

Talking Babies:

What about the babies?

**Tuesday 29th September
2026**

**09:30 – 10:30am or 18:00pm –
19:00pm**

**Laurie Johnson
(Early Years Quality Improvement)**

Please introduce
yourselves in the chat
with your name and the
name of your setting.



[What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf](#)

Agenda:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. What about the babies?
3. Why outdoor play matters
5. High-quality care – Safer eating / safer sleeping arrangements
6. Best Start in Life strategy
7. Q&A
8. Date of next meeting



What about the babies?



Building a Shared Vision of Quality in Baby Rooms

- Relationships
- Responsive Care
- Outdoor Experiences
- Safe Practice
- Professional Identity

Why Focus on Babies?

Babies need:

- Secure relationships
- Specialist educators
- Rich experiences
- Quality environments
- Emotional security



[Getting it right from the start: how early years practitioners work with babies and toddlers - GOV.UK](#)

What Does Quality Look Like?

Quality is about:

- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Emotional Security
- ✓ Responsive Interactions
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Meaningful Experiences





What is your pedagogy for the baby room?

[Early Years Design Guidance - July 2026](#)

Why Outdoor Play Matters?

Outdoor environments naturally provide:

- sensory stimulation
- opportunities for movement
- changing experiences
- curiosity
- awe and wonder



babies outdoor learning

Challenge 1: Getting Outdoors

Many settings identify practical barriers.

Examples:

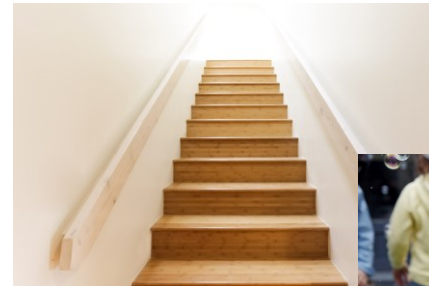
- stairs
- limited access
- staffing pressures
- preparing children

Discuss shifting the question from:

"How do we get outside?"

to

"How can the journey become part of the learning?"



Supporting Transitions Outdoors

Explore how routines and the rhythm of the day help babies feel safe.

Examples:

- familiar songs
- visual cues
- repeated language
- predictable sequences

Ask staff to think about how children know they are going outside.

Are transitions calm and purposeful? Or rushed and stressful?

Challenge 2: Getting Ready

Getting ready provides opportunities for:

- language development
- independence
- turn-taking
- body awareness

Reflection:

"What learning happens when babies put on hats, shoes and coats?"



Seeing the Environment Through Baby Eyes



High-Quality Care Includes Safe Care

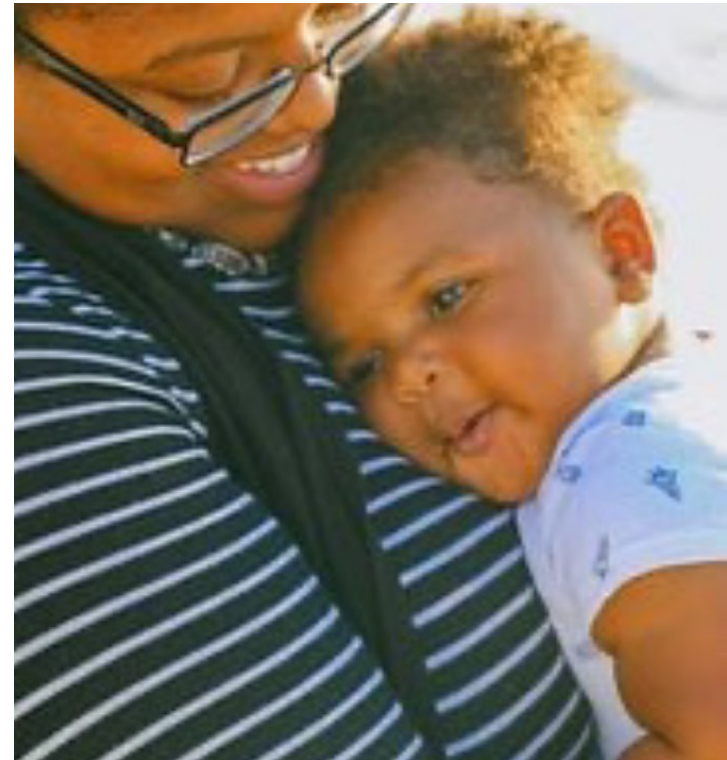
The September 2026 EYFS updates remind us that care and education cannot be separated.

For babies:

- feeding is learning
- sleeping is wellbeing
- care routines are communication

Safe care is not separate from quality.

Safe care is quality.



Safer Eating in the EYFS 2026

Key Requirements:

- ✓ Dietary requirements, allergies and health needs known
- ✓ Up-to-date allergy information shared with staff
- ✓ Ongoing discussions with parents
- ✓ Food prepared safely for each child
- ✓ Choking risks reduced
- ✓ Appropriate supervision at mealtimes

Safer Eating in Practice

What does this mean in practice?

- ✓ Individual allergy management
- ✓ Partnership with parents during weaning
- ✓ Appropriate food textures
- ✓ Active supervision
- ✓ Staff with Paediatric First Aid present
- ✓ Learning from incidents

Safer Sleeping Arrangements - EYFS 2026

Key Requirements for Children Under 2

- ✓ Back to sleep
- ✓ Separate sleep space
- ✓ Firm, flat sleep surface
- ✓ Safe bedding
- ✓ Frequent checks
- ✓ Sight and hearing supervision
- ✓ Adult present for babies under 6 months

Safe Sleep in Practice

Safe Sleep Means

- ✓ Feet-to-foot positioning
- ✓ Heads uncovered
- ✓ Appropriate room temperature
- ✓ Frequent sleep checks
- ✓ Individual knowledge of children's needs
- ✓ Partnership with parents

Supporting Home learning environments BSIL

The Best Start in Life programme aims to ensure that every family can access support, information and opportunities that help children thrive from birth through BSIL family hubs and an online digital offer.

Why This Matters

A strong home learning environment supports:

- Communication and language development
- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Confidence and curiosity
- School readiness

In Shropshire we are...

- Expanding 0-2 Stay and Play provision to provide accessible, universal support for families with babies and young children.
- Developing an email campaign, offering practical ideas for learning at home alongside signposting to local services and community support from birth registration onwards.
- Working collaboratively with health partners and the voluntary and community sector to deliver a coordinated approach to universal support for families with children aged 0-2 through Best Start in Life Family Hubs.



We need your support

Supporting families through everyday conversations and activities helps build confidence in their child's development, while encouraging engagement with local services through the BSIL hubs, support networks and key developmental opportunities, including statutory Health Visitor reviews.

Best Start in Life resources and local support

PEEP 0-2 Stay and Play (siblings welcome)

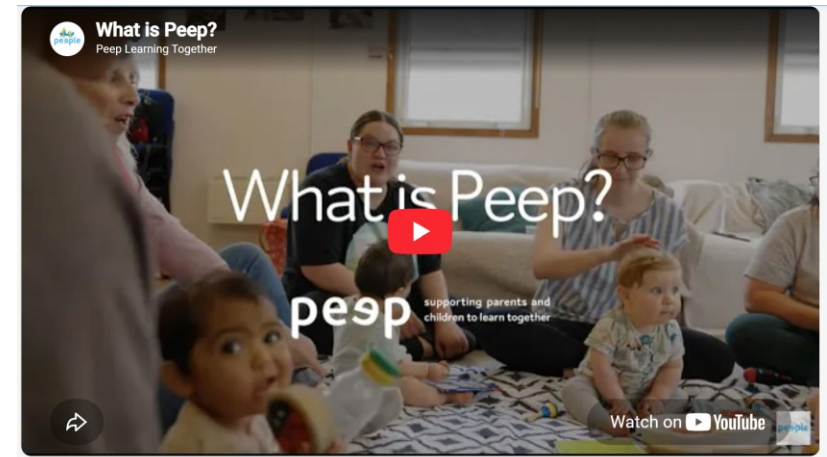
📍 The Lantern, Shrewsbury

📅 Starts 3rd November

🕒 Six weekly sessions

Families can:

- Learn simple play and communication activities
- Enjoy songs, stories and sensory experiences
- Build confidence in supporting learning at home
- Meet and connect with other local families



[Peep Learning Together Programme - Peep](#)

Our 3-4 PEEP Stay and Play programme has been popular, demonstrating strong demand from families. We would therefore encourage practitioners to promote the new 0-2 PEEP Stay and Play programme. As Best Start in Life Hubs continue to be rolled out across the county, we will share details of additional groups and opportunities for families to access support closer to home.

Best Start in Life resources and local support

Resources to Share with Parents and Carers

Department for Education - Best Start in Life Resources

Information and practical ideas covering:

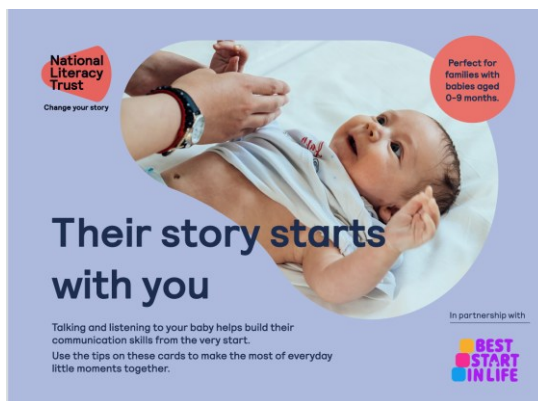
- Child development
- Early communication and language
- Building positive routines
- Preparing children for their learning journey

National Literacy Trust - Words for Life

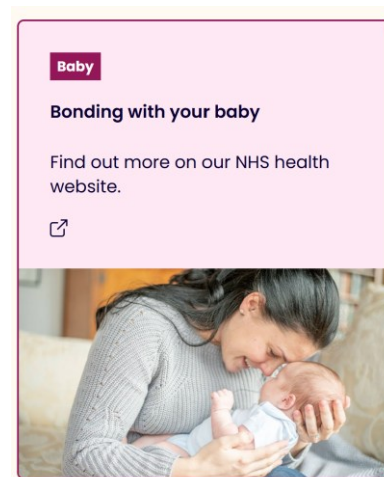
Free activities, videos and resources to support:

- Talking
- Reading
- Singing
- Playing together at home

Families can access age-specific resources for 0-9 months and 10-24 months, alongside a range of translated versions to ensure information is accessible to all.



[Little Moments Together Cards | Words for Life](#)



[Baby \(0-2 years\) - Best Start in Life](#)

Any questions?

Agenda items for the next meeting?



Evaluation for Early Years
Talking Babies – Fill in form

Evaluation for Early Years Talking
Babies



[Training Brochure - Autumn Term.pdf](#)



[What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf](#)

[Slides from presentations and bite-size CPD | Shropshire Learning Gateway](#)