

## Early Years Subgroup Meeting

### Minutes

10th January 2022 2pm

Microsoft Teams Meeting

### Present:

Sarah Bagshaw  
Sue Pounds  
Jasmine Sanders  
Julie Robinson  
Vinnny Merritt  
Martin Rostron  
Helen Shearer  
Julie Edwards  
Kevan Hamer  
Laura Wright

Primary Headteacher Representative  
Nursery School Headteacher  
Private Provider  
Private Provider  
Private Provider  
Primary Governor  
Head of Start Well  
Schools Finance Manager  
Schools Finance Unit  
Start Well Advisor

### 1. Welcome and minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> November were agreed.

### 2. Covid Update

The new omicron variant was discussed and its impact on staffing levels.

Public Health had advised that community spread during the festive period was still circulating and to expect high levels of isolation throughout January.

Currently, reported staff absences in nursery provision was at a lower level than the Primary sector, but it was not known if there were areas of high absence in particular areas.

A rapid survey was to be scheduled which would inform the Authority of the current position as regards the impact of omicron. The survey would include questions concerning staffing levels, parental testing, risk of reduced childcare offer and an open text box for individual concerns.

It was noted that the “in-direct” effect of covid was increasing levels of stress throughout the workforce, with the numbers of close deaths and severe illness during the pandemic taking hold

### 3. Finance Update

In 2022 to 2023 the hourly funding rates for all local authorities will increase by 21 pence an hour for the 2-year-old entitlement, and 17 pence an hour for the 3 and 4-year-old entitlements.

It is proposed that the full amount of the increases to be passported to the Providers.

The proposed rates for 2022-23 are :-

<b>Early Years Rates</b>			
		2021-22	2022-23
		per hour	per hour
3 & 4 year old universal	Base Rate	£ 4.14	£ 4.31
	Deprivation	£ 0.38	£ 0.38
3 & 4 year old additional 15 hours	Base Rate	£ 4.14	£ 4.31
3 & 4 year old universal Nursery Schools	Base Rate	£ 5.07	£ 5.24
	Deprivation	£ 0.86	£ 0.86
2 year old		£ 5.26	£ 5.47
Early Years Pupil Premium		£ 0.53	£ 0.60
		per year	per year
Disability Access Fund		£ 615	£ 800

#### **4. Early Years Improvement Group**

The EY Improvement group will link into the Primary Improvement Partnership teams, with representatives from the nursery sector included within the 10 primary cluster groups.

Scoping meetings were taking place to formulate the terms of reference for the group. The Chair of the group had been appointed (primary H/T) and the deputy chair would be elected from the PVI sector.

The Group would be responsible in furthering the EY priorities, agreeing how to best manage change and to ensure childcare needs are making progress.

There was a slight delay expected as prior discussions were necessary to confirm the EY Improvement Group position in relation to existing groups.

#### **5. Childcare Sufficiency Survey**

The Council, despite several reminders and initiatives, still lacks data on Provider capacity, even though this data is a requirement of the Childcare Funding agreement signed by all Providers.

This data is essential for the Authority to be able to advise, and plan, for sufficient levels of childcare places to be available in areas of demand, and to be informed which areas currently may have sufficient places.

A stand-alone survey regarding latest Provider capacity data was circulated prior to the end of the Autumn term. Returns were received from approx. 54% of Providers which included data on age range provision, hours of delivery and vacancy levels

A letter from Bernie Brown ,Director of Children's Services, Bolton Council was being drafted, which will underline the importance of this information to the Authority, and that it is vital for Providers to complete their sufficiency update.

The EY portal contains a self-update module which allows the Providers to electronically return their sufficiency data each term

## **6. AOB**

Update on Harvey Nursery closure – Full report will be presented to the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> January

## **7. Date & Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 2pm via teams