

WHAT IS THE EARLY YEARS FORUM?

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

The Early Years Forum (EYF) is a regular multi-agency meeting, consisting of professionals from Health, Education, Social Care and the Third Sector from across the Vale of Glamorgan. We work together to plan, support and review children from birth to five years who may have emerging needs, disabilities and/or healthcare needs so they can access their childcare or education setting.

- 01** A professional who is already involved with your child will make a referral to EYF if they are concerned that your child may have a need that affects their access to play, childcare or school. The Forum can only accept referrals for children who are resident in the Vale of Glamorgan and are aged between birth and five years old and, not attending a school nursery or reception class. Once received, the referral is discussed at the next scheduled meeting and you and your child will be allocated a key person who will support you through the process.
- 02** Your key person will contact you to introduce themselves, share the outcomes, gather further information, invite you to our weekly parent support group and answer any questions you may have. If your child is attending a play or childcare setting a member of the EYF may also liaise and visit the setting. If your child is not accessing a play/childcare setting they will be able to signpost you to childcare in your area, should this be your wish and, support you and your child through transition into a setting.
- 03** The EYF will review your child following initial contact, at key transition points or, if we are provided with further information from you or from professionals involved. For the majority of children known to the Early Years Forum, the setting will be able to meet their needs within their existing resources, expertise and with advice and support from EYF. In some cases the EYF may not need to take further action and your child can be discharged from the service prior to their transition into nursery or school. If your child has very complex needs they may require support plans or additional funding in order to access their childcare/play placement. A plan **may** need to be written to meet the needs of your child at their setting. This could be an Individual Development Plan, Individual Healthcare Plan, Risk Assessment or setting support plan.
- 04** If your child is still known to the EYF the term before they start their nursery or school placement, they will be reviewed at this point to plan for their transition. This review will include gathering up to date information and coordinating the support and advice that may be needed to ensure the nursery can include and support your child. The representative of the EYF will liaise with the school and support them in planning for your child's transition by sharing a One Page Profile, any relevant information we may have, and by providing a transition visit to school. We will be able to offer the school advice, guidance, and training to meet the needs of your child as well as attending any relevant meetings. We **may** also direct the school to write or review an Individual Development Plan, Individual Healthcare Plan or Risk Assessment.
- 05** Following your child's transition into nursery or school, the EYF will cease involvement. It will be the school's responsibility to meet your child's needs to ensure they settle and access their full entitlement. Most children, even those with very complex needs, who may need to attend a specialist provision from Reception class, usually attend a mainstream nursery. All schools in the Vale of Glamorgan receive funding from the local authority to include children with a range of needs and they can access advice and support from specialist teams and outreach services..

For more information email: earlyyearsforum@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

