

Early Years Reference Group

Date: 5th November 2007-11-09

Time: 6.30pm

Venue: Redditch Room, County Hall, Worcester

1. Welcome and Introduction
Geoff Taylor- Smith welcomed everyone to the first meeting of this group. Everyone introduced themselves.
2. Apologises
Gill Johnson from Jack & Jill's Nursery in Kidderminster
3. GT-S gave a brief outline of the purpose of the group. He handed over to Andy McHale who explained about the context of the Early Years Reference Group in terms of the Schools Forum & DCSF requirements.
 - Spring 2007 the DCSF consulted on the new 3 year budget cycle starting in 2008. Included in the consultation was the funding of Early Years.
 - In the summer DCSF published their expectation on Early Years funding. A report was taken to Schools Forum (copy provided). The report was endorsed. The report included
 1. The Establishment of the Early Years Reference Group;
 2. Representation on the Schools Forum from Early Years providers.
 3. Requirement by April 2008 to identify the costs for the PVI sector to be reported to the School Forum.
 4. **By 2008/09 consistent** pupil count arrangement for all sectors.
 - By April 2010 at the latest need a single funding formula for both maintained and PVI sectors to be agreed by the Schools Forum.
 - This is a requirement for all Local Authorities.
4. Schools Forum
 - Early Years has always had representatives on the Schools Forum from the **Early Years and Childcare Partnership**. The current representative **Lesley Towey** has indicated she is no longer able to continue **but there are two non school places on the Forum requiring representation from the Childcare Act Implementation Group and the PVI sectors.**
 - **It was agreed that Phillip Hoare would replace Lesley Towey & Jillwould be the named substitute on the Schools Forum in the Childcare Act Implementation Group category.** (only one to attend at a meeting)
 - Chris **Hurley would** represent the PVI sector on the Forum.
5. Terms of Reference
 - Agreed that Terms of Reference are required.
 - To be included:
 - Key focus on Funding for Early Years

- Meetings (frequency/venue/timing) (Forum meets 5 times a year, group to meet before Forum 6.30 start for meetings at earliest)
 - Business to be done at the meeting.
 - Travel expenses can be claimed.
- Forum meeting in January 2008 and April 2008. Reference Group needs to meet before to agree the report to go to the Forum. The suggested next meeting to be the week beginning 7th January 2008. Early Years Management Group will draw up a terms of reference.

6. Membership of the Group

Cherill Illingsworth was invited to this Group as a representative from the maintained sector. Ideally still need some more headteachers from maintained schools with a nursery class. Ideally need a primary representative.

If possible a urban/rural balance with differences of sizes of nursery classes.

This will be progressed by Alison Hitchins and Annette Bryant.

Suggestion that a child minder should also be on the Reference Group.

7. Cost Analysis Survey

- Alison Hitchins then led the discussion on the draft questionnaire.
- Contributions made by all members to improve clarity of questionnaire and explanations.
- Questions on average costs proved difficult. Complexity of the PVI sector is difficult to represent.
- When another version is available, suggestion is that it is trialled with some providers to make sure it is clear enough.
- Agreed there was no time for a trial. So needs to go out with returns by the 3rd December.

8. Date of next meeting

14th January 2008

6.00 for sandwiches

6.30 Start

County Hall. Room to be advised.

Terms of reference

Early Years reference Group

Purpose of the Group : to progress the establishment of a common funding formula for all early years settings to be introduced from April 2010 at the latest. Members to advise on approaches to data gathering, analysis of outcomes and input to the recommendations.

Reporting to: Reports on progress and recommendation to be presented to the Schools Forum, which is the body that endorses and finally recommends changes on funding arrangements to Cabinet.

Membership: Representatives of the Admission Forum, PVI sector and Maintained Sector; local authority officers.

Members – Chair Geoff Taylor-Smith

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Business: Most to be conducted at the meetings. Small working groups may be required but they will be kept to a minimum.

Meetings: To be held at County Hall at least a week before meetings of the Schools Forum. Meetings to be convened, no earlier than 6.30pm. Officers will convene and clerk meetings.

Expenses: Travel expenses can be claimed. Claims to be made to Trish Mallinson on an expenses form.

Behaviour: Confidentially on information provided to be respected. Data to not be shared.