



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

Thursday 3rd April 2025

5 by 5

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Shirley Reynolds - Cabinet Member: Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills
Lead Director:	Simon Wellman - Director: Education & Skills
Service Area:	Education and Skills
Report Author:	Rebecca Carey – SDM Achievement and Enrichment
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 380808 Email: Rebecca.Carey@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	SMT – 6th March 2025 Business Briefing – 13th March 2025 Cabinet – 3rd April 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approves the implementation of the 5by5 scheme (five themed activities to try before the age of five) across Telford and Wrekin that focuses on supporting the best start in life for children.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report summarises a new initiative called 5by5 that the Council has created to encourage our young children to participate in fulfilling, life enhancing activities that will achieve a best start in life and support school readiness. This builds on

the highly successful 10by10 scheme (10 activities to try before the age of 10) that has been in place across the borough since 2022.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In 2022, Telford and Wrekin Council was one of the first in the country to roll out the 10by10 initiative which encourages and motivates all children to take part in ten life-enhancing activities by the time they are ten. In another first, the 5by5 scheme, which will encourage children to participate in five (themed) life-enhancing activities by the time they are five, will build on this success and act as a prerequisite to the 10by10 initiative, given it encourages developmental building blocks in early childhood.
- 3.2 The 10by10 initiative has received a positive reception from children and their families and is well supported by town and parish councils and local community groups. 10by10 is also promoted across primary schools in Telford and Wrekin with many of the activities being offered as part of the national curriculum and through extracurricular activities ensuring all primary aged children, of which there are over 16,000, access the offer.
- 3.3 The 10by10 initiative includes 'Learn to Ride a Bike' as one of the ten activities. Last year the council and Sports England worked in partnership to procure a range of specialist bikes, specifically adapted for use by children with disabilities. This further increased access and participation, helping children with mobility issues and Special Education Needs and Disabilities to complete the 'Learn to Ride a Bike' activity.
- 3.4 The 10by10 scheme complements the growing number of council-led services and initiatives designed to support and enhance the lives of our children. To name just a few, these include our hugely popular Urban Games, which provides a variety of sports and recreational activities to engage young people in physical fitness and teamwork. Our Happy Healthy Active Holidays programme ensures that children have access to fun and enriching activities during school breaks, promoting physical health and mental well-being. Additionally, our refreshed short break programme for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) offers tailored support and activities, for children with vulnerabilities, to have the opportunity to thrive. We also offer multiple school holiday programmes through our leisure service, providing a range of activities from sports to creative arts, ensuring that there is something for everyone. These programmes are designed to keep children engaged, active and learning even outside of the school term.
- 3.5 Giving every child the best start in life is a cornerstone of the government's plan for change. Likewise Telford and Wrekin are ambitious for every child to live and

grow well within the borough. Information from the recently released national annual [School Readiness Survey, 2025](#), conducted by kindredsquared, found that at the start of school over a third (36%) of children struggle to play and share with other children, 34% find it difficult to listen and follow instructions and a quarter (25%) continue to require help with toilet training. It was also reported that 50% of school staff have allocated more time and resources to improve early language skills, when compared to 2024, and 44% of schools have provided dedicated intervention staff to support children into their new school routines. The survey also captured the views of parents, whereby 41% had not heard about the principal of 'school readiness' before their child joined their reception year. The 5by5 initiative, which will compliment our growing Family Hub offer, aims to encourage families with young children to engage in a range of activities that support and raise awareness about school readiness. Our ambition is to close the gap between community groups, increase opportunity for those with vulnerabilities and raise the number of children who are 'ready to start' school.

- 3.6 A great start in life for children aged 0-5 is crucial for their overall development. During these early years, children's brains are highly receptive to learning and growth. Providing nurturing and stimulating opportunities helps to build a strong foundation for cognitive, emotional, and social skills. Early childhood experiences shape their future health, behaviour and later success. By ensuring that children take part in life enhancing activities during this critical period, we can set them on a path to a brighter and more successful future and support them as they prepare for school.
- 3.7 The implementation of 5by5 will be led by Telford and Wrekin Council given it's focus on utilising all the existing fantastic resources that are accessible and free for families to participate within the borough. We have over 150 parks, many with playgrounds; libraries spread throughout our communities, which offer a wide range of pre-school activities and services to families and 13 council managed leisure centres. Our Family Hubs, providing free information and services about children, also continue to grow with 6 locations now established and 3 under development. We will work with our primary and nursery schools, early years providers, childminders, community providers, local charities and other third sector organisations to support delivery. There are over 12,000 children between the age of 0-5 in Telford and Wrekin that will be able to benefit from the scheme.
- 3.8 The 5by5 scheme will encourage children and their families to take part in activities focused around the following 5 themes:
- Develop and Grow
 - Find my voice
 - Make Friends

- Creative Curiosity
- Learning Adventures

Each of the 5 themes will have 10 learning adventures for children to experience. Further detail of these can be found in Appendix A.

- 3.9 A clear design and marketing approach for 5by5 has been developed that will complement the existing 10by10 brand. Although the colour scheme and graphics will be unique to 5by5, the fonts, website design and promotional materials and branding will be recognisable to those who are familiar with 10by10 and seamlessly link the two initiatives under one corporate brand.
- 3.10 A webpage has been designed for families that can be accessed across multiple platforms (including mobile phones). It will promote the existing facilities and resources across the borough with information about accessibility as well as provide adventure cards and certificates that parents can download and printout. This will allow them to have an overview of all the activities on offer that they can share with their children.
- 3.11 A communication strategy is being developed with stakeholders to ensure that information is shared about the aims of 5by5 and provides updates to families about what is available in the borough throughout the year. It will share stories showcasing 5by5 adventures that are taking place. It will encourage families to share things they are taking part in or maybe trying for the first time as part of the offer.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 To introduce a 5by5 initiative with a focus on all children of pre-school age which aims to encourage them and their families to experience and take part in a range of healthy, fun and educational activities across the borough.
- 4.2 To introduce fifty adventure ideas based across five themes which are broadly in line with the areas of learning set out in the national early years foundation framework.
- 4.3 To create a 5by5 website that will provide parents with information about the initiative. This will include the rationale behind the five themes and suggested activities along with a range of downloadable resources. The website will provide parents with up to date information about local events and activities, links to partners including Family Hubs, leisure and advice and guidance relating to the local SEND offer.

- 4.4 A 5by5 communication strategy will include regular updates that encourages participation. Clear 5by5 corporate branding will be developed that will complement the wider brand that includes 10by10. There will be 5by5 branding within the Family Hubs and across health provider services. The initiative will be supported by private voluntary and independent nursery providers and well as at schools with a nursery and childminders.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 An alternative option to implementing a 5by5 scheme, which focuses on bringing together, within a framework, all of the Borough's resources to support child development could be the continuation of the different sources of information that is currently in place. However, this alternative is not recommended because it lacks the structured guidance that a 5by5 scheme offers. Without a clear framework, there is a risk that some families may not know about and therefore access the resources and facilities in place which will impact on their children's development. As a discretionary service the council can choose whether or not to implement the project however due to the significant positive impact that the 5by5 project will have on early years development it is recommended the cabinet agree to the proposals set out in this report.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The 5by5 approach will join up various agendas across early support and intervention, including our family hubs model. The 5by5 brand will help to unify a shared set of commitments across council teams, educational providers and health services. Without an approach there is risk of continued fragmentation in approaches and interventions delivered to the borough's residents.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The proposals set out in this report support the following council priorities:
- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community
 - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Associated costs for the 5by5 project will be financed through existing resources for example, the website is currently being developed within existing IDT resources. Other proposals in this report are intended to bring together existing facilities and resources into one framework, rather than generate new activity and therefore are not planned to have a direct or ongoing budgetary impact.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The proposal to build on the 10by10 initiative by extending it to early years through a focused 5by5 initiative is one which the Council has the power to implement. Legal advice will be provided on any of the individual proposals, as needed, to ensure that the 5by5 initiative is implemented successfully.
- 9.2 The recent policy announcements by government around changes to legislation regarding children, young people and education will place further obligations on local authorities to secure the wellbeing of children. The proposals contained within the 5by5 initiative will support the delivery of these statutory requirements.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 The proposal ensures that children 0-5 have access to a wide range of healthy, fun and educational activities across all wards in the borough.
- 10.2 Families are able to utilise facilities within their local area, this could include; leisure, local and town parks, Family Hubs, parent/child groups, community centre events, libraries.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The proposal aims to encourage children 0-5 and their families to have the opportunities to take part in a wide range of healthy, fun and educational activities across the borough. Activities are deliberately selected to ensure free or low cost to ensure maximum access and participation.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 The proposal supports the ambition that a range of healthy, fun and educational activities are available across the borough and are well placed to be able to meet the needs of each individual community.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

No specific implications.

14.0 Background Papers

None

5by5

15.0 Appendices

A 5by5 themes and 50 adventures (page 8-11)

B 5by5 branding (page 11)

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	28/02/2025	28/02/2025	SW
Legal	28/02/2025	28/02/2025	ACL
Finance	28/02/2025	28/02/2025	TD

Appendix A

Develop and Grow	
5by5 Activity	Activity Description
Eat a rainbow	Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables in different colours helps to ensure children get enough nutrients and vitamins.
Splash in a swimming pool	Swimming benefits physical development by strengthening muscles, improving coordination and balance, and building water confidence. It can also help lay the foundations for a lifelong love of swimming and water safety.
Stamp and scrunch the autumn leaves	Stamping and scrunching in leaves promotes childrens physical activity and provides sensory experiences through play.
Grow your own food	Growing your own food helps children understand where their food comes from. It allows them to be hands on and promotes healthy eating habits.
Walk/Hop/Skip or run across the Ironbridge	Children love to be active. Walking, running, hopping and skipping improves balance, coordination, and leg muscle strength and body control.
Putting on own shoes and coats	Putting on shoes and coats help children develop independence and self-confidence. It helps strengthen finger muscles and develop hand-eye coordination.
Use a potty or toilet independently	This is a significant milestone for young children, fostering independence, boosting confidence, and self-care, all while preparing them for future school and social situations.
Eat with Utensils	Learning to use utensils allows children to feed themselves. It requires precise hand movements, which helps children refine their fine motor skills essential for activities like writing and buttoning clothes.
Learn to brush your teeth with supervision	A good routine for brushing teeth helps to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.
Visit the Town park and use the equipment	Visits to parks and play areas help to develop childrens physical and social skills. Playgrounds help children learn through play in a fun and unstructured way and develop physical strength, improve balance and coordination.

Find my Voice	
5by5 Activity	Activity Description
Share a book and listen to stories	Reading together creates special moments for parents and children to connect. It helps children develop foundational skills like letter recognition and builds imagination of characters and settings that start a habit of reading that can lead to a lifelong enjoyment of books
Go to Bounce and Rhyme and join the library	Sharing songs and rhymes is a fun way for babies and young children to develop their communication skills and learn about language and numbers from an early age.
Learn a nursery rhyme and sing a song	Singing nursery rhymes with actions is a great way for babies and young children to develop their motor skills and hand-eye coordination. It supports early language and communication development.
Listen to outdoor sounds	By listening to and recognising outdoor sounds children learn new things and develop their sensory vocabulary. Listening to nature outside helps children learn about the natural world around them.

Explore the sounds that musical instruments make	Exploring sound with instruments helps to enhance children's fine motor skills, their eyesight, hearing, concentration, and memory.
Join my friends in the role play area	Role play allows children to express themselves creatively, explore different ideas, and develop their imagination. It provides opportunities for children to expand their vocabulary, practise speaking, and develop their communication skills.
Play peek-a-boo	Playing peek-a-boo with young children is a fun and beneficial activity that helps them develop object permanence, social skills, and language skills, while also fostering a strong bond between parent and child.
Blow bubbles and catch them	Through activities such as bubble catching and popping, children are able to practise hand-eye coordination. Bubble activities also help children to develop their visual and auditory senses, as they learn to recognise and distinguish different shapes, sizes, and colours of the bubbles.
Feed the Ducks	Feeding the ducks is an activity that allows parents and children the chance to be outside exploring nature. It provides opportunity to listen to the sounds around and begin to talk to children about water safety.
Teddy Bears Picnic	Teddy bear picnics encourage children to use their imaginations as they plan the picnic, choose foods and activities for their teddy bears in a role play environment.

Make Friends	
5by5 Activity	Activity Description
Visit a toddler or community group	Visits to toddler groups help to develop children's physical and social skills. It provides an opportunity for children to come together to interact, play and develop their communication and language.
Go to Pre-school	Going to pre-school helps children develop the skills and knowledge to be school ready. Preschool provides opportunities for children to interact with a wide variety of peers and adults. Children learn crucial social skills like sharing, taking turns. Preschool activities, like play and story time, stimulate cognitive development, enhancing problem-solving skills, language skills, and early numeracy.
Play hide and seek	Hide-and-seek helps children understand that objects continue to exist even when they are out of sight. It encourages problem-solving and memory skills and is lots of fun to play together.
Play a board game with friends	Board games provide opportunities to learn how to take turns, follow rules, and interact with others in a structured and fun environment.
Go on a treasure hunt with friends	Treasure hunts are lots of fun. They encourage children to be active, explore and develop their problem-solving skills.
Talk to the baby/toddler in the mirror	Talking to young children in front of a mirror can promote language development, encourage self-awareness, and foster social and emotional skills by providing opportunities for imitation, communication, and self-reflection.
Draw a picture of your friends	Drawing strengthens small muscles in the hands and fingers which are essential for lots of tasks. It provides a way for children to communicate and experiment with different lines, shapes, and colours.
Play circle games	Circle games provide opportunities for children to interact with peers. They learn to take turns and co-operate together. Through songs, stories, and discussions, children develop their confidence, build positive relationships and make friends.

Build a den	Cosy dens are great fun to build. Den building has lots of benefits for children of all ages. It gets little brains thinking creatively and solving problems. It encourages youngsters to work together and helps them develop their communication skills.
Attend an event in the community	Attending and sharing in community events can help children feel a sense of belonging and connection to where they live and their local area.

Being Curious and Creative	
5by5 Activity	Activity Description
Ride on a bus or train or both	Using public transport with young children is a great way for them to explore the world around them. It exposes children to new environments and lots of opportunities for observation and social interaction.
Exploring paint	Painting provides a space for children to express themselves and experiment with colour and shape. Painting is a multi-sensory experience and helps children to create their own artwork.
play a musical instrument	Playing a musical instrument develops childrens fine motor skills, their eyesight, hearing, concentration, and memory.
Get messy with arts and crafts	Art and crafts provide an opportunity for children to express themselves, explore ideas, and develop their imagination. Arts and crafts is a multi-sensory experience and allows children to experience different materials and textures.
Build a sandcastle	Pouring sand into containers, building sandcastles, and using tools like small shovels or scoops require precise hand-eye coordination and control. These activities strengthen the muscles in their hands and fingers, laying a foundation for later skills like writing and drawing.
Lay on the ground and watch the clouds sail by	Watching the clouds in the sky is an opportunity for children and parents to bond. It can be a calming activity, helping children to relax and enjoy the world around them.
Dance and sing to music	Singing and dancing in lots of fun and provides a range of benefits to children. Dancing improves balance, coordination, and agility, which are crucial for overall physical development and singing is a chance to build learning and communication skills.
Take a torch and walk when its dark outside	This provides an excellent opportunity for children to engage their senses and enhance their sensory development. The light from the torch can be used for light interacts with different objects, creating shadows, reflections, and patterns.
Blow a dandelion make a wish	Blowing a dandelion is an activity that can help children develop mindfulness and learn about nature. It also stimulates imagination and creativity.
Play with playdough	The sensory nature of play dough allows babies and young children to be naturally curious and explore the world around them using their senses. It is also beneficial for fine motor development and strengthening little fingers, hands and wrists.

Making Connections	
5by5 Activity	Activity Description
Count to 5	Counting to 5 is a crucial step in developing early numeracy skills, as it helps children learn the sequence of numbers. It is a skill that children can

	practice in everyday situations, such as counting objects, sharing snacks, or understanding routines.
Draw with a pencil	Holding and drawing with a pencil strengthens the small muscles in the hands and fingers. It helps children develop the muscle memory and control needed for forming letters and writing.
Look for letters and numbers on signs in the community	This is a great way to help children recognise letters and numbers. It helps children to remember and use the names of the letter and numbers they see and develops their communication and language skills.
Write out a card for family or friends	This is a way for children can develop their social skills by sending a card to another person. It provides opportunities to develop language and practice literacy skills such as writing and reading.
Choose a recipe and bake it with a grown up	Baking is a way to spend quality time together and the act of baking is fun and engaging. Involving children in the cooking process encourages them to try new foods and develop a positive relationship with food.
Make a shopping list and go shopping	Shopping provides lots of learning opportunities. Children can practice writing words on the shopping list and counting the number of items in the basket. It also provides opportunities to develop communication and language through conversations about food and shopping.
Go on a bug hunt	A bug hunt is a brilliant way for children to get up close to nature. It gets them active in the fresh air, encourages them to use their observation skills, and it gives them a chance to get hands-on with wildlife.
Plant a sunflower and see how tall it grows	Gardening with sunflowers promotes an appreciation for nature and to get outside together.
Make a snowman	It is lots of fun to be out in the snow. Rolling snowballs and assembling them into a snowman requires lots of physical energy as well as creativity and imagination.
Walk in the woods	Walking in the woods is a great way for children to get physical exercise, strengthening their muscles and bones. The woods provide a rich environment for children to use their senses and imagination, fostering creativity and allows children to explore different textures, sounds, and smells.

Appendix B

