

Leadership Skills in Entrepreneurship: Portfolio

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I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work.

Business Pitch – Little Chefs Kitchen

Good afternoon, my name is Louise and I'm an Early Years Practitioner who is passionate about supporting children and their families in building healthy habits and creating healthy lifestyle choices. My idea focuses on providing simple recipe boxes with healthy ingredients that are designed specifically for families in childcare settings to take home and cook with their children. These boxes make nutritious meals accessible to everyone and create meaningful experiences for both the parent/carer and the child. In addition to families being able to take the recipe boxes home, they will also be invited into the setting once a month to watch the staff demonstrate how the boxes are used. Families and children will also be able to take part in the demonstration.

I came up with this idea as I am very passionate about the health and development of young children, and I believe that all children and their families should have access to healthy meals and a balanced diet that will support their growth. After working in the Early Years sector for 5 years, I became aware of the different financial struggles some families face and how some rely on the setting to provide their children with healthy, nutritious meals. With the childhood obesity statistics for 2024 showing that 11.8 per cent of children in Wales were living with obesity it was important for me to create something that would help to bring this percentage while support the physical and mental well-being of young children (Welsh Parliament, 2026).

I understand how busy family life can get and how overwhelming it can feel preparing healthy meals, however these recipe boxes and sessions spent demonstrating in the settings create positive food experiences and aim to build the confidence of parents who may be struggling or feel anxiety when it comes to mealtimes. This concept was inspired by the importance of early childhood nutrition and how vital hands-on learning experiences are for children's growth and development.

I believe this idea will be successful because these recipe boxes provide pre-portioned ingredients with child friendly instructions creating a less stressful cooking experience and healthy meals more accessible. These boxes meet the need for a more convenient and healthy solution for busy families. With the involvement in the settings, it encourages families to trust and want to use a service that is implemented in their child's learning environment. For parents who struggle with their child's eating habits, this service is perfect as it involves hands on learning for the children. By involving the children in the preparing and cooking experience within the setting and at home it creates a sense of confidence for the child and builds their independence. With this consistency the children are more likely to want to eat the meals and reinforces learning that is already happening when they are in the setting. This service also aims to strengthen the relationship between the Early Years practitioner

and the family which is recognised in framework for Early Years (Department of Education, 2025).

With the focus being on children's wellbeing, health and development, these recipe boxes can be altered to meet different dietary requirements, cultural preferences and financial situations making the service inclusive to all families. Clear allergen information will be included in each box to ensure parents have trust in the service and that parents feel confident in ingredient safety. One of the most important parts of this idea is the fact that it caters to families and children with different needs. They can be adapted for children who may be vegetarian, vegan, gluten/dairy free or halal and can also be adapted to reflect different cultural food traditions, allowing families to see their cultures are being represented.

It is important that as a service we tailor our recipe boxes to meet different budgets. Every family in Early Years settings has different financial situations so it is important to me that everyone has the opportunity to use this service, and it is as affordable as possible. By offering flexible monthly subscription options, the business can be a practical solution for all families.

I believe that I am the best person for this business idea as I have spent the last five years in the Early Years sector working alongside other professionals and families in childcare settings and supporting the growth and development of young children. Throughout my five years' experience I have learned that children learn best through hands-on, meaningful experiences. Cooking is not only about creating healthy and nutritious meals, but also their fine motor skills and supporting their emotional and social development through turn taking and cooperation. My time spent working in Early Years settings observing children, tracking their milestones and completing developmental checks has given me a deeper understanding of child development allowing me to create recipe boxes that are age appropriate, educational and safe.

In addition to this, through training and completing childcare qualifications I have been able to expand my expertise on the importance of building strong relationships in early childhood and how these relationships have an impact on a child growth and development. My knowledge on safeguarding, the framework for childcare settings in Wales and inclusive practice ensures that my recipe boxes are carefully planned and prepped to meet every child and their families' individual needs (Welsh Government, 2025).

By combining my knowledge on child development and my passion for children's health and well-being I am highly capable of creating a service that is developmentally appropriate, child centred and supports the needs of the family.

While there are already successful companies that create healthy recipe boxes, there is currently no established service in the United Kingdom that are specifically designed for the Early Years sector and directly connect children and their families through cooking experiences in childcare settings. Recipe box services that are

directly aimed at children and their development do not exist in the market; there are also no services that currently promote family engagement by offering children and their families into the setting to contribute to cooking lessons.

The demand for this product is high for several reasons including how Early childhood educators and the Curriculum for Wales are consistently reinforcing healthy eating habits between the child's home and their setting. Including Section Four of the Welsh Government Best Practice Guidance (2024), which contains guidance for childcare settings outlining how much food should be provided across a full day in childcare and how in practice, some children will have meals in different settings throughout the day, for example, school, nursery and home which requires flexibility and meal planning.

In addition, the cost of healthy food is a barrier for many families especially those who face financial difficulties. The rising cost of food makes it challenging for families to afford nutritious meals which then leads to an increasing concern about the health and well-being of children as they may be missing out on essential nutrients that are needed to help them grow and develop. With this being a rising concern, my recipe boxes aim to be inclusive to all families including those struggling financially. Many families would like to provide their children with a balanced diet, but struggle to due to their financial situation. However, with this service being easily accessible within childcare settings, on a flexible monthly subscription service, it creates inclusivity for everyone and eliminates the lack of confidence other families feel when it comes to cooking as they have the opportunity to take part in lessons with their children in a safe environment.

Busy families are increasingly conscious of the importance of healthy eating and how hands-on activities help build life skills and confidence for children, however, may lack time and confidence to cook and plan meals, which is something this recipe box service caters for.

Financially, this idea would begin on a small scale only being introduced into a few small settings meaning it would not require substantial startup costs. Initial costs would involve developing the recipe content and purchasing fresh ingredients and packaging, creating instruction cards and ensuring food safety and hygiene standards are met.

There will also be costs linked to staff training, as all staff who work in the settings where the recipe boxes are supplied will need food hygiene training in order to take part in the demonstration part of the service. There would also need to be allergen awareness training available for staff to ensure compliance with food safety regulations.

The main ongoing expenses would include ingredients, packaging materials and allocated staff to prepare the boxes.

Funding could be accessed through several different routes including business startup grants from the local council and Early Years innovation funding to support the beginning of the business. As the business grows, partnerships with local supermarkets and community organisations could reduce the cost of ingredients through sponsorships. If this service demonstrates a positive outcome on children's health and well-being, it could then qualify for Public Health funding through the Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme (HSPSS, 2015).

While there would need to be some initial investing, this business idea has potential for sustainable profit once established.

Thank you for listening to my pitch.

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LITTLE CHEFS KITCHEN BUSINESS PLAN

PRESENTED BY: LOUISE BAKER

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MY IDEA

MY VISION

My idea focuses on providing simple recipe boxes with healthy ingredients that are designed specifically for families in childcare settings to take home and cook with their children. These boxes make nutritious meals accessible to everyone and create meaningful experiences for both the parent/carer and the child. In addition to families being able to take the recipe boxes home, they will also be invited into the setting once a month to watch the staff demonstrate how the boxes are used. Families and children will also be able to take part in the demonstration.

My idea brings together

- **Early Years education**
- **Family engagement**
- **Healthy eating**

This concept links the childcare environment with the home as it creates a shared learning experience for both child, practitioner and family.

WHY IS MY IDEA INNOVATIVE AND HOW DOES IT LINK TO THE EARLY YEARS

My idea creates meaningful experiences for both the parent/carer and the child. It gives them access to healthy meals that will support their growth and development while also creating positive food experiences and builds confidence.

It is important to me that healthy meals are made more accessible for families and children as the Welsh Government (2024) statistics show that 11.8 per cent of children are living with childhood obesity, and we aim to bring this percentage down by making the experience child friendly and stress free.

For parents who struggle with their child's eating habits, this service is perfect as it involves hands on learning for the children. By involving the children in the preparing and cooking experience within the setting and at home it creates a sense of confidence for the child and builds their independence.

We also aim to be inclusive as we meet different dietary requirements, cultural preferences and have clear allergen information in each box.

My service is also linked to the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme and the Welsh Government Flying Start Childcare guidance as we aim to support settings to meet their quality requirements.



Welsh Government (2022)

THE BENEFITS

There are many benefits to this idea and how it supports early childhood development

Firstly, this idea promotes healthy eating habits from a young age and teaches children the importance of having a balanced diet.

Secondly, this service supports children's holistic development as it helps develop their fine motor skills through pouring, mixing and chopping. It also develops their communication and literacy skills as they follow simple instructions and work with their family and practitioners which will also develop their social and language skills. Finally the service helps to support their emotional well-being and development and create independence as it encourages hands on, meaningful experiences.

Additionally, this idea supports inclusive practice and celebrates diversity within the childcare settings and the community. Children and families are made to feel included as we provide recipe boxes that represent different cultures and dietary requirements.

My business idea also aligns with the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS) which is designed to help support all childcare settings in Wales promote healthy eating and support emotional development and well-being (Welsh Government, 2015).

Early Years framework emphasises the importance of strong partnerships with parents and carers. This business idea promotes shared cooking experiences at home and in the setting and involves the children and their families in the demonstrations at the setting.



Welsh Government (2015)

THE CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

One major challenge is cost and affordability. Lots of families would see recipe boxes as an extra cost, especially for those who are currently struggling financially. There would need to be flexible pricing options and possible funding to support lower income families in order for everyone to have the opportunity to use this service.

Time constraints could also be a possible barrier. Preparing, and organising the boxes as well as demonstrating how to use them could increase the workload for staff in childcare settings.

Staff would also need to attend the relevant training such as food safety and hygiene which could potentially have to be completed outside of work hours.

Understanding how busy family life can be means that not all parents will be able to attend the demonstrations in the childcare settings and may not be able to regularly cook at home. However encouraging participation through flexible communication methods such as videos of the demonstrations for the parents who can not attend.

Finally, maintaining high quality and fresh ingredients could be a challenge as the business grows. It could be a challenge. It would be essential to build strong partnerships with the community and local suppliers.

Who would the audience be?

The primary audience for this business would be the parents and families and the staff working in childcare settings.

Particularly those who are passionate about child development and those interested in the health and well-being of children and the benefits of healthy eating.

WHY I AM BEST FOR THIS BUSINESS

I believe that I am the best person for this business idea as I have spent the last five years in the Early Years sector working alongside other professionals and families in childcare settings and supporting the growth and development of young children.

Training and Expertise

Following on from this, through training and completing childcare qualifications I have been able to expand my expertise on the importance of building strong relationships in early childhood and how these relationships have an impact on a child growth and development. My knowledge on safeguarding, the framework for childcare settings in Wales and inclusive practice ensures that my recipe boxes are carefully planned and prepped to meet every child and their families' individual needs (Welsh Government, 2025).

Experience

Throughout my five years experience I have learned that children learn best through hands-on, meaningful experiences. Cooking is not only about creating healthy and nutritious meals, but also their fine motor skills and supporting their emotional and social development through turn taking and cooperation.

Observations

My time spent working in Early Years settings observing children, tracking their milestones and completing developmental checks has given me a deeper understanding of child development allowing me to create recipe boxes that are age appropriate, educational and safe.

REFERENCE LIST

- 1.Welsh Government (2024) Best practice guidance: Section 4 food and nutrition: Standards, guidelines and menu planning. Available at [section-4-standards-guidelines-and-menu-planning.pdf](#) [Accessed: 10 February 2026]
- 2,Welsh Government (2025) A quality framework for early childhood play, learning and care in Wales. Available at [a-quality-framework-for-early-childhood-play-learning-and-care-v2.pdf](#) [Accessed: 16 February 2026].
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Part B – Research Analysis

This section will evaluate the potential impact the introduction of the healthy recipe box business could have on children's development and how they could be linked to supporting their physical, social and emotional development through hands on learning experiences. This analysis will also consider the impact of positive parent and practitioner partnerships and whether this business idea adds value to the Early Years sector.

Promoting a balanced nutrition through the idea of recipe boxes available in childcare settings contributes the children's well-being and overall holistic development, particularly fine motor skills through the use of pouring, mixing and chopping and communication and social skills as they work together with their families and practitioners at home and in the setting.

Research suggests that quality childcare leads to improvements in children's development in later years, such as enhanced language skills; better educational performance in mathematics and reading; and an increase in positive behaviour/outcomes. Children who attend quality early years settings are more independent, concentrate on their play for longer and, on entry to school, are more co-operative and better prepared for the challenges they meet.

According to Welsh Government (2025), the right childcare can help to tackle some of the more entrenched issues that result from living in deprivation, including low skills and poor health that will take time to overcome.

Both Early Childhood Learning, Play and Care (ECPLC) and Flying Start Childcare Guidance detail the importance of a healthy balanced lifestyle, both nutritionally and physically and how childhood experiences play a significant role in shaping our futures and are critical to the chances of leading a fulfilling, prosperous and healthy life (Welsh Government, 2025).

To ensure Flying Start childcare providers are best placed to offer healthy active environments they must register to be part of the Healthy Sustainable Pre School Scheme. The HSPSS supports the basic principles and learning framework (ECPLC) of Flying Start. Delivered jointly between Public Health Wales (PHW) and local authorities, the scheme is made up of a number of aspects relating to the promotion of a healthy, safe, sustainable and active environment (Welsh Government, 2023).

The scheme sits within National Policy Context which states:

Since 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government has based its policy for children and young people on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Planning and delivery of services for children and young people in Wales is undertaken in the context of the seven core aims for children and young people, based on the UNCRC:

1. have a flying start in life.

2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities.
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation.
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities.
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised.
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being.
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

The relevant articles are articles twelve through thirty one which explain that all children have the right to healthcare, food, a clean environment, care and support for their individual needs, play and the opportunity to join in with a range of activities, and the right to have their say on what they think should happen when adults are making decisions about them (Welsh Government, 2023).

This is supported by Jean Piaget's theory which describes cognitive development through four different stages. Piaget's theory argued that children are active learners who construct knowledge through interaction in their environments. This theory supports a child's right to meaningful experiences and exploring independently (Madsen, no date).

Another theory is Urie Bronfenbrenner's theory which strongly reflects a holistic view of children's rights and how children's development is influenced by multiple environments including, family, childcare settings and the wider community (Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny, 2017).

This business idea directly complements the Flying Start guidance and priorities as it encourages children to learn new skills while working independently and engage with families and childcare practitioners by cooking nutritious meals with healthy ingredients provided by the recipe boxes. This business which offers children and adults to contribute to practical cooking sessions within the settings which can then be transferred to the home environment support children's overall holistic development. The main priority of Flying Start is to provide high quality childcare that improves children's health, development and well-being, which these recipe boxes aim to do.

This idea reinforces the importance of healthy habits and how learning continues at home as well as in the childcare setting. It enhances the key outcomes of quality childcare by encouraging children to use their fine motor and social skills through the cooking and preparation process and strengthens the relationships between the parent, child and practitioner as families are invited into the setting to take part in cooking demonstrations as a group.

Additionally, the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS) supports childcare settings in improving their care for children's health, nutrition and well-being. This business contributes to this scheme by exposing children to a variety of healthy foods and encouraging them to eat nutritious meals. It encourages children to take part in the cooking and preparation process of their meals, building their independence and lets them practice healthy eating habits from a young age. Community involvement is also a bit part of this business as the cooking demonstrations at the childcare settings encourage parents and children to engage in hands on cooking experiences and activities with their children which is an important part of the bonding experience.

In summary, this business idea closely aligns with many of the health priorities for the early years sector by extending the focus on nutritious meals and creating healthy habits that will benefit children's well-being and development.

In addition to this the Flying Start programme offers guidance and support for parents where parents may be reluctant to attend sessions in childcare settings. A barrier to this business could potentially be parents of lack confidence or feel overwhelmed with attending their child's setting to take part in activities. linking with parenting workers to accompany families may increase their confidence to attend, or attending parenting groups to meet the families and talk through what the session will look beforehand may ease anxiety and encourage more families to attend. By working hard to build relationships with the families beforehand, they are more likely to engage long term and therefore the business to be a success (Welsh Government, 2017).

In regard to the financial stability of this business idea, funding could be accessed through several different routes. Including business start up grants from the local council and Early Years Innovation funding to help start up the business. Partnerships with the community and the local supermarkets may also be a possibility to help providing fresh ingredients more accessible as the business grows.

In addition to this, Business Wales could also offer funding for the start up of the business as well as the local authority early years department funding to help get the business up and running. However, a potential barrier may be that childcare settings can not afford or chose not to purchase the recipe boxes long term. As healthy eating is a part of the Flying Start programme and Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS), it would be a good opportunity for the childcare settings to seek grant funding which can then support them in purchasing the recipe boxes long term. This funding could also support the settings to send their staff on the relevant training that may be required in order for them to participate in holding cooking demonstrations in their settings, including food safety and hygiene training, safeguarding training and first aid training.

As previously mentioned, the core principles of this business idea strongly align with the values of the Flying Start Childcare Guidance and the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme as it aims to support already quality childcare into providing children with nutritious meals and cooking lessons where they can become independent learners, build strong relationships and partnerships and have the opportunity to take part in hands-on, meaningful play experiences. These recipe boxes have the potential to become widely used across the early years sector with the use of sustainable funding strategies and engagement from childcare settings and families.

This recipe box service would initially begin as a small-scale business working primarily with the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School settings and Flying Start childcare. However, there is potential to widen the scope and work across the early years sector in stay and play sessions, parent and toddler groups, sessions with childminders and even eventually in primary schools across the local areas by linking with the school family engagement officers.

In order to develop this business further, the introduction of digital resources including instructional videos of the recipe boxes being used by staff in the childcare setting which can then be sent out to the parents and families that are unable to attend the in-person demonstrations due to work or feeling overwhelmed at the thought of attending. This would then further support parent involvement and make it more likely for families and practitioners to support the business.

Additionally, to expand the idea further and ensure the business is inclusive, the boxes would include ingredients and recipes for different dietary requirements and respect other cultures. Early childhood is a crucial time for developing an identity and a sense of belonging, therefore when children see their own cultures being represented in everyday experiences it promotes a sense of inclusion and self-worth. Families are also more likely to engage and continue to support the business in the future when they feel that their dietary requirements and cultural preferences are respected.

In summary, even though the recipe box business idea may begin at a small scale, due to its alignment with the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme, Flying Start childcare guidance and Welsh Government aims for quality childcare to be available to all children, suggest that it could be integrated throughout the early years sector and expand further as the sector grows. The business main aims of promoting healthy and nutritious meals, the ability to form strong relationships between families, practitioners and the community and supporting children's overall holistic development, suggest that in the long term the demand for this business could be high and contribute to the long-term improvements on children's health and well-being.

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