

## EARLY YEARS OAG ACTION RESEARCH - ONE-PAGE SUMMARY

### WHAT WAS THIS ACTION RESEARCH ABOUT?

This project explored how the **Early Years Ordinarily Available Guidance (OAG)** can be used in everyday practice to strengthen inclusive provision. It involved **12 action research projects** across nursery schools, primary schools, childminders and PVI nursery settings.

**Settings focused on practical ways to:** identify needs earlier, strengthen communication, regulation, independence and engagement, improve confidence in supporting children with SEND, build stronger partnerships with parents and carers, and embed the Early Years OAG into daily practice.

### WHAT CHANGED AS A RESULT?

**The project led to increased staff confidence, greater awareness of the Early Years OAG and practical changes in provision.**

#### Staff became more confident

- Staff awareness that the Early Years OAG was available to use increased from 20% at baseline to 89% at exit.
- Exit survey responses showed increased confidence in supporting SEND across the broad areas of need.
- Settings reported that staff were more confident to notice needs early and try strategies.

#### Children were more settled, engaged and independent

Settings reported positive changes in children's emotional regulation, communication, attention and engagement, independence in routines, and confidence and sense of belonging.

#### Inclusive practice became more embedded

Settings introduced small, manageable changes such as calm corners, sensory circuits, structured group times, communication supports, parent workshops and routines to build independence.

### WHAT MADE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE?

#### Across the projects, five things stood out:

- using the OAG as a practical tool, not just a document
- giving staff time to reflect on what they were seeing
- making small, consistent changes to routines and environments
- sharing strategies with parents and carers
- applying successful approaches to support more children

### WHAT DID PRACTITIONERS AND PARENT CARERS TELL US?

- "Staff are much more confident to notice needs early and talk to parents about how to support their child."
- "We've seen real changes in children - more settled, more engaged and more confident."
- "The OAG is an easy, practical tool that helps us reflect on what we're already doing and what we can try next."
- "We feel more confident in what is in place for our child."

### HOW WILL THIS WORK CONTINUE?

#### The learning from this project will be used to:

- share Stories of Implementation across Birmingham
- support wider use of the Early Years OAG
- inform future training and workforce development
- strengthen parent partnership
- help settings apply successful strategies more widely

### THE KEY MESSAGE

**Small, consistent and ordinarily available changes can make a meaningful difference. When practitioners use the Early Years OAG to notice needs, try strategies and work with families, children become more settled, more engaged, more confident and more independent.**