

**Schools Forum Early Years Working Group**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 1.30pm**  
**at Rowland Hill Nursery School and Children Centre**

Name	Designation/ Representation
Melian Mansfield (MM)	<b>CHAIR.</b> Chair of Pembury House Nursery School
Gladys Baah-Okyere (GBO)	PVI Settings Rep
Luisa Bellavita (LB)	PVI Settings Rep
* Joanna Conroy (JC)	Childminder
Duwan Farquharson (DF)	Willow Director of Business
Nick Hewlett (NH)	Principal Adviser for Early Years
Sian McDermott (SMcD)	Nursery Head SF Rep (Rowland Hill)
Storm Moncur (SM)	Childminder
Susan Tudor-Hart (ST-H)	School Forum PVI Settings Rep
Melanie Widnall (MW)	Principal Advisor for Early Years
* Christine Yianni (CY)	Childcare Sufficiency Manager
* Grant Bright (GB)	Primary Head Rep (Rokesly Primary School)
* Cllr Zena Brabazon (ZB)	Lead Member
Ridhwaan Edoe (RE)	Early Years Team
* Lucy Walker-Collins (LW-C)	Primary Head Rep (Stroud Green Primary School)
* Patricia Harvey (PH)	Finance Team
<b>Also Present</b>	
Lewis Antony (LA)	Finance Team
Sarah Hargreaves	Senior Governance Officer

\* denotes absence

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.  
 1.2 Apologies have been received from Lucy Walker-Collins, Cllr Zena Brabazon, Patricia Harvey and Grant Bright.

### 2. Election of Chair and vice Chair

- 2.1 **Melian Mansfield** was proposed as Chair by **Sian McDermott** and seconded by **Storm Moncur**.  
 2.2 **Susan Tudor-Hart** was proposed as vice Chair by **Sian McDermott** and seconded by **Melian Mansfield**.  
 2.3 **Agreed.**

### 3. Minutes of the Meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023

- 3.1 Pt 5.5 to delete "given previous mistakes".  
 3.2 Pt 5.9 to say "It was queried whether in the 1<sup>st</sup> year a child ...." Ridhwaan to check with Elicka McAuley. It is known that other local authorities pay twice in the 1<sup>st</sup> year as school years and financial years are different. The DfE have also

been asked for clarification but a response is outstanding.

#### **Action RE**

**3.3** With these changes the minutes were **agreed** as a correct record of the meeting.

#### **4. Matters arising from the minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**4.1** Pt 3.4 Sian and Ridhwaan will meet shortly with Lewis to discuss the financial information available to schools. Lewis is aware that there is room for improvement.

**Action SMcD, RE, LA**

**4.2** Pt 3.6 Nick will circulate the current LA management structure. He cautioned that there are frequent changes.

**Action NH**

**4.3** Pt 5.1 The number of children will be checked again. The 3's and 4's are largely static but there has been an increase in 2's. There are 6,548 3's and 4's in the borough with 5,201 in settings (79%). This is the highest summer figure ever. This will be discussed further at the next meeting when the up to date figures are available.

**Action NH**

**4.4** Pt 6.2 By the end of December the funding rates for next year will be known. The viability of taking 2's rather than 3's or 4's will be clearer for settings. Childminders will be supported with their business plans. Some childminders currently suggest to parents that they should move the children to nurseries when they turn 3. Parents of 2's who turn 3 would not be asked for the difference in the hourly rate.

#### **5. Information and Updates: Nick Hewlett**

**5.1** There are frequent meetings with the DfE, who are drip-feeding information to councils.

**5.2** The EYFS is due to change in January 2024.

**5.3** Indicative budgets will be available by February 2024 for implementation in April 2024 when there will also be a new phase of expansion of 2 year old (15 hour) provision.

**5.3.1** £57,000 has been provided to the LA for the LA delivery of the 2 year old expansion. This will pay for a processing officer and apprentices.

**5.4** Presentations have been held on LiquidLogic (an IT system) which is already used by social care. It could be adopted by Early Years in order to streamline the systems across the council.

**5.5** The Early Years conference on November 3<sup>rd</sup> was well received.

**5.6** The Early Years strategy launch went well.

#### **6. Funding for Children who Repeat a Year: Sian McDermott**

**6.1** Where a child has an EHCP and the nursery school or childminder is named on their Plan once they reach 5 years and 22 weeks the school/childminder no longer receives funding. (This only affects autumn born children as summer born don't reach the age cut off before transferring to school and it does not affect children in school nurseries as they can be counted as a Reception child).

**6.1.1** Nick will speak to Mary Jarrett as she is the EHCP lead officer about the possibility of School Forum agreeing to a sum of money to be set aside for these children in order to fund providers/settings.

**Action NH**

#### **7. Options for the Underspend: Nick Hewlett**

**7.1** It was confirmed that the underspend stands at £231,000.

**7.2** A range of options were put forward to spend the money, which has to be spent by or passported out of the LA by the end of the financial year. Most of the options were those previously considered for the anticipated underspend before:

- free entitlement offer (comms and marketing)
- speech and language
- parent champions
- increase the base rate to settings
- supporting vulnerable children
- baby project
- free EY conference

- 7.2.1 Child and parent mental health was an additional option, run possibly via an inclusive theatre now operating out of Haringey.
- 7.2.2 The money can be divided between a range of headings.
- 7.3 After a wide ranging discussion it was **agreed** to remove speech and language therapy from the list as this is going to be provided via NHS, Safety Value and Family Hub funds. This will be a follow-on from the LEAP project in Northumberland Park. Settings will be supported following an assessment.
- 7.3.1 A idea of a free conference for Haringey EY providers was welcomed. Places to out borough providers could be sold. Cover costs would also be appreciated.
- 7.3.2 The baby room project has been popular with 24 expressions of interest for 10 places but it is not yet known how many settings will develop baby provision as the funding levels aren't yet known.
- 7.3.3 The Parent Champions and free entitlement projects could be linked together.
- 7.3.4 It was confirmed that previously £150,000 had been allocated to places for vulnerable children.
- 7.3.5 If the whole of the underspend was put into increasing the base rate for all 3's and 4's it would amount to around £44 per children as a one off lump sum. (Two year old settings will be getting more money this term and next and so they wouldn't be included in any base rate increased payment). It was noted, however, that some settings need this more than others. It would be difficult to specify what settings could/should spend the money on. Ridwhaan will look at more accurate figures (based on the summer 2023 Census) for any one off increase in the base rate. **Action RE**
- 7.4 Members asked for viable figures which could be put against all the options by 8<sup>th</sup> December. **Action RE**

**Storm Moncur** is leaving childminding and hence this group. She was thanked for her input over recent times and everyone wished her well in the future.

## 8. Future Meeting Dates

- 8.1 The next meeting will be held on **23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024** at 9.30-11am, on-line.

Future dates are:

19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 9.30am-11am face to face

21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 9.30am-11am online

18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 1.30pm-3pm face to face

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at **3.40pm**.