

## Wiltshire Council

### Early Years Reference Group

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday 12 May 2017 at County Hall, Trowbridge

#### 1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Jane Boulton, Dawn Bryant, Mark Cawley, Rosemary Collard, Nicola Harris, Ashley Harris, Trudy Murphy, John Proctor (chair), Fiona Webb, Emily Wood (minutes)

#### 2.0 Apologies

Angela Brennan, Jenny Harvey, Liz Williams

#### 3.0 Minutes of last meeting held on 18 November 2016

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record of discussion.

#### 4.0 Matters arising

Item 5 – Parent/carer survey results still to be circulated to group members.

Item 6 – Free Entitlement Debt recovery. Item moved to the September meeting when Jenny will be present to lead on this item.

Item 9 – Children's Centre representative – Russ Martin is now working for Spurgeons and will probably now attend the meeting as CC rep – JH to confirm for September meeting.

Item 10 – HMRC have processed without challenge, through the childcare element of the working tax credit, the claim from the family who have declared increased childcare costs because of the additional support required for their child. This funding route should be promoted to all relevant parents and childcare providers (suggested Newsletter article).

#### **ACTION:**

**Parent/carer Childcare survey results to be circulated with minutes**

**JH to include FE debt recovery in September meeting**

**JH to contact Russ and ask him to represent Children's Centres**

**EW to include information on Tax Credit childcare cost reimbursement in newsletter**

#### 5.0 Early Help Introduction and update (Shelley Rowe)

Shelley has been in post for 18 months. She sits within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which employs a range of professionals from Social Workers to Police. Her role is to support individuals working with children and provide advice (this can be done anonymously) on what kind of referral for support/intervention maybe required for specific cases. She will signpost to Social Care should the threshold for this level of intervention be triggered. To differentiate Shelly's role with Hélène Schwartz, Hélène advises on the generic safeguarding policies and procedures which every organisation working with children must follow.

One part of Shelley's role is to oversee if lead professionals have implemented and registered their CAFs. Last year 284 CAFs were recommended, however 54.2% were not completed. The reasons behind non – implementation were a mix of lack of parent engagement, cases were subsequently opened by Social Care or the need for the CAF diminished.

Shelley wanted to stress the importance of MASH referrals. MASH have a 48hour turn-around to decide on what intervention may be required. Shelley can also give tips on how to make a good referral.

## 6.0 DfE Model Agreement

The group were disappointed that the finalised document including Wiltshire's inserts was not yet ready for discussion. EW explained that until the administrative processes for the extended entitlement were confirmed, the sections could not be completed. Determining the exact admin procedures is reliant on the Local Authorities' software supplier completing their updates on the system. Until now they have obfuscated on the details.

There was then a big discussion on how the Free Entitlement was marketed. The group wished the 'Free' element to be removed from publicity. RC explained that B&NES have opted to call it 'Early Years Entitlement' and the majority approved this option.

It was requested that the Funded 2 year olds were distinguished from the funded 3&4 year olds, on funding statements.

**ACTION: JH to seek update from Software Supplier to enable the completion of the Agreement. JP asked for a further meeting in June for the group to look at the proposed Wiltshire inserts.**

**ACTION: JH to look at differentiating funded 2 year olds from funded 3&4 year olds on termly funding statements.**

## 7.0 30 hours' issues/practice

There was some discussion between childcare providers present about the business implications of taking on the extended entitlement from September. EW reported that all providers have been surveyed as to their intentions of delivering the extended entitlement. 53% of providers responded to this survey, with an almost even split between childminders and group settings. Of these, 84% said that they would be offering the extended entitlement from 1 September. The majority (38.9%) suggested that they plan to do this term time only, with 5.5% stretching the offer over the year and 32.1% doing a mixture of both term time only and stretched offer.

The full results from this survey are to be circulated with the minutes.

**ACTION: JH to include survey summary with minutes**

## 8.0 Childcare Team update

It was reported that a successful Quality Day for Childminders was held for nearly 50 back in March. The day included talks from Wiltshire Council officers Hélène Schwartz, Shelly Rowe and Natalia Reyner. We also had an external speaker (Kate Reynolds) who gave an informative talk on her girls present differently to boys in relation to being on the Autistic Spectrum. A further event is being planned for September.

The Introduction to Childminding Practice course continues to be popular, with over 30 attendees to date.

Over the next term, the team's focus will be on supporting the sector around 30 hours' delivery. Part of this will be rolling out some smaller briefing sessions to give providers more opportunity to think about how they will offer the 30 hours and to encourage partnership working where applicable (where providers feel they can't offer the full 30 hours but could work in conjunction with another nearby provision to meet parent's needs).

The team continues to deliver a range of training and provides support and advice to those providers with less than a Good Ofsted Judgement, those Childminders who have joined our Quality Improvement scheme, those waiting for Ofsted Registration or any provider needing support for instance around Safeguarding.

## 9.0 Workforce Development Strategy update

The March 2017 [Workforce Strategy](#) is now available. Commitments contained in this strategy include:

- Enabling staff with an Early Years Educator (EYE) qualification who also hold level 2 English and mathematics qualifications, including Functional Skills to count in the level 3 staff:child ratios.
- Consulting on allowing those with Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS), and its predecessor Early Years Professional Status (EYPS), to lead nursery and reception classes in maintained schools.
- Working with the sector to develop level 2 childcare qualification criteria.
- Improving the quality of early years training and providing access to continuous professional development (CPD).
- Providing funding to support the sector to develop quality improvement support in partnership with schools and local authorities.

The strategy intends to attract more individuals to consider a career in the early year's sector focuses on five areas:

- Qualification requirements at level 2 and level 3
- Specialist graduates
- Careers advice
- Quality of training
- Diversity of the workforce

Actions from the strategy include:

- The development, through a voluntary and community sector grant, an online portal that sets out career paths, bringing effective online CPD together in one place and provides online training modules. This will include support for staff already in the workforce to improve their English and mathematics.
- Providing training through voluntary and community sector grants on SEND, speech and language development and effective business management.
- Working with organisations specialising in SEND to develop a qualification for early years' staff who want to specialise in SEND. We will work within the context of implementation of the Sainsbury Review of technical education and aim to deliver a new qualification in 2018.

We are currently at the beginning of a recruitment drive for childcare workers and childminders, this will move around the county and will include a briefing session on the 12 July and information on routes to qualify to work in the sector.

It was suggested that school leavers were targeted through school career fairs. It was also suggested that if Childcare Officers were unable to attend a fair that a local group setting or childminder could cover. JB stressed that it should be a variety of careers promoted, that all provision requires a range of disciplines and skills (book-keeping, business managers alongside those individuals working directly with children).

The next Workforce Development Meeting will be on the **23 June 2017** at County Hall.

**ACTION: EW to include article in next newsletter about recruitment drive and ask for providers to volunteer to support the drive either by promoting it themselves or offering to attend a school's career fair if possible.**

#### 10.0 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report update

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report is now complete and should be on the Wiltshire Council web site shortly. The headlines from this report are:

- Across most of the county there is sufficient Early Years & Childcare provision.
- Feedback from parents was that they could not always find provision offering the hours they required and that they found the cost expensive.
- From the parental survey carried out only a small percentage of parents were unable to find childcare. Of the 1168 returns 16 of the returns were related to parents requiring childcare for school aged children whilst another 6 responses were from parents of Early Years children that could not find a setting for their child. 5 of the children were children

with a disability. These families are using family and friends to cover their childcare needs. 7 of the parents stated they were unhappy with this arrangement.

- Areas that would benefit from the development of more Early Years places are Trowbridge, Ridgeway Farm near Purton, Royal Wootton Bassett and Larkhill. Other areas that require close monitoring are Hindon, Corsham, Amesbury and Devizes.

The updated Community Childcare plans will also be available on the Wiltshire Council web site in the next week.

#### 11.0 Structure Chart for Early Years

Structure charts prepared by Jenny Harvey were circulated to all present. It was explained that each council employee has the same format for their email: [first.surname@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:first.surname@wiltshire.gov.uk) should anyone wish to make contact. Acknowledgement was given for these charts.

#### 12.0 Safeguarding update

Hélène Schwartz has now commenced her maternity leave and will be covered by Teresa Mcilroy.

The Safeguarding training that has been commissioned for group settings has proved to be popular. One was delivered in April, the next in July and possibly a further one for September. The Childcare Team have been trained to deliver Safeguarding training for Childminders, this too is proving to be popular and has been arranged for times that is convenient for Childminders e.g. Saturdays.

#### 13.0 Early Years Board update

Julia Cramp (Associate Director) leads on this multi-agency meeting. The prime purpose of this board is to steer policy on School Readiness, which involves more than just educational ability but also independence, toilet-training. They are working on creating a leaflet on what 'school readiness' means in practice. Working groups have been set-up and JP reported that good progress is being made.

#### 14.0 Confirmed dates for future meetings

Date	Day	Time	Venue
29 September 2017	Friday	10.00 – 12.00	Lacock Room, County Hall, Trowbridge

#### 16.0 Any other business

JP requested that when the minutes were distributed that JH does not use the Blind Carbon Copy (bcc) function, as all representatives of the meeting wish to have each other's email addresses.

**ACTION: JH to email future Reference Group communication to all not using the bcc function, so each member can see each other's address, should they need to contact each other.**