

The Schools Forum Early Years Working Party Forum

The Schools Forum Early Years Working Party was set up in September 2017 to consider and assess how best to resolve the issue of the overspend within the Early Years block reported in the Schools Budget 2016/17 Outturn paper.

The key roles and remit of the group were to:

- Develop a shared understanding of how the Early Years block funding is allocated to the Local Authority and the apportioning of that funding to providers and central services
- Contribute to the effective use of the Early Years block to maximise value for money
- Develop a solutions based approach to addressing the current and to minimise future overspends
- Provide support to Early Years and Childcare providers to enable a more effective use of resources and better value for money to be achieved through a collaborative approach
- Enable effective communication between the Council and Early Years providers so that key messages are disseminated clearly and in a timely manor
- Regularly review the impact of actions being taken and ensure expected outcomes are achieved
- Ensure hourly rates going forward remain affordable within the Early Years block
- Ensure settings remain sustainable and childcare sufficiency is maintained

The working group has now disbanded as it has fulfilled its purpose. It was suggested, at the last meeting, that a new group be formed to take into consideration all aspects of Early Years Childcare and Education.

Recently, it was identified that paper administration for children with special/additional needs, is an area that keeps increasing together with the inconsistency of the forms to use. The time and financial implications is causing concerns for nurseries. We will continue to assess the above original key roles as it is vital to have these as a foundation to build on.

Research shows that the first five years of a child's life are fundamentally important. These important years are the foundation that children will build on for future learning and development.

Therefore, it is crucial in moving forward, that a working group be established that is steered by the Early Years providers and include all other factions of Early Years in their remit, opposed to being led by the Local Authority:

- Inclusion
- Childminders
- Early Years settings
- Primary Schools with nurseries attached
- Representatives from Rutland County Council including Finance
- School Forum members

Meeting four times a year to discuss any new reforms, finances and all aspects of Early Years, ensuring a good working partnership with transparency and respect.

I have attached a draft of Notification of Working Group for your perusal which sets out our intentions for this new group if it is acceptable to the Schools Forum.

Kind Regards,

Mary Darlington
Chair of Rutland Early Years Managers