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Bristol City Council
Early Years Monitoring, Support, Challenge and Intervention Framework

Introduction

Bristol City Council is committed to working in partnership with all who contribute to the provision of high quality childcare through a process of reflection, self-evaluation and continuous improvement. The Early Years Monitoring, Support, Challenge and Intervention (MSCI) Framework is intended to secure best possible outcomes for children in Bristol 0-5 settings in the voluntary, private, independent and maintained sectors. It clearly sets out the respective roles of the local authority and settings in order that we work together to improve the quality of provision and children's outcomes. It is closely aligned to Bristol's schools' policy and procedures for monitoring, support, challenge and intervention and is consistent in approach to identifying settings which require additional support and intervention. The purpose of the framework is to ensure that local authority support is targeted purposefully and that settings receive help in proportion to their needs.

The National and Local Context

The Childcare Act 2006 legally obliges local authorities and early years and childcare providers to undertake a range of requirements to ensure that the learning, development, health, safety and well-being of children are secured. This includes legislation which establishes the statutory learning, development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and specifies minimum requirements for registration with OfSTED. The local authority is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient high quality, accessible provision and that it is sustainable.

The MSCI framework takes account of the Disability Discrimination Act and the Race Relations Act.

Through the Key Themes, their Principles and the linked professional commitments, the EYFS establishes a shared language with providers and users of the services to recognise quality and improve practice. The EYFS is the main tool, together with the Ofsted inspection framework of self-evaluation for driving quality improvement.

Who is the policy for?

This policy establishes Bristol City Council's (BCC) approach and commitment to high quality in all aspects of early years and childcare provision wherever it may be found within the full range of local settings.

The word **setting** is used throughout the policy as a generic term which covers all provision: full daycare, sessional care, nursery schools, nursery classes, children's centres, childminders, crèches, play schemes and parent-toddler groups.

Context

This policy is set within the context of BCC's vision for children and young people. ADD HERE A SECTION ON BCC'S VISION

Key Partners

BCC has a strategic role in organising and promoting access to a range of services and support for early years and childcare which the local authority provides either directly or through its partners.

The local authority works in close collaboration with a wide range of locally-based organisation including the Primary Care Trust, universities, colleges of further education, training providers, Play & Early Years Training Unit (PEYTU), Bristol Association for Neighbourhood Daycare (BAND), Jobcentre Plus.

BCC also benefits from support and guidance from a range of national organisations, including Sure Start, The National Strategies, The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) the National Children's Bureau (NCB) and Together for Children (TfC)

Bristol's Monitoring, Support Challenge and Intervention role

Monitoring

This is the systematic work the local authority is required to undertake to collect and analyse the information about the provision and achievement in each setting. BCC also routinely analyses the information made available by OfSTED and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The monitoring of each setting is undertaken in partnership with the provider and takes account of the setting's own self-evaluation.

Support

This is the process by which BCC works in partnership with settings to identify and address improvement priorities. Support may be provided directly by **the** local authority including the early years teams or by other organisations on its behalf. Agreement will be reached with each setting to ensure that support and improvement are timely and appropriate.

Challenge

All settings should continually challenge themselves to improve. BCC has the responsibility to ensure that settings' self-evaluation and improvement planning are informed by high-expectations of quality and achievement.

Intervention

Where settings do not meet the required conditions of registration and the EYFS, and are not able to lead their own improvement BCC is required to intervene to secure children's health and safety and well-being. Where a setting has been judged inadequate by OfSTED or is of serious concern to the local authority a more significant programme of local authority support will be arranged.

Criteria for the categorisation of early years settings

Aims of categorising settings

- Identify highly effective practice to celebrate and disseminate the strengths and successes of BCC's settings
- Identify additional support needs in agreement with the setting
- Intervene in settings in most need of support.

Categorisation of pre-school settings:

The categorisation of settings is based on an assessment of the extent to which each setting has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and is able to advance its own development, making effective use of external input to secure improvement. This constitutes the setting's *capacity to improve*.

A category in the range 1 to 4 will be based on an assessment of the setting's quality and capacity to improve. The category will reflect the level of support needed by the individual setting. The support categories closely match the grading system of the OFSTED inspection framework.

All pre-school settings will be assigned one of the following support categories:

Category 1.

A setting has outstanding or very good practice and provision judged by OfSTED Inspection or LA categorisation. A setting that has very good capacity to improve and can contribute to the dissemination of best practice and whose practitioners could contribute to Bristol's training and development programme.

Category 2

Overall outcomes in the setting are good or better. The setting has the capacity to lead its own improvement. The setting has a good or better OfSTED inspection outcome.

Category 3.

A setting has some areas for improvement to ensure good outcomes for all children.

Improvements needed are likely to relate to a number of the descriptors for category 3 settings. There is often slow progress in addressing improvement priorities identified in an Early Years Consultant annual review or OfSTED inspection. OfSTED judges the setting to be satisfactory or better. Some category 3 settings may not have the capacity to improve without local authority intervention.

Category 4.

A setting is in an OfSTED category of concern or is of serious concern to the LA in relation to a number of the descriptors for category 3 and 4 settings.

Bristol City Council best fit descriptors for the categorisation of early years settings.

Dark green	Descriptors for light touch support Category 1 (dark green rating)
	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>All children are very well cared for and the setting has excellent systems and processes in place which fully comply with safeguarding and welfare requirements</p> <p>Practitioners have clear and convincing evidence of the positive difference the setting is making in effectively supporting the needs of children and their parents in relation to health outcomes.</p> <p>Children are safe and happy. Practitioners have very good strategies for managing children’s behaviour which ensure that the setting is a secure and positive environment.</p> <p>Children’s well-being, social, cultural, emotional and physical needs are given high priority by all practitioners</p>
	<p>Leadership and Management</p> <p>Leadership and management are innovative and inspirational and widely distributed through the setting. Leaders lead by example and systematically monitor and evaluate provision and children’s outcomes. They rigorously analyse information from their data gathering and use it effectively to plan further improvement.</p> <p>The governing body, management committee or owners provide strong, supportive leadership which focuses on improving the quality of provision and children’s outcomes</p> <p>The SEF provides an accurate picture of the setting’s strengths and areas for development and all practitioners engage in self-evaluative processes which contribute to development priorities.</p> <p>The setting has strong capacity for dissemination of best practice and for supporting improvement in other settings</p> <p>There is determined and imaginative practice to promote inclusion and equality and to challenge discrimination</p>

	<p>Learning and Development</p>
	<p>There is excellent provision for children’s personalised learning and development and as a result all children make very good progress. Very high quality support is provided for vulnerable individuals and groups to narrow the gap in achievement between the lowest achieving children and the rest</p> <p>Parent partnership is fully embedded in the setting and most parents contribute enthusiastically to children’s learning and development</p> <p>The rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment strongly enable children’s learning and development and promote children’s creative and critical thinking</p> <p>High quality, culturally diverse resources are easily accessible to children and encourage experimentation and exploration in all areas of learning</p> <p>Highly effective observational assessment, record keeping and planning ensure all children receive the support and challenge they need to make the best possible progress.</p> <p>Respectful and strongly positive relationships, based on a shared understanding of the setting’s aims and values, between staff, staff and parents and staff and children, promote a warm, welcoming and nurturing ethos in the setting.</p> <p>The key person role is fully understood by all practitioners and is evidenced in the warm, affectionate relationships between practitioners and children, the positive relationships with parents and the carefully planned learning experiences which support individual and group learning and development needs.</p>
	<p>Training and Development</p>
	<p>The staff structure and good child/staff ratios contribute positively to stability, continuity and parental confidence in the setting</p> <p>The setting’s very well considered recruitment policy includes the employment and development of staff who live in the local community</p> <p>The highly effective continuing professional development and qualifications training programme promotes a strong culture of reflective and research based practice.</p> <p>Practitioners are confident and articulate about their practice and contribute positively to dissemination of their practice through training and support to other settings</p>

	Sustainability
	<p>The management committee, governing body or owners closely monitor the sustainability of the setting and work with the LA if there are concerns</p> <p>The setting is very well regarded in the community and offers flexible provision to meet parents' needs.</p> <p>Highly effective business planning ensures that the setting is viable and secure.</p>
	Partnerships with parents, community partners and professional agencies
	<p>Practitioners regularly gather the views of children and parents and ensure that they can see how their views are reflected in changes and developments in the setting</p> <p>Highly effective use is made of the resources in the neighbourhood which helps children to develop a sense of community</p> <p>Settings actively reach out to parents to offer them support using systems and processes designed to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families</p> <p>Very strong partnerships with other agencies and services ensure children's individual needs are met effectively and that partnerships have a positive impact on community cohesion</p>
	Outstanding or Good OfSTED - outcomes for children are outstanding or very good and the setting has excellent capacity to lead its own improvement

Light Green	Descriptors for light touch support Category 2 (light green rating)
	<p>Health and Safety All children are very well cared for and the setting fully complies with safeguarding and welfare requirements</p> <p>Practitioners have evidence of the positive difference the setting is making in effectively supporting the needs of children and their parents in relation to health outcomes</p> <p>Children are safe and happy; they are well behaved and considerate towards one another</p> <p>Children's well-being and social, cultural, emotional and physical needs are given high priority by all practitioners</p>
	<p>Leadership and Management</p>
	<p>Leaders at all levels understand their roles and responsibilities and rigorously monitor and evaluate provision and children's outcomes. They use their analyses to make accurate assessments of the setting's strengths and areas for development</p> <p>The setting receives effective leadership and support from the governing body, management committee or owners which raises the expectations of staff and children</p> <p>The setting leadership has sufficient capacity to contribute to the dissemination of best practice to other settings</p> <p>The OfSTED SEF is regularly updated and there is good evidence of reflective, self-evaluative practice</p> <p>The setting accurately identifies its own areas for development, is able to manage the challenges it faces and has a strong capacity for improvement</p> <p>The setting actively and consistently promotes inclusive practice, equality and challenges discrimination. All staff recognise how diversity enriches children's learning</p> <p>Good provision is made reflecting the cultural diversity of children and families living in the community</p>

	<p>Learning and Development</p>
	<p>The majority of children make good or very good progress in their personalised learning and development and very good support is given to vulnerable individuals and groups to narrow the achievement gap between the lowest achieving children and the rest</p> <p>Parents are regarded as partners in their children’s learning and development and this is reflected in the good relationships and regular dialogue between practitioners and parents.</p> <p>The setting successfully promotes the importance of all six areas of learning and development. The indoor and outdoor teaching and learning environment is very well organised and offers a wide range of stimulating and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that are differentiated to meet children’s individual needs</p> <p>High quality resources that reflect cultural diversity are easily accessible to children and as a part of their daily routines children learn about diversity in society.</p> <p>Practitioners with key person responsibilities are well informed, they ensure that individual needs are met and that there are trusting relationships between key persons, children and families.</p> <p>Effective systems of observational assessment, record keeping and planning contribute positively to the good progress children make.</p> <p>The setting actively engages parents in contributing to children’s assessment and learning and parents value the support they receive from the setting.</p> <p>Very good relationships and efficient communication systems contribute to a positive ethos and shared understanding of the setting’s values.</p>
	<p>Training and Development</p>
	<p>The staffing structure is stable and staff ratios are good. Practitioners are well qualified or undertake training to improve their qualifications.</p> <p>An effective professional development programme raises the quality of provision and practice and impacts positively on staff morale and enthusiasm.</p> <p>Setting is proactive in recruiting and developing staff who live in the local community</p> <p>Good attendance at relevant meetings/events – some practitioners are willing, confident and able to share their practice with others.</p>

	Sustainability
	<p>There is no concern about sustainability. The setting is well regarded in the community and offers flexible provision to meet parents' needs</p> <p>The management committee, owners or governing body take issues of sustainability seriously</p> <p>Good business planning ensures that the setting is viable and secure.</p>
	Partnership with parents, community partners and professional agencies
	<p>Strong partnerships with other agencies and services ensure children's individual needs are met effectively.</p> <p>Practitioners make good use of the systems and processes that support families and children's needs</p> <p>The views of parents and children are listened to carefully by practitioners and contribute to developments in the settings</p> <p>Good transition planning with strong networking in place and effective assessment and record sharing with parents and other settings contribute to effective partnerships</p>
	<p>Good OfSTED –no LA concern – outcomes for all children are good and some are outstanding and the setting has a strong capacity to lead its own improvement</p>

amber	Descriptors for targeted support Category 3(amber rating)
	Health and Safety
	<p>The setting's procedures for safeguarding and/or welfare regulations are satisfactory and are consistently applied</p> <p>Practitioners manage children's behaviour appropriately so that children are safe and enabled to thrive.</p> <p>The setting meets the physical, social and emotional health and well-being needs of most children</p> <p>Practitioners recognise that children's health is an integral part of their holistic development and well-being</p>
	Leadership and Management
	<p>Leaders identify key priorities and develop satisfactory plans for improvement. Effective leadership is not embedded at all levels in the organisation and some leaders do not have the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding needed to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>The setting's governing body, management committee or owners provide sound leadership but some aspects of the setting's development are not sufficiently challenging</p> <p>Leadership does not always make effective use of advice and guidance from LA support.</p> <p>Adequate SEF – emerging evidence of reflective practice and participation in a quality improvement programme is leading to improvement</p> <p>The setting has satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement but may request support for specific improvement priorities.</p> <p>There are some inconsistencies in the application of the setting's policies, procedures and practice for dealing with anti-discriminatory behaviour and for promoting inclusive practice and equality</p> <p>The setting makes sound provision to reflect the cultural diversity of children and families living in the community</p>

	Learning and Development
	<p>Most children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development but there is some variability in children's achievement across EYFS areas of learning and for different groups of children</p> <p>Parent partnership is adequate. Parents receive information but the setting does not actively involve them in children's learning and development</p> <p>Planning for the six areas of learning and development is satisfactory The quality of the indoor and outdoor teaching and learning environment, resources and curriculum organisation are reasonable and contribute adequately to children's progress</p> <p>An appropriate range of resources adequately reflect cultural diversity and practitioners promote children's learning about cultural diversity through daily routines</p> <p>Systems for observational assessment, record keeping and tracking progress are satisfactory but are not always applied consistently</p> <p>All children have a key person who has a good understanding of the role and ensures that good relationships are established with children and their families.</p> <p>Communications and relationships are sound and contribute positively to the setting's ethos</p> <p>Support for vulnerable children is acceptable and their progress in learning and development is steady but slow.</p>
	Training and Development
	<p>Workforce professional development planning and training take-up require strengthening. Setting leaders do not always make the most effective use of staff knowledge, skills and expertise.</p> <p>Staff turnover, qualification levels and/or staff ratios lead to variability in the quality of provision for different groups of children</p> <p>Setting is aware of the benefits of recruiting and developing staff who live in the local community</p>
	Sustainability
	<p>Sustainability of the setting may be, threatened by falling numbers of children resulting in a potential reduction in staff and learning resources.</p>

	<p>There are some weaknesses in the management's/governing board's understanding of sustainability issues</p> <p>Business planning is satisfactory and the setting makes effective use of LA support when required.</p>
	<p>Partnerships with parents, community partners and professional agencies</p>
	<p>Partnerships with other agencies are improving and children and staff have access to services which meet children's needs and enhance provision</p> <p>Practitioners have an understanding of systems and processes that support families and children's needs</p> <p>Transition planning, assessment and record sharing with parents and other settings are in place but require strengthening to ensure reliability, accuracy and good continuity</p> <p>Setting practitioners listen to parents' and children's views but this is seldom translated into policy or practice</p>
	<p>Satisfactory OFSTED – Overall outcomes are satisfactory however the setting may be vulnerable to being placed in an OfSTED category of concern if in addition to the majority of category 3 descriptors, some of the descriptors for category 4 apply to the setting.</p>

red	Descriptors for intensive support Category 4 (red rating)
	Health and Safety
	<p>Evidence of serious breaches of compliance with welfare and/or safeguarding regulations</p> <p>Inadequate attention is given to children's physical, social and emotional health and well-being</p> <p>Behaviour management strategies and procedures are not secure in enabling children to thrive and the poor behaviour of a significant group of children inhibits the progress and development of others.</p>
	Leadership and Management
	<p>Leadership, at most levels, is inadequate and lacks the capacity to lead change and improvement. Priorities are not accurately identified, monitoring lacks rigour and fails to secure consistent high quality provision and good outcomes for children</p> <p>The governing body, management committee or owners do not actively support the setting and do not provide sufficient challenge to the setting to address weaknesses and bring about improvement</p> <p>Leadership does not always engage or accept the support provided by the LA</p> <p>Setting has poor self- evaluation systems and procedures and there are weak links between the setting's evaluation and development planning</p> <p>Setting has no capacity to improve without sustained intervention</p> <p>Inadequate policies and procedures to deal with inclusive practice, discriminatory behaviour and to promote equality</p> <p>There is no effort in policy or practice to reflect the cultural diversity of children and families living in the community</p>
	Learning and Development
	Children's learning outcomes are not high enough - children do not show enthusiasm for learning and are not developing social and

	<p>learning skills that will equip them well enough for the future</p> <p>Children make inadequate progress because the quality of the teaching and learning environment, the resources and the organisation of the curriculum are poor</p> <p>There is limited evidence that children take responsibility for their own learning and develop skills of personal responsibility</p> <p>Systems for observational assessment, planning and record keeping are unsatisfactory</p> <p>Limited evidence of transition planning or assessment and record sharing with parents and other settings</p> <p>Poor relationships and weak communication and interactions between staff, staff and parents, staff and children</p> <p>Support for vulnerable children is inadequate and therefore they do not make good progress in their learning and development</p>
	Training and Development
	<p>Weak evidence of effective workforce professional development planning and training take-up</p> <p>High staff turnover, low qualifications and/or staff ratios have an adverse impact on children's learning and well-being</p> <p>No effort is made towards promoting a culture of recruiting and developing staff from the local community.</p>
	Sustainability
	<p>Serious concerns about setting's sustainability impact on staff well-being and quality of provision</p> <p>Poor understanding of sustainability issues by the management committee, governing body or owners undermine the viability of the setting</p> <p>Weak business planning and limited communication with the local authority threaten the viability of the setting</p>
	Partnerships with parents, community partners and professional agencies
	<p>Poor evidence of constructive work with partners and other agencies to improve ECM outcomes for children</p> <p>Limited evidence of parent partnership in children's learning and development.</p>

	There is a high level of parental complaints about the setting which are not adequately resolved.
	Inadequate recognition of the contribution of parents' and children's views to the setting's policy development and practice
	Inadequate response to support from local authority officers or other external partners and agencies.
	Inadequate OFSTED or at high risk of being placed in an OfSTED category of concern

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Process for categorising early years settings.

Each setting has a designated Early Years Consultant who has the primary responsibility, on behalf of the local authority, for engaging the setting in a constructive dialogue about its performance and its priorities for improvement. This core function is delivered through a structured annual review meeting with each setting and a follow-up meeting which will take place six months after the annual review.

The meetings cover six key areas

- Safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Leadership and management and overall effectiveness
- Quality of provision, teaching and learning and children's achievement
- Training and development
- Sustainability
- Partnership with parents, community partners and professional agencies

Structured Visit

The structured annual review visit is carried out by an Early Years Consultant who has a geographical area responsibility. The visit is referenced to the Self-Evaluation Support Materials (SESM) framework, the setting's SEF and the local authority quality criteria for categorising settings. The visit will provide each setting with the opportunity to:

- be professionally supported and challenged through an external perspective on the setting's performance
- clarify and confirm the setting's judgement about its strengths and weaknesses
- be challenged to adopt an evidence-based approach to self-evaluation
- focus on the key priorities and actions for improvement

Following the annual review visit...

If necessary, settings will receive support from the appropriate support team based on the setting's category and needs. The range of information used to assign a category includes:

- the setting's own self-evaluation of provision, including inclusive practice, involvement of parents, and listening to children's voices
- analysis of OFSTED reports
- the early years support teams' knowledge of the early years setting and analysis of their notes of visit
- continuous professional development including attendance at training, locality network meetings and training sessions, qualifications of practitioners
- progress in a quality assurance scheme or quality improvement programme
- management of transition/effectiveness of partnership working with local providers
- effectiveness of leadership and management

Early years settings can access support from early years support teams via

- telephone or e-mail contact
- training and development
- network meetings/training

LA Early Years support for each category

All early years settings will receive an annual review visit from an Early Years Consultant. This visit will be structured to monitor the effectiveness of the leadership and management, the quality of teaching, learning and care and to support the setting to identify its strengths and areas for future development. There will be a follow-up visit six months after the annual review visit to discuss progress with agreed priorities.

Category 1 Light Touch Support

- Annual review led by the Early Years Consultant. The Early Years Consultant will identify those aspects of the setting's provision which may be used to disseminate good practice or make a contribution to training. The EY Consultant will engage in professional dialogue about the setting's improvement priorities. Follow-up visit six months after the annual review.

Category 2 Light Touch Support

- Annual review led by the Early Years Consultant. Category 2 settings will not usually need additional support and have the capacity to take action to make improvements to their own provision. Follow-up visit six months after the annual review.

Category 3 Moderate Support

- In addition to the annual review visit a Category 3 setting will receive a visit as soon as possible following the raising of a concern either through self-referral by the setting or from a member of the early years support teams. Local authority support to address the concern will be agreed between the setting and the relevant support team. Follow-up visits will be made to review progress with agreed actions.

Category 4 Intensive Support

- Following an initial monitoring visit, a further visit will be arranged to plan and agree an improvement action plan which includes OfSTED recommendations for improvement and the key steps to help secure the improvement. The plan will be written jointly by the setting and the appropriate early years support team and will include LA support details. The appropriate support team will visit as agreed in the improvement action plan.

Copies of the plan will be sent to the following:

- Service Manager, Early Years
- Teams involved in supporting the setting
- A copy will be filed
- An early years officer from the appropriate team will visit regularly to support the setting's review of the implementation of the action plan and will arrange on-going support. The support level will be reviewed according to need.
- Settings in Categories 4 which do not make adequate progress in securing improvement with action plan priorities within a six-month period will be requested to meet with senior representatives of the Early Years Service to discuss how the local authority and the setting can work together to accelerate improvement.
- If adequate progress is still not made within a further month concerns will be passed to OFSTED and the Service Director for Learning, Achievement and Schools. The setting will be informed that a referral to OFSTED has been made; this may result in withdrawal of the flexible free entitlement funding. In these circumstances the setting may decide to close or remain open.

Continuous Quality Improvement:

BCC will continue to promote the capacity of settings to lead their own quality improvement and believes that an external perspective is an important element of the quality improvement process.

Bristol believes that all settings will benefit from undertaking effective self-evaluation supported by an appropriate framework such as the Bristol Standard and other quality assurance schemes such as Effective Early Learning (EEL) and Baby Effective Early Learning (BEEL).

The early years support teams will continue to use the Bristol Standard Framework as a tool to support improvement in settings.

BCC has cross referenced the revised Bristol Standard to the National Quality Improvement Network (NQIN) principles which set a national benchmark for quality improvement approaches. (See Appendix 1 for details of the NQIN principles.)

Links with training:

The Early Years Consultant team will inform the Early Years Commissioning Manager, who is responsible for workforce development, about settings which are in Categories 3 and 4 so that priority can be given to meet the settings' training and development needs.

Roles and responsibilities in relation to the improvement of early years settings

The primary responsibility for securing improvement is with the settings themselves and their management committees, governing bodies or owners. The local authority statutory responsibilities are set out in this policy. A range of early years officers contribute to monitoring and challenging all settings to improve and where appropriate to use the local authority's powers of formal intervention. Elected members too, play a critical and strategic role in ensuring the best possible outcomes for children in the EYFS.

The respective roles of key stakeholders are set out below

SECTIONS TO BE COMPLETED

Early Years Settings

The Manager or Headteacher

The Management Committee, Governing Body or Owners

ALL STAFF

Local Authority

Early Years Consultant
Senior Consultant
Service Manager, Early Years
Programme Director
The Director of Children and Young People's Services

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ADD GLOSSARY

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