *Achieving Sustainability (Gold) Award* celebrates excellent and sustained practice in the support of infant feeding and parent-infant relationships. Unicef UK have published three new case studies from services which are implementing the standards and transforming care for families:

- Epsom & St Helier Hospitals: sharing insight into the value of an engaged leadership team
- Leeds Community Healthcare Health Visiting service: showcasing innovative work to encourage multi-generational support of breastfeeding
- NHS Tayside HSPC: highlighting the value of putting families at the heart of care, enabling parents to help shape the services.

These case studies are now available to download from the Unicef UK website.

Published February 2019

Reducing stillbirth and infant death: PHE planning tool

Public Health England (PHE) has produced a planning tool to examine factors that influence stillbirth and infant death at the population level, rather than in individual clinical care. It can be used to:

- model what effect an improvement to benchmarks would have on an area;
- understand how factors could influence stillbirth and infant death locally
- prioritise services and address risk factors.

The tool is designed for planners and commissioners working in local government, clinical commissioning groups and across local maternity systems.

Published 12 March 2019

Safeguarding

The economic cost from childhood exposure to severe domestic violence: report

This report by domestic violence charity Hestia and economics charity Pro Bono Economics estimates that 500,000 children in the UK today are exposed to severe domestic violence. The analysis focuses on a chain of evidence that links exposure to domestic violence in childhood to the prevalence of conduct disorders and hyperactivity disorders and the associated additional cost of public service usage.

Evidence suggests that childhood exposure to severe domestic violence could increase the number of children in the UK with conduct disorders by 25,000-75,000 and the number of children in the UK with hyperactivity disorders by around 10,000-25,000. In monetary terms, the long-run cost of supporting these children is likely to be in the region of £0.5-£1.4 billion. This is equivalent to £1,000-£2,900 per child exposed to severe domestic violence.

Published 5 March 2019

Ofsted

CLOSING SOON: Education inspection framework 2019 consultation

Ofsted is seeking views on its proposals for changes to the education inspection framework from September 2019. With regard to early years (registered provision) the main document states:

“We know that, to make a real difference to a child’s life, high-quality education and care between birth and the age of 5 are crucial. These early years should provide the foundation of a happy, successful future. The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets out the education and care standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children, from birth to 5, learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Once a provider is registered on the Early Years Register, Ofsted carries out regular inspections to evaluate the overall quality and standards of the early years provision in line with the principles and requirements of the EYFS.

This will not change, but we propose to put a greater emphasis on the curriculum.....We have seen an industry develop around assessment and tracking of young children. What children learn is too often coming second to the delivery of assessment information. The education inspection framework will put more emphasis on the quality of education and care. It will ensure that we consider children's experiences and how they are being developed, alongside assessments."

Launch date: 16 January 2019

Closing date: 5 April 2019

Consultations

CLOSING SOON: DHSC consultation on restricting promotions of HFSS products

This consultation from the Department of Health and Social Care seeks views on:

- restricting volume-based price promotions of HFSS food and drink that encourage people to buy more than they need, for example, 'buy one, get one free' and free refills of sugary soft drinks;
- restricting the placement of HFSS food and drink at main selling locations in stores, such as checkouts, aisle ends and store entrances;
- which businesses, products and types of promotions should be included in the restrictions;
- definitions for HFSS products, price promotions and locations in stores;
- how businesses can put this into practice and whether they will face any difficulties.

Launch date: 12 January 2019

Closing date: 6 April 2019

CLOSING SOON: Education inspection framework 2019: Ofsted

Please see the Ofsted section of the Bulletin for details of this Consultation.

NMC consultation on midwifery education

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) has opened a consultation into new standards for pre-registration midwifery education. You can respond as a midwife, other health or social care professional or a member of the public. The UK-wide consultation sets out the draft skills and knowledge the next generation midwives will need to learn so they can deliver great care in the years to come. The plans include giving students an increased focus on continuity of care for mothers, newborn infants and their families. Midwifery training would also place more emphasis on mental health care for mothers, and a greater focus on public health and health promotion. Education institutions will also be given the freedom to be more creative in designing their curriculum and more innovative in the way they train midwives.

Launch date: 12 February 2019

Closing date: 9 May 2019

Conferences & Events

26 March 2019, London

New Ofsted Education Inspection Framework Conference

This Westminster Insight event aims to provide greater clarification and guidance on what the new education inspection framework will mean in practice and will discuss how the planned changes will affect the way Ofsted inspects schools.

29 March 2019, Birmingham

The Pupil Premium and Ofsted: ensuring successful outcomes

This SecEd & Headteacher Update one day conference will bring together innovative schools, senior leaders, teachers and other experts to present deliverable, evidence-based and practical interventions and strategies for raising attainment, overcoming barriers and narrowing the gap for disadvantaged pupils. The event features nine workshops relevant to primary colleagues.

30 March 2019, London

Celebrating education

The joint event from the Institute of Education and the National Education Union aims to celebrate a variety of pedagogies, examining teaching and learning across maths, English, early years, primary, and approaches to the curriculum.

Brief details of the Early Years and primary strand are [here](#).

29 April 2019, London

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: promoting inclusivity in mainstream education

This Westminster Insight forum will explore ongoing challenges for SEND pupils in mainstream education including exclusions, funding, off-rolling and tribunals. The conference will also examine how future policy initiatives and the Education Committee's SEND inquiry can improve provisions and support services for SEND pupils.

1 May 2019, London

HiAP 2019: Delivering health equity tackling inequalities

The HiAP 2019 conference will serve to provide help for local authority and NHS decision makers, sharing insight on how best to collate evidence, identify impacts, take action and prioritise interventions. It will provide all delegates with a number of preconference toolkits and practical solutions which can help them deliver immediate steps towards rebalancing the many societal and health related challenges they may face. It will focus on the transference of best practice methodology in order to create common understandings of health and health inequalities across councils, NHS settings and community care.

2 May 2019, Manchester

Creating active communities conference: delivering a new approach

Sport England have invested around £100m into 12 grassroots projects in order to build healthier, more active communities across England. The Local Delivery Pilots will be used to trial new and innovative solutions that make it easier for people in these communities to access sport and physical activity. It is hoped that via this approach, barriers are removed and new collaborative partnerships are formed.

The Creating Active Communities Conference will take an in-depth look into the local delivery challenge and highlight successful projects that are working to increase activities for all across our towns and cities.

2nd April 2019, London

Child development from birth to starting school - next steps for support, policy and practice in England

This Westminster Forum seminar will examine priorities for supporting child development from birth to starting formal education - focusing on meeting the needs of families, developing cognitive skills and literacy, and next steps for multi-agency working and early intervention. Delegates will look at how stakeholders can work to secure improvement in the learning environment at home, in the interests of encouraging child development prior to school. This will include what further support is needed to improve outreach to parents from disadvantaged backgrounds.

15 June 2019, Birmingham

TACTYC One Day Conference and AGM 2019

The focus of this TACTYC one-day conference will be on happiness and wellbeing in the early years. Tactyc is calling for papers for the conference; the closing date for applications is 15th May 2019.

ECU Bulletin is compiled and edited by NCB's Early Childhood Unit (ECU). Any communications about the ECU Bulletin should be sent to: ecuinfo@ncb.org.uk Please note that there may be a charge to download or view some documents featured in the Bulletin.