

## Early Years Reference Group

Training Room, First Floor, Kirkgate Buildings

### Notes of meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019, 09:00 – 11:30am

No	Description of Item	Action
1	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <p>Debbie Lea (Chair), Acting Childcare Sufficiency Manager            Rachael Singleton, Early Years Outcomes Manager            Nina O'Connor, Early Education Funding Team            Abdul Mohammed, Childcare Sufficiency Team            Faye Scott, Early Years Partnership Manager, representing Childminders            Suzanne Moorhouse, Childcare Sufficiency Team            Kath Duffy, Early Years Alliance</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b></p> <p>Sarah Palmer, Kirklees Primary Schools            Samantha Richmond, NDNA Network            Amelia Boughey, School Finance</p>	
2	<p><b>Terms of reference</b></p> <p>Samantha Gallant has been added to the membership of the group. Meetings have been scheduled until July 2020, however, if there are no agenda items, the meeting will be cancelled one week before the meeting date.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting 28.11.2018</b></p> <p><b>EYPP</b>            NOC stated there is a bug in Synergy 18.2 whereby children who aren't eligible were being funded, however, schools are not affected. DL stated we have funded £12K more than the budget allocation in 2018/19.</p> <p><b>New payment schedule</b>            Implemented in April and is working well.</p> <p><b>30 hours – Delivery Support Fund</b>            A small underspend was carry forward and needs to be spent ASAP, can be spent on communications related to 30 hours, e.g. the new pocket sized information and social media campaigns.  <b>Action for FS to process payments to new childminders.</b></p> <p>Minutes agreed, all other actions are complete.</p>	FS
4	<p><b>Early Years Block Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018-19 underspend/carry forward</li> <li>• 2019-20 rates</li> </ul> <p>DL distributed the paper which was shared at schools forum identifying the proposals for the under spend.</p>	

The budget underspend in the financial year 2018/19 was £566k which equates to 2% of the total budget.

The reasons for the underspend are not straightforward to explain but relate to the different methods used to allocate the funding between the Department for Education (DfE) and the Local Authority (LA) and then from the LA to providers, for example:

- **Original funding allocation to LAs**

The DfE allocate funding to LAs based on the children registered at a setting during the week of the January census, however the LA allocates funding to providers based on actual children in attendance each term.

Due to seasonal variations each term the funding allocated to providers differs from the funding received from the DfE.

- **Adjusted funding allocation to LAs**

The DfE adjust funding paid to LAs based on 7/12ths of either an increase or decrease in children numbers in the January Census of the previous year. The 7/12ths adjustment accounts for the additional (or reduced) number of children in attendance during the previous Autumn and Spring terms.

However the funded hours paid to providers in these terms is 390. As a proportion of the annual entitlement of 570 this equates to 68% of the annual funding whereas the adjustment of 7/12ths used by the DfE equates to 58%.

- **Stretching the entitlement**

The arrangements for stretch funding are very complex, and more children are now stretching therefore this creates another mismatch between the methods used to allocate funding.

In recognition that there has been no increase in the early years funding rates for over 9 years and the rate actually reduced in April 2018 at a time of increasing financial pressure on all providers, Officers recommended to Schools Forum that after retaining small contingencies for continued risks the remaining underspend is used to increase the funding rates for 2, 3 and 4 year olds on a temporary basis. Schools Forum members were in agreement.

All members of Early Years Reference group agreed with the recommendations.

It is estimated that the remaining underspend can fund **an increase of £0.06 per hour** for both the 2 year old rate and 3&4 year old rate for the next three terms, the revised rates from Autumn 2019, are:

- **£5.06 - 2 year olds**
- **£4.20 - 3&4 year olds**

There will be no changes to the funding rates for the Deprivation Supplement, Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access Funding.

	<p><b>Please note this is a <u>temporary</u> increase in the rate, spending will be monitored each term, if there is any risk of insufficient funds the rates will revert back to £5.00 and £4.14.</b></p> <p><b>Actions</b>  <b><i>Email to be sent before the end of term.</i></b>  <b><i>SM to post on facebook page.</i></b></p>	DL SM
5	<p><b>Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</b></p> <p>Annual childcare audit sent to providers at the beginning of June together with sufficiency data collection, this is a new system for collecting data to capture times when providers have the highest and lowest occupancy in funded settings allowing us, over time, to show termly trends together with the actual number of places available against the Ofsted registered number.</p> <p>46 daycare outstanding (76% return)  Approx. 60 childminders outstanding (65% return)</p> <p>A small proportion of providers have submitted their audit form but not their sufficiency data and vice versa.</p> <p>We aim to publish the 2019 assessment in October to coincide with the publication of the school place planning document.</p> <p>The sufficiency data submitted so far does show there are differences between the Ofsted registered number of places and the actual number of places offered.</p> <p>NOC stated some group childminders have more children than school nurseries.</p> <p>FS stated there is no wrap around for some schools which may be the reason why parents choose to send children to PVI settings rather than schools.</p> <p>The number of childminders continues to decrease and this is also a national trend. FS stated we are still not getting enquiries for new childminders, Calderdale, Barnsley and Bradford have a good number of enquiries. RS stated the situation needs to be monitored.</p> <p>With the introduction of the new web based portal it is hoped this will generate enquires from those interested in becoming a childminder.</p> <p>DL specified that 65% of funded children attend PVI settings.</p> <p>DL circulated charts which show, 97% children are in good or outstanding settings, last term is was 98%.</p>	
6	<p><b>30 hours</b></p> <p>There has been an increase in take-up with more children accessing the extended entitlement. 8% increase compared with summer 2018.</p>	

	<p>However, the actual number eligible is unknown. DFE provided an original estimate of 3500 based on the Spring term but our estimates were 4500 for Spring and 5500 for Summer, using our estimates the take up rate would be 59%. It was noted that every LA used similar methodology to estimate and all were higher than the DFE estimates.</p> <p>DL speculated whether 30hrs was having an impact on the 2YO take-up especially in Summer term, however, we have not received notification from parents indicating they have been unable to find a place.</p> <p>DL said we have produced publicity materials including a 12 page booklet which covers everything about the free entitlements for 2, 3 &amp; 4 year olds including help with childcare costs. These can be used by professionals working with families, we have also produced a pocket size version and have 20,000 copies. Actual distribution yet to be decided.</p> <p>RS mentioned Best Start Partnership which is a relatively new strategic group meeting on a monthly basis – <b>DL to attend next meeting.</b></p> <p>Publicity materials will be given to professionals attending the Changing Lives through Childcare event on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July at the Textile Centre.</p>	DL
7	<p><b>2 year old take-up Action Plan</b></p> <p>Take-up was discussed. Take-up is always highest in the Autumn term due to places available at providers, decreases in Spring term then usually increases again in Summer term, however in the last 2 summers we have seen another decrease to Summer, could be due to pressure on places since 30 hours began but there is no evidence to support this theory.</p> <p>National average fallen from 72% last year to 68% this year. The number of eligible children is falling.</p> <p>DL distributed action plan document – FS and DL presented to Children Services SLT. Compared to Yorkshire and Humber regional figures measured in the Spring term our take-up is average, East Riding of Yorkshire are highest at 81% in the region however they are small. Rotherham is next highest with 79%. Our Director would like to aim for 95% take-up - our current take up is 71%.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the best places to raise awareness about free places for 2 year olds, 3 and 4 year olds and 30 hours.</p> <p>2YO check in partnership with Health to be fully rolled out in September should help to increase take-up of 2 year olds.</p> <p>KD has details of parent and toddler groups, <b>KD to inform DL of numbers</b> so that publicity materials can be sent.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding monitoring why some parents choose not to take up a 2 year old place. Some parents felt that 2 years was too young to be attending a group however, they may</p>	KD

	<p>attend different groups for example baby and toddler groups, play gyms etc, so their child is socialising at these groups. RS suggested adding a question if not attending 2YO provision to <b><i>find out if they take their child to other settings to capture that data.</i></b></p> <p>If a parent decides to leave a 2YO place we also need to find out the reason why. FS said not enough been done about children not settling in. <b><i>Can the reason be mandatory of the FEEC Funding Leavers forms? NOC/SM to investigate.</i></b></p> <p>Consultants used to contact parents on DFE list termly but since the team review this has not been possible. However to inform the new Action Plan visits were resumed in the 6 wards with the lowest take up in Spring. FS stated that 154 out of 263 doors knocked from DFE list, 38 said applying / considering applying / already applied. 45 no answer on door. 10 don't want to send until child is 3YO. 3 with language barrier. The six wards are Batley East, Batley West, Ashbrow, Greenhead, Dewsbury West, and Crosland Moor. Dewsbury West ward has the largest number of children not accessing – 106 in summer term.</p> <p><b><i>SM to complete mapping exercise</i></b> to look at where the eligible children are who are not taking up a place. 6 wards plus Heckmondwike.</p> <p>FS said next task is <b><i>contacting parents on the unplaced list</i></b> in Sept.</p> <p>A discussion took place about liaising with a group called Happy Moments. This is a voluntary group working to connect, support and inspire mums across Batley and Dewsbury. <b><i>Action DL/FS to make contact.</i></b></p>	<p>EYOT</p> <p>NOC/SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>EYOT</p> <p>DL/FS</p>
8	<p><b>Update from Early Years Outcomes Team</b></p> <p>Team now part of Early Support, Michelle Wheatcroft. Not expecting any changes because of the move to Early Support, however, the move may open up opportunities for more joined up working. RS outlined the team plan and team priorities for the coming year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health and Wellbeing conference taking place in November</li> <li>• 2 year old check with health project</li> <li>• Schools sharing baseline data</li> <li>• 50 things (now up and running)</li> <li>• Business Solutions Early Portal</li> </ul>	
9	<p>Any other business None</p>	