

Children's Services

Minutes of Meeting Early Years Consultative Group

Held on: Wednesday 11th March 2026

Time: 14:00 – 16:00

Venue: Cranworth Room – County Hall

Present:	Post Title	Dept/Organisation	Attendance
Jo-anne Lamb (Chair)	Senior Adviser for Early Years Learning	NCC	Y
Su Rushbrook	Early Years Finance Manager	NCC	Apologies
John Crowley	Assistant Director Education Intelligence and Effectiveness	NCC	Y
Sue Brown (minute taker)	Early Years Service Manager	NCC	Y
Lacey Douglas	EY Rep, Schools Forum		Apologies
Louise Clement McCloud	Head Teacher	Little Drakes	Y
Claire Hooker	Head Teacher	Emneth Nursery School	Y
Carole Jacques	Head Teacher	Earlham Nursery School	N
Claire Henry	Owner	So Schools Out	N
Lesley Doy	Manager	Chapel Break OSC CIC	N
Victoria Furness	Owner	Forest School for Life	Apologies
Suzie Squirrel-Hughes	Owner	Little Squirrels	N
Jayne Rayner	Manager	Alburgh & Denton Pre-school	Y
Jane Pears	Manager	St. Helens Pre-school	Y
Lynne Armitage	Committee Trustee	Ducklings Pre-school	Y
Amanda Healey		Ducklings Pre-School	N
Nina Hopson	Director	East Dereham Day Nursery	Apologies
Charlie Wilson-Boast	Manager	Seedlings Day Nursery	Apologies
Jenna Howard (in place of Charlie Wilson-Boast)		Seedlings Day Nursery	Y
Yvonne Hamilton	Manager	Chestnut Nursery @NRP	Apologies
Katie Stephens	Manager	Fakenham Daycare	Y
Jo Tuttle	Director of Business	Aylsham High School	Apologies
Samantha Mann	Owner	Attlebridge, Cawston and Lyng Montessori Schools	Y
Hayley Fiddy	Deputy Manager	East Dereham Day Nursery	Apologies
Lisa Cook	CEO	Ad Meliora Academy Trust	N
Amanda Dennis		Fakenham Daycare	N
Lucy Oldman	Inclusion Adviser SEND	NCC	Y

Item	Minutes	Actions
1.	Apologies	
	Hayley Fiddy, Jo Tuttle, Nina Hopkinson, Victoria Furness, Yvonne Hamilton, Lacey Douglas	
2.	Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising	
	<p>Early Education Funding Rates 2026-2027</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query from Jayne Rayner (JR) from the previous meeting where a discussion had taken place and figures agreed for the funding and then subsequent communication, JR thought the figures were lower than what had been agreed. • Jo-anne Lamb (JL) advised what was discussed at the meeting was what was agreed. JL shared the break down on screen and explained the figures • No contingency held back as wanted to ensure providers received the maximum amount. There was a slight risk if there was an overspend there would need to be some adjustments for the following year to balance it out. However, we are aware there is a funding consultation taking place this summer so there may be changes as a result. 	
3	OAP/PEaS Review	
	<p>Following on from previous meetings from last year looking at SEND, Lucy Oldman (LO) advised there had been lots of work happening in the background.</p> <p>Prior to the meeting all were asked to think about the OAP document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well equipped do you feel to support children with emerging SEND needs? • Does the draft OAP document support you with this and how frequently do you access the OAP? • Are there any improvements we can make to the OAP to provide the support you need? <p>The OAP and the PEaSS documents were shared for all to look at.</p> <p>LO advised the PEaS had been in place prior to LO joining the LA and recognise it needs reviewing with the links and resources updating to keep it up to date and responsive as possible. We would also like the PEaSS and the OAP to work alongside each other and be useful for both EY settings and schools.</p> <p>LO asked all to feedback using the QR code to access the feedback form OAP and PEaSS Setting Survey – Fill in form which will be shared in the EY Bulletin.</p> <p>Following discussion regarding the OAP, the following comments were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good tool for students, apprenticeships and new practitioners • Good practice tool • Good transitions tool • We are all implementing what is suggested, but not necessarily using the document • Would use the document if we had exhausted all other avenues • Need more than universal information, more targeted approach information needed. • If colleges used it, would be good to embed for learning • Experienced staff may not find it helpful (patronising) • Where are parents in this? Doesn't include the element of dealing with parenting (to educate them) • Doesn't meet need for managers to deal with parent's needs. • Good to use for writing support plans 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is aimed at “Ordinarily” but also highlights additional so can be confusing. • When just presented with the document there’s lots of information to digest. So maybe being presented differently would help. <p>When accessing the QR code it was felt the form needed some changes to enhance the responses. LO will investigate having the form changed to take on board the comments (the form had changes made by the end of the meeting).</p> <p>The OAP document was produced to help settings to support the children and families. JL advised to think about what do you need from the document from a setting point of view?</p> <p>LO advised that there was a tool being developed, “Early Needs Assessment Tool” for parents/families to be available from September 2026. A signpost document for support and strategies for parents and to explain need to have strategies to explore for the child before the need to apply for SEND support.</p> <p>Following discussion regarding the PEaSS Document, the following comments were made: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document is set out well. • Jumps beyond the OAP, has a tick list and good suggestions. • Professional document not for parents (where OAP is more at a parent level) • The areas can be marked off and then the document gives you some strategies. <p>LO encouraged all to submit the feedback via the QR code.</p> <p>It was raised that it would be good to have the same representative on both steering groups looking at the documents rather than 2 acting independently.</p> <p>It was also raised that would be good to have one County document that could cover all, rather than a different document for every topic.</p> <p>JL acknowledged the document needs to provide support for the settings, but some documents are out of our control. Towards Excellence was a good example of a document that supported settings across all areas of practice. Unfortunately, the LA do not have the remit of quality assuring providers anymore.</p> <p>Early Years Family Hubs also have support in place and SEN practitioners will be based in the Family Hubs to work with families. However, referrals from settings to the Family Hubs and ECFS are low. It was thought, this could be due to the fact they are not situated in the right place to reach some families due to Norfolk’s geographical area. They are also not accessible evenings or weekend.</p> <p>JL suggested having a future meeting focusing on Family Hubs and invite Teresa Frost and Carla Nichols to attend.</p> <p>LO thanked those who were involved in the link up with the EYAs to discuss children with an EHCP and their transition.</p> <p>Jane Pears (JP) and Claire Hooker (CH) raised, that meetings had been set up but not had the information or would only discuss one child although had three children in the setting. LO will follow up.</p>	
4.	Any other business	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Local Offer – JL advised that all providers are expected to publish their local offer on the Norfolk Childcare Directory (NCD). Feedback received recently from the directory team is that the narrative is inconsistent and providers may not be aware what information needs to 	

	<p>be included. We have been asked to reflect on how we can support providers to improve what is published on NCD, to help parents to choose the appropriate setting for their child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at what other Local Authorities offer, we are suggesting producing a template with prompts (an example was shared on the screen), JL asked if that would be helpful. • It was agreed to take back and develop a template and bring back to the next meeting for comments. • White Paper – was recently shared at Leader and Managers, further discussion to take place at the next meeting. • Early Years Inclusion Fund – JL advised this was to be introduced in April, we do not know what the criteria is but will build on SENIF. Will share further information once received. • Elective home education – Lynne Armitage (LA) advised they had parents withdrawing children from school, one of whom has a sibling attending her setting. One parent has indicated they will also withdraw the child from nursery to home school. Is there any support and information available if providers have concerns? John Crowley (JC) advised there was a team who is responsible to check that the education provided is suitable for school age children but nothing in place for pre-school children as it is not statutory education. LO suggested raising with the SEND and Inclusion Support Line (0333 313 7165). 	
5.	Date of Next Meeting	
	<p>Tuesday 23rd June 2026 – County Hall (Colman Room)</p> <p>Agenda item: Revisit OAP SEND Local Offer narrative template White paper discussion</p>	