

Early Years Sub Group Meeting

Minutes

8th November 2013

Room 142, Castle Hill Centre

Present:

Carolyn Hutton
Ann McLeod
Jack Hatch
Barbara Howarth
Lynne Kay

PVI Provider
Nursery Headteacher
Primary Headteacher
Primary Headteacher
Primary Governor

Jan Robinson
Julie Edwards
Kevan Hamer
Jackie Bateson
Amanda Highland-Partington
Claire Binks

Early Years and Childcare Team
Schools Finance Unit
Schools Finance Unit
Strategy and Performance
Children Centre Manager
Strategic Finance

Apologies – Janet Halton, Jan Robinson

Carolyn Hutton chaired the meeting.

1 Minutes of 13 September 2013

Complaints Procedure needs to be put on the Web.
The minutes were agreed.

2 Membership Update

A letter has been sent to the PVI's for nominations to the group. Expression of interest from Rose Cottage has been made.

There is still the position of Nursery Governor to be filled but there are difficulties as there are changes in this sector currently.

Childminder is to be seen separately. Ideally this should be before the meeting so that their views can be expressed. Unfortunately this time the meeting will be afterwards. This will be continue to be reviewed.

3 Formula Considerations

The base information from the meeting in July was reissued for context. The additional work had been undertaken around the options for removing flexibility. Two options were tabled:

- £500k to be taken out of the formula to meet the current overspend in the sector as a result of time lags in increasing numbers and the affordability of the formula as setting move to professional status. The remaining £500k to be reallocated over maintained nurseries and the non-professional rate. The rationale behind this is that

maintained schools do not receive flexibility and it is likely that a move to one formula could see a reduction in the base rates. This option results in big losers in the PVI sector where there is the professional status.

- The second option took out the £500k to meet the overspend but allocated the remaining funding across all sectors. This results in maintained nurseries and PVI settings with a professional losing. Maintained primary schools gained.

The discussions considered the uncertainty about the Governments wish to move to a single base rate and whether it was better to do nothing until this position was clear. This was balanced against the need for a flexibility formula and whether it was achieving its purpose. The other areas of concern were the cost pressures of SEN and the overspend.

The recent introduction of 2 year old places has highlighted further the pressures caused by SEN and the lack of funding in this block for this. Work is currently on going to look at processes and support in this area. SEN processes will be piloted in the Oxford Grove PSR pilot with a view to rolling out in September 2014.

The group requested that further work be done on amending flexibility and look at changing the % across all base rates with a view to generating a saving of £500k to meet the overspend.

Consideration was also to be given to the formula that operates for other schools to see if Early Years could be brought in line with this.

4 Two Year Old Update

Head count

The headcounts were now in and take up was at 40%. Whilst from nothing this is reasonable. There is still much work to be done and work to increase this is ongoing. Consideration is being given to:

- Extending the eligibility criteria to include some of the September 2014 criteria around working tax credits
- Parent champions

The group also suggested looking at changing registration processes so that it could be undertaken in the setting.

Property Update

Charging policy has been agreed. The properties are looking to be marketed in December 2013.

5 Any other Business

Free School Meals

There is a statutory responsibility for maintained settings to provide free school meals to eligible nursery children. This is causing additional budgetary pressures for the maintained nurseries as there is no additional funding. It is believed that other Authorities are funding this.

It was agreed that the Authorities concerned would be contacted to understand how this was being funded.

6 Date of the next meeting

3.30 pm
10 January 2014
Crompton 1
BSTC