

Schools Forum Early Years Working Group

Date: 4th May 2017 at the PDC at 11am

Name	Designation/ Representation
Melian Mansfield (MM)	CHAIR
Ngozi Anuforo (NA)	Head of Early Help Commissioning
Luisa Bellavita (LB)	PVI Settings Rep
Zena Brabazon (ZB)	Rowland Hill
Peter Catling (PC)	Woodlands Park Nursery School & Children Centre
Charles Cato (CC)	Early Years Finance
Lou Colley (LC)	PVI Settings Rep
Duwan Farquharson (DF)	Willow
Dawn Ferdinand (DaF)	Willow
Nick Hewlett (NH)	Interim Principal Advisor for Early Years
Emma Murray (EM)	Primary Head Rep
Yoke O'Brien (YO)	Finance Business Partner (Schools)
Karyn Parker (KP)	Childminders
Susan Tudor-Hart (STH)	PVI Settings Rep
Christine Yianni (CY)	Business Support Officer
Sarah Hargreaves (SH)	Clerk

Also present: Melanie Widnall, Interim Principal Advisor for Early Years

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted from: Yoke O'Brien, Nick Hewlett and Herbert Nally (Pembury House).
- 1.3 Duwan Farquharson, Dawn Ferdinand and Karyn Parker were not present.

2. **Minutes of the meeting of 6th March 2017**

- 2.1 The minutes were **agreed**, signed and returned to Ngozi for safe keeping.

Matters arising

- 2.2 Pt 3.4 Providers have been informed of their funding allocations,
- 2.3 Pt 3.5 Meetings and training sessions on using the provider portal to submit headcount information have been held with SBMs within schools.
- 2.4 Pt 3.6.3 Meetings have been held with those settings who have not submitted business plans.
- 2.5 Pt 3.6.4 Charles confirmed that some of the settings who will be receiving less funding in the future have been contacted. It was noted that the pattern of the delivery of the offer is as important as the hourly rate in determining financial viability. Members asked for an update to come to the next meeting.

Action CC

- 2.6 Pt 3.8 Zena has written to Helen Fisher and Vicky Clarke (Tottenham Regeneration) regarding the Opportunity Investment Fund. Schools are not able to apply for funds but investment can be made into “soft” infrastructure. The Economic Development Team and North Tottenham Regeneration, which includes Pembury House, will be putting in 2 priority bids. It was noted that sustainable childcare will be hard to deliver.
- 2.7 Pt 3.10 Members asked again that support could be considered for those settings who will be losing out mid-year; rather than just those who will be losing out overall. Fees and budgets have been set for the whole of the school year and it is hard to make adjustments mid-year. It was noted that there is currently no money available to support any settings.

Members asked about the £76,000 earmarked for the Quality Supplement and whether it could be used here instead. It was noted that this budget had been agreed by Cabinet and so could not necessarily be used elsewhere.

Members asked for clarification on the Early Years money. Has this been put into reserves? Is the HNB using it? Concern was expressed as to the on-going need for HNB funding. It was **agreed** that some under 5’s could be funded via the HNB, which was likely to save money in the longer term. Ngozi to check. **Action NA**

- 2.8 Pt 3.11 Members asked again for details on what funding remains in the 2 year old budget and how much will be needed to pay at £6ph until 2019. It was explained that the year end close down is still being undertaken. It was confirmed that the £6 ph will be available until March 2020. Further details will be available at the next meeting. **Action NA**
Members asked that a figure of the funds remaining be circulated before the next Schools Forum meeting. **Action NA**
- 2.9 Pt 6.2 The meeting regarding the Quality Supplement (QS) has happened, Draft Terms of Reference have been drawn up and a mapping of where the QS could be spent undertaken. All sectors were represented. A further meeting will be held on **May 24th**

3. **Update on the Delivery of the 30 Hour Offer**

- 3.1 **Members asked what information had been made available to parents.** It was noted that this question had also been raised at the Primary Head’s meeting. The eligibility checking service is now open and the DfE information has been provided. It was **agreed** that it is important that any information provided is pitched correctly so that:
- a. parents realise that settings are not obliged to offer the 30 hour offer.
 - b. it is not a universal entitlement but an offer available to those who are eligible.
- The fact that it is a rationed service is likely to lead to complaints. It is unclear as to whether, if no place is available for an eligible family, they would be able to take their case to judicial review.
- 3.1.1 It is difficult for the council to provide any additional information at present due to the Purdah period around the election.
- 3.2 Various providers said they were experiencing difficulty in registering on the checking service. The provider needs to register before the parent can do so. Some parents have been told that they will not be receiving their details until September. This will impact on their ability to take up the 30 hour offer. If parents do not have their code a place can’t be held open for them; even if they have been offered one. This will need to be included in the Admissions Principles (see 3.4 below).
- 3.2.2 Parents need to be aware that they have to renew their eligibility every 3 months. The LA will be checking the system and informing settings that parents’ eligibility is coming to an end so that they can remind them to re-register.
- 3.3 The DfE held their national awayday on May 3rd at a Haringey school and listened to the local issues. They will be coming back post election to assess the local impact.
- 3.4 It was noted that effective delivery of the offer is not just about the number of children, but also ratios and admission policies. The true demand is still unknown. Although each setting administers their own admission criteria, it was **agreed** that it would be beneficial to have a set of agreed principles which everyone could work within. Criteria to be considered include:

Age	Siblings already at the setting
Disability	Haringey resident priority.
Should existing children be prioritised?	

It was **agreed** that these would be general guidelines or principles and would not preclude settings from using their own judgement in the allocation of places. Schools were keen to have a more formal admissions policy so that there was something to refer to if/when complaints come in from parents.

All settings **agreed** that the inclusion of more vulnerable children (both SEND and social issues) should be a priority. Ngozi to consider further and will draft a paper for the next meeting. **Action NA**

- 3.4.1 It is possible that the 1,710 places requested will not be enough to meet local demand. Of this 1,710, 1,050 will be on offer for 30 hour provision; as 1,710 children are deemed to be eligible this could leave a shortfall of 660 places. However, it was noted that as it would be possible to add additional services eg. lunch, ballet or additional hours to the basic 30 hour offer that there may be more places on offer than is anticipated.
- 3.4.2 It was noted that a large proportion of the shortfall is likely to be with childminder provision. Their on-going sustainability is a concern.
- 3.4.3 Additionally some settings operate out of premises from which they cannot offer the 30 hours.
- 3.4.4 It was noted that many settings are prioritising existing 15 hour parents for the 30 hour places; this does not necessarily meet the needs of the most vulnerable families. Concern was expressed about children who need a place, but are not eligible either because their parents do not work and/or they do not have the money to pay the top-up fees. Settings were asked to record any useful case studies. **Action providers**
- 3.4.5 The DfE will be asked to consider these issues. **Action NA**
- 3.5 All settings will need to consider their balance of 15 hours, 30 hours and 2 year old places, eligibility for places and the mobility of their local families.
- 3.6 It is unclear as to whether if a 30 hour family falls out of the eligibility criteria the 15 hours will still be available to them at the same provider.
- 3.7 Providers pointed out that they will need to receive the funding regularly if they are to survive; they wish to see it included in the monthly cashflow. The operational guidelines requests LAs to move to monthly payments to providers as soon as possible. This will place additional demands on the LA team; **members asked if money from the centrally held funding could be used to fund a post.** Ngozi thought that this was unlikely.
- 3.8 **Members asked whether the demand and supply were located within the same areas of the borough?** Charles said that the supply had been mapped onto children's residential ward locations, but this does not necessarily account for the areas of demand for 30 hours as families travel within wards due to work commitments and childcare.

4. **Two Year Old Programme Delivery – Update**

- 4.1 In summer 2016 there were 841 2 year olds and in spring 2017 885. The white, East Europeans groups are increasing the quickest. Overall numbers are reasonably consistent; it was not felt to be necessary to consider expanding provision. It is unclear if there would be additional money for more places. Ngozi to check. **Action NA**
- 4.2 Due to the headcount field on the provider portal becoming compulsory, more refined categorisation has led to the number of "unknowns" significantly reducing from 260 to 29. The number listed as Turkish has increased.
- 4.3 Settings said that it can be difficult to align the information provided by parents to that required by the LA as people categorise themselves in a variety of ways. Additionally some parents do not give a response. It is likely that some of the figures are giving an over or under representation of the true figures.
- 4.4 The role of the 10 Parent Champions in getting parents to take up the places available has been showing results.

- 4.5 Over the last year 1,594 2-year olds went through the system and were funded by the LA; compared to the 841 funded by the DfE. This cost £3m which is between £800,000-900,000 more than the DfE is providing. It is proposed that the reporting to the DfE will be done differently in the future. Ngozi to report back to the next meeting. **Action NA**
- 4.6 The changes to the benefit rules are impacting on larger families, which may affect their take-up of places.
- 4.7 There are no reserves now which can be used to subsidise the places. It is possible that the funding to settings will have to reduce. This could result in places being withdrawn. It was noted that it is not in the DfE's interest to close places.
- 4.8 **Members asked if the impact on the children on being involved in the programme was being tracked.** Ngozi said that the DfE were interested in this, but have not asked for it to be tracked as the children get older.
5. **DfE Updates**
- 5.1 Ngozi said that she will circulate any useful documents she obtains. Most publications are being deferred until after the general election.
6. **AOB**
- 6.1 ChildCare Choices: providers will be encouraged to set up an account so that parents pay their tax free childcare fees. Providers need a UTR tax code to do this. Schools can use the LA's. All other providers will use their UTR, via HMRC, to set up an account.
- 6.1.2 The scheme is aimed at companies, partnerships, corporations and self assessment payers so schools and charities are likely to encounter problem registering. The Chief Accountant is looking into it. Ngozi to report back next week to settings. **Action NA**
- 6.1.3 Providers were asked to let the LA know of what issues they have encountered. **Action All**
7. **Date of next meeting**
The next meeting will be held at the PDC on **12th June at 9.30am**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. There being no further business the meeting closed at **1.10pm**.

Signed:

Date: