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From Practitioner to Leader: Exploring the Early Years Apprenticeship Pathway

Explore qualifications, careers and progression opportunities from entry level through to specialist and leadership roles

What is an apprenticeship?



An apprenticeship is a training programme that allows learners to earn while they learn, gain hands on experience and a recognised qualification - all with full tutor support.

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Apprenticeships

What is an apprenticeship made up of?

Standard (Knowledge, skills and behaviours)

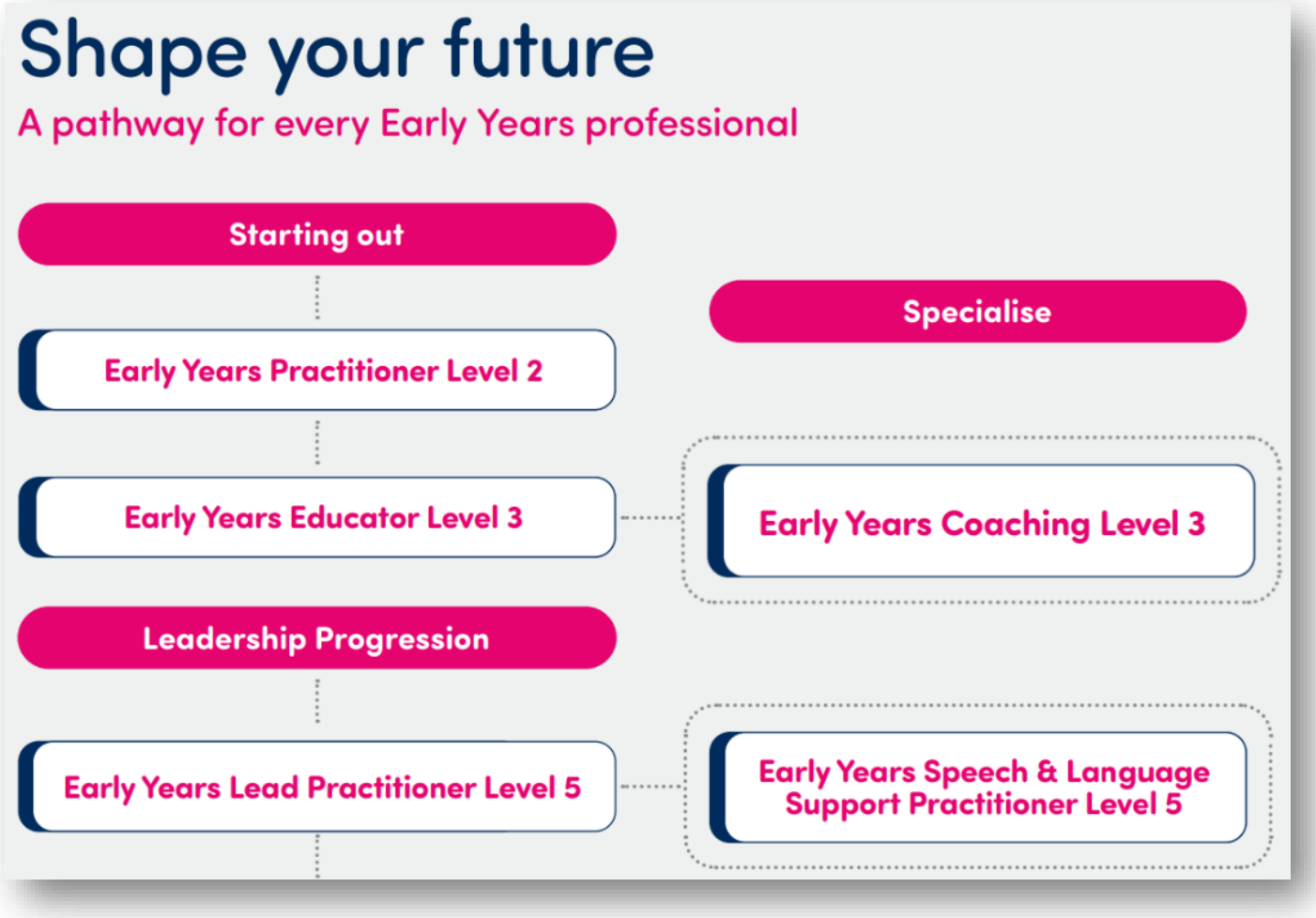
Maths and English functional skills (depending on age and previous qualifications achieved)

Off the job training

Gateway to Completion

Apprenticeship Assessment

Explore the Pathway



All our Early Years Apprenticeships are funded through the **Growth and Skills Levy** or **government co-investment**, meaning there's no cost to the learner

Blended approach to learning, with on-the-job training, online study + tutor visits

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How we support you

Blended programme of face to face and online study

Progress reviews every 6 weeks

Specialist 1-2-1 Tutor Support

SEG boost – personal development, career information advice and guidance and welfare programme

Regular reflections on learning and practice

Partnership working between BPN, the apprentice and the employer

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Early Years Practitioner Level 2 Apprenticeship

- 12 month programme + 3 months EPA (for full time learner)
- Functional skills maths and English L1 required if apprentice does not already have equivalent qualifications **(mandatory for 16-18 year olds)**
- Ideal for learners who are new to an early years setting/the workplace or not quite ready for level 3
- Consists of 9 core modules, including child development, health and safety, safeguarding and purposeful play & assessment
- EPA methods: observation and a professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Best suited for:

- ✓ School leavers
- ✓ Career changers
- ✓ Those new to Early Years
- ✓ Learners wanting practical experience



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Early Years Educator Level 3 Apprenticeship

- 15 month programme, (minimum duration 12 months), all assessment takes place on programme
- Fully recognised and supports meeting ratio requirements for EYE L3 in an EY setting
- Functional skills maths and English L2 **(mandatory for 16-18 year olds)**
- Learners will need to complete paediatric first aid and submit their certificate as part of their apprenticeship
- Consists of 11 modules + assessment preparation – including safeguarding, H&S, child development, a unique child, enabling environments and teaching, learning & assessment
- Apprenticeship assessment methods – observation and questioning, and a choice between either a professional discussion **OR** a case study

Best suited for:

- ✓ Existing practitioners
- ✓ Those ready for more responsibility
- ✓ Learners looking for a recognised Level 3 qualification
- ✓ Those interested in future progression opportunities

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Early Years Coaching, Learning & Development Practitioner Level 3

- 14 month programme + 3 months EPA (for full time learner)
- Consists of 12 core modules, including coaching fundamentals, understanding learning needs and evaluating impact
- On successful completion of the apprenticeship, as well as your level 3 qualification, you'll also gain an ILM Level 5 certificate in Effective Coaching, adding further credibility and flexibility to your professional profile
- Learners must complete 348 hours of off-the-job learning to support their development and apply new skills in practice (Off-the-job training is structured learning that takes place outside of an apprentice's usual, day-to-day work tasks, but during contracted working hours).

Best suited for:

- Early Years Practitioners supporting the development of others
- Room Leaders
- Deputy Managers
- Nursery Managers
- Training Coordinators
- Learning Facilitators
- Apprenticeship or Early Careers Coordinators
- Digital Learning Coordinators
- HR or People Development Administrators
- Coaches or mentors supporting Early Years staff development



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Your learning journey

Your apprenticeship combines expert guidance with practical workplace application, you can expect:

- **Monthly workshops** –Explore key learning and development themes with experienced tutors
- **Online learning resources** – Access flexible materials and activities to support your progress
- **Workplace application**– Apply your learning to real organisational priorities and projects
- **Progress reviews** - Receive regular support and feedback throughout your journey
- **Coaching practice** - Develop your confidence through practical coaching opportunities

What challenges does this programme address?

- Identify staff learning needs and capability gaps
- Design inclusive and engaging learning solutions
- Deliver effective face-to-face, blended and digital learning
- Use coaching to support individual performance and development
- Build productive relationships with managers, colleagues and wider stakeholders
- Evaluate the impact of learning and demonstrate value across the setting
- Adapt to changing organisational, staff and child development needs
- Develop confident, reflective and evidence-informed practitioners

Role Eligibility Criteria

Learners should:

- Be employed in a role with responsibility for supporting, delivering or coordinating learning and development activities.
- Have access to learners, colleagues or stakeholders to enable workplace projects and coaching practice. (18 hours with maximum 3 people)
- Be able to plan, deliver and evaluate learning interventions.
- Have opportunities to work collaboratively with managers, HR and wider organisational stakeholders.
- Have the support of their employer to complete workplace evidence and off-the-job learning.

EYLP L5 Apprenticeship

- 18 month programme + 3 months Apprenticeship Assessment
- Designed for those in a leadership role in an EY setting
- Maths and English L2 (mandatory for 16-18s, highly recommended, with L2 English needed to be included in ratio and L2 maths required to become a manager)
- 16 online sessions, including topics such as leadership, legal requirements, ethics and rights based approaches, leading enabling environments.
- Assessment methods – observation and questioning, professional discussion with portfolio of evidence



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Speech and Language Early Years Lead Practitioner Apprenticeship Level 5 – programme overview



- Early Years Lead Practitioner L5 programme
- 18-month programme
- Speech and language content developed by speech and language experts
- The speech and language element is embedded into the apprenticeship
- Certificate provided for speech and language programme

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Speech and Language Programme Delivery

Monthly virtual classrooms (BPN) delivered through a speech and language lens

2 live speech and language classes (start and end of programme)

Elearning packages built into the programme, designed by speech and language link

Practical tasks and learning log to be completed

Learning built into Bud programme for a smooth learner journey

Speech and language modules

Module	Brief overview of module content
Module 1 – What is SLCN?	- What we mean when we talk about SLCN – (broken down into the 3 main areas). - Key terminology that is related to SLCN (e.g. articulation, expressive/receptive language, fluency). - A brief overview of common diagnoses that may be seen in early years/nursery settings (e.g. speech sound disorder, selective mutism, DLD). - Prevalence of SLCN in children, and the impact that these difficulties can have on long term life chances/outcomes. - Examples of how SLCN difficulties can impact *almost* every aspect of a child's development and learning in the early years.
Module 2 – Development of speech and language skills (typical development)	- Typical development of speech and language skills. - The skills involved in processing language, and what happens when this breaks down. - Typical development of attention and listening skills, and why the development of these skills is important in children's speech and language development. - Top tips on how to support the development of attention and listening skills in the early years setting.
Module 3 – Creating a Communication Supportive Environment in the Early Years setting	- What is a communication supportive environment, and why this is important, and how it helps promote inclusion. - Why using a 'whole setting approach' supports unidentified needs and supports all children within the setting. - How to make these changes in a practical way, by using visuals, creating space that encourages interaction and using audit tools to help identify 'hot' and 'cold' areas for communication in your setting. - Looking at core strategies to support all children in their language development. - How to support children in the setting with their speech sound development, by using activities such as rhyming, syllable clapping and listening to sounds.
Module 4 - Identifying SLCN and Taking Action	- Exploring possible 'red flags' or 'common indicators' that might indicate difficulties in a child's language development. - Exploring possible 'red flags' or 'common indicators' that might indicate difficulties in a child's speech sound development. - Thinking about the 'wider picture' by understanding the link between communication difficulties and behaviour. - Understanding the difference between SLCN and EAL and how best to support EAL children and their families acquire speech and language skills. - What to do if you have concerns about a child's possible SLCN. How to monitor progress, work with families and knowing when to seek further support/referral to specialist services.

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Apprenticeship Recruitment Service



How does it work?

Our free Apprenticeship Recruitment Service is designed to make things simple for you. We connect early years settings with enthusiastic, motivated learners who are ready to start their careers — bringing fresh talent into the sector, while helping apprentices find a supportive environment where they can truly grow and thrive.



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Apprenticeships

How do we support apprentices?

- Pre-screening- to understand their experience, career goals, and the type of setting that would suit them best, while also confirming their eligibility for the apprenticeship.
- Match to current vacancies and discuss suitability.
- If we don’t have a suitable vacancy available, we provide guidance and support on how to approach local early years settings directly.
- Proactive vacancy search - distribute strong CVs to local employers.



How do we support apprentices? (cont.)

- Matched candidates are offered an interview/work trial with the setting. Will help both the employer and candidate decide if it's the right fit.
- If a placement is not offered, we continue supporting the candidate in their employer search and provide helpful feedback to support their development.

Get in touch!
recruitment@bestpracticenet.co.uk
Or scan the QR code – and we'll be in touch



Scan to find out more!

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To summarise

I want an apprenticeship to...	Recommended programme
Start my Early Years career →	Level 2 Early Years Practitioner
Gain further experience and hold greater responsibility →	Level 3 Early Years Educator
Support, train and guide colleagues to develop their skills & improve practice →	Level 3 Coaching, Learning & Development Practitioner
Develop specialist speech & language expertise →	Level 5 Speech & Language Support Practitioner
Lead your setting →	Level 5 Early Years Lead Practitioner

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Next steps

How do I apply?

Applications can be made through our website:

https://www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/early-years

Any questions?

