

Agenda Item 8



REGULATORY AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORT

NAME OF COMMITTEE:	Lincolnshire Schools Forum
DATE OF MEETING:	27 April 2016
SUBJECT:	Early Years in Lincolnshire Analysis of the Local Authority's Current Early Years Priorities and Intentions for 2016-17
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IS REPORT CONFIDENTIAL?	No

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to share with the Schools Forum the Local Authority's statutory duties under the current DfE guidance for early years and provide an analysis of Lincolnshire's position for 2015-16 and priorities for 16-17.

This will enable the Schools Forum to see how Lincolnshire compares to other Local Authorities and that should help inform future discussions about early year's provision.

DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND

During 2015 -16 Lincolnshire reviewed the Early Years Support Service. For many years this service has been known as Birth to Five, however following a process of reshaping the Early

Years Services through staff consultation from January 2016 it will be named as Early Years and Childcare Support. The focus will remain on our statutory duties with regard to all early years and childcare provision and will work to improve outcomes for young children and their families with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in child development and school readiness.

The Service provides monitoring, challenge and support for inclusive practice and training to all Early Years and Childcare Providers within Lincolnshire which cater for early year's and school age children. This includes support for Schools, Pre-Schools, Nurseries, Children's Centres, Day Care Settings, Registered Childminders and Out of School Clubs. The offer that Early Years and Childcare Support provides ensures that all Early Years and Childcare Providers have access to efficient and effective support in order to deliver the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and to make a measurable, positive impact upon the lives of young children throughout Lincolnshire. As part of the new working arrangements we have aligned our area of work to reflect the locality teams geographical boundaries and introduced new line management arrangements for staff to ensure we have shared priorities with a focus on our most vulnerable children. The sector has been provided with information on the new arrangements and we will continue to provide ongoing communication via the leadership and management briefings and our updated website.

Early Years and Childcare Support provides both targeted and universal support. Accessible to all Lincolnshire Early Years providers, we continue to deliver Leadership and Management briefings three times a year, a range of training opportunities and a wealth of information and resources available through the Early Years and Childcare Support pages of the LCC website. Direct support for settings has been revised and is now provided through a targeted support programme on a county wide basis, further information on key areas of the service are within this report.

EYFS and Ofsted outcomes in early years continue to rise, Lincolnshire has a high percentage of children accessing their free Early Years Entitlements and evidence suggests that there is sufficient high quality childcare available across the county. This report will provide greater details of these areas of work and also confirm our priorities for the coming year in this changing environment.

A focus for the coming year will be to develop a strategy to define Lincolnshire's approach to "school readiness" in order to progress this work the Service Manager for Early Years and Childcare Support will bring together a number of representatives from a range of organisations and areas of expertise to contribute and participate in the development of this strategy over the coming months. To initiate the development of this work we have refocused and reshaped the children centre hub in to the school readiness hub.

EYFS PROFILE OUTCOMES

The EYFS Profile summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. It is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime and four specific areas of learning and the three learning characteristics. A completed EYFS Profile consists of the attainment of each child assessed in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) descriptors together with a short narrative describing the child's three learning characteristics. For each ELG, practitioners must judge whether a child is meeting the development expected at the end of the Reception year (expected), exceeding this level (exceeding) or not yet reaching this level (emerging).

In addition, the EYFS profile provides an accurate national data set relating to levels of children's development at the end of the EYFS. The DfE uses this to monitor changes in levels of children's development and the readiness for the next phase in their education both nationally and locally. The level of development is referred to as a good level of development (GLD). Children with a GLD are those achieving at least the expected level in all the following areas of learning: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy; and mathematics. All areas of learning within the EYFS are important and to reflect this, the GLD measure is supported by a measure of the average of the cohort's total point score across all the ELGs. This ensures that the attainment of all children across all ELGs is captured.

In 2015, 69.1% of children in Lincolnshire achieved a Good Level of Development, 2.8% higher than the national average of 66.3%. Girl's outperformed boys in Lincolnshire; 77% achieving a GLD compared to 62%. The average point score (supporting measure) in Lincolnshire was 35.1 compared to 34.3 nationally. At a national level, the achievement gap between the lowest attaining 20% of children and the mean is 32.1%. At 29.4% the gap in Lincolnshire remains less than the national figure.

Agreement trialling training was provided to schools based on analysis of the Lincolnshire EYFSP outcomes. During this academic year, training has focused on the Prime area of Personal Social and Emotional Development and the Specific area of Literacy ELGs.

2 training events for NQTs, teachers new to the EYFS, new Head teachers and senior leaders were provided to enable a clearer understanding of the profile, quality assurance of judgements and data sets.

An evaluation and planning form is completed and submitted annually to the DfE detailing the systems in place to fulfil the statutory arrangements for Local Authorities. Following a Quality Assurance visit last year, the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) confirmed that Lincolnshire met requirements as outlined within the 'Early Years Foundation Stage 2015 Assessments and reporting arrangements' and the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook'.

The Early Years and Childcare Support Moderators (Improvement Advisers) have taken part in a range of Inter LA moderation activities, including a regional group agreement trialling event in February 2016. This process has helped to ensure that judgements are consistent and accurate nationally.

Early Years and Childcare Support have been commissioned to deliver Leicester City's Moderation Process of the EYFS Profile in 2016 following a request for support. Two LA

Early Years Moderators have shared this activity, delivering training to Leicester schools and School Moderators, information briefings and supporting the coordination of the process. This will result in up to 30 days of traded work for Lincolnshire CC. Although this work will be ongoing through the summer of 2016 the initial feedback is excellent with regard to the quality of Lincolnshire systems, support and knowledge.

The outcomes achieved at the end of the EYFS are underpinned by the ongoing partnership working with schools which includes a responsive suite of training and also bespoke consultancy offered through the Brochure for LCC services. 12 training events for schools were delivered across the county during the Summer 2015 and Autumn 2015 terms and attended by over 170 teachers and teaching assistants. Early Years and Childcare Support staff have also supported 35 schools since April 2015 through paid consultancy work. This has mainly been tailored support dependent on the unique needs of each individual school, with a commitment to working in partnership to improve the outcomes of every child in the county.

QUALITY OF PROVIDERS JUDGED BY OFSTED

There are targeted quality support programmes made available to Lincolnshire Early Years and Childcare Providers with a 'less than good' Ofsted outcome, in line with the Early Education and Childcare Statutory guidance for Local Authorities (September 2014). Building on the previous successful intervention model, Early Years and Childcare Support continue to provide bespoke support through the 'Getting to Good' programme for Early Years and Childcare Providers with a Requires Improvement Ofsted outcome. The Targeted Improvement Programme that was introduced in September 2014 continues to provide intensive support and monitoring for Early Years and Childcare Providers with an Inadequate Ofsted outcome. Similar tailored programmes for registered Childminders have also been introduced and data shows that this is having a positive impact on raising standards.

Local data (latest Ofsted Breakdown January 2016 source: Information Team) indicates that currently 95% of Early Years Providers on 'non-domestic premises' were judged as good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection. This is an increase of 3% from the same period up to December 2015. This confirms that Lincolnshire's Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Early Years Providers are continuing to build on their good practice and that the revised model of support from Early Years and Childcare Support has not had a negative impact on the outcomes of providers with a good or outstanding grade.

In March 2016 Ofsted published its Early Years and Childcare Statistics as at December 31st 2015. Data shows that the overall effectiveness of registered Early Years and Childcare Providers at their most recent inspection. Data for Lincolnshire indicates that currently 86% of these providers are Good or Outstanding. This is an increase of 2% from the data published for period ending 31st August 2015. This data is higher than Regional and National outcomes and Lincolnshire is second highest in the region (9 Authorities) for the number of Good and Outstanding Early Years Registered Providers.

Universal support continues to be available to all Early Years and Childcare Providers through termly Leadership and Management Briefings which now include evening and weekend sessions to facilitate attendance. Evaluations show that these events continue to be valued by the Early Years and Childcare Sector that have been willing to pay a small fee to attend to cover room booking costs. Lincolnshire has also hosted a further 'Getting to

Good' seminar in March 2016, delivered by Ofsted, for Early Years Providers with Requires Improvement/Satisfactory and Inadequate outcomes. This seminar was well attended and the Ofsted inspectors who delivered the regional event commented that it is "positive that providers see Ofsted and their Local Authority working together." Ofsted have agreed that the Local Authority can deliver these seminars out to the Childminders who are currently less than good.

Lincolnshire's maintained Nursery Schools have continued to achieve very strong Ofsted outcomes with three of the schools graded as 'outstanding' and the remaining schools graded as 'good with outstanding' features.

The outcomes achieved at Ofsted for the Early Years and childcare sector are underpinned by support through the programmes for those providers who are less than good, this is in addition to the quality training courses offered through the Early Years Training Directory by Advisers within the Early Years and Childcare Support Team and relevant commissioned training providers. Training for both the Maintained and Non Maintained sector is developed following analysis of both Ofsted and Early Years Foundation Stage Profile datasets.

During 2015, Children's Centre Teachers continued to contribute to the very strong Ofsted outcomes for the Children's Centres across Lincolnshire. 87% of Lincolnshire Children Centre inspections have resulted in a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' outcome. The most recent 5 inspections under the new, more robust Children's Centre inspection framework have achieved a 'Good' result, demonstrating the continued commitment to working in partnership to raise outcomes for young children and their families with an outstanding outcome in centre leadership.

In the most recent Children Centre inspection in July 2015 the Ofsted report stated that;
"The majority of the activities provided for young children are of a very high quality and ensure that children make good gains in their communication and language skills as well as in their social development. In addition initiatives that focus on improving the skills of children in the most need of support such as 'Prime Time' are taken into local childcare settings by children centre teachers. These strategies not only have a direct impact on children's skills and help to narrow inequalities they also help to drive up the quality of childcare provision as staff have access to expert advice".

THE EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENTS (EYE) FOR 2, 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS

Early Years and Childcare Support is committed to securing quality early years provision and the best possible outcomes for young children and their parents at the best possible price within the available resources, as well as offering providers a reasonable level of funding to support a sufficient, sustainable and flexible market place.

The Department for Education continues to invest in 2 year old free early education places nationally for around 260,000 children. This equates to approximately 40% of all two year olds in the country.

In Lincolnshire, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) latest figures show that approximately 3,076 children are eligible to access free childcare places. In March 2016, 2,301 children were accessing their entitlement which represents 75% take-up.

In December 2015, Local Authorities reported that take-up had increased to 182,168 across the country. The national take-up reported by the DfE in March 2016 was 72% nationally and 68% in East Midlands.

The DWP continues to produce a list of all those eligible families for individual Local Authorities and this will be available 7 times during 2016-17. Children continue to be offered a place based on specific government defined criteria relating directly to an individual family's economic circumstances. Funding continues to be distributed to Local Authorities based on participation. The gap between the number of approved places compared to actual take-up is being supported by a targeted outreach programme of support. Lincolnshire has commissioned this work to the contracted partners delivering Participation & Engagement for the locality Children's Centre's and a joined up approach has been implemented to ensure the most effective methods are used to support families to access their child's entitlement. Early Years and Childcare Support continues to work in partnership with the Virtual School to ensure all Children Looked After (CLA) are supported to access their 2 year old entitlement places from the time they turn 2 years of age.

The number of Early Years Providers delivering funded 2 year old places continues to rise and there are currently 517 providers registered to deliver 2 year old places in Lincolnshire which includes 18 schools and 221 childminders. This represents 86% of all providers delivering free education places to 3 and 4 year olds. The Service is continuing to build this offer to ensure high quality provision is available for all eligible children in Lincolnshire. The DfE has commended the Local Authority's progress with the initiative.

The number of 3 and 4 year olds accessing the free entitlement continues to rise and national figures published in January 2015 indicated that 99% of 3 and 4 year old children access their free entitlement in Lincolnshire. This is above the national figure of 96% and above the regional East Midland figure of 97%. The increase in children accessing the 2 year old entitlement can be seen to be having an impact as children transition into accessing the 3/4 year old offer. Early Years and Childcare Support is working collaboratively with the Virtual School's Head to identify and fund all those Children Looked After (LAC) in early year's settings to ensure this additional funding is being used to support their needs as identified in their Personal Education Plans (PEPs). Take up will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

30 HOURS ENTITLEMENT

The Government has made a commitment to giving families where parents are working, an entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare for their 3 and 4 year olds from September 2017. This will require capacity planning across the Local Authority, especially for areas where Childcare Providers have maximised places. Early Years and Childcare Support are currently reviewing childcare capacity across Lincolnshire to ensure sufficient places are available when the additional offer is implemented in September 2017. Where any sufficiency gaps are identified we will work with the sector to address the needs of local families.

Although the sector has welcomed this there is concern that the current funding rate is not sufficient to provide quality provision and extend this entitlement further. In response to these concerns the Department for Education commissioned a report to present the findings of a research study to explore the costs of delivering the free early education entitlement. This report was published on the 25th November 2015. Following the publication of their findings,

the Government has confirmed that they will be investing additional funding to Early Years to increase the rate paid for the 2, 3 and 4 year old entitlements.

In response to the focus on the funding of Early Years Entitlements at both a national and local level, Lincolnshire has undertaken a review of our approach to funding. This work is now complete and a summary of our findings will be published shortly. This analysis has demonstrated the variance in the overheads and running costs dependent on the governance model they operate within. Due to the counties geographical size and rural nature we rely on having a diverse market place to ensure sufficiency of provision for families and we try to address this by the formula which is currently operating.

The Government has committed to consult on an Early Years National Funding Formula in 2016 and we expect to receive further information about the local rates for 2, 3 and 4 year olds in Lincolnshire in 2016-17. It is expected that the new rates will be implemented from April 2017 and we await this announcement prior to making any changes to the current operating model.

The commitment to increase the rates shows the importance the Government has placed on funding high quality childcare. The Local Authority will continue to support the Early Years and Childcare Sector and ensure the new rates will support the sustainable delivery of the Early Years Entitlements, including the new 30 hour entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds for working families.

EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM

Early Years Pupil Premium funding was introduced in April 2015, to build on the successful model of the school-age Pupil Premium. It ensures more money is spent on those three and four-year-old that will benefit most from additional investment. The aim of the Early Years Pupil Premium is to close the gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers by providing funding to Early Years Providers to help them raise the quality of their provision. It complements the Government-funded Early Education Entitlement by providing nurseries, schools, and other providers with up to an additional £302 a year for each eligible child. This equates to an hourly rate of 53p per child per hour.

Restrictions are not imposed on how providers spend the Early Years Pupil Premium, however Early Years Improvement Advisors continue to support the sector with good practice ideas. Ofsted are responsible for holding providers to account for how they have used the EYPP to support their disadvantaged children through the regular inspection process. During 2015-16, Lincolnshire has seen a very high take-up of Early Years Pupil Premium. The estimated number of EYPP eligible 3 and 4 year olds in Lincolnshire was 1,637 according to published data in 2014 by Technical Support Team, Society of County Treasurers.

During 2015/16 the take up during each of the terms is below with the take up for the spring term at 98%.

Period of Funding	Number of children	Percentage Take-up
Summer Term 2015	1,343	82%
Autumn Term 2015	1,143	70%
Spring Term 2016	1,608	98%

CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY

There continues to be a significant number of newly registered Early Years and Childcare Providers opening up around the county each year. Some of these new registrations represent new childcare businesses and thus new childcare places, whilst others have been as a result of relocation, change of ownership or change of governance, which may or may not have impacted on the number of places they are able to offer.

In addition to this, there has been a significant increase in the number of schools introducing Early Years Provision. Since the introduction of the Small Business Enterprise Act 2015 we have seen an increase in the number of schools offering 2 year old places in addition to the for 3 and 4 year old places that they already offer. The DfE commissioned the Family and Childcare Trust to undertake a project to support schools to develop a flexible free early education offer. A networking event took place in the spring 2016 to review this work in Lincolnshire. Some of the Early Years and Childcare Support consultants attended alongside Lincolnshire schools that have been involved in the project. Feedback from schools was positive and as a result of the programme the FCT has developed a toolkit that can be used by other schools to support them on the journey towards establishing early year's provision.

The development of 2 year old places has been driven by the Governments' agenda to provide funded early education places for the 40% most disadvantaged 2 year olds. The trajectory funding and capital funding made available to the Local Authority has been used to target where 2 year old places are most needed.

A detailed analysis of the market capacity and the expected additional eligible children was undertaken and a breakdown of the needs assessment by district area was created. The targeted activity has included capital build programmes to create new places and small revenue grants to improve the quality of existing 2 year old provision. Many capital projects have been completed however there are still several in development as we move into the 2016-17 financial year to support the market need.

Changes to the Statutory Duty placed on Local Authorities in September 2014 means that all new Early Years Providers are able to deliver the Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds upon opening. This supports the Local Authority to meet its Sufficiency Duty, however following a provider's first Ofsted inspection, where a judgement of 'Inadequate' is published the Local Authority is obliged to find alternative provision and withdraw funding, as soon as is practicable. The Local Authority is required to consider the continuity of care for children who are already receiving their funded entitlement, however funding will not be administered for any new children starting at the provision. An improved Ofsted inspection is required in order to offer additional funded places. To mitigate this, a programme of support has been developed to give new providers the best chance of achieving a good or better judgement at their next inspection and thus maintaining a sufficient supply of funded childcare places.

There have been the inevitable closures but overall the number of available places has increased over the last year. There are a number of reasons for this which include; change in personal circumstances for owners i.e. retirement, financial pressures other issues include quality issues leading to inadequate judgements.

The market place will continue to fluctuate and therefore a new capacity audit is currently being analysed to inform future sufficiency planning for the period 2016-2017 and will also inform the Annual Sufficiency Report.

Early Year's and Childcare continues to deliver group briefing sessions for those wanting to register as a Childminder. These are still provided around the county in response to demand. Once Childminders are registered with Ofsted they have access to a variety of tools and resources to support their development journey via the LCC Early Years and Childcare Support web pages; it is not possible with current resource levels to provide individual support on a one to one basis to assist them to achieve a good or better Ofsted judgement at first inspection. If the outcome of the first inspection is less than good then there is a support programme in place similar to the one provided to Early Years Providers.

Those wanting to develop standalone out of school provision are supported remotely in the first instance with telephone advice and support provided; A key driver for this is capacity within the service however legislation around out of school provision has been significantly relaxed since September 2014. Those seeking to establish new early year's provision can request a visit from a Sector Support & Development Consultant.

WORKFORCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Years and Childcare Support continues to support the development of the Early Years & Childcare Workforce across Lincolnshire to ensure that managers / leaders are able to drive forward continual improvement and ultimately improve outcomes for children in readiness for school. Growing and retaining a highly skilled workforce has been recognised as key in supporting the delivery of outstanding practice.

The Lincolnshire online Early Years Training Directory provides a comprehensive programme of statutory courses that assist the sector to meet the EYFS / Ofsted requirements and to provide and maintain high quality provision. The training includes a range of face to face events and e-learning modules to support the learning styles of users and ensure training is accessible. The Childminder pre-registration briefing sessions that were piloted last year have proved to be successful in preparing those new to the sector to be inspection & delivery ready and therefore further dates will be planned for this year. We have reviewed and revised our commissioning arrangements for the provision of safeguarding training with LSCB for the Early Years and Childcare Sector. This is to ensure consistent messages are delivered and to encourage greater opportunities to build positive working relationships in a locality multi-agency environment.

Regular information sharing at Managers Briefings enables the Early Years and Childcare Support Workforce Development Team to keep the sector abreast of imminent changes to legislation and promote tools that have been created to support managers with developing their staff teams in order to meet the requirements placed upon them within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The web based audit tool continues to be developed after feedback from the sector, making suggestions where a change to the system will enhance how they will use it to record and monitor training profiles of their staff.

The continuation of Graduate Support Programme Funding (GSP) has enabled practitioners to further their studies, supporting the setting with funding for staff cover in order to ensure that the children within the setting are safe, their learning and development are not

compromised and the setting remains within the required staff ratios. The Graduate Leader Subsidy enables the settings to pay a salary enhancement to the graduates that they employ in order to retain them within the Early Years Workforce (it is recognised within the Private, Voluntary & Independent sector that there are not the salary scales or terms and conditions from which graduates may benefit are not as attractive as the maintained sector therefore supporting equality for the graduates) The Workforce Team within Early Years and Childcare Support have excellent links with local FE / HE Training Providers, working in partnership to promote the graduate pathways open to the sector.

The Lincolnshire Early Years Postgraduate (EYP) Network remains strong, with a maintained membership of over 130 EYP's. Early Years and Childcare Support continues to support the network with the focus on a sector led model that will direct the work of the network going forward. The Early Years Professionals and the Early Years Teachers within Lincolnshire remain committed to the role they play in supporting children and their families and also their colleagues.

During this year's programme members received training from Mary Barlow who supported them in thinking differently about the environment for the under twos and a session with Chris Jones (co-delivered with our own Skills Coaches) looking at how leaders support through a coaching & mentoring approach.

The network of 30 Graduate Early Years Skills Coaches, from both Early Years settings and registered Childminders, are now offering peer to peer support to managers across Lincolnshire on the 'Getting To Good' programme as well as working in partnership with Bishop Grosseteste University, who are using the Skills Coaches to offer mentoring required to those students on the Early Years Teacher Pathway. This project has now been expanded further to include support for newly registered Childminders or Childminders with a judgement of requires improvement taking part in the Getting to Good programme.

During 2015/16 the Graduate Leader Fund has sponsored 30 graduates to undertake the Level 3 Forest School Training with Natural Choice Training Ltd. This training supports the learning and development of children using the outdoor environment and is being embraced by all involved. Using their skills and then encouraging them to think differently regarding the delivery of activities is having a huge effect on those children who are happier expressing themselves within a natural space. This ethos has been proven beneficial to the development of boys and those children who are most vulnerable which is one of Lincolnshire's key priorities for early years however our own evaluation will be carried out with those settings who have been involved and the impact on the development of individual children tracked to inform future commissioning arrangements.

30 more leaders passed the level 5 Diploma in Leadership & Management with Riverside Training, further developing them to address the management of the staff team, an area that is not addressed within the Early Years degree qualifications. The emphasis on the skills of the managers in settings is a key focus during an Ofsted inspection; this course supports those with this responsibility with the knowledge and confidence to improve their performance in this area.

Early Years and Childcare Support continue to provide a programme of training events and also packages of support for schools through the School's Brochure for LCC services. This area of work is described above in the EYFS profile outcomes section of this report.

INCLUSION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

From January 2016, inclusion support for Early Years settings is provided by the Early Years Locality Teams with guidance and support from the School Readiness Hub. Early Years Specialist Teachers now provide bespoke support to ensure that providers which are funded to deliver Early Years Entitlement places are aware of their duties within the revised SEND Code of Practice and are proactive in early identification and meeting the needs of all children. Early Years Providers continue to be supported through the allocation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund which enables them to enhance support for children with severe and complex needs. As part of Lincolnshire's SEND Local Offer, Early Years Inclusion Funding supports government strategy by enabling early intervention and removing barriers to learning faced by children with special educational needs. Inclusion funding is used by Early Years Providers to:

- Provide enabling environments by providing Enhanced staff ratios
- Purchase specialist equipment

This funding has supported 425 children from April 2014 – March 2015. This is an increase of 135 families on last year's figures. The funding reduces reliance on requesting Education, Health and Care Plans for our youngest children with additional needs, by providing a mechanism for children to access Early Years Provision with appropriate support. If it is felt that a child may need further support with transition into school that cannot be met through the schools notional SEN budget an Education, Health and Care Plan can be requested and be in place if criteria is met by the time child enters school.

Following the implementation of the revised SEND Code of Practice, in which the statutory timescales for an Education, Health and Care assessment are shorter than the previous statutory assessments, there are now a number of children in Early Years settings that have an Education, Health and Care Plan. The final plan makes reference to Early Years Inclusion Funding in the resource section. There are currently 30 children in pre-school settings with an Education, Health and Care plan in place, 27 of whom will be starting school in September 2016.

Inclusion Funding continues to be accessed by maintained Early Years Provision i.e. nursery schools and nursery classes in schools and registered Childminders. In order to ensure Inclusion funding is being targeted to provide support to Lincolnshire's most vulnerable children who are operating significantly below their appropriate age and stage of development, the current processes and guidance are currently being reviewed and updated and will be shared with all Early Years providers and relevant professionals. All Early Years Providers are invited to attend SENCo network clusters at a small charge, which provide updates on statutory, national and local processes so that the sector's understanding and provision of high quality inclusive early years practice continues to be embedded across Lincolnshire.

The National Autistic Society EarlyBird Programme for parents of pre-school children with autism has continued to be delivered in the summer and autumn term of 2015. The delivery of EarlyBird requires staff to be fully trained and accredited to facilitate this programme and a number of families requiring this type of intervention at the same time in a local area which is often not the case due to the specialist support it provides. In order to identify other more

sustainable approaches in partnership with the Lincolnshire All Age Autism Strategy other options are being considered to ensure that there is training available for parents and practitioners in regard to autism and children in the Early Years. This will incorporate the Department for Education's 'Early Years Autism Competency Framework' and standards.

Early Years and Childcare Support continue to have an integral role in Lincolnshire's implementation of the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years. An Early Years Lead Adviser participates in the weekly allocations meeting, where requests for Education, Health and Care assessments are considered. The Early Years Sector will also be represented on the newly formed SEND steering group which provide strategic oversight, leadership and accountability for developing the Lincolnshire SEND self-evaluation and implementing the SEND action plan.

The Lead Adviser for vulnerable children continues to work closely with the SEND team to update and ensure Early Years processes are reviewed and reflect the views of parents and the Early Years sector as part of Lincolnshire's Local Offer.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Early Years and Childcare Support is committed to working in partnership with localities, targeted teams and other agencies across Lincolnshire to raise outcomes for young children. There are numerous examples of successful partnership working across Lincolnshire teams. The managers within the service are working closely with colleagues in the newly formed Early Years Locality Teams to identify and support the most vulnerable children and are actively involved in quality assuring CfBT Early Years Groups in the Children's Centres. This rigorous process has recently been revised to reflect the significant role in improving and sustaining the delivery of high quality group sessions. The Lead Adviser for vulnerable children has continued to develop links and delivered an input on the re-structure of support for the Early Years to team meetings for Community Paediatricians, ESCo, Sensory Education Support Team, Educational Psychology Team, SEND Practice Supervisors and furthered developed working partnerships with the Early Help Consultants, Specialist Nurse Training Team and the Working Together Team. Future meetings are planned with the Targeted Children's Services Team (Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists) and the Fostering and Adoption Team.

During the Summer and Autumn Terms of 2015, the Children's Centre Teachers (CCTs), continued to deliver a targeted project for 2 year olds called Prime Time, working in partnership with Early Years Providers who deliver the Early Years Entitlement for 2 year olds. Working with funded children, and prioritising the most vulnerable children who are known to Children's Services, the project aimed to raise achievement of vulnerable children and to support families to raise outcomes for their children. . During Summer term 2015 and Autumn term 2015, 266 children accessed a Prime Time Programme, 33% of whom were open to Children's Services. This reflects the focus on targeting the more vulnerable children, with an increase in 5% on the previous year's data. All children who participated made progress in some or all Prime Areas of learning i.e. Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development. Follow up visits have been successful in ensuring the children's progress continues to be monitored in order to narrow the gap of achievement for the most vulnerable 2 year olds. The Prime Time programme was recognised for the impact it had in promoting the best outcomes for vulnerable children by being named as a finalist at the annual Nursery World Awards and Children and Young People's (CYP) awards. The School Readiness Hub is now working with

Early Years Locality Teams to establish group based intervention models to target support on the most vulnerable children who may or may not be attending an Early Years Provider.

Following the pilot of the integrated 2 year old review in East Lindsey, information sessions were co-delivered with a Health Visitor to the Early Years sector. These events were oversubscribed and attended by approximately 320 Early Years Providers, Health Visitors and CfBT Early Years colleagues. The events aimed to raise awareness of the role of the ASQ-3 used by Health Visitors, reflect on the EYFS progress check at 2-3 and share ideas on how to further develop sharing information to inform the best outcomes for children. Evaluations reflected the increased understanding of the role of the Health Visitor check and the opportunities Early Years Providers had identified to further develop information sharing.

The School Readiness Hub will be leading the Early Years Teams in developing pathways of support for the following vulnerable groups of children: Open to Children's Services; Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; Children Looked After; children at risk of exclusion and children with English as an acquired language.

Tracking systems are being developed to record not only the support and intervention provided through the Children's Centres and Early Years Team for children on a plan, but also the impact this has had on the child's educational progress, with the aim of narrowing the gap of attainment.

Working closely with the Virtual School and the Specialist Teaching Team, a pathway of support has been developed to ensure the educational progress of Children Looked After is closely monitored and informs appropriate intervention. Termly visits will be carried out by Early Years Specialist Teachers which will include completion of the WellComm Speech and Language Assessment. This mirrors the support provided to schools by the Specialist Teaching Team for Children Looked After in Key Stage 1 and will contribute to a data pathway of progress with communication and language for all Children Looked After from the age of 2 – 7.

A pathway of support is currently being developed to support children in the Early Years who may be at risk of exclusion. Working in partnership with the Re-integration team, an Early Years Intervention Ladder will be developed to provide for Early Years Practitioners and ensure a smooth transition into school for children who are showing significant delay in Managing Feelings and Behaviours. The Spring Term Early Years SENCO network cluster has a focus on supporting these children and their families and will include some joint delivery with the Early Help Consultants to promote the role of the Early Help Assessment in identifying with families what is causing concern, what is working well and what needs to happen next.

In order to narrow the gap of attainment for children who have English as an acquired language, a focus of the School Readiness Hub will be to work with the Early Years Locality Teams to develop strategies and support to Early Years providers, building on the previously successful Boston Equality in Minority Communities Project.

The Service Manager for Early Years continues to be committed to working with Early Years Providers and the Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliances to develop models and explore innovative practice with regard to sector led improvement in Early Years. Early Years and Childcare Support colleagues continue to work in partnership with both KYRA and Elite

Teaching School Alliances', who both have individually been successful in securing grants regarding sector lead improvement projects.

The termly Early Years Leadership and Management Briefings are delivered across the county three times a year, providing further opportunities for partnership working. Over the last year, these briefings have included inputs from Early Help Consultants on the signs of safety and Early Help, updates on the introduction of the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework, the Prevent Strategy, the restructure of Early Years support and raising awareness of accident prevention based on data provided by Public Health.. These briefings continue to be well attended and valued by the sector with on average 300 attendees at the events delivered across the county each term.

EARLY YEARS CONFERENCE

The Early Years and Childcare conference that was held at the Lincolnshire Showground in June 2015 was extremely well attended, a two day event that attracted almost 500 practitioners. With the title 'Be healthy, Be cool, Be ready for school' this gave a focus to the health, well-being and transition to school.

Neil Farmer focused on getting it right for boys and workshops were delivered by Shonnette Bason (Permission to be Happy), Ann Butler (Stickykids – Move it and Groove it, encouraging physical activity), Debbie Garvey (Exploring Food through the EYFS), Jean Barlow (Making Friends and Learning New Things), Ben Kingston-Hughes (School Readiness) Mary Barlow (Discovering Transition) Kate Sparling (Promoting Team Games and Cognitive Development). Closed by Andy Cope – The Art of Being Brilliant ensured that all delegates went away feeling positive about what they would return to the setting and trial as a result of their learning. For 2016 we are looking to provide more localised workshops and events to engage providers in to getting to know and work with their Early Help Locality Teams rather than a single county wide event.

BUDGETS

The DSB budget for Early Years is across two key areas identified via the following budget codes of MCHAD 35101 and MCHAD35105.

Summary of Early Years and Childcare Support (previously named MCHAD 35101)

This includes staffing and associated costs to enable Early Years and Childcare Support to deliver a range of support services across the Early Years PVI and maintained sector as described within this paper. It includes areas such as direct support, training, information and advice to Early Years Providers and Childminders in relation to meeting the needs of vulnerable children who are looked after and those with an identified inclusion need. Also provided within this area is targeted support to Childminders and Early Years Providers, in response to an Ofsted inspection with an outcome of less than good or a new Ofsted registration giving additional support on the facilities, equipment and policies without this support there is significant risk that the number of children in Lincolnshire accessing good and outstanding EY would decline and outcomes for children would not continue on its current upward trajectory.

Summary of EYE 2, 3 and 4 Year Olds: (previously named MCHAD35105)

The second area is directed to the delivery of the EYE for 2, 3, and 4 years olds across the county including the payments to all Early Years Providers and Childminders registered to deliver the Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 years olds including all the required support systems, administration, distribution marketing, data collection, monitoring and auditing.

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2016-17

- Continue to provide targeted support to Early Years Providers and Childminders in order to sustain and increase the number of settings within Lincolnshire with a good or outstanding Ofsted outcome to ensure that all children in Lincolnshire experience a high quality education.
- Continue to monitor take up and increase as required the number of children accessing the 2, 3 and 4 year old free entitlement.
- Continue to develop collaborative strategies with the Virtual School to improve outcomes for all Children Looked After (CLA) in Lincolnshire, ensuring CLA access their 2 year old entitlement at the earliest opportunity.
- Review the support provided throughout the early years to reflect the statutory requirements of Local Authorities with respect SEND.
- Support the delivery of Lincolnshire's Early Help Strategy.
- Continue to implement a targeted model of support for providers across Lincolnshire, including Childminders and focus on those providers who have been judged as Inadequate or Requires Improvement by Ofsted.
- To determine opportunities for sustainable traded services and investigate options to provide training through this type of delivery model.
- Continue to work in partnership with the Early Years Providers and Teaching school alliances to support sector led improvement.
- Respond to any changes to guidance, policy and legislation in relation to the statutory duties that are placed on the LA following the consultation expected in 2016 on the delivery of 30 hours and the Early Years funding review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Early Years and Childcare Support endeavours to maximise outcomes for Lincolnshire's youngest children through the delivery of varied early intervention strategies. To ensure that sufficient, inclusive, quality provision is being delivered across the county and has strong relationships with Service users.

The Service is well placed to support the Early Years sector in order to continue to improve children's outcomes, support inclusive practice, school readiness and improve and maintain safeguarding practices within the county's Early Help strategy.

The Schools Forum is asked to:

- a. Note the contents of the report.
- b. Consider and comment upon the contents of the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS			
PAPER TYPE	TITLE	DATE	ACCESSIBILITY
Department for Education	Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities	September 2014	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2
Department for Education	2-year-old early education entitlement: Local Authority guide	May 2015	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2-year-old-early-education-entitlement-local-authority-guide
Department for Education	Childcare Policy Bill Statement	December 2015	https://www.gov.uk/.../Childcare_Bill_Policy_Statement_12.03.2015.pdf
Department for Education	30 hours early implementers	February 2016	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-parents-benefit-from-30-hours-free-childcare-early
Department for Education	Review of childcare costs	November 2015	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-childcare-costs
Department for Education	Early Years Pupil Premium	March 2015	https://www.gov.uk/early-years-pupil-premium-guide-for-local-authorities
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	Early years and Childcare inspections and outcomes September 2014 to December 2014	March 2015	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-and-childcare-inspections-and-outcomes-september-2014-to-december-2014
Department for Education	Implementation study: integrated review at age 2 to 2 and a half years – integrating the Early Years Foundation Stage progress check and the Healthy Child Programme Health and Development Review.	November 2014	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/376698/DFE-RR350_Integrated_review_at_age_two_implementation_study.pdf