

## Children's Services

### Minutes of Meeting Early Years Consultative Group

Held on: Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Time: 14:00 – 16:00

Venue: County Hall, Colman Room

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Dept/Organisation</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Jo-anne Lamb (Chair)	Senior Adviser for Early Years Learning	NCC	Y
Su Rushbrook	Early Years Finance Manager	NCC	Y
John Crowley	Assistant Director Education Intelligence and Effectiveness	NCC	Apologies
Lacey Douglas	EY Rep, Schools Forum		Y
Alison Hughes	Primary Director	Inspiration Trust	Apologies
Kim Walters King	Senior Lead	Martham Academy	N
Cassandra Williams	Head Teacher	Lakenham Primary School	N
Louise Clement McLoud	Head Teacher	Little Drakes	Y
Claire Hooker	Head Teacher	Emneth Nursery School	Apologies
Claire Henry	Owner	So Schools Out	N
Lesley Doy	Manager	Chapel Break OSC CIC	N
Carol Vincent	Nursery Manager	Spring Thorpe Hamlet	N
Victoria Furness	Owner	Forest School for Life	Apologies
Suzie Squirrel-Hughes	Owner	Little Squirrels	Apologies
Jayne Rayner	Manager	Alburgh & Denton Pre-school	Y
Jane Pears	Manager	St. Helens Pre-school	Y
Lynne Armitage	Committee Trustee	Ducklings Pre-school	Apologies
Sue Brown (minute taker)	Early Years Service Manager	NCC	Y
Nina Hopson	Owner	East Dereham Day Nursery	Apologies
Charlie Wilson-Boast	Manager	Seedlings Day Nursery	Y
Claire Gravett	Nursery Class	Fakenham Infant School	N
Yvonne Hamilton	Manager	Chestnut Nursery @NRP	N
Katie Stephens	Manager	Fakenham Daycare	Y
Kirsty Woods	Improvement & Inclusion Officer – Workforce Development	NCC	Y
Jo Nolan	Family Information & Childcare Sufficiency Manager)	NCC	Apologies
Jo Tuttle	Director of Business	Aylsham High School	Y

**Item Minutes**

**Action**

## 1 Apologies

John Crowley, Alison Hughes, Claire Hooker, Victoria Furness, Lynne Armitage, Nina Hopson

## 2 Minutes of last meeting & matters arising

Read as a true record.

## 3 Recruitment and Retention (KW will share power point)

- KW shared power (copy attached) and the following discussed:
- KW to check if providers can offer placements for the Bootcamp. Will also seek clarification of how the candidates are sourced to see what the pathway is.
- KW advised that Maynell had originally offered to run the Transition Awards (Playwork to Early Years) but has been advised it is now changing Nationally so is on hold. It is believed it won't just be offered to Early Years, but open to TA's, Health & Social Care students too.
- KW added that future plans, would include supporting settings and childminders with the recruitment process. How to write a good job advert and job description also how to carry out job interviews to appeal to the right candidate. Also working with settings around retention of staff and valuing staff.
- KW advised that post COVID the EY Alliance conducted a survey, and the following were the top 5 reasons for not staying within early years workforce:

KW

1. Not being valued (post covid)
2. Job related stress.
3. Poor Pay
4. Impact of staff – less staff reflecting on quality
5. Long working hours

- Investing in personal professional development is one of the key elements to retain staff.
- KW advised the links with the colleges are new but have asked following completion where do students go? They advised that 50% go onto university, often to Teacher Training but the other 50% they couldn't tell us. We will be going into colleges at the beginning and at the end of their courses so hopefully will get some more feedback as to what their route will be.
- JP feels some colleges place a student for us to sign them off and then they go which is not good for the setting or the student.
- KW added its about giving the apprentices the responsibility, not just clearing up but to involve them in all tasks that all staff are involved in.
- JP advised that Cosstessy Fayre is taking place 18/19<sup>th</sup> May and would be good for early years to have a presence.
- JR feels there is a need for new managers of settings to have a support network in place, and the Systems Leaders were a

useful source for that and feel it is a massive loss. Feel we go from one initiative to another without real investment in any.

- JL added that the LA sometimes doesn't get a choice with the DfE initiatives but would be good to discuss what works well for providers.
- KW would rather a practitioner attend one piece of training and use it well rather than attending lots of courses and don't do anything with it.

**Action:** For the next meeting, all think of everything we have been involved in in the last five years and feedback what is good and what isn't, and we can then go away and think about it.

All

#### 4 **SALT Support**

- JL raised there are some significant changes around the referral system for children with speech and language, giving the parents the responsibility to refer their child. There will be comms going out soon about the changes.
- Early Years contribute to this service so want to hear from providers if it is not working.

#### 5 **Cost Savings**

- LM raised that they have really looked at their contracts and saved a significant amount of money (£31,000). The following are worth looking into.
  - Energy contracts and costings
  - Waste costs can be reduced, don't just go with main companies (Bifa) there are other local companies that charge far less.
  - Town Councils minutes of meetings to see who they use, as they would generally be looking at using cheaper companies.
  - Food waste costs
  - Shredding costs. LD advised they use a local company (Citris Shredding) who collect and are considerably cheaper than Shred Station.

Louise offered help to look at energy prices for other settings.

(JT left the meeting)

#### 6 **Any Other Business**

- JL asked if the effect of the expansion grant was having an impact on the level of demand? The following comments were made:
  - KS advised they had closed their waiting list.
  - JP advised the barrier is staff to cover the extra children.
  - Parents are unclear how to claim.
  - Parent/Carer claim form retention (printing and keeping for seven years)

- LD aware of issues with committee run settings as EY3's no longer exists. The registered person needs to email Ofsted with staff details, but not all settings are aware. **Action:** JL to arrange a notification to all settings to advise. JL
- Barrier for childminders seeking doctor checks as some are refusing or charging a high fee.
- JL thanked all for their comments.
- JL advised that Lacey's term as the PVI School Forum rep was coming to an end, therefore we need to agree who our future rep will be. LD stated she was happy to continue in the role. JL asked for expression of interest, none were forthcoming, so it was agreed that expressions of interest should be submitted to NCC within the next two weeks. If no other nominations were received LD would be nominated for a further term. (No nominations were received therefore LD will continue).

## 7 **Dates of next meeting**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – 10 – 12 noon - County Hall – Cavell Room