

Early Learning Together



Information for professionals



What is Early Learning Together?

Early Learning Together is a home or group based early education service for the families and carers of eligible children, which uses the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Portage* strategies (*further information available at: www.portage.org.uk).

Home based

The early learning will take place in the parent/carers own home in order to help the child and family develop skills and to learn together, play together, participate in universal services and be included in the community.

Little Stars group

Alternatively, the child may benefit from Little Stars, a small structured group for children to attend with their parents/carers. Each group is run by a member of the Health and Children's Centre team who has experience of planning a small steps approach and a member of the children's centre. The group will provide play, learning, social interaction and communication experiences for the children to develop.

Early Learning Together starts by visiting the family at home and observing the child to establish the child's achievements so far. One of the main principles of the work is that parents/carers are the key figures in the child's life and hold important information on their needs and development.

Early Learning Together works in partnership with parents to build on their knowledge so they increase their confidence to support the needs of their child.

To be considered for Early Learning Together, the child must be at least 6 months old and not yet eligible for a free early education place.

They must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- 2 areas of delay plus the parent/carers needing support to engage effectively with the child's early learning (to be constantly assessed once service delivery commences)
- Any family who we believe will meet the eligibility criteria for a free early education place (for 2 year olds – this includes any child who is or has ever been LAC) plus the parent/carers needing support to engage effectively with the child's early learning (as above)
 - Children placed in kinship arrangements
- Children on the edge of care (to improve interactions and to provide an additional protective factor)
 - Children in 'new' foster placements
- Children with young parents (to increase the parent's confidence in their ability to meet the child's needs and to access universal services).

The child's progress will be reviewed regularly with the parent/carers and their achievements celebrated.

In the term before they become eligible for a funded early education place the worker will, if required, provide help to access a childcare provider of the parent/carers choice and will support the child's transition into the group learning environment.

To refer a child and family please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/childrenscentres

