



Welcome to the fifth edition of the Education Mile Newsletter. Our aim is to share regular local and national information for early years providers in the City. If you would like to find out anything further on any items or you would like more advice or information, please contact the **Family and Young People's Information Service**, **020 7332 1002**, fyi@cityoflondon.gov.uk. Website: www.fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk. If you would like to contribute to the next edition, we would love to hear from you; email isabelle.britten-dennie@cityoflondon.gov.uk.



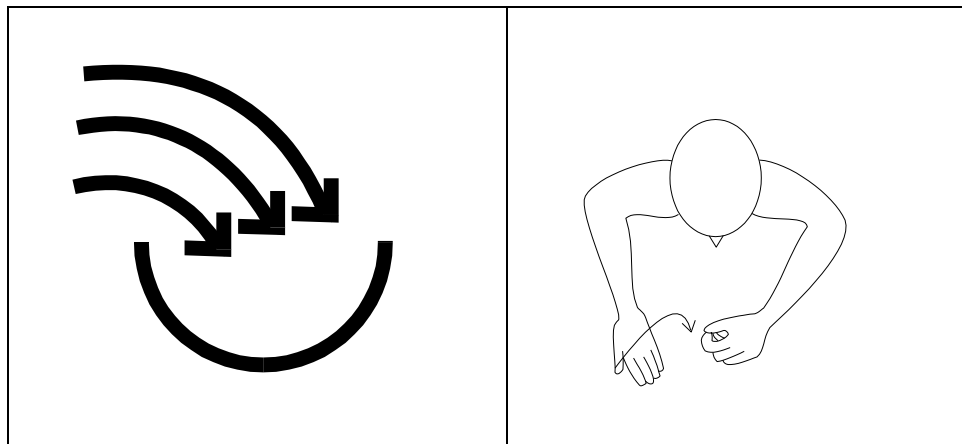
To make you smile...

A family went to a little girl's dance recital. Their young 3 year old son turned to his dad and said, "When I become a girl, I'm going to be a ballet dancer just like her!"

Makaton sign

Being able to communicate is one of the most important skills we need in life. Almost everything we do involves communication from asking for food and drink to making friends and having fun. Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language, so signs and symbols are always used with speech.

This term's sign is: **More**



Have you signed up to be part of the exciting new City Early Years Project, COLTALE?

For the next 2 years we will be running a Communication and Language Project called Coltale (City of London Talks and Listens Enthusiastically.) The aim of this project is to support parents, practitioners and most importantly children to reach their full potential and have best range of opportunities open to them.

To be a part of this project we will ask you to sign an agreement to commit to the project. During this time, you will have opportunities to attend exciting training and share good practice with others. We will, of course, be there to support you. There might be some surprises along the way too! If you are interested in being a part of this exciting project, and have not yet let us know, then please email me as soon as possible so you don't miss out.



Early Years Foundation Stage: Displays

It often appears to be an unwritten rule of schools and early years settings that every wall in every room must be liberally plastered with brightly coloured displays. Typically, this includes children's work, bright posters, flashcards of words and numbers, etc. and what could be described as 'general decoration'. The thinking is that settings must provide a sensory feast with no surface left uncovered.

Putting up, refreshing and replacing displays requires a lot of staff's time and effort.

Researchers at Carnegie Mellon spent some time studying the impact of brightly decorated early years settings on "distractability" and found that visual displays can actually have a negative impact on learning for younger children.

Even though it is important for children to feel a sense of belonging and ownership of the environment, they can become overwhelmed by the explosion of decorations, numbers and words, becoming distracted from the learning intended.

Below are some questions to involve your staff in reviewing displays in your environment:

1. What is the purpose of using displays in our learning space?
2. Where are our displays? Why?
3. How do our displays look from children's eye height?
4. What questions do children ask about displays?
5. What feedback have we had from families on our displays (if any)?
6. Who is responsible for changing displays?
7. Are all our children represented in our displays?
8. Do we reflect our community and local environment in our displays?

To hear more about the research, go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=qt0muSzEd_M