

Solihull Early Years and Childcare Ofsted
Registered group settings

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

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Your Ref:

Please ask for: Lisa Morris

Our Ref: LM/kes

Date: September 2026

For the attention of early years setting leaders

The early years team- setting support for 2026-2027

As another new academic year begins, we are writing to share our visit focus for 2026/7. This gives us an opportunity to celebrate the previous year with you and your priorities for 2026/7. We will contact you to arrange a time for our visit and gather more details from you.

We know that you will have been reflecting on the updates to both the early years foundation stage statutory framework and the Ofsted early years inspection toolkit effective from 01/09/2026. Our visits will support reflection on these changes.

The local authority has a legal duty to secure information, advice and training as set out in the early education and childcare statutory guidance for local authorities. Our annual visits form part of this support and they enable us to direct our support in proportion to need.

We really value all your feedback and suggestions and have used this along with information from recent Ofsted reports to shape our improvement visits. Please also look at how this intelligence has supported our training plans -

<https://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/training/>

Setting improvement visits for group settings

The early years team are looking forward to visiting you and your settings during the academic year. We know that you will have been reflecting on the updates to both the early years foundation stage statutory framework and the Ofsted early years inspection toolkit effective from 01/09/2026. With these changes in mind, our setting improvement visits this year will focus on self-evaluation in:

- Safeguarding
- Children's welfare and wellbeing
- Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

The visit will continue to include a **leadership discussion, walk around the premises** and **joint observation (which will include case sampling)** of practice and provision with a senior leader.

Preparing for joint observation case sampling

- We would ask that when the leadership team identify a room/group of children to focus on for the joint observation that they also identify a specific child in the group who faces **a barrier to their learning**. We will use them as a case sample during the joint observation.
- We will consider their experience, particularly focusing on the **behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines** toolkit statement below, and in comparison, to the experience of their peers.

Ofsted early years inspection toolkit - Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines: *Practitioners understand and consider **each child's** individual needs and circumstances, including those of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may **face barriers to their learning**. Any **adaptations and/or reasonable adjustments** maintain the high expectations of behaviour that **reflect the children's ages and stages of development**. Practitioners **proactively** work with other agencies to serve children's best interests.*

- This does not have to be during an adult-led experience. In fact, observing children accessing the continuous provision, during snack or mealtimes, or transitioning between a range of these experiences is all valuable.

<i>To be most effective the leader will need to be alongside the early years adviser throughout the time (rather than contributing to the running of the room) to enable shared reflections and to support their own feedback to the team following the visit.</i>
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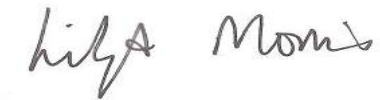
Area SENCo support for group settings

Area SENCos will continue to contact group-based settings to arrange support visits. These visits will focus on supporting the SENCo role and promoting high-quality practice across the setting. We will also continue to respond to requests for support for individual children, as we have done throughout 2025/6.

To discuss this further please contact a member of the team –

Early years enquiries: 0121 704 6150 or eyenquiries@solihull.gov.uk .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Lisa" and the last name "Morris" clearly distinguishable.

Lisa Morris

Early years team manager