

Kent Early Years and childcare Provider Association Meeting

15 July 2024 19.30 - 21.30 via Zoom

Lynne Tomlinson	Bright Beginnings Nurseries
Gemma Maclachlan	Childminding Representative - East Kent
Tracey McCartney	Halsted Nursery
Charlotte Roles	Dimples Day Nursery, Darent
Julie Miles	Discovery Day Nursery
Denise Howard	Rainbow Out Of School Clubs Ltd
Debbie Jones	Muddy Puddles Nursery
Sue Atkinson	Childminding Representative -West Kent
Michelle Stanley	Education Lead Adviser - Kent County Council
The Education People	
• Alex Gamby	Assistant Director 0-5 and Out of School Provision
• Debbie Henderson	Sufficiency and Sustainability Manager
• Lucy Norman	Communication and Partnerships Manager

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies

Apologies- Lisa Evans (Chair), Hayley Coombes, Karen McKinley, Zenia Ford, Abi Akin, Penny Seward

In Lisa's absence, and in the absence of a vice chair, Alex chaired the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting (25/04/24) Matters arising

Any expressions of interest for the role of Vice Chair to be sent to Alex and Lisa by the end of August (discussion covering what the role involves).

Currently identifying group representatives for Canterbury and Ashford vacancies
Last round of B&Ns, two sessions no provider reps attended.

Minutes agreed

3. Briefing and Networking Sessions

Feedback from provider reps in attendance

Charlotte

- How many of you are offering the funding for 9month-2 years and the extended for 3- & 4-year-olds? If you are not offering it why not? – everyone attending said they were offering the new entitlements
- How have you managed to creatively but legitimately issue invoices to cover costs and stay sustainable? Restricted on what they charge for (snacks, lunches, charity run so some struggle).
- Are you managing to recruit and if so, how? Most still struggling to recruit , current campaign we have had some apprentices apply.

Denise (OOS)

- Staffing – impossible to recruit, we train staff up and then they move on if you cannot offer extra hours
- One provider didn't engage with any other OOS provider and she felt very isolated
Trace back to see who this was – action Lucy
- Someone was paying for all their training; Denise directed them to The Education People website.

Childminders

Sue

- CM – payment dates- finding it extremely difficult to manage, dates vary every month
- Funding training would you attend – resounding a yes
- Collaborations – only one in a collaboration and she felt it was beneficial

Gem

- Payment dates same response
- Training, mixed response, must not be information overload
- Collaborations – some were interested in being a member but not a leader

Lisa and Penny

- New entitlements - a provider had stopped taking babies due to sustainability (last January), some settings are still only offering 30 hours, and working family 2yr olds
- Some delivering Summer HAF for the first time, charging 50p for consumables, asking for snack contributions, £55 for a place on the waiting list then refunded, charge for 30 minutes alongside the funding hours, art, dance et are chargeable
- Staffing cannot compete with TA wages, we are losing staff to schools, TTO posts. Fewer young people taking up early years and struggling to keep hold of the qualified staff we have.

PA rep attendance

Sessions on 11th and 12th no PA Reps attended; how do we handle this going forward. Do you still want this slot at the sessions ? Issues mentioned/discussed:

- Having the questions focussed the discussions and made them easier
- Could we set up a Provider Association WhatsApp group if people cannot attend?
- Julie - could attendees have the questions before hand.
- Questions need to be agreed for September and October B&N Sessions

Action all - confirm if you are happy to be in a WhatsApp group, confirming which number is to be used – Alex to share along with minutes

4. Labour government manifesto – Alex Gamby



Labour Government
Manifesto for Child

Discussion included:

- We seem to have gone full circle, only thinking about preschool not babies and toddlers.
- We are struggling to recruit so where are they are going to get the staff.
- More schools being asked to ask to increase their intake – may impact available space anyway
- 99%+ good and outstanding Ofsted's in Kent across all providers. .
- From CM point of view from the manifesto is not supporting the 'not just a babysitter strapline.'
- Wait to see how it will work, shift on how it will be funded
- HAF money cannot be used to fund BC/ASC as things stand.

5. New Entitlements and Wraparound Update

Debbie Henderson



New Entitlements
and Wraparound Uj

6. KCC Early Years Review

Cabinet Committee agreed recommendations and next steps *Sam Sheppard*

Main area that the review identified was the lack of a consistent inclusive culture. We have some really good examples of best practise of inclusion in Kent, but it's not consistent.

Key changes three and five are more about the SENIF process. SENIF practitioners are going to move to focus on targeted support. So that's about removing a lot of bureaucracy from that process.

Another key change is around training, identifying what a core training offer might be.

Overall, we will be working on an implementation plan that is really clear about what activity needs to happen.

7. Education Strategy 2025 -2030 *Michelle Stanley*

- Specific issues in Kent; the strategy will cover a huge amount.
- We are facing significant financial challenges as everyone will be aware, providers, schools, colleges and KCC.
- Range of other reviews that are currently going on.
- We need to build a sector that works effectively together as well as delivering our statutory duties
- The approach that we're using for putting the strategy together is about co construction.

Four key questions. People were invited to respond in the chat.

1. What do you see as the big issues in the education sector currently and in the future?
2. What opportunities and threats do you see?
3. What does KCC do well?
4. What do you need from KCC?

Any comments or suggestions to michelle.stanley@kent.gov.uk.

Lucy shared the chat with Michelle.

8. Stronger Practice Hub – Legacy Planning *Julie Miles*

Planning to provide an online platform, where all of our webinars, recordings, case studies, blogs etc, can be accessed. However, there's other aspects to the Hub that we don't want to lose and it's really important that we continue networks in some way. We would like to know how you think the Hub can continue if no longer resources in the same way.

We spoke to some of the other local authorities today and they do informal buddying and peer-to-peer support within settings. If you are a new setting and you're just opening up; the local authority could put a well-established setting in touch with the new setting and then they could be a mentor/buddy and help them

How do we do this? Could it be a mentorship programme?

How would that differ to our post Facebook page?

Could we offer a type of collaboration that is more around mentoring?

Maybe a slot in future on some of the briefing and networking sessions?

9. Any other business

Sue – I have been talking to childminders to find out more about what kind of training opportunities they would like because we get the emails through from The Education People with the list of training and there's very little that is outside of childminding hours. Also, one course that was mentioned was the Education Trust autism training and that there was a lot of paperwork involved.

Alex responded that we could feed that back to them as this was not a TEP process.

Meeting closed.

Next meeting 16 September – 16.30 – 18.30