

Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Interim Director of Education

Report to:	Lincolnshire Schools' Forum
Date:	20 June 2019
Subject:	Annual Report for Early Years

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Provide information on the delivery and performance of Early Years and Childcare Support during 2018/19.
2. Outline the priorities of Early Years and Childcare Support for 2019/20.

Recommendation(s):

Schools Forum is asked to:

1. Consider the content of the report, and
2. Agree the priorities for Early Years and Childcare for 2019/20.

Background

Early Years and Childcare Support (EYCC) provides information, support, challenge, and training opportunities to all early years and childcare providers within Lincolnshire. This includes Academies, Schools, Private, Voluntary and Independent providers, Registered Childminders and Out of School Clubs. For the benefit of this report, these will be referred to as "providers".

Early Years and Childcare Support offers providers access to effective support in order to deliver the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and ensure there is sufficient provision available for families in Lincolnshire. This support enables providers to effectively meet the needs of children and has a particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable families, in order to reduce inequalities in child development and promote the school readiness agenda.

Early Years and Childcare Support has responsibility for six key areas within Children's Services. These are:

1. Funding and delivery of the Early Years Entitlements for 2, 3 & 4 Year Olds
2. Provision of sufficient and sustainable early years and childcare provision for children aged 0-14 years (18 years for those with SEND)
3. Delivery of quality provision and educational outcomes for children (within the EYFS framework)
4. Professional development and workforce training in the early years and childcare sector
5. Inclusion funding and SEN advice and support
6. Partnership working in relation to school readiness including health and the quality and delivery of Children's Centres

1) The Early Years Entitlements (EYE) for 2, 3 & 4 Year Olds

Evidence shows that attending high quality early education has a lasting impact on social and behavioural outcomes of young children. The entitlements make childcare more accessible and affordable for parents and enables parents to access training, work or increase their working hours if they wish to do so.

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours a week of free early learning. Take-up is currently at 95% nationally and at 97% in Lincolnshire. The greatest change within the sector during 2018/19 was the introduction of a monthly payments system to support providers to effectively manage their budgets to support sustainability within the market.

2 Year Old Early Education Entitlement

The Department for Education (DfE) continues to invest in 2 year old free early education places nationally for around 260,000 children.

Changes have been introduced to the eligibility criteria for families accessing Universal Credit which has impacted on the number of families eligible.

In Lincolnshire, we have seen a decrease in the number of children potentially eligible based on the lists produced by the DWP. The list produced in January 2019, in anticipation of take-up in the 2019 summer term showed 2,467 families potentially eligible.

- In spring term 2019, Lincolnshire's take-up is at 80% with 2,093 children accessing a funded place.
- Take-up nationally is at 72% based on the Statistical First Release published by the DfE in 2018.

The number of Early Years Providers delivering funded 2 year old places continues to rise and there are currently 590 providers registered to deliver 2 year old places in Lincolnshire which represents 85% of all providers delivering free education

places to 3 and 4 year olds. EYCC 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.

A joined up approach to outreach has been developed between EYCC, the locality teams and partners to ensure the most effective methods are used to support families to access their child's entitlement. EYCC also 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, and this support continues until children reach statutory school age. Collaborative working arrangements are in place with the Virtual School's to ensure specific support is in place and children's educational needs are identified and tracked within their Personal Education Plans (PEPs).

Early Years Pupil Premium

Early Years Pupil Premium is additional funding for providers to improve the education they offer for disadvantaged 3 and 4 year olds. Providers receive up to an additional £302 per year for each eligible child. This equates to an hourly rate of 53p per child. Restrictions are not imposed on how providers spend the Early Years Pupil Premium; however Early Years Improvement Advisors continue to support the sector promoting areas of good practice. 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.

In spring term 2019, 1,146 children in Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings and an additional 545 children in schools qualified for EYPP. This represents 103% take-up compared with the government's original prediction of eligible children. The DfE has committed to review the delivery mechanism for EYPP to ensure appropriate levels of funding are allocated to Local Authorities.

Disability Access Funding

3 & 4 year olds are eligible for DAF if they met the following criteria:

- The child is in receipt of child Disability Living Allowance and;
- The child receives free early education.

The settings of three and four year olds eligible for the DAF are entitled to receive a one-off payment of £615 per year. The DAF is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement. Children do not have to take up their full early year's education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement. If a child eligible for the DAF is splitting their free entitlement across two or more providers, parents have been asked to nominate the setting they wish to receive this additional funding.

In 2018/19, a total of 157 children have qualified and been funded for DAF in Lincolnshire. The local authority continues to encourage childcare providers to

seek parent's permission to check eligibility for this additional funding to maximise take-up.

30 Hours Entitlement

Since the introduction of the extended entitlement to 30 hours free provision, Lincolnshire has seen a growing number of children accessing places.

Following the publication of a DfE survey in March 2019, the following results were published:

- National take-up: 92%
- East Midlands Regional Take-up: 93%
- Lincolnshire take-up: 96%

Currently, 95% of childcare providers in Lincolnshire are offering the extended 30 hours entitlement. There are 695 providers registered to deliver funded places in Lincolnshire and this demonstrates a diverse market place which enables parents to access their extended entitlement.

To support the sustainable implementation of the 30 hours, these additional hours are being funded at the revised universal hourly base rate. There is still an unknown impact of how the introduction of 30 hours may affect the market place. Many parents may return to work or increase their working hours based on this new offer and therefore the capacity requirements could change, therefore the market place is being closely monitored.

Monthly Payments

Lincolnshire successfully implemented a monthly payments system from September 2018 following consultation with the sector, providing extensive training and support to providers. All providers in Lincolnshire submit claims on a monthly basis (by a specified date) and have been paid on a timely basis within the parameters of the payment schedule. Feedback from the sector regarding the new payments system has been overwhelmingly positive and this is supporting providers to manage their budgets more effectively.

An online data collection system is being utilised to ensure accurate and up to date claims and payments are delivered on a monthly basis.

2) Sufficient and Sustainable Early Years and Childcare Provision

In 2017, the local authority undertook a sufficiency audit to assess the availability, accessibility, flexibility and affordability of childcare in Lincolnshire. The outcome of this audit demonstrated that Lincolnshire was in a strong position to meet the needs of families and there was capacity within the market place to meet the changing requirements of families childcare needs in relation to the implementation of 30 hours childcare.

It was recognised that this did not, however, account for parental choice and we may have had capacity in provision that parents did not wish to access. This is always an unknown variable within a sufficiency audit and it was therefore identified that a parental survey would be completed in 2018 as a continuation to this audit. The survey was designed to assess the sufficiency, quality and flexibility of early years and childcare provision being offered in Lincolnshire and gain parents' view-points to further understand how providers have responded to the needs of families in Lincolnshire.

In addition, the local authority wanted to gain an understanding of how the market-place was responding to demands for 30 hours childcare for working families. The County Council worked with Hemsall's Consultancy (a specialist early years and research company) to undertake a questionnaire survey of parents and carers living in Lincolnshire.

The survey was available on-line between 4th June and 31st July 2018, widely promoted by Lincolnshire via social media, childcare providers, websites and posters throughout the county. Lincolnshire had a very successful response rate to the survey, with 1,033 questionnaires being completed by parents across the county.

The questionnaire survey asked parents and carers to share their experiences of using childcare, including where they felt there needed to be more childcare available to them.

Key themes were identified within the survey. These include:

- Parents using childcare are happy with quality (93% reported being satisfied with the quality of childcare used).
- The vast majority of parents and carers using childcare (95%) were satisfied with the childcare arrangements they had in place.
- For some parents and carers there is a need for more childcare, particularly for school-aged children.
- A need for childcare at different times of the day or during school holidays
- One of the main barriers to using more childcare is cost.

Following feedback from the parental survey and to ensure we respond to the feedback provided, the Early Years & Childcare Support team has developed some key proposals to take forward - these have been identified within a childcare delivery plan for 2019-20.

3) Quality Provision / Educational Outcomes

EYFS Profile Outcomes

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) 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. Children with a Good Level of Development (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.

Local Authority responsibilities for the moderation of the EYFS Profile

As set out in the Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2019 p. 48-49 and pages 42-43 the LA has a responsibility to provide quality assurance of data as set out below.

LAs should implement an effective process to scrutinise the validity and accuracy of the EYFS profile data prior to submission to DfE. The dataset should be checked by the moderation manager and LA data professionals at a level of detail that enables anomalies to be identified and highlighted to settings for review and amendment (where necessary).

At least 25% of providers within an LA receive a moderation visit each year. LA s must ensure that all providers are visited at least once every 4 years as part of a cycle of moderation visits. In addition to planned visits to all settings on a 4 year cycle, moderation visits or support may be triggered by:

- Newly Qualified teachers and practitioners new to the EYFS
- Requests from head teachers
- New senior leadership team
- Ofsted concern
- Settings with an EYFS cohort for the first time
- Concerns raised by the School improvement partner or LA personnel
- Data anomalies
- Unusual patterns of attainment
- Non-attendance training events
- Concern relating to the 2017/18 assessment cycle including maladministration

- All practitioners responsible for the completion of the EYFS profile who are not receiving a moderation visit should take part in training.

EYCC coordinate and manage this process through a nominated Early Years Improvement Advisor who takes the lead role, as nominated moderation manager. An evaluation and planning form is completed and submitted annually to the DfE detailing the systems in place for early years moderation, to fulfil the statutory arrangements for Local Authorities.

To support this work the Early Years Improvement Advisers have taken part in a range of Inter LA activities, including a regional group agreement trialling event in spring 2019. This process has helped to ensure that judgements are consistent and accurate nationally. The Lincolnshire EYFSP moderators in 2019 include Local Authority officers and also 14 school based moderators.

2018 EYFS Profile data:

- Lincolnshire achieved a Good Level of Development measure of 69.1%, 2.4% lower than the national average of 71.5%. This is broken down at district level as follows

2018 GLD – district level	
Lincoln	66.1
West Lindsey	69.5
East Lindsey	65.8
North Kesteven	76.3
South Kesteven	73.3
Boston	62.2
South Holland	65.5

- Girls outperformed boys in Lincolnshire; 76% achieving a GLD compared to 62% the gap widened from 12% in 2017 to 14% in 2018.
- The average point score (supporting measure) in Lincolnshire was 34.4 broadly in line with National.

Data for disadvantaged cohorts was analysed in order to offer targeted support to the Early Years Workforce.

- For the Lowest attaining 20% of children, the national gap is 31.8%. At 32.2% the gap in Lincolnshire remains slightly wider than the national figure, but narrower than the East Midlands average of 33.1%.
- For children eligible for Pupil premium the gap between them and their non-eligible peers is 20% in Lincolnshire, compared to 18% nationally. The gap remained the same in Lincolnshire for these children in 2018.
- For children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) the gap between them and their English as a first language peers is 14% in Lincolnshire compared to 7% nationally. The gap widened for these children in Lincolnshire in 2018 by 1%.

As a result of the widening gap between Lincolnshire and National outcomes EYCC took the following action:

- Detailed data analysis of the outcomes has been shared with Early Years providers through the Spring Leadership and Management Briefings at National, Lincolnshire and District level, so that all providers understand where there are gaps in children's learning. This will support practitioners to have a greater understanding of these areas of learning and to promote a need to focus on these within the planning and delivery of children's learning.
- EYCC has met with Teaching School representatives to share data outcomes with a view to working with them collaboratively to focus on developing a sector led approach to improving outcomes and narrowing the gap.
- EYCC identified trends and key priorities from the EYFS Profile data to share with the Early Years Locality Leads and the commissioned provider for Children's Centres (Early Years Alliance) at a countywide level to focus delivery models, with a priority around communication and language.
- EYCC Improvement Advisers have used data analysis on gaps in outcomes to inform their training course offer within the EYCC training directory, which is offered flexibly to meet the needs across the sector. Courses have been reviewed to ensure that they focus on the need to narrow the gap in outcomes for all children.
- EYCC has established links with EMTET (Ethnic Minority Traveller Education Team) to share data analysis on outcomes for children with English as an additional language and to identify a pathway of support for identified children as they transition into school.
- Agreement trialling training was provided to schools based on analysis of the Lincolnshire EYFSP outcomes in Autumn 2018 and Spring 2019 focussing on the Literacy and Numeracy Early Learning Goals. This year, these events will also focus on these goals, with standards discussions focussing on cohort analysis including those children who are Looked After and eligible for Pupil Premium.
- Training events for NQTs, teachers new to the EYFS, and separate events for Head teachers and senior leaders were provided to enable a clearer understanding of the Early Years profile, quality assurance of judgements and data sets.
- An Early Years Improvement Advisor has attended termly Head teacher briefings to share the data analysis focussing on the gaps in outcomes and to provide information on the moderation process.
- EYCC have been booked to deliver a CPD session for Head teachers on Closing the Word Gap and Increasing Vocabulary at the Summer Head teacher Briefings.
- Since January 2016 the work of the Early Years Specialist teachers under the Early Help teams has been to focus support on improving educational outcomes for Lincolnshire's most vulnerable children, through partnership working with Early Help workers and social care through children centres,

EY settings and in the child's home, working with providers to support children on a plan and children with an SEN.

- EYCC is working with LTT to develop bespoke targeted programmes to support schools and academies over the next year aimed at improving literacy outcomes in the reception year.
- In response to the widening gap in outcomes, EYCC has in 2018-19 implemented a programme of focussed support directed at schools and academies where outcomes were more than 20% adrift from the National measure for Good Level of Development in 2018. This was designed to better support them to prepare their staff to work with the reception children to best meet their needs to maximise opportunities for learning throughout the year.
- The package provided 3 face to face visits to school, one in each term Autumn, Spring and Summer.

To include:

Initial Visit:

- Focused on observation and evidence collection by the teacher, to inform on-entry judgements and validate accuracy of age and stage of development.
- Reflection of the children's chronological ages, consider if they are 'at', 'below' or 'above' their age related expectation.
- Effective utilisation of the EYFSP handbook and the profile principles to ensure the teacher has a full understanding of the requirements.
- Identify children who are eligible for Pupil Premium, review how this funding will be used to make the biggest impact on outcomes for these children.

Second visit:

- Review progress of cohort on tracker and children within sample. Where are the children now? What has the impact of practice and provision been on outcomes for individuals and the cohort?
- Joint observation to review provision and opportunities for children to consolidate their skills and demonstrate their learning. What impact have recent developments had?

Final visit:

- Final visit takes place and follows the standard moderation visit guidance.
- More detailed feedback will be shared with the teacher and Headteacher on the impact of the support.

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, EYCC continue to provide bespoke support through the 'Getting to Good' programme for early years and childcare providers (including Early Years Registered Childminders) 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. Providers can also self-refer into Early Years and Childcare for support if they have identified they are at risk of getting a less than Good outcome at their next inspection.

In April 2019 Ofsted published its EYCC Statistics on overall effectiveness as at December 31st 2018:

- 97% of Early Years and Childcare Providers in Lincolnshire achieved a Good or Outstanding Judgement, 2% higher than national.

Broken down into specific types of provision Childminders have increased to 96% Good and Outstanding and Childcare on Non Domestic Premises have increased to 97% Good and Outstanding. These all reflect an increase since the last quarter report from Ofsted.

These outcomes are higher than Regional and National averages. 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 targeted model of support from EYCC has enabled our resources to be utilised effectively to support the sector.

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

Building on the high quality of the Early Years Sector in Lincolnshire and the outcomes for children at the end of the EYFSP that are slightly below National, EYCC has in 2018-19 sponsored 60 early years practitioners to undertake the Level 3 ELKLAN Training, with a view to up skilling practitioners to be able to close the word gap for their disadvantaged children in line with Ambition 1 of the Improving Social Mobility through Education Report 2017 - Unlocking Talent Fulfilling Potential.

4) Workforce And Professional Development

EYCC continue 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 within the recently released Early Years Workforce Strategy as key in supporting the delivery of outstanding practice.

The Lincolnshire online Early Years Training Directory provides a comprehensive programme of statutory and quality enhancement courses that support 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 all users and ensure training is accessible for those in the more remote areas of the County.

The Childminder pre-registration briefing sessions continue to be successful in preparing those new to the sector to be inspection & delivery ready, and encouraging them to attend leadership and management meetings prepares them with new legislation from the onset.

Safeguarding training continues to be delivered by the LSCB. This has proved to be a very effective way of getting the statutory training delivered in a consistent way that is accessible for all learners, with a multi-agency approach. There is a complete suite of e-learning modules that are available to every early years practitioner, it ensures everyone is aware of their responsibilities and can speak / act with confidence as and when the need arises.

Regular information sharing at the manager briefings enables the 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 team continue to build links with local & national FE / HE Training Providers, working in partnership to promote the graduate pathways that are open to the sector, Hosting events locally to support training providers (with access to government grants) to meet the workforce face to face. This has supported the continued growth of the workforce throughout the year. The relationship with regional partners has been beneficial in sharing information and supporting each other to review and meet the requirements of the workforce strategy.

45 additional practitioners have been sponsored to undertake the Level 3 Forest School Training with Natural Choice Training Ltd, bringing the total of qualified practitioners to 200+ in Lincolnshire. Practitioners have expressed the benefits of improving their practice and this is also evident within Ofsted outcomes. They have embraced the ethos and as a result can evidence the outcomes on children's learning and development, particularly successful with the boys and those with speech and language difficulties, both were included in Lincolnshire's key priorities for early years. 20 supporting practitioners have been sponsored to undertake the level 2 forest school training in order to strengthen the forest school sessions that are taking place. Ofsted have made comment in a number of reports recently on the benefits of the forest school sessions that they have observed during inspections.

Please see the following examples from Ofsted reports:

Day Nursery in South Kesteven:

"The highly stimulating outdoor environments and activities, including numerous courtyards, an orchard and forest school sessions, enable children to take risks, enjoy nature and explore a wide range of inspiring activities. One child, when asked about the orchard, says emphatically, 'It's great there'."

Pre School in West Lindsey:

"Children play in a highly stimulating learning environment, including the outdoor play areas. Here, children learn to take and manage risks. They negotiate different surfaces and climb trees in the forest area. They watch popcorn pop on a campfire and understand the rules and boundaries when the fire is lit, in order to keep themselves safe"

The Professional Development Fund, a grant from the Department for Education, has recently been awarded to Lincolnshire, part of a £20m commitment nationally to improve children's early language, literacy and numeracy through high quality, evidence-based professional development support for early years practitioners. A 2 year project that will see the development of 4 networks of practitioners, bringing schools and PVI settings together as CPD partnerships, paying staff backfill costs for practitioners to attend CPD free of charge.

During this year EYCC sponsored 60 practitioners to complete the Elklan speech & language specific level 3 training course. This required a commitment from each practitioner to attend 3 full days training and build a portfolio of evidence. It is expected that this training will impact on the Communication, Language and Literacy word gap as practitioners will be more confident and equipped with the strategies that will support children's communication.

The emphasis on the skills of the managers in settings remains a key focus during an Ofsted inspection; EYCC continue to commission a range of leadership training that will support the skills, knowledge and confidence to improve the performance of staff in this area. Courses in subjects such as supervisions, delegation of teams, coaching and mentoring have all proved beneficial.

5) Inclusion and Early Intervention

Inclusion support is now embedded with the Early Years Locality Teams with guidance and support from the School Readiness Hub within EYCC to ensure consistency and quality assurance. Early Years Specialist Teachers continue to 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. The funding is co-ordinated and processed through the central team.

The Early Years Inclusion Fund continues to enable early years providers to enhance support for children with SEND. 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:

- Improve outcomes for children with lower levels of SEND
- Purchase specialist equipment

The process for Inclusion Funding enables children with lower and emerging SEND to access universal early years provision. The new process for administering Inclusion Funding has been fully embraced and welcomed by the sector. Funding and data has shown that increasing numbers of children eligible for 30 hours are taking this up with the support of Inclusion Funding and the payments of this has been brought in line with the Early Years Entitlement monthly payment process to monitor spend more closely. In the spring term 2019 there were 317 children accessing the Inclusion Fund to enable providers to support their needs.

All early years providers are invited to attend SENCo network clusters, this provides updates on statutory, national and local processes; so that the understanding of the requirements is reviewed and there is provision of high quality inclusive early years practice embedded across Lincolnshire. The networks offer CPD opportunities linked to the four main areas of SEND, outlined in the code of Practice, these are supported by presentations from a range of agencies including: Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum, The Working Together Team (Social Communication Outreach), Portage and The Sensory Education Support Team. Key messages on working in partnership with parents, implementing the graduated approach within the SEND Code of Practice and transition support planning have also been delivered.

Community Paediatricians have a duty to inform the Local Authority when they feel a child may have special educational needs. On receipt of these notifications, Early Years Specialist Teachers provide support to the early years provider to ensure the child's needs are being met through the graduated approach. This has now extended into home visits for children who are not in early years settings. The Early Years Specialist Teacher is able to explore educational options with the parents/carers and signpost to support and provision available through the local Children's Centre and eligibility for 2 year old funding.

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 representative participates in the weekly Hub meeting, where draft Education, Health and Care Plans are considered. The early years sector is also 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, following participation in the recent peer review, early years provision was recognised as a strength in early identification, meeting the needs and improving outcomes for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Lincolnshire is one of 23 Local Authorities selected to deliver the Early Years Level 3 SENCo Award. This is an accredited course for Early Years Practitioners in the identification and support of young children with SEND in a wide range of Private Voluntary and independent (PVI) settings across England. A Lincolnshire Early Years and Childcare Improvement Adviser has been trained by NASEN and School Improvement Liverpool to deliver this training in Lincolnshire.

The Lead Adviser for Improvement and Inclusion 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. The local authority has also had active involvement with the Council for Disabled Children's Action Learning. This has enabled the local authority to share good practice with other Local Authorities and confirm that the early years inclusion processes used in Lincolnshire are embedded in line with statutory duties.

6) Partnership Working

EYCC is committed to working in partnership with locality teams, SEND, Health visitors, schools and our other partners/agencies across Lincolnshire to raise educational outcomes for young children with a focus on narrowing the attainment gap. There is close working with colleagues in the Early Years Locality Teams to provide effective support and challenge to ensure that the most vulnerable children are supported to access good quality early years and educational provision, with the aim of narrowing the gap in attainment. In addition to this the team are working with a range of professionals to improve pathways of intervention which will include Health Visitors on the pathway for the integrated two year old review, and the tracking systems for our most vulnerable children.

Continuing to work with the Virtual School and the Specialist Teaching Team, to ensure the educational progress of Children Looked After is closely monitored and informs appropriate intervention. Termly visits are carried out by Early Years Specialist Teachers which will include the 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. We will be working in partnership with the re-integration team, to provide support for children at risk of exclusion and to ensure a smooth transition into school for children who are showing significant delay in managing feelings and behaviours.

The development of the Maternity Hubs in partnership with Better Birth Lincolnshire in some Children's Centres (currently 6 centres) has strengthened the link with midwifery and other partners. Families are able to access a range of services to support their health and well-being, including services such as Quit 51 and Addaction. Further development in the Maternity Hubs is to focus on the postnatal support for the emotional and physical wellbeing of postnatal women. More support for dads will also be a new focus to ensure we are listening to their needs and ensuring they are fully involved in the pregnancy and delivery of their babies. Parent Champions will support new families to parenthood and those who have recently moved to the area by welcoming them into the Maternity Hubs and the Children's Centre services.

The FaB project is a partnership between ULHT and Lincolnshire Children's Services to deliver a more effective support package to families who have had a baby on the neonatal unit at either Boston or Lincoln hospitals. By building a more effective network of early help with children's centres, health visiting and the ESCO service before and after the family leave the hospital so that families will feel more

supported within their local community. Families from across Lincolnshire are supported on the ward by the designated FaB Link Worker and linked to a Vulnerable Children's Lead and children's centre in their home area.

The project:

- Aims to reduce the isolation of families with a premature baby on discharge into the community
- Ensures that the optimum package of support is in place for families and link with local children's centres
- Raises the profile of children's centres with families and health professionals
- Engages with potentially vulnerable children and their families as early as possible.

Strengthening partnership to deliver services to EAL families has resulted in a successful bid from the Impact Migration fund to deliver a programme alongside Health professionals in the Boston area to ensure families have the support to ask the questions about their health and well-being.

EYCC is working in partnership with Public Health to deliver training to Local Authority Colleagues, and Education settings about the introduction of compulsory relationships education from September 2020. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships as set out within the EYFS guidance.

In order to narrow the gap of attainment for children who have English as an Acquired Language (EAL), work continues with the Early Years Locality Teams to embed strategies providing opportunities to share good practice across the sector. EYCC participate in regional groups in relation to a number of areas of interest including moderation, school readiness and improvement outcomes for our most vulnerable children.

Early Years Budgets

The DSG early years block funding supports 2, 3 and 4 year old provision. The total budget for 3&4 year olds is £34.178m during 2019/20 which includes additional funding for 30 hours.

Total spending plan for 3 & 4 year old entitlement is £32.652m, which is 95.53% pass-through to providers in 2019/20. This passed-through to providers in the form of the local universal rate; mandatory deprivation funding; inclusion fund and 0.5% contingency fund. Centrally retained funding for Direct Early Years Services is £1.526m during 2019/20, which represents 4.47% of the budget allocation.

Lincolnshire's indicative allocation for 2 year olds in 2019/20 is £5.412m. The Local Authority retains a small percentage of this funding for the cost of supporting 2 year old funding. The cost is £0.052m, which represents 1% of the total budget.

The centrally retained budget is utilised to provide a range of support services to the early years and childcare sector, as described within this report. This support was redesigned in 2016 to meet the reducing levels of resources available to Local Authorities. The service delivered includes direct face to face support, the delivery and commissioning of training, information, advice and guidance, and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support to early years providers across all sectors, including PVI, childminders, academies and schools.

Conclusion

EYCC 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 across the sector.

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. It is requested that school forum support the 2019/20 priorities and core business proposals set out within this report.

Early Years and Childcare Support - Key Priorities 2019/20:

- Continue to explore with partners a shared multi-professional understanding of "school readiness" to inform the development of a strategy that supports a shared responsibility and understanding so that outcomes for children are improved.
- Review the impact of deprivation supplements within the early years DSB expenditure using an appropriate monitoring system with the childcare sector in 2019/20.
- Deliver actions identified within the Childcare Delivery Plan to support sufficiency priorities identified within Lincolnshire's annual sufficiency report 'A Parental Perspective of Childcare in Lincolnshire.
- Participate in a Local Government Association (LGA) Early Years Peer Review during the Autumn term 2019.
- Further embed joint working with health visiting teams to monitor the roll out of the Lincolnshire joined up approach to the Integrated 2 year old review.
- Work in partnership with the early year's sector to deliver the Professional Development Fund.
- Launch the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Early Years.
- Provide information to the Lincolnshire Early Years Sector on Ofsted's new Education Inspection Framework 2019.
- Develop an effective audit function for the Early Years Entitlements to ensure all funded and government supported childcare offers are being delivered appropriately to families in Lincolnshire.

The Schools Forum is asked to:

- A. Note the contents of the report.
- B. Consider and comment upon the contents of the report.

Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out??

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Early Years National Funding Formula	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance
Early Years Single Funding Formula 2019/20	http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=5316&Ver=4
Statistics: early years foundation stage profile	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-early-years-foundation-stage-profile
Early years national funding formula: allocations and guidance	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-and-childcare--2
Lincolnshire's Early Years Entitlements Agreement & Guidance	https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/childcare-and-family-support/early-years-and-childcare-support/early-years-entitlements/registration-and-delivering-funded-places/129305.article
Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/30-hours-free-childcare-la-and-early-years-provider-guide
Experimental statistics on the use of 30 hours free childcare from January to March 2019	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/30-hours-free-childcare-spring-term-2019
Statistics from Ofsted for early years and childcare	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/early-years-and-childcare-statistics

Relationships and Sex Education September 2020	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs
Improving social mobility through education – Unlocking Talent Fulfilling Potential	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-social-mobility-through-education
Early Years Level 3 SENCo Qualification	https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/resources/ey-senco-l3-qualification-specification.html

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