

## Schools Forum Early Years Working Group

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 at 10.00am. Virtual meeting

Name	Designation/ Representation
Melian Mansfield (MM)	<b>CHAIR.</b> Chair of Pembury House
Ngozi Anuforo (NA)	Head of Early Help Commissioning
Gladys Baah-Okyere (GBO)	PVI Settings Rep
Luisa Bellavita (LB)	PVI Settings Rep
+ Cllr Zena Brabazon (ZB)	Lead Member for the Children Service
+ Peter Catling (PC)	Woodlands Park Nursery School & Children Centre
Duwan Farquharson (DF)	Willow
Nick Hewlett (NH)	Principal Advisor for Early Years
+ Emma Murray (EM)	Primary Head Rep
Susan Tudor-Hart (STH)	School Forum PVI Settings Rep
Melanie Widnall (MW)	Principal Advisor for Early Years
+ Christine Yianni (CY)	Childcare Sufficiency Manager
Sarah Hargreaves (SH)	Clerk

+ denotes absence

### 1. **Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from Peter Catling and Emma Murray.

### 2. **Minutes of the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

- 2.1 The minutes were **agreed**, they will be signed and returned to Ngozi for safe keeping when this is next possible.

#### **Matters arising not on the agenda**

- 2.2 Pt 2.2 Duwan will speak to the SBM Forum about SBM representation on the Working Party. **Action DF**
- 2.3 Pt 2,4 Nick will speak to Ellika McAuley again about the possibility of having an area SENDCo on the Panel when the Panels restart. **Action NH**
- 2.3.1 Pt 3.2.3 Ngozi will look at the figures in her report again and re-circulate the updated paper. **Action NA**
- 2.3.2 Pt 5.1 Ngozi will re-circulate the list of which and how many settings are housed in Haringey buildings. **Action NA**

### 3. **Covid-19**

- 3.1 The LA is trying to keep in contact with settings and to hear views throughout the lockdown.
- 3.2 The DfE has been clear with LAs as to their responsibilities. Under the Coronavirus Act 2020 the Secretary of State has the power (delegated to LAs) to transfer money from settings which have closed to

those who have remained open to provide vulnerable children's places. Although this power should be used as a last resort when all other early years budget areas and contingency have been used. If this avenue were to be used, the indicative funding allocation for all settings would need to be re-calculated.

- 3.2.1 The childcare sufficiency duties and the need to support providers still apply.
- 3.3 Some children have left the area during the lockdown and it is not known how many will be returning.
- 3.3.1 Some settings are concerned about how many children they will have in September.
- 3.4 Not all vulnerable children are in settings; only around 1% are. There is concern about where some of the rest currently are. Links have been made with Bev Hendricks and the Social Care Teams regarding LAC children and those with EHCP's.
- 3.4.1 There is also concern that some children are missing out on their health visiting visits as many HVs have been taken off general work and re-deployed into Covid-19 wards. The intention is to provide targeted health visiting support as required.
- 3.4.2 Children's emotional well-being needs to be guarded. 1:1 support is available. The aim is to keep settings as calm places for children. It can be hard for children to socially distance, but the staff need to make efforts to do so.
- 3.5 There is a need to know the number of settings open/closed. Figures are sent to the DfE twice a week covering this and the number of vulnerable and critical workers' children.
- 3.6 On June 1<sup>st</sup>, 59 settings reported that they were open including 22 PVI's and 25 childminders. They were catering for 160 children including 47 vulnerable children. Ngozi will circulate the details. **Action NA**
- 3.7 *Members asked if the quality provided by the places which had remained open was as good as usual.* NH said that it was and that even with the necessary changes made settings were still providing inspirational places for children.
- 3.8 The providers survey was sent to 250 settings and 87 have been returned.
- 3.9 Workshops for providers have been planned – to look at the likely loss of money, access to government funding, the furlough scheme etc. Concern was expressed that once a furlough claim has been put in it cannot be changed, eg if the funding received is subsequently reduced. Some settings will be facing huge losses, others less so. NH and MW have asked their teams to talk to individual settings to discuss their circumstances.
- 3.9.1 Settings are concerned about their funding if they must reduce the number of children they can take, to comply with social distancing rules. Guidance is needed for the short, medium, and longer term.
- 3.9.2 There will also be a shortfall in the number of places which can be offered if they all must be socially distanced.
- 3.10 DF said that there was an issue for Broadwaters with the Free for Two's and children centre funding which has not been received; this is causing cashflow issues. Ngozi to investigate this as it should not be an issue as the funding should continue as normal.
- 3.11 It was noted that schools can apply for extra funding to cover their extra costs, private providers can apply for business grants, but voluntary sector providers can't, and many parents can't pay higher fees. Some parents who were previously paying have now lost their jobs or had their hours reduced and so cannot afford to pay fees. There are now only 13 voluntary sector providers remaining in the borough.
- 3.12 It was noted that all sectors have been impacted; some issues affect all settings and others affect some settings more than others. Providers said that the PVI meetings had been useful. The area-based meetings meant that everyone heard about the issues faced by all providers. NH and MW were thanked for arranging these. A separate voluntary sector forum would also be useful. **NH agreed** to arrange a meeting. **Action NH**
- 3.13 NH said that individual meetings with individual providers can be arranged for anyone who wants to talk about their issues.
- 3.14 The possibility of targeted financial support was requested.
- 3.15 Ngozi said that she will be writing a paper for the Gold Group. Adequate and affordable childcare is seen as part of economic recovery. She will need to know what the issues are from settings and schools if there is any chance of making a case for resources. All to provide information asap.

**Action all settings**

- 3.16 Settings explained that having to provide information to the LA on the 1<sup>st</sup> morning of opening put extra pressure on them and did not necessarily help the service to children. Ngozi explained that she understood this, but it was needed then to enable her team to meet the DfE deadlines.
- 3.17 MM had circulated a letter she had been involved in drafting together with 30 childcare organisations in response to the DfE's planning guidance for early years and childcare settings regarding returning to work. The need to provide reflective spaces for both children and adults to diffuse pressures was noted.

4. **AOB**

- 4.1 STH thanked NH and MW for all their work during the lockdown. NH said that it had been a collective effort and he was proud of what their teams and the settings had achieved.
- 4.2 There will be an extra meeting on **16<sup>th</sup> June at 11am** via Teams. The agenda will be finance, how this group can link into the SBM Forum, the paper for Schools Forum/Gold Group and childcare sufficiency. Members asked that the meeting be scheduled for 1.5 hours as an hour is insufficient.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.  
There being no further business the meeting closed at **11.30am**.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Actions from the minutes: 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
2.2	To speak at the SBM Forum about sharing a place on the working party	DF
2.3	To speak to Ellika McAuley about area SENDCOs on Panels when they re-start	NH
2.3.1	To check the figures in the report and to re-circulate it	NA
2.3.2	To re-circulate the list of which and how many settings are housed in Haringey buildings	NA
3.6	To circulate the list of which settings are open and which children they are catering for	NA
3.12	To arrange a voluntary sector providers meeting	NH
3.15	To provide information useful for the economic recovery report/funding bid to Ngozi	All settings