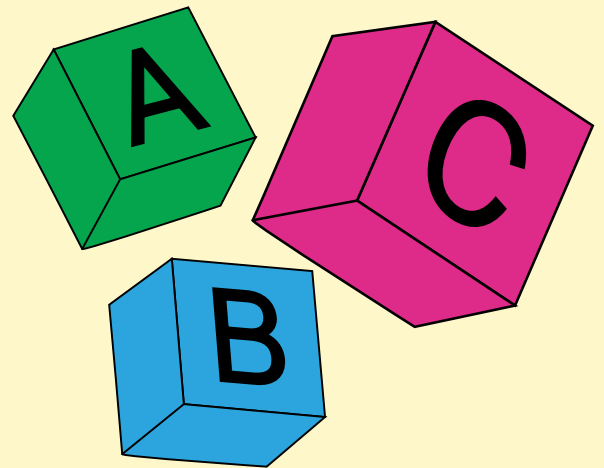


Considering a
Career in

BE MORE

Early Years



**Shaping the
next generation**



Early Years

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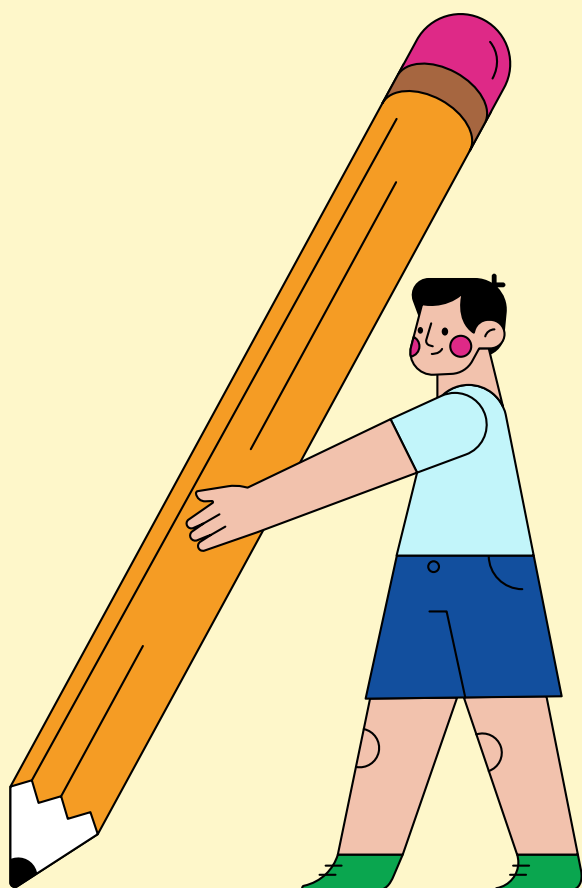
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What is Early Years?

The early years sector educates and cares for children from birth to five years old, supporting their emotional, educational, and social development.



People in this sector are positive role models with an enthusiasm for helping children reach their potential in the foundation stage, preparing them for later educational settings such as primary school.

Whether you're managing a busy local nursery or making a positive difference to a child with special educational needs and disabilities, the sector strives to prepare the next generation for wellbeing and success.

There is a high demand for skilled workers in the sector and opportunities to work in many different roles and settings. A career in this sector means you could work in nurseries, hospitals, playgroups, daycare centres, preschools, and crèches, or you might make home visits.

From organising creative arts and crafts sessions or fun playtime activities to using specialist techniques to assist children with special educational needs, working in early years education means having a big impact on someone's childhood and future.

Early Years

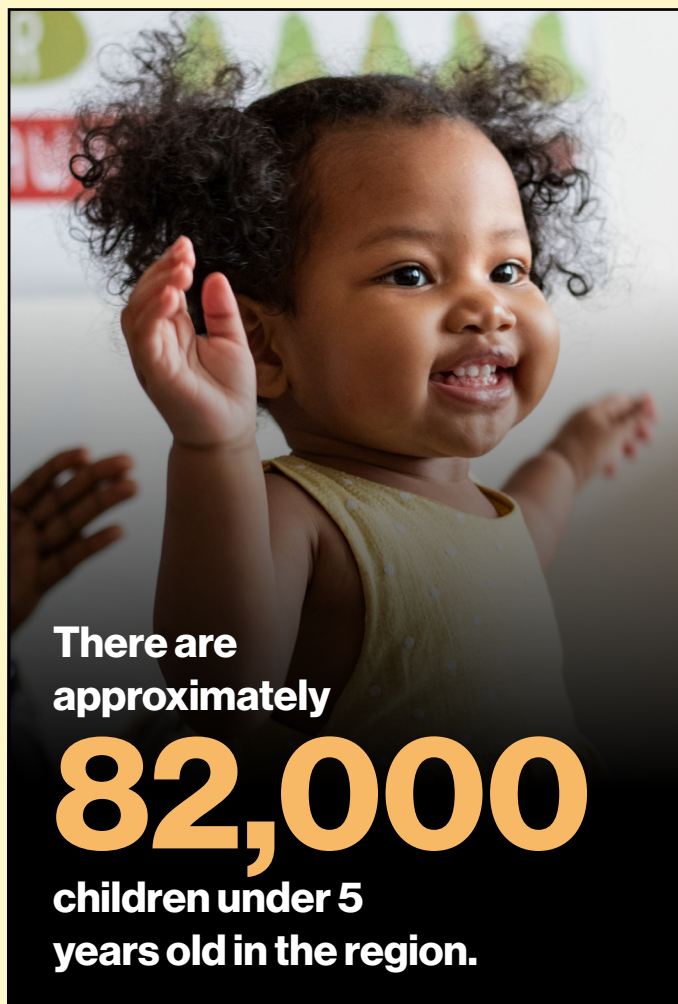
Did you know?

Early years in Liverpool City Region: Stats & Facts

- There are nearly **7000** early years establishments in the North West.
- A national skills shortage in the early years sector means that trained early years workers are **consistently in demand**.
- The early years and childcare practitioner workforce is projected to grow by **10% by 2035**.
- The importance of early years care is growing as teachers report that **over a third** of children starting Reception are behind in play, sharing with others or following instructions.

Early years in action in the Liverpool City Region

- Three major universities in the Liverpool City Region (Liverpool, Liverpool Hope, and Liverpool John Moores) offer taught degrees and research opportunities in childhood studies or early years education, providing resources and expert knowledge.
- The Liverpool Early Years Stronger Practice Hub is 1 of 18 centres in the UK that provides funded support to early years professionals, including skills programmes, newsletters, recruitment opportunities, conferences, and networking events.
- The region has a Family Information and SEND Directory that includes a dedicated section on early years, offering support to families and providing helpful resources and links to key information.
- Liverpool City Region invested £5 million into early years apprenticeship funding and employed a cohort of early years employment officers in 2024 to target the skills shortage within the sector.
- Local courses allow early years providers to develop their knowledge through guided programmes, such as the Liverpool Early Years SENCO Award, which offers special educational needs coordinators additional technical and theoretical training in their specialist area.
- Early years providers have benefited from government grants, including the Early Years Expansion Grant, which offered up to £10,000 in funding to improve facilities and increase the number of early years places in the local area.



Early years: Good to know

What is a skills shortage and how does it affect pursuing a career in the early years sector?

A skills shortage exists when a sector does not have enough specially trained workers for the number of roles available. This means that an early years career could offer job security if you train or become highly-qualified, as the sector is keen to recruit more skilled individuals.

What is the importance of SEND expertise in early years education?

SEND expertise gained through training helps early years providers better care for and educate children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Early Years:

The first years of children's education, especially the years up to the age of 5 in the UK education system. **(Cambridge Dictionary)**



What are the Career Pathways & Job Roles?



Early Years career pathways

In an entry-level job such as playworker or early years practitioner, you'll lead primarily play-based learning activities, such as group games or storytime sessions.

A mid-level role could involve working more independently and with more responsibility, shaping children's education as a SEND practitioner or home visitor.

To progress into higher-level roles, such as family support worker or nursery manager, you could learn management and leadership skills or specialise in a relevant subject within childhood studies.



There are nearly

7,000

early years establishments
in the North West.



Early Years Job Roles

There are many different job roles in the early years sector.
Here's just a sample:

Position	Role & tasks	Salary
Playworker	Provides a safe environment for children in playgroups and childcare settings. Leads engaging games and activities, encouraging and caring for children.	Up to £22,000
Nursery worker	Works as an early years practitioner in a nursery setting, leading or assisting with activities and childcare routines. Ensures babies and children are in a safe environment, meeting individual needs and using research-backed approaches to support actions.	Up to £24,000
Maternity support worker	Assists senior medical professionals in caring for babies and mothers. May support or lead parenting classes on hospital wards. Performs routine checks such as taking temperature or blood pressure to support a wider health team. Reports problems to midwives or nurses.	Up to £26,000
Portage home visitor	Makes home visits to young children with support needs, including learning difficulties, physical disabilities, or other special needs. Develops plans and activities for parents to complete. Provides emotional support and guidance to family members.	Up to £30,000
Family support worker	Supports families with a broad range of social issues, including helping families develop parenting skills. Provides emotional support to families, offering practical advice about parenting.	Up to £35,000
Nursery manager	Ensures a safe and secure environment for children and employees at nurseries or other childcare centres. Plans curriculums and activities and manages day-to-day organisation of the nursery school.	Up to £35,000



Earn up to
£70,000
per year

Position	Role & tasks	Salary
Early years teacher	Sometimes also called an early years educator. Provides high-quality teaching to young children, using research-backed approaches and techniques to plan and carry out lessons and activities for children. Develops plans for individual children to support their needs, including children with SEND.	Up to £40,000
SEN teacher	Teaches children with special educational needs, tailoring their approach based on each child's individual requirements and using specialist expertise and techniques. Ensures the safety and well-being of any children in the learning environment.	Up to £49,000
Health visitor	Visits families at home with a child under 5 years old, sharing health expertise. Identifies health needs using specialist knowledge and recommends plans for care based on these needs. Supports the family emotionally, provides advice, and prevents illness in young children.	Up to £53,000
Education site inspector	Carries out official inspections of educational providers, including registered early years childcare centres and childminding businesses. Follows official regulations to identify areas of improvement in a variety of early years settings. Provides feedback and findings that should be used to make effective improvements within the setting.	Up to £70,000



Subjects to study at school & beyond

- Childhood studies
- English
- Maths
- Psychology
- Science
- Social sciences

Core skills and knowledge to build

- Building relationships
- Communication skills
- Creativity
- Empathy
- Literacy and numeracy
- Organisation
- Situational awareness
- Teamwork

At entry-level

You could do a diploma or T-level in education and early years to train for entry-level jobs in this sector. Alternatively, if you want to earn and learn on the job, you could do a level 2 early years practitioner apprenticeship or a level 3 early years educator apprenticeship.

At mid-level

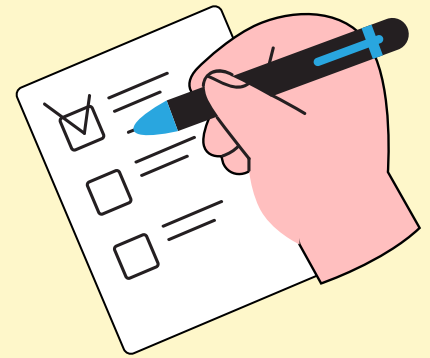
For mid-level positions, you could take a higher technical qualification (HTQ) or level 5 early years lead practitioner apprenticeship, developing more skills and experience for roles such as lead educator or health play specialist. Other options include a foundation degree in early years education, offering leadership training and technical skills so you can become a nursery or daycare manager.

At senior level

For roles that need more specialist training, such as SEN coordinator or health visitor, you could earn a degree in a specialist area, learning more about organising childcare and managing children's health. Or you could undertake an early years teacher degree apprenticeship (EYTDA), earning a university qualification while gaining relevant professional experience.

Test Your Knowledge

(Answers on back page)



Q1. What is the early years sector?

- A.** Children aged 0 – 5 years old
- B.** The sector that educates and cares for children aged 0 – 5.
- C.** Children aged 0 – 1 year old.
- D.** Solely the work that happens in a nursery.

Q2. Which of the following are activities in early years settings? (Tick as many as you wish)

- Unsupervised time
- Group reading
- Organised play
- Arts and craft sessions

Q3. There are 5000 early years places of work in the North West. True or false?

Q4. Approximately how many children in Liverpool City Region are in their early years?

Q5. Which of the following have useful courses and programmes for an early years career? (Choose as many as you wish)

- A.** Liverpool Stronger Practice Hub
- B.** Liverpool Hope University
- C.** Liverpool University
- D.** Liverpool John Moores University

Q6. Which of the following workplaces could an early years career find you in? (Tick as many as you wish)

- Nursery
- Secondary school
- Hospital
- Day-care centre

Q7. Give an example of an apprenticeship or training course that could prepare someone for a role in the early years sector.

Q8. What are the skills necessary to work in an early years career? Name three.

Q9. What role does a SEN teacher play in early years education?

- A.** Tailors educational approach to individual children with special educational needs.
- B.** Uses the same teaching method for all children.
- C.** Only organises activities for early years playgroups
- D.** Solely makes sure children are safe in early years settings

Q10. Fill in the blank: The early years and childcare practitioner workforce is projected to grow by _____ by 2035.

Childminding

Did you know?

Myth-busting for recruitment

“Childminders have to be parents or carers”

Childminders do not have to have their own children to become a Registered Childminder, being passionate to make a difference to children's outcomes, committed to personal development and an Enhanced DBS is all you need to start the registration process.

“I don't want to work full time or when my children are off school”

Being a Registered Childminder allows you to work around family and other commitments. As your business, you can choose to work term time only, part time or part days, deciding the age of children you look after as long as you stay within or below the age limitations of your registration.

“Parents don't want a male childminder”

Not at all, although men working in the early years sector is very much in a minority, those male childminders who already work as a Registered Childminder run successful business's. All those involved in the Early Years Sector are working hard to dispel the perceptions and personal judgements.

“I have a pet so I cannot become a Childminder”

Having a pet will not stop someone from becoming a Registered Childminder. As long as any risk has been removed ensuring children's safety, health or possible allergy. Having a pet is usually welcome by children and parents alike.

“I need a house and garden to be a childminder”

Childminders work from all types of properties including flats and more recently non domestic premises. There is guidance on the number of children Childminders can have depending on the floor space and you may well need permission from your landlord to run a business from your home.

“My home will have to be set up like a nursery”

Not at all, the majority of Registered Childminders can “pack away” at the end of the day. As long as while children attend, toys and resources are accessible to children, a dedicated play room or permanent equipment is not necessary.

“I would have to buy lots of toys, equipment and resources before I start childminding”

Not at all. The Early Years Foundation Stage sets out what learning and development children should be at so as long as the toys and resources are safe and in good condition if second hand, they do not need to be new. Most resources can cover many areas of learning and along with Library visits and lending/swapping between colleagues, the quality of learning outweighs the quantity of resources.

“I don’t want my kitchen to be like catering”

Although kitchens need to be a clean safe environment to cook for minded children, the Food Standards Agency has a wealth of information on their website to ensure Registered Childminders adhere to food safety ensuring the preparation, storing and cooking food will not pose a health issue, including the storage of packed lunches if parents prefer to supply children’s lunch and/or breast milk.

“I would need a book keeper to be self employed”

You can have an accountant but the Government Self Assessment for Tax is easy to use after a Gateway Account is made. The Government website explains what can or cannot be claimed for including heating, lighting, food along with wear and tear from your initial profit. Help and support is available so no need for accountancy costs.

“I would love to be a Childminder but do not understand all the regulations, rules and training needed”

There is no need to worry, from your first enquiry with your Local Authority, there is support and mentoring to guide you through the initial registration process along with business, training and peer support.

“I am not a teacher but hear that Childminders need to have a curriculum like schools”

Although this sounds daunting, for Childminders a curriculum is broken down to: “what you want a child to learn” “how are you going to implement this learning?” and “what impact has this had on the child”. There are certain assessments that need to be done to make sure children are at their expected age development but written lesson plans or a curriculum is not expected.

“I heard that there is too much paperwork and complicated assessments to do”

Government has worked to reduce the burden of written work for Childminders over the last few years, the registration process will explain what you do and do not need to have written and subsequent support and mentoring from your Local Authority will be available.



Quiz Answers

- Q1. B
Q2. Group reading, organised play, arts and crafts sessions
Q3. False – there are around 7000!
Q4. 82,000
Q5. All
Q6. Nursery, hospital day-care centre
Q7. Level 2 or 3 apprenticeship, such as early years practitioner or early years educator, or a foundation degree in early years education.
Q8. Creativity, organisation, communication skills
Q9. A
Q10. 10%