

Coventry Wraparound Programme Newsletter

As we rapidly approach the end of 2025, we would like to welcome you to the final Wraparound Programme Newsletter for this year. In this edition we will be focusing on long term sustainability and will share top tips and details of the tools available to you to support your business.

Since 2024, Coventry City Council has made wraparound programme funding available to both existing and new wraparound providers who are keen to support the development of before and after school places for children across the city. Funding has provided start up costs for the creation of new places to support financial sustainability as the demand for the provision grows. As funding for many of these provisions comes to an end, we wanted to focus attentions on what providers can do to remain sustainable once funding is no longer accessible.

Sustainability

In order to achieve longevity, it is vital that a business ensures its sustainability. Income should consistently cover expenditure. There should be a business plan in place which identifies a roadmap for growth and sustainability, outlines your vision and goals and the key strategies you will put in place to achieve these.

Business plan

To be effective, a business plan needs to be regularly reviewed, reflecting on

- progress towards the goals set

- the experience, skills and abilities required to further develop the business
- the views of your customers (families). For example are you continuing to provide the type of service families need and will use?

Budget

To be sustainable, it is important to set a budget. The budget should clearly list all of your income and expenditure.

Sustainability will be achieved when income covers all expenditure, while generating some surplus to provide a contingency / development fund.



Marketing

Don't assume that people know about your service. Word of mouth is a wonderful, cost-effective way to fill spaces but if your numbers are low you do need to think about other ways of increasing numbers on register.

Top Tip: Ask to advertise your service within the school newsletter, attend school parent / carer evenings to talk to parents about wraparound, and / or encourage a child on the register to bring a friend for a taster session, hold an open session for parents to come along and see wraparound for themselves.

User surveys

(parents / carers and children)

Know about, and be reactive to changes in demand for your service.

Top tip: Listen to, and hear, what your users are telling you. Demand for wraparound may change from term to term – you need to know if this is the case.

Other information that you could ask

about: Are the sessions / activities meeting the interests of the children, are the hours you offer really what parents need, are parents generally happy with the service.

Staff feedback

Are staff happy with the service they are delivering? Are there aspects of the service that they struggle to deliver? What do they like best about the service they provide?

Top tip: If you have a team of happy staff, you obviously want to keep them and avoid the time and cost involved in recruitment, so it is important that you invest in your team. For example ensure they have opportunities to attend training and add to their skills, think about the incentives you offer as an employer, for example do you reward long service by providing an additional day's holiday for staff who have worked with you for several years.



Unique selling points

Know what your unique selling points are and make sure you advertise these.

Top tip: Actively promote what makes your service great. It could be your flexibility, the activities available to the children, the facilities within the venue or even your commitment to environmental sustainability. (if you would like more information about environmental sustainability, the Early Years Alliance has an [environmental toolkit and action plan](#)).

Local competition

It is always good to know the competition in your area. For example their charges, opening hours, the service they provide. If your service is more flexible or maybe you have facilities 'they' don't, then make sure you promote the fact. Another idea that some providers have appreciated and then gone on to develop, is to form a local network with other providers.

Getting together once in a while to discuss the service offered, the challenges and successes of your specific type of provision can be very supportive. Additionally, if at any point you are not able to meet specific parental requirements, knowing what is offered locally, can help you to support a parent to find a service that does meet their family needs.

SWOT analysis

Identifying your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is a good way of continually assessing internal factors that could affect your business (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats)

- **Strengths:** Identify what is good about your business and how it can be improved or built on, perhaps it is your relationship with the school and how well you work together.

- **Weaknesses:** Identify any issues that could let you down if not dealt with or resolved. For example, it could be that the activities you provide are no longer as popular as they once were, think about how you can identify and then provide activities children want.
- **Opportunities:** Include any areas that have potential for development to improve the business. Perhaps demand is growing and you need staff quickly. How will you recruit? It could be that a childminder or a local Early Years Provider would be interested in working with you.
- **Threats:** Consider risks that could affect the success of your business. Things that need to be prepared for, controlled or minimised. For example another provider opening up across the road or the government changing the funding and tax breaks available to parents to support the cost of childcare.

If you would like some help to produce or review a SWOT analysis, please contact Gary Croxon gary.croxon@eyalliance.org.uk or Tracey Hobbs tracey.hobbs@eyalliance.org.uk

Monitoring

Monitoring of the budget and business plan is a key part of achieving and maintaining sustainability. You should be able to identify whether income covers all expenditure and if not, you will need to start thinking about how you can increase income or reduce expenditure.

Top Tip: Keep a record of all grant money expenditure because you will be asked to return a monitoring form. We strongly recommend you keep all receipts and accurate records.



Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit – Financial support for families

Make sure you know about the financial support available to eligible parents to support them with wraparound childcare costs and ensure you are signed up to accept the two schemes. Be available to support parents if they need help to apply.

Eligible parents / carers of primary school aged children accessing wraparound have access to:

- **Universal Credit Childcare:** For working families claiming Universal Credit. Parents can claim back up to 85% of eligible childcare costs
- **Tax-Free Childcare:** the government will automatically add £2 for every £8 eligible parents pay into online childcare accounts up to the value of £2000 per year - £4000 for disabled children. This can amount to £500 every three months. The maximum parents / carers can pay into the account is £8000 but individual accounts can be opened up for each child they pay childcare for.

Always remember:

The families that choose to use your service are the most important part of the equation. It is because they use your service that you have a business.

Therefore it is important that you listen to your families and know what they want, when they want it and where they would like to access the service. In return they will pay fees that provides income to pay the bills!



Please be aware, there is still time to apply for wraparound programme funding, but applications close on **Friday 16 January 2026**, so if you are thinking about submitting an application, please do so as soon as possible to avoid missing the deadline. Funding is available to set up / expand a wraparound service with one condition that you should be aware of; it is an expectation that the wraparound provision will be sustainable from 1 April 2026.

If you would like to review your business plan or are thinking about developing a business plan before you apply for wraparound funding (remember the deadline for applications is 16 January 2026) Please contact Gary Croxon: gary.croxon@eyalliance.org.uk or Tracey Hobbs: tracey.hobbs@eyalliance.org.uk

Alternatively, email the Business Sufficiency and Funding team directly at EYproviderfunding@coventry.gov.uk as soon as possible. Colleagues will be able to provide you with a business plan template and if needed, support you to fill it in.

As an example, wraparound programme funding can be used to support:

- Employment of new staff, safer recruitment costs – DBS
- Staff salaries to support growth of the wraparound offer
- Marketing to promote the service
- Costs – rent / utilities
- Groceries – snacks / meals
- Consumable resources – craft materials

If you are planning to apply or would like to discuss an application, please contact Gary Croxon gary.croxon@eyalliance.org.uk or eyproviderfunding@coventry.gov.uk as soon as possible.



Contact details for the Early Years Alliance team:

gary.croxon@eyalliance.org.uk
helen.middleton@eyalliance.org.uk
tracey.hobbs@eyalliance.org.uk

Contact details for the Coventry Early Years Business, Sufficiency and Funding team

Contact your allocated Early Years Business, Sufficiency and Funding Advisor directly or for general enquires, email **EYProviderfunding@coventry.gov.uk**

Useful links

- For information on Tax – free childcare and universal credit: Use the [childcare costs calculator](#) and [Best Start in Life](#) for support
- [Coventry business support resources](#)
- Frequently asked questions: [Coventry wraparound project – Frequently Asked Questions for families](#)
- [Previous newsletters](#)
- [Early Years Alliance Business Blocks](#)