FAQ FOR EYBZ WEBSITE

1) When and how did the Early Year Business Zone start?
The initial planning started in 2017 and the website was launched in August 2017. The toolkits were designed and tested and developed in consultation with 'pilot settings' before being rolled out later that year.

2) Do you have to be an NDNA member?
No, but you need to register for a free 'EYBZ user account'. You then have immediate and free access to a range of tailor-made business resources.

3) What are the benefits of registration for a free EYBZ user account?
You will have immediate and free access to the following:
• EYBZ Business Toolkit comprising (1) Business Appraisal (2) Financial Management (3) Staff Cost Calculator
• An invitation to join the EYBZ Facebook group (peer-to-peer network of other early years settings)
• Regular email updates on free resources including details of free EYBZ support sessions
• Email support helpline on business challenges

4) How is the service funded?
The NDNA runs the EYBZ with financial support provided by the Department for Education. The initial funding was for April 2017 to March 2018, followed by a six month extension period up to September 2018.

5) Who designed the business toolkit?
The three elements of the toolkit were designed by the NDNA working closely with the DfE and other partners. There was an open invitation for settings to assess and feedback on the format of the website, toolkit and support training.

6) Is the toolkit being developed?
Following the initial development of the toolkit, some elements have continued to be refined based on feedback and suggestions from 'real-time users'. This process will continue in line with comments and suggestions from users.

7) What training or support is available?
A range of free support sessions, funded by the DfE, were offered to all users in the summer of 2018 and included:
• Regional Surgeries: one day face-to-face events led by an experienced Early Years trainer in different locations
• Online Demonstration Webinars: a series of 45 minute sessions for up to 8 delegates using WebEx
• 1-2-1 Phone Calls: a series of 30-40 minute time slots for users to have individual phone calls with an EYBZ expert
For details of the current support available please use this link to NDNA website.

8) Is there a discussion forum?
Everyone that registers with the EYBZ is invited to join a closed EYBZ Facebook group. This provides an opportunity for group members to post questions and answers, so they receive valuable free advice in a peer-to-peer environment.

9) What are the benefits of the toolkit?
The toolkits have been developed to support the sector with help on business management. The free tools can be used by all settings, but will be particularly useful to individuals new to the sector or new to the business management. This includes those with overall responsibility for the settings occupancy levels, sustainability and profitability. Not all settings can afford management software packages, so these 'free and ready to use toolkits' can bridge the gap for settings who require some guidance with overall business skills.

10) What is the Business Appraisal Tool (BAT)?
This is based on a series of questions to help analyse a setting's business performance and planning for the future. It has 12 sections covering every aspect of running a business including funding to marketing and financial management. The tool will provide recommendations and links to additional resources and templates relevant to the answers provided. It can be re-visited whenever needed and provides a handy reminder or checklist of actions to take.

11) What is the Financial Management Tool (FMT)?
This is a financial projection tool that will allow you to monitor a setting's monthly financial position based on previous turnover and overheads. After the data has been entered, it provides a visual check on which areas of expenditure are high and flag up areas of potential savings. The tool provides a breakdown of yearly, monthly and weekly expenditure, plus the cost for a full time place, so you can check if fees are at the correct level to achieve breakeven and profitability.

12) What is the Staff Cost Calculator (SCC)?
This is a stand-alone module that allows you to input data about a setting's opening hours, rooms, children, staff, holiday periods and attendance patterns. It then provides visual data on spaces by room and when they are full. It also calculates where you can deploy staff more efficiently across the rooms and gives a cost for staffing each room versus occupancy.