

## **LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM EARLY YEARS BLOCK WORKING GROUP**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the EYB meeting scheduled for 11 June 2020 has been cancelled, to be replaced by decision making using the Forum's Urgent Business Procedure.

Information is provided in the composite paper and you can let us know your views on the issues requesting feedback by completing the eform available [here](#).

Please respond by close of business on **11 June 2020**.

Alternatively, please share your views via the chair of the working group, by emailing [peter@lancschildcare.co.uk](mailto:peter@lancschildcare.co.uk)

Some specific items raised by colleagues are being investigated further, and additional information will be circulated in due course. It is intended that a Skype meeting will then be arranged to allow members an opportunity to discuss these options in more detail.

### **AGENDA**

#### **1. Minutes of the last Meeting (Attached)**

To agree the minutes of the last meeting as a correct record.

#### **2. Matter Arising (Attached)**

To note any matter arising from the last minutes.

#### **3. Schools Budget Outturn, School Balances and Clawback 2019/20 (Attached)**

To consider the matters set out in the report and offer feedback where required.

#### **4. Schools Forum Annual Report 2019/20 (Attached)**

To support the publication of the Forum annual report for 2019/20 or offer any comments.

#### **5. Urgent Business Outcome - Alternative arrangements following the cancellation of the May 2020 school census (Attached)**

To note the decision taken using the Urgent Business Procedure.

#### **6. Funding Agreement for the Provision of Early Education Funding 2020/21**

A report is normally presented to the Working Group at this time seeking views on any proposed amendments to the Funding Agreement for the next academic year. For 2020/21, the LA is not proposing to make any changes to the agreement beyond updating the dates to reflect the 2020/21 year.

To note the information provided.

#### **7. Early Years Block Autumn Term 2020 Payments (Attached)**

A letter from the Chair of the Working Group is attached which sets out the key issues in connection to the Early Years Block Autumn Term Payments. Whilst no information

is yet available from the DfE, the LA is preparing a paper around possible options. Once this paper has been finalised it will be circulated to members and a skype meeting arranged to allow further discussion of the available options.

Details will be provided in due course.

#### **8. Funding for PVI and Childminders with additional Costs associated with COVID-19**

Schools may be able to request support directly from the DfE to assist with additional COVID-19 costs including increased premises related costs and additional cleaning costs, subject to certain conditions.

The County Council has asked the DfE if this scheme can also be made available to EY PVI providers and Childminders.

Any response will be shared at the skype meeting if it has been received.

#### **9. Local Authority Discretionary Fund**

Philippa Perks has asked if the following statement from NDNA can be shared with the group. (In Lancashire, it is district councils that deal with business rates)

##### **ENGLAND ONLY**

##### ***NDNA calls on local authorities to support childcare providers***

*Since business grants were announced of £10,000 for small businesses and £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses, NDNA has been lobbying for wider access to these grants. This is because we know that most nurseries have a rateable value that's too high to qualify for the £10,000 grant and were expressly excluded from the £25,000 grant.*

*NDNA is aware that local authorities now have access to discretionary funding to support businesses who are struggling to survive due to the Coronavirus shutdown but are unable to access other grant funding.*

*The grants available under this fund will be for £25,000, £10,000 or any amount up to £10,000 and each local authority will be responsible for their own scheme and have discretion in determining which businesses they will prioritise.*

*NDNA has already written to all Chief Executives of billing authorities to make them aware of the needs of the early years sector. And the body which represents local authorities have themselves highlighted the need to support childcare providers during this crisis.*

*To identify whether you are eligible for this grant, please check your council's website and search for 'Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund'. This fund is being managed by the council which handles your business rates so in some areas, this may be different to where your early years team is located. We understand that many have already opened their application process and there*

*are limited funds available so you must act quickly. If you cannot find anything on this fund, please do let us know and we will check our files to see if they have responded to our letter with any further details.*

*As councils will need to make decisions about how the fund would help your business, you may be asked to provide details about the loss of income you've suffered and why you need to access the grant. Each local authority area might handle this differently but you may be asked for financial information to support your application.*

This can be discussed as part of the Skype meeting.

#### **10. Early Years Consultative Group**

The Early Years Consultative Group meetings normally dovetail with the Forum meetings and Consultative Group issues have been raised, including:

- Extension of a school offer to include two-year olds;
- Matters associated with decision to recommend that early years provision should not be subject to a wider reopening from 1 June 2020.

Information will be provided as part of the Skype meeting.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

No further items have been notified

#### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

1:00 pm on 6 October 2020 at County Hall, Preston, subject to COVID-19 implications