Shaping Lives

Shaping your tomorrow, today.

Early Years Practitioner Level 2 Apprenticeship



Education & Skills Funding Agency

Ofsted Good Provider

Early Years Practitioner

Level 2 Apprenticeship

Making the right choice about your next step is key to unlocking your potential and setting yourself up for a bright future. This overview is here to give you all the essential info about the apprenticeship—how they benefit you, and why it's the perfect route for practical learners like you.

Ready to shape your tomorrow? Let's dive in.

Meet Arti, our brand mascot



Whether you're an individual looking for a fresh start or a business ready to invest in your team, our Early Years Practitioner programme offers the perfect opportunity to make a lasting impact in early childhood education.



For Learners:
Imagine a career where every day brings the chance to help young children grow, learn, and thrive. With our programme, you'll gain the skills and confidence to work with children from birth to age 5, supporting their development and wellbeing. You'll be part of a professional team, working alongside experienced Early Years Educators, teachers, and childcare experts. No previous experience? No problem. We're here to guide you every step of the way.



For Employers:
Imagine a workforce that's fully equipped to deliver high-quality early years care and education. Our programme ensures your staff are trained to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) standards, set by the Government to support children's learning and development. Whether you're a nursery, pre-school, or children's centre, investing in this programme means investing in the future of your team and the children you care for.

From nurseries and playgroups to home-based care and beyond, our programme prepares individuals to excel in a range of early years settings. Together, we'll shape the next generation of early years professionals, ensuring every child gets the best start in life.

Duration:

12 months + 3 months for EPA

Level:

2

End-point assessment organisation:

City & Guilds

Qualification:

Level 2 Early Years Practitioner Diploma

Who is it for:

- Assistant Childminders
- Early Years Practitioner
- Nanny & Early Years Worker
- Nursery Assistant/Practitioner

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



Our Early Years Practitioner programme equips learners with the essential knowledge to thrive in early childhood education.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Effective Communication with Children
Learners will discover how to engage and connect with young children, ensuring they feel supported and understood—key to creating a nurturing environment.

Equality, Rights, Diversity & Inclusion
Apprentices will learn how to respect and celebrate each child's uniqueness, promoting equality and fostering an inclusive atmosphere in your setting.

Safeguarding & Legislation
Understanding safeguarding procedures and legal requirements is vital. This programme covers the key risk factors and legislation to ensure children's safety is always a top priority.

Child Development
From observing to assessing and planning under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), learners will develop an in-depth understanding of how children grow and develop.

Health & Wellbeing
Apprentices will learn how to support the physical and emotional wellbeing of babies and young children, ensuring they thrive in all aspects of their care.

Child-Led and Adult-Led Play
Understanding the importance of balancing child-initiated play with structured, adult-led activities is key for fostering creativity and learning.

Partnership Working
Learners will be prepared to work collaboratively with parents, caregivers, and other professionals, creating strong partnerships that benefit the children in their care.

Reflective Practice
Apprentices will develop reflective habits, continuously improving their skills and growing within their role, which helps ensure high standards in your setting.

Supporting Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
Learners will gain a clear understanding of the SEND code of practice and how to support children with additional needs in line with current legislation.

For employers, this programme will help develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce. For learners, it's a chance to build a fulfilling career with the opportunity to make a lasting impact. Together, let's shape the future—yours, your team's, and the children you care for.

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



The Early Years Practitioner Level 2 apprenticeship develops the vital skills needed for a successful career in early childhood education, benefiting both learners and employers alike.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Effective Communication
Learners will develop the ability to communicate clearly with babies, children, and adults, ensuring positive relationships and a supportive environment in every setting.

Promoting Respect, Equality & Diversity
Apprentices will understand how to foster inclusive environments that celebrate diversity, promoting respect for each child's individuality—essential for a thriving early years team.

Safeguarding Children
Through this programme, learners will be trained to spot signs of danger or abuse and will know how to follow safeguarding procedures to keep children safe, a critical skill for any childcare provider.

Planning Engaging Activities
Apprentices will work with colleagues to plan activities that nurture children's holistic development—whether through play, creativity, or educational programmes. These skills help create dynamic, enriching learning environments.

Health & Wellbeing
The apprenticeship teaches learners to encourage healthy eating and exercise, promoting the physical and emotional wellbeing of children, which is crucial for early years settings.

Implementing & Reviewing Activities
Apprentices will not only carry out activities that support children's development, but also review them to ensure they meet the needs of the children, making continuous improvements to their practice.

Collaboration with Colleagues & Parents
Effective teamwork is at the heart of this programme. Apprentices will work closely with both colleagues and parents to support the full development of each child.

Reflective Practice & Professional Growth
Learners will use mentoring, feedback, and supervision to continuously refine their skills, setting personal and career development goals, which will ultimately benefit the whole team.

By investing in this apprenticeship, employers can build a strong, skilled workforce, while learners gain the practical expertise to thrive in early years settings. Together, we can shape the future of your team, your career, and the children you care for.

What will be covered?

Knowledge. Skills. Behaviours.



The Early Years Practitioner Level 2 apprenticeship cultivates essential behaviours that are crucial for success in early childhood education, benefiting both learners and employers.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Care & Compassion
Learners will develop the ability to show genuine care and compassion for children, creating a nurturing environment that supports emotional growth.

Honesty, Trust & Integrity
Building a foundation of honesty and trust is vital. Apprentices will learn to act with integrity, fostering strong relationships with children, families, and colleagues.

Positive Work Ethic
This apprenticeship instills a strong work ethic in learners, encouraging reliability and dedication—qualities that are invaluable in any childcare setting.

Commitment to Improving Outcomes
Apprentices will be trained to focus on the continuous improvement of outcomes for children, ensuring they reach their full potential in a supportive environment.

Team Focus
Success in early years education relies on teamwork. Learners will cultivate collaborative skills, learning how to work effectively with colleagues to create the best possible experiences for children.

Non-Discriminatory Practice
Apprentices will understand the importance of working in a non-discriminatory way, promoting equality and inclusivity within their settings.

Professional & Reflective Practice
This programme encourages learners to engage in professional development and reflective practice, ensuring they continually assess and enhance their skills for the benefit of the children they care for.

By embracing these behaviours, learners will not only enhance their personal development but also contribute positively to their teams. For employers, investing in these behaviours means fostering a professional and effective workforce that prioritises the wellbeing and development of every child. Together, we can create a brighter future for the children and communities we serve.

Kickstart your journey with the Starter Pack.

Your adventure in early childhood education begins with the Starter Pack! This initial activity is all about discovering yourself. You'll explore your learning styles and gain valuable self-awareness to set a solid foundation for your journey ahead.

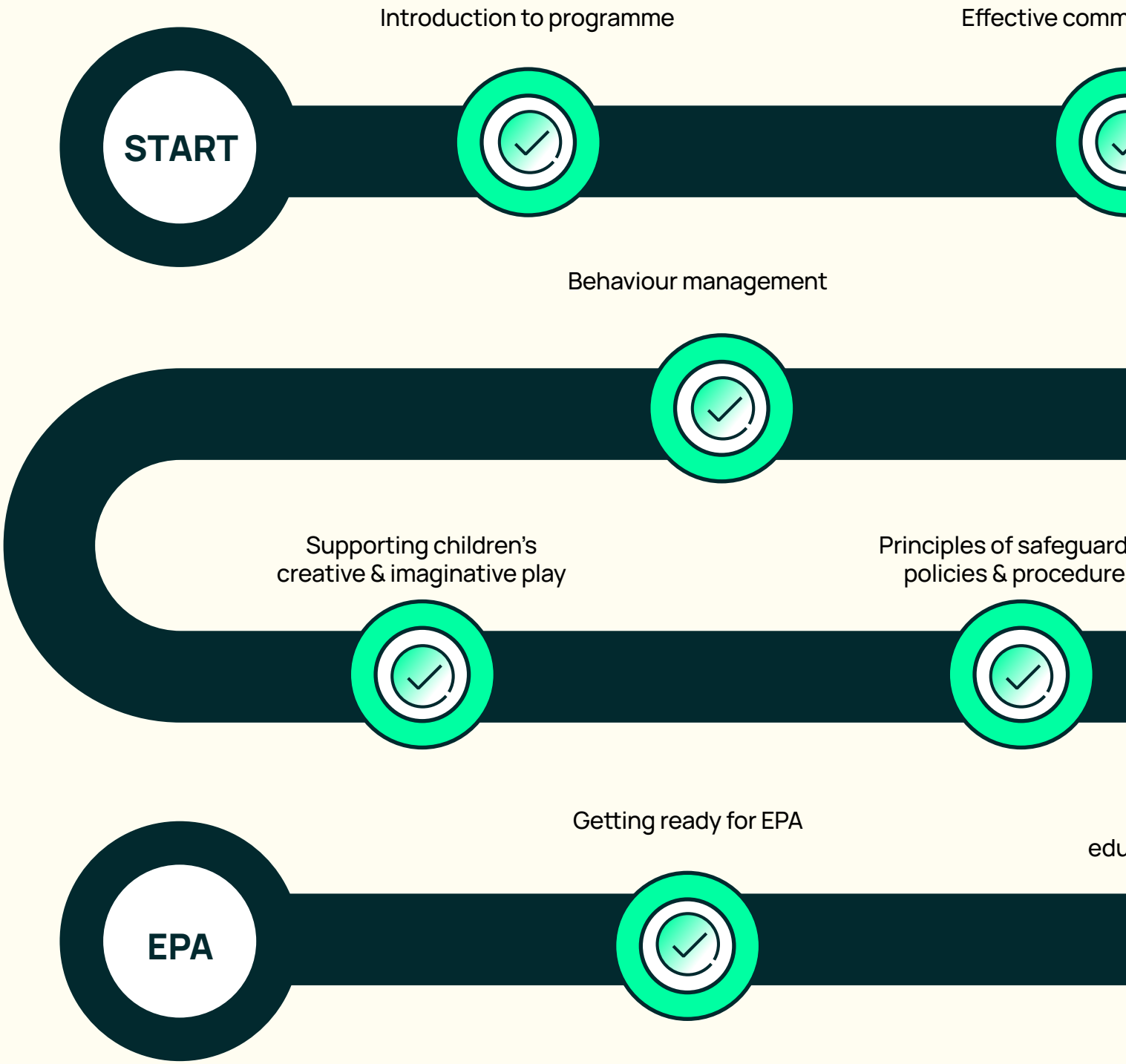
Next, you'll dive into developing essential study skills and reflective practices, which will be woven throughout the programme. These skills will not only help you succeed in your studies but will also prepare you for creating insightful reports for your Showcase Portfolio.

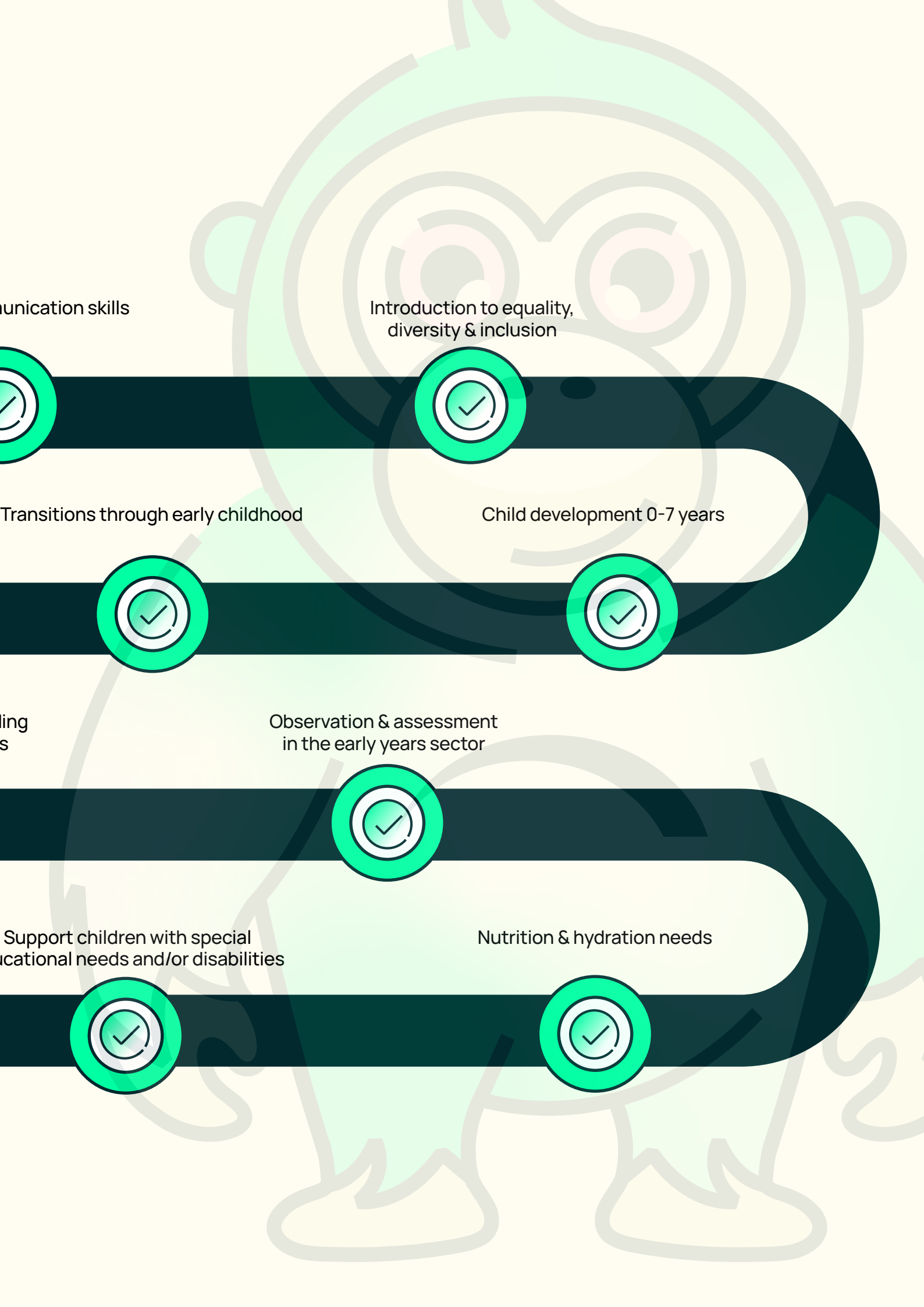
Additionally, the programme includes a series of interactive tutorials that bring theory to life. These engaging sessions will deepen your understanding of the role and help you apply what you've learned in practical ways.

With every step, you'll build the confidence and skills needed to make a real impact in the lives of children. Ready to get started?



Learner journey.




unication skills
Introduction to equality, diversity & inclusion
Transitions through early childhood
Child development 0-7 years
ling
s
Observation & assessment in the early years sector
Support children with special ucational needs and/or disabilities
Nutrition & hydration needs

The benefits of ‘Flipped Learning’.

Flipped learning presents numerous advantages over traditional lecture-based approaches, including:

Personalised Learning Pace: Apprentices can learn at their own pace, revisiting online materials as often as necessary. This flexibility is especially beneficial for complex topics or procedures.

Enhanced Preparation: By providing essential knowledge before remote workshop sessions, apprentices can deepen their understanding and develop higher-level skills.

Focused Support: Trainers can dedicate more time to addressing individual needs, offering tailored feedback and support instead of simply delivering content.

Active Learning Environment: Flipped learning encourages active, differentiated, and learner-centred experiences, allowing apprentices to engage in collaborative and interactive tasks.

Skill Development: This approach fosters essential intra- and interpersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and self-regulation—critical competencies for future careers.



For the Learners
Flipped learning empowers learners to take charge of their education, making it more engaging and relevant. By accessing materials at their convenience and participating in interactive sessions, they develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter while honing essential skills that will benefit them in their careers.



For the Employers
Employers also reap significant benefits from flipped learning. It can lead to higher retention and completion rates, as apprentices feel more motivated and satisfied with their learning experience. Additionally, it boosts performance and productivity by equipping apprentices with knowledge and skills that are directly applicable to their roles. The flexibility and scalability of this training approach make it easy to adapt to various learning needs and contexts, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of workforce development.

Exciting pathways to learning: What's involved.

eLearning
Our fully interactive eLearning modules are designed to fit seamlessly into the busy lives of your apprentices. They can learn at their own pace while covering essential knowledge for each module. With a blend of digital resources, engaging videos, interactive quizzes, scenarios, and case studies, we cater to various learning styles, ensuring everyone can thrive.

One-to-One Online Session with a Personal Tutor
Each apprentice will benefit from personalised online one-to-one sessions with their dedicated Personal Tutor. This tailored support ensures that every learner receives the attention and encouragement they need to excel. Tutors assess learning, provide individual feedback, conduct progress reviews, and prepare apprentices for their end-point assessment (EPA). Our flexible approach allows us to adapt to each learner's unique needs, with easy access to tutors via email, phone, and the online platform, Bud.

Workshops
Our dynamic Elevate workshops offer a fantastic opportunity for learners to enhance their skills and tackle new challenges. Each two-hour session focuses on a specific module, creating an interactive space where apprentices can deepen their understanding while connecting with peers from diverse backgrounds. This interaction enriches their learning experience and broadens their career perspectives.

In addition to mastering module content, workshops help develop essential soft skills, including communication, maths, digital literacy, and positive attitudes. Learners also have the chance to build a supportive network with their peers, which can be invaluable throughout their journey.

What to Expect in a Workshop
Before attending, apprentices must complete the relevant eLearning module to ensure they are well-prepared for the workshop activities. Each session, led by a sector expert, involves a variety of engaging activities, such as role-playing, quizzes, presentations, case studies, and research projects, making every workshop a unique and enriching experience. With multiple timeslots available each month, we can accommodate various working patterns, ensuring that learning fits seamlessly into their lives.

Understanding module progression.

The graphic below illustrates the exciting stages that learners will navigate through for each module:

1



eLearning
Get ready for an exciting learning adventure! For each module, you'll access interactive eLearning resources that are expertly crafted to enhance your knowledge and prepare you for the upcoming workshops. These engaging materials are more than just learning tools—they're your gateway to fully immersing yourself in the subject, ensuring you're well-prepared for an exhilarating workshop experience.

2



Group Workshops
Step into the world of dynamic learning at each workshop, guided by industry experts! You'll explore a thrilling variety of activities, with support at every turn. Imagine engaging in role-playing, tackling quizzes, creating eye-catching presentations, analysing fascinating case studies, and diving into research projects. Each workshop is a unique adventure, filled with diverse activities that promise an enriching and unforgettable experience!

3



Consolidation Activities
As you reach the grand finale of each module, it's time for dynamic consolidation activities! This is your moment to shine, showcasing all the knowledge, skills, and behaviours you've mastered. This crucial step helps you build an impressive portfolio. Get ready to dive into a mix of exciting tasks: write insightful assignments, gather compelling witness testimonies, and present your practical workplace creations. This stage is designed to let your learning take centre stage in a variety of engaging ways!

Unlocking the potential of off-the-job hours.

Off-the-job hours, also known as protected apprenticeship time, are a key part of every apprenticeship programme. This dedicated time helps learners develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to succeed. Apprentices are entitled to 6 hours per week of protected time, which for those working part-time (under 29 hours a week) amounts to 20% of their working hours.

At Shaping Lives, we support apprentices in making the most of these hours by offering engaging eLearning modules that typically take about 3-4 hours to complete. We also run workshops that provide an additional 2 hours of hands-on learning. Plus, we encourage consolidation activities where apprentices can dive into research and practice, averaging around 15 hours per module.

Employers play a crucial role in this journey by creating opportunities for training that connect directly to the apprenticeship. To make this easier, we've developed a comprehensive learner journey that outlines the content of each module and suggests activities for apprentices to explore. Together, we can shape the future of early childhood education!



Test 1
Learning has taken place during the learner's normal working hours



Test 2
It can't be maths or English



Test 3
It must be relevant to the skills, knowledge and behaviours in the apprenticeship standard



Test 4
The learner must be learning something new

Key roles in your learning success.

At Shaping Lives, several dedicated professionals work together to ensure your success throughout your apprenticeship. Here's how each role contributes to your journey:



Business Development Managers (BDM)
Our Business Development Managers (BDMs) play a crucial role in guiding you smoothly through the enrolment process. They begin by collecting learner nominations and carefully verifying the information to ensure eligibility criteria are met. This thorough review streamlines the next steps. Once you're set to enrol, BDMs collaborate closely with the Customer Success team (CST) to facilitate enrolment meetings, eligibility verification, and initial assessments. They manage the entire process, ensuring contractual and funding compliance is maintained.



Learning Enrolment Tutor
Your journey kicks off with the Learning Enrolment Tutor, who meets with you to gather final enrolment details and conducts a skill scan to assess your prior learning. After this initial meeting, they lead a group workshop, marking the exciting start of your learning experience. While it may be the same tutor who conducted your meeting, another team member might also take on this role.



Functional Skills and Learning Support Tutor
At the beginning of your programme, you'll complete initial assessments in English and maths, which will help shape your Functional Skills pathway. We offer workshops to build foundational skills, and if you need more tailored support, especially if you have Additional Learning Needs (ALN), our one-to-one sessions are here for you. We work closely with your personal tutors to provide the resources, advice, and guidance necessary for you to feel prepared and confident for your Functional Skills exams.



Personal Tutor
After your first day of learning, you'll be assigned a personal tutor who will support you throughout your apprenticeship. They're there to assist with your individual needs, help consolidate your learning for your diploma, and prepare you for your End Point Assessment (EPA). You can meet with your personal tutor remotely via platforms like Teams or face-to-face, which may include observations. They are your primary contact for any support you need during your apprenticeship.



Workshop Tutor
As you attend group workshops for each of your modules, a workshop tutor will be by your side to facilitate your activities and learning. These sector experts guide you through engaging sessions, and after each workshop, they provide feedback to you and your personal tutor, helping to foster your development.



Quality Improvement Coach
While you may not interact directly with a Quality Improvement Coach, their role is essential. They sample the work you complete for your Diploma to ensure it meets the required standards. Additionally, they support the professional development of your personal tutor and may occasionally join one of your sessions to provide further insights.



Independent End-Point Assessor
Your Independent End-Point Assessor comes from an organisation separate from Shaping Lives. Their role is to assess your learning and conduct your final assessments. You will meet this assessor after completing your on-programme learning, just as you're ready to go through the gateway process for your final assessments.



Additional Learning Support Coach
As you start your programme, we'll reach out to discuss your Cognassist assessment or any declared needs. We'll determine if you require extra support and develop a plan so your personal tutor knows how to best assist you. Ongoing mentoring and support are available throughout your programme, and we also provide your personal tutors with continuous training, advice, and guidance to help them support you effectively.

Understanding the End-Point Assessment (EPA).

The End Point Assessment (EPA) is the final step of the Early Years Practitioner Level 2 apprenticeship, marking a major milestone for both apprentices and employers. For learners, it's a chance to showcase the skills and knowledge you've gained. For managers, it's an opportunity to see your apprentice grow into a confident, competent professional, ready to make a lasting impact in early years settings.

What Does the EPA Involve?

The EPA evaluates the apprentice's abilities through these key components:



Portfolio of Evidence
The portfolio highlights the apprentice's journey, demonstrating their growth, knowledge, and practical skills. It includes reflective journals, lesson plans, assessments, and observations—showcasing the depth and variety of their work. For managers, this is a tangible representation of the apprentice's development and readiness to step into more responsibilities.



Professional Discussion
This structured conversation between the apprentice and assessor allows for deeper reflection. Apprentices will discuss the work in their portfolio, share their insights, and link their learning to the apprenticeship standards. For employers, this is a chance to hear how the apprentice has applied their learning to real-world situations, ensuring they meet the required standards.



Knowledge Multiple-Choice Test
This 60-minute test, completed on a computer, checks the apprentice's understanding of key areas, with around 40 multiple-choice questions. It's a straightforward way to confirm that essential knowledge has been retained.

What Goes into the Portfolio?

Both apprentices and employers should be mindful that the portfolio must:

- **Show Competence:** Include a variety of evidence (e.g., lesson plans, reflective journals) to cover all areas of the apprenticeship standards.
- **Be Authentic:** All work must be the apprentice's own, genuinely reflecting their skills.
- **Demonstrate Variety:** Evidence should come from different tasks and activities, showing the apprentice's full range of abilities.
- **Link Clearly:** Each piece of evidence should connect directly to the apprenticeship standards.

Professional Discussion: A Key Element

During the professional discussion, apprentices will explain how their portfolio demonstrates their competence in key areas, covering:

- **Portfolio Evidence:** Apprentices will discuss how their work meets the required standards.
- **Apprenticeship Standards:** They will reflect on how they've applied their learning.
- **Development:** Both apprentices and employers can see how skills have been sharpened over time.
- **Overcoming Challenges:** Apprentices will share any challenges they've faced and how they've grown through the process, a valuable discussion for employers wanting to understand their resilience and progress.

For Learners and Employers Alike

By fully preparing for the End Point Assessment, apprentices can ensure they complete their qualification successfully, while employers benefit from confident and capable team members who are ready to take on more responsibility and contribute even more to the success of your setting.

Supportive, flexible, and tailored training for Early Years Apprentices.

At Shaping Lives, we believe that every learner deserves the best support possible. That's why each of our apprentices is paired with a dedicated Personal Tutor. Think of them as their guiding star throughout their journey—available for remote one-on-one sessions right from their workplace!

Their Personal Tutor isn't just there to check in; they'll be their mentor, helping them learn, tracking their progress, and preparing them for their end-point assessment (EPA). We pride ourselves on our flexible approach to training, tailoring our support to suit their individual needs.

Here's how it works:

One-on-One Sessions: Connect with their Personal Tutor through remote sessions. This means they can learn at their own pace, in a way that suits them best.

Self-Study: They'll have access to our fantastic social learning platform, Bud, where they can dive into self-study materials at their convenience.

Always Accessible: Their Personal Tutor is just a message away! Whether it's via email, our learner portal, or good old-fashioned phone calls, we're here to help them every step of the way.

Specialist Learning Portal

Our learning portal, Bud, strikes the perfect balance between performance and usability. Designed in collaboration with Paragon Skills, it places the learners' needs at its core, ensuring flexibility across multiple platforms with simplicity as a priority. The hard work of managing apprenticeships is taken care of, allowing Bud to guide them through the process step by step—from enrolment and gathering evidence to preparing for audits, end-point assessments, and funding.

Functional Skills

As part of the apprenticeship, learners will need to provide evidence of achieving a grade A–C in English and maths at GCSE level (or an equivalent higher level). If they can't provide this evidence, or if they have an exemption, they'll undertake functional skills training alongside their apprenticeship.

Functional skills are seamlessly integrated into their programme, enabling them to work towards their qualification while developing these essential skills. At the end of their functional skills training, they'll complete an assessment, which can be in the form of online tests or a professional discussion.

Ongoing Support

Learners will receive full support from our experienced Client Services and Operations teams before, during, and after their apprenticeship journey. Our team is dedicated to helping them measure the impact of their apprenticeship programme, providing regular progress updates, and inviting them to exclusive events—all to ensure they maximise the benefits of their apprenticeship.

We go beyond the job role by offering pastoral support, along with valuable advice and guidance. With a strong focus on care and social responsibility, we empower our learners to progress through our programmes, building their confidence to tackle any challenges they may face.



Shaping Lives

Why choose Shaping Lives?

Shaping Lives is a trusted national training provider, delivering high-quality apprenticeship programmes. Our focus on early years education is paramount, as we understand the critical role it plays in shaping young lives and laying the foundation for future success.

Our dedicated Personal Tutors work closely with your business, providing tailored support to ensure your employees thrive in their roles. We are deeply committed to fostering an outstanding learning experience, empowering both our learners and employers to make a meaningful impact in early childhood education. Together, we can cultivate the next generation of leaders in this vital field.

Contact us

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