

Early Years Working Party– 10/3/2022

Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

10a.m. to 12p.m.

Attendees:			
Theresa Staunton (TS) Chair	PVI representative on Schools Forum	√	
Jeni Murphy (JM)	Early Learning Team Manager	√	
Denise Bushay (DB)	Schools Places & Admissions Head of Service	X	
Roger Capham (RC)	Director PACE Academy Trust	√	
Paula Carter (PC)	Gingerbread Corner	X	
Jane Charman (JC)	Head Teacher, Park Hill Infants	X	
Toby Martlew	Principal, Ark Oval Primary	X	
Shelley Davies (SD)	Director of Education	X	
Charles Quaye	Finance manager Education	√	
Asim Saleem (AS)	Local Authority Accountant	√	
Maria Reeve	Acting Head of Purley Nursery School	√	
Chris Marchant (CM)	Goslings Pre-School	√	
Linda O'Callaghan (LOC)	St Mary's Infant School	X	
Yetty Osonaike (YO)	Alpha Day Nursery	X	
Jaqi Stevenson (JS)	Executive HT, Federation of Crosfield & Selhurst Nursery Schools & Children's Centres	√	
Pam Sokhi (PS)	Early Years Inclusion and Intervention Team Manager	X	
Debby MacCormack (DM)	Service Manager, Early Years, Parenting and Parent-Infant Partnership	X	
Agenda items			

Please note: the recording of this meeting was deleted once transcription was completed

1	Apologies and welcome	TS
	The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from DB.	
2	Minutes and actions	TS
	The minutes of the 27.1.2022 meeting were agreed. Update on Actions: 2022/23 Funding paper – Schools Forum were presented with Option 1 and Option 2. The vote has been to take the MNS through on a per child basis. The Chair has asked for this decision to be confirmed for 2022/23 and 2023/24.	

JS asked has confirmation being received that this is appropriate to do. TS said she had not heard anything different. She is reporting on Schools Forum's decision. This may get picked up at the next Schools Forum meeting as this was an action to be followed on. She will update the Early Years Work group once an answer is received.

TS said Schools Forum agreed for the Early Years Work group to organise and distribute the underspend using the distribution method. This distribution will go through from the meeting today and will get distributed without having to go through Schools Forum.

MNS SENCOs to be invited to School SENCO Forum - ongoing item. JS said her SENCO still does not get notification of the Schools SENCO Forum though they are invited to the Early Years SENCO Forum. At the last meeting JC said that the Park Hill SENCO had attended this meeting, but JS pointed out that this is a nursery school run by a primary school.

MR said she does not get notified either of the SENCO Forum. A lot of conversations get missed. She receives information forwarded by her federation partner or executive HT to make sure she does not miss out. You do not know what you do not know. Sometimes people elude to things that have happened and she is none the wiser.

JS said maintained nurseries are not treated fully as a school or fully as an Early Years provider. Croydon need to decide what the role of the maintained nurseries is.

TS attended the workshop around the new Early Years strategy. There was a lot of requests around where SEND sits and what it will look like. It will be interesting to see where the operational impact is.

JS said she a colleague attended the workshop yesterday and she will be attending on Saturday. The strategy is high on aspiration but low on operational practice. The strategy looks like a rebranding of Best Start.

TS said the Schools Forum chair wants a resolution on the MNS but she feels that due to Purdah the situation will be put on pause.

JM will send an email to Julie Ralphs and Mark Southworth to ask how information on the School SENCO Forums can be passed on– **ACTION** – JM

JS said nurseries will probably not get an invite to the School SENCO Forum if it comes from Octavo who are a paid service. Nurseries cannot afford this.

AOB – 29.9.21 Early Years meeting
“PS has breakdown of figures agreed...” TS said she has not made any progress in getting the figures. The data dashboard is progressing but there are no figures for Early Years in this.

Finance - update on the benefits to the children identified by the team
CQ said though he received an email from PS he does not think it is the data.

JM said Early Years need to look at the role of the 3 workers as what they were initially employed to do has changed.

TS said a paper on what the 5% is spent on would normally come to the Early Years Work group at the end of the year and within this 5% is the £237k. This information will come in a similar way as the Virtual School who present a paper to Schools Forum with a breakdown of what the money is used for and the outcome of costs etc.

CQ said the paper on the breakdown of the 5% was looked at by TS and himself. In terms of the final outturn, the reason why this will not be received is that staffing costs go to various areas. These areas then have to be recharged and from this an actual is generated. This process is currently being completed.

TS said the Work Group need the impact of the £237k spend.

Meet to drill down on the £237k spend **ACTION** – CQ/JM/DB/PS

CQ said Schools Forum have agreed to a 2 year methodology funding for the MNS supplementary funding.

TS said the previous accountant indicated that the methodology had to come yearly.

CQ said there is no evidence to say this needs to be done yearly. His judgement is to follow the way the DfE distribute the methodology which is per hour and not on the pupil numbers.

Follow up from June 2018 Schools Forum minutes onwards to identify where the £200k for the transformation of the nursery schools is – **ACTION** - CQ

JS said the nursery schools were propped up with funding to bring their supplementary amount to £160k. The £200k was set aside for the transformation on nursery schools for them to become sustainable.

CQ said if money is set aside for transformation then it should be used for this. He asked if there is a business case for this.

JS said there is no model or business case for this transformation. She is frustrated at the lack of activity and the failure at all levels to grasp the problems that nursery schools are facing.

CQ said he will take on board what JS said and will make a business case to the director of finance and SD which will look at the whole situation i.e. meeting the needs of the SEN children in the locality. He can do a business case for finance but feels that all nursery schools have to come together to do their part.

JS said the Early Years strategy slides do no mention maintained nurseries. She reiterated that the current position is just not sustainable.

	CQ said he will email SD/DB and cc in TS/JS and ask where nurseries fit in the strategy ACTION – CQ	
3 & 4	Sufficiency update & Distribution of underspend	JM
	<p>AS informed members he has updated the child rate through 80%.</p> <p>JM said the underspend total has been confirmed by the finance team and these figures are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. At the moment the DAF figures have not been received.</p> <p>TS would like to know whether the hourly rate has gone over to the settings. JM said this will be adjusted today by the administrators.</p> <p>TS was surprised at how few children were in the deprivation pot. JM said there are probably more children in settings than are claimed for. Parents have to sign a parent declaration to claim this and in her experience there are barriers with parents in doing this. One factor is ensuring that settings are having these discussions with parents. Parents also need to feel comfortable to say their child is in this category.</p> <p>TS said deprivation and EYPP should be distributed at 100%.</p> <p>JM and CQ are in agreement with TS suggestion. JM informed the group that EYPP underspend has been added to the deprivation pot and will go out as one figure.</p> <p>TS said the DAF has not been distributed. Before Covid we looked at DAF which looked at supporting early intervention. She is keen for this to be relooked at. We need our director at the table to have this discussion and agreement. JS has done a whole paper on what this would look like and how settings can be supported with early intervention. Can some of the DAF money be used to identify families who need this?</p> <p>Update at the 25 May 2022 meeting on how the DAF from the underspend of 2021 will be distributed ACTION – Head of Service/Leads??</p> <p>TS said in the budget for next year no one has put forward a request around Early Years SEND, no paper to look at anything. The impact of Covid on the Early Years is significant and this will not be seen until the middle of next year.</p> <p>JM said to look at how we distribute the DAF as settings are reporting there is not enough money to support the children, especially those with high level needs. We need to look at and equip settings with an additional high level training programme.</p> <p>JS said she endorses JM suggestion and to use the SENCOs as part of the training and pay the nurseries for this. This is a success in the locality model as it has helped schools work closely together to have a dialogue around the level of need.</p>	

	<p>TS is concerned about the number of children that will appear with future needs i.e. speech and language. She is not supportive of Chatterbox online as this is not working, particularly with parents who may have English as a second language. The LA leads have to take this on and work out what they can do to support the settings.</p> <p>JS asked how many children are currently in receipt of DAF including the children in receipt of high needs specialised funding, how are they impacted and what is the amount.</p> <p>JM said around 49 DAF claims have been received so far but she is not sure how many are high level needs payments there are.</p> <p>CM said there seems to be some lack of knowledge on what can be put through to claim DAF. Colleagues can look online for the information on parents and carers which is quite specific in what this can be used for. There is a useful and helpful guide.</p> <p>TS said it is the fount of knowledge that has been made redundant. The online information for parents and carers could be added to the training.</p> <p>JM said she will bring discussions on a guide to the next managers' forum and maybe incorporate this into the annual support visit that is provided.</p> <p>Hold a meeting with PS to understand the number of children receiving high needs support within the settings ACTION – JM/CQ.</p> <p>TS said it is unfortunate that Early Years sits in 2 blocks. At present it does not as no response is received, no information comes into Early Years or into High Needs. This information does not exist in a form readily available.</p> <p>CQ has requested AS run a transaction report to analyse by providers and he will ask PS who the providers and children are and why they have been paid ACTION - AS</p> <p>JM said settings are facing difficulty with staffing and Covid. To support the difficulties workshops are focusing on staff interaction and pedagogy. This issue is national and London wide and often happens when there is a new inspection framework. Early Years will be Ofsted's focus.</p> <p>Amend the Early Years meeting day to Thursday ACTION - JM</p>	
5	Finance update - verbal	CQ
	<p>CQ said he has done the draft figures after looking at the January 2022 published data from the DfE. Early Years will get £27,241,779. The spend as of today is £25,022,579. He is awaiting figures from JM/AS on how much Early Years are planning on paying as of March 2022.</p> <p>TS said it will be interesting to see if the DSG anticipated a figure of £27m as the original budget figure from the DfE was around £30m.</p> <p>CQ said the reason the figure has gone down is because of the claw back.</p>	

	<p>TS said Early Years work hard to make sure they are not overspent. There is a downward trend as the children are not on seats, therefore there should not be any overspend.</p> <p>JM said the census closes on Friday and this will affect the adjustment and provide the figure for next year.</p>	
6	Any Other Business	
	None	

Meeting finished at: 11.38am : Next meeting 26 May 2022

AGREED ACTIONS	
Actions from previous minutes	<p>MNS SENCOs to be invited to School SENCO Forums - ongoing item.</p> <p>JM will send an email to Julie Ralphs and Mark Southworth to ask how information on the School SENCO Forums can be passed on- ACTION – JM</p> <p>Finance - update on the benefits to the children identified by the team.</p> <p>Meet to drill down on the £237k spend ACTION – CQ/JM/DB/PS</p> <p>Follow up from June 2018 Schools Forum minutes onwards to identify where the £200k for the transformation of the nursery schools is – ACTION - CQ</p> <p>CQ said he will email SD/DB and cc in TS/JS and ask where nurseries fit in the strategy ACTION – CQ</p>
	<p>ACTION: Head of Service/Leads?? to update at the 26 May 2022 meeting how the DAF from the underspend of 2021 will be distributed</p> <p>ACTION: JM/CQ to hold a meeting with PS to understand the number of children receiving high needs support within the settings</p> <p>ACTION: AS to run a transaction report to analyse the providers and CQ will ask PS who the providers and children are and why they have been paid</p> <p>ACTION: JM to amend the Early Years meeting day to Thursday</p>