

Report From The Early Years' Reference Group

A. Membership Of The Early Years Reference Group

Introduction

1. At Its Meeting On 7 October 2010 The Schools Forum Received A Report On The Early Years Reference Group (EyrG) Terms Of Reference And Resolved To Adopt The Terms Of Reference, Membership And Conduct For The EyrG. This Report Presents The Recommendations for the replacement and continuation of EYRG members.

Membership of EYRG

2. The EYRG Terms of Reference indicate membership of the EYRG should be representative of the different types of early years education providers across the county who are eligible and registered to offer free entitlement nursery education. The membership structure is
 - 4 representatives of private sector nursery education providers
 - 4 representatives of voluntary sector nursery education providers
 - 1 representative of independent schools providing nursery education
 - 1 representative of children's centres
 - 1 representative of district specialist centres
 - 1 representative of childminders
 - 1 representative of LA primary schools which have nursery classes
3. Membership will normally last for up to three years from the date of appointment.
4. Members are selected by inviting expressions of interest from all nursery education providers and selected by the LA in consultation with the chair of the Schools' Forum with a view to maintaining a geographic spread. Membership will normally last for up to three years from the date of appointment.
5. The current membership is shown in the appendix to this report.

Review of Members

6. Expressions of interest have been invited from the sector in order to either fill vacancies or nominate replacement members, as many current members have now served three years on the group.
7. Expressions of interest have been received to join the group from two representatives of the private sector and two from the voluntary sector, as shown in the appendix. All existing members have expressed a willingness to continue to serve.
8. It is proposed to:
 - a) appoint Alan Butler, Fiona Webb, Lucy Waterman and Andrea Gray as members of the EYRG;
 - b) to re-appoint Rosemary Collard, Mark Cawley, Mike Fairbeard and John Proctor for a further term of office;
 - c) continue to seek a representative from children's centres;
 - d) not to seek to replace Janet Stanford when her term of office expires in November.

Recommendations

9. The Forum is invited to note the contents of this report and is recommended to agree the proposals in paragraph 8 above.

B. Payment For Changes Within A Funding Period

Background

10. The Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 & 4 year olds states:
“Local authorities should ensure that, from parents’ perspective, eligible children are provided with the free entitlement as soon as they start at a provider, including if they change provider late in the term – unless this breaks the terms of the parental declaration (see 6.15). Local authorities should ensure that parents are not expected to pay for any part of their free entitlement if the child starts after the headcount date and should ensure that providers are funded accordingly to enable this.”
11. At present Wiltshire’s Local Provider Agreement (which defines the terms of the Free Entitlement Scheme) makes no provision for paying providers for children who start after a headcount date and hence does not meet the requirements of the statutory guidance. Providers are unable to claim free entitlement funding within a funded period for any children who start after the headcount week but they must honour the free entitlement for that child if a space exists at their setting. An informal arrangement currently exists whereby a provider may request the transfer of funding from a previous setting if a child transfers to them midway through a funded period but this is currently not enforceable. Providers are also not obliged to inform the local authority of any children leaving after the headcount week.
12. The response to the review of the Early Years Single Funding Formula undertaken by the EYRG indicated that over 70% of respondents would like the council to consider developing a more formal system to deal with these situations.
13. At its meeting held on 18 March 2011 the EYRG requested that a scheme be designed and implemented to enable providers to be paid for children starting after the headcount date with regard to minimising any additional paperwork.

Proposal

14. To meet the requirements of the Code of Practice, and the wishes of providers, it is proposed to introduce a system to enable providers to claim funding (and to refund any over-payment) with effect from September 2011.
15. Providers will be required to submit details of children not declared in the headcount for the funding period in the following circumstances:
 - children who started to access free entitlement with the provider after the headcount date;
 - children who ceased to access free entitlement with the provider after the headcount date;
 - children who were inadvertently not included on the headcount form;
 - children who were included on the headcount form but for whom inquiries were outstanding.
16. The information will be gathered from providers at the end of each funding period as an addendum to the “Significant Differences” form which is currently in use.
17. Although the proposal may lead to additional cost it is forecast that this can be met from within the existing budget.

Recommendations

18. The Forum is invited to note the contents of this report and is recommended to agree the proposal outlined in paragraphs 14 and 15 above.

CAROLYN GODFREY
Director, Department for Children and Education

Report Authors: Jackie Bedford
Business Support Manager for Early Years and Childcare
Schools and Learning

and

Simon Burke
Head of Business and Commercial Services
Schools and Learning

Contact: Tel.: 01225 713840 / simon.burke@wiltshire.gov.uk

Unpublished documents relied upon in the production of this report: None

Appendix A

Early Years Reference Group Membership: June 2011 - (established January 2008)

Name	Position	Provider	Date of Appointment	Hub Area	Notes
Private nurseries - 4 representatives of private sector nursery education providers					
Rosemary Collard	Owner	Snapdragons Day Nursery	January 2008	West/North	Willing to continue
Mark Cawley	Manager/owner	New Road Nursery, Chippenham	January 2008	North	Willing to continue
Applications					
Alan Butler		Learning Curve Day Nursery, Wootton Bassett		North	
Fiona Webb	Director	Sunny Days Children's Nursery, Calne		North	
Voluntary settings 4 representatives of voluntary sector nursery education providers					
Mike Fairbeard		Little Fir Tree Nursery, YMCA	September 2008	West	Willing to continue
Ted Hatala		St Josephs Nursery, Devizes	February 2009	West	
Applications					
Lucy Waterman	Curriculum Coordinator	Rub a Dub Preschool, Derry Hill		North	
Andrea Gray		Smiley Faces Amesbury		East	
Independent nurseries 1 representative of independent schools providing nursery education					
John Proctor	Owner	South Hills School	January 2008	South	Willing to continue
Children's Centres 1 representative of Children's Centres					
Vacancy					
District Specialist Centres 1 representative of District Specialist Centres					
Jane Cross	Springboard DSC, Chippenham	DSCs	June 2009	North	
Childminders 1 representative of childminders					
Lorraine Cope	Accredited childminder	Childminders	July 2009	North?	
Maintained nurseries 1 representative of LA primary school which has a nursery class.					
Michael Keeling	Headteacher	King's Park Primary School, Melksham	July 2009	West	
Janet Stanford		Clarendon Inf School, Tidworth	November 2008	South	