

Early Years Practitioner (Under 2's)

Hi, I am Karen Neal and have taken on the new role of Early Years Practitioner for under 2's.

I am very excited to join the Solihull Early Years Team after many years working in Brambles Day Nursery as well as continuing to work in early years within a school.

I myself have 2 children a 6 year old boy and a 12 year old girl. We love to be out and about as much as possible, especially enjoying trips to the beach.

Under 2's has always been a passion of mine as I think its fascinating how babies grow and develop so rapidly in these first few years. I recognise the importance we as practitioners have in ensuring that children have the best start in their care and education and the support we can provide to parents with our knowledge of child development (After all, they don't come with a set of instructions!).

Alongside this I understand the many difficulties and hurdles you may face along the way, whether it be staffing changes, guidance updates or wider world situations such as the recent Covid restrictions.

This being said, we are always willing to overcome these and work towards achieving better outcomes for children. Remember, good practice breeds good practice.

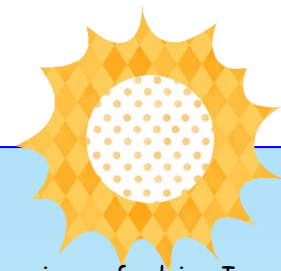
Check out this link to see how important you are as practitioners. [Time for babies and toddlers – Birth To 5 Matters](#)



In this exciting new role, I will be visiting settings to get to know staff, routines and the environment, offering in setting support, training and guidance around opportunities for practitioners to further develop themselves or, home in on areas they would like to improve within the setting. This will enable them to continuously improve on their practice, in turn helping to achieve better outcomes for the children within their care.

Please feel free to contact the Early Years Team for further information.

I look forward to meeting you all.



If there was one piece of advice I could give to settings from my experience over the years is the importance of singing to children, especially babies.

Singing songs children is crucial to early brain development and early communication. It is a universal language that children can access both at home and in settings and can reassure and soothe children when upset, engage them further in their play and learning as well as introduce a wide range of new vocabulary to them from a young age.

You don't need to have the voice of an angel (trust me I really don't), but just sing and enjoy. Try not to worry about what others think about your voice and just seek the responses of the children that will be gaining so much from these simple interactions.

10 THINGS BABIES LEARN WHEN WE SING TO THEM

- 1 When you sing to me, I learn your voice and we are bonding.
- 2 Singing is one of my favourite methods of play interaction.
- 3 When you sing and speak, I learn about words and communication.
- 4 When you sing about things around me, I learn to make associations.
- 5 I can learn my name by hearing it in songs.
- 6 Songs for different routines in my life help me predict what comes next, which makes me feel safe.
- 7 Music includes rhythm and rhyme, which are both part of my developing language.
- 8 When you sing, I listen. This helps me begin to develop my listening skills.
- 9 Music expresses emotion, which I learn from hearing your voice in the lyrics.
- 10 Above all else, your singing voice expresses love!

CAMHS logo

If you need a little inspiration for new songs click on the link below, print these songs out for yourselves and share with parents to further embed their love of songs. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/earlylearning/nurserysongs>

[Making Up Nursery Rhymes for Babies - BBC Tiny Happy People](#)