

#OfstedBigConversation Minutes

Meeting:

Eastern Region Steering Group

Date:

23rd February
Time: 1 – 3 pm

Location:

Room 2.43, Eastbrook ,
Shaftesbury Road, ~~82m~~ bridge CB

Attendees

Linda Baston-Pitt Chair Director OSHN Cambs
Ruth Pimentel Co-Chair CEO Toad Hall Nursery Group
Sue Brockhouse HMI, Ofsted
Cheryl Langley Senior Officer, Ofsted
David Shaylor - Munns Farm Day Nursery Nr Hertford
Paula Day - Childcare Development Team Manager Central Bedfordshire Council
Caroline Maryon PACEY Service Manager Cambs
Dawn Wilson Bedford Borough Council
Jane Daly Suffolk County Council
Lisa Topham Senior Childcare Manager East PLA
Carol Wyld School Improvement Adviser, Luton Borough Council

Apologies

Zoe Wright Magic Nurseries
Michelle Winter SHMI
Annette Brooker Cambridgeshire County Council
Dina East County Commissioner Suffolk County Council
Catrina Storey Peterborough City Council,

Minutes

1. We reviewed the previous minutes and noted no further actions. Linda reiterated the role of the OBC and confirmed this was a platform to discuss with Ofsted. Wherever possible attendees need to ensure that messages are passed to practitioners. Minutes from all regional meetings are available on the OBC website.
2. **Moving inspections in-house** – Sue gave an update to the group. All is on schedule for the move on 1st April and 3 phases have been outlined for the next 3 years. Currently they are under consultation for the proposed new structure and further detail will be available for the next meeting. Ofsted keen to ensure all providers are aware that it will be business as usual. The group reiterated their concerns over the consistency of inspections and welcomed the opportunity that bringing these in-house will bring. There are still concerns that the inspection process feels very punitive and that the guidance/coaching/mentoring role, previously fulfilled by LAs is now being missed. OFSTED confirmed that their role is as a regulatory and support and guidance is the reasonability of the LA's. Inspections should be seen as a positive experience. Childminders, in particular, appear to be a very vulnerable group.
3. **Complaints** – there were no significant increases/decreases in the number of complaints. One of the biggest issues remains the information provided to Ofsted about the registered person. In particular, from Committee members who are unaware of their obligations. PLA representative commented that this is a very complex area and she was unsure how well versed some of the inspectors were. She would liaise directly with Sue. Ofsted commented that, in the main, providers were confident with British Values and there was strong evidence that providers had worked hard at this aspect.
4. **Safeguarding** was still an area where providers may make errors, in particular with allegations against members of staff. Ofsted commented that providers can also report local Authority staff if they feel the advice/process has not been followed appropriately. It is important that providers keep a very detailed timeline and log of calls to LADO to support any further investigations by OFSTED.
5. **EYPP** – this is still difficult to access and Las reported that the eligibility checkers are conflicting and complex. OFSTED reported that providers are still encountering delays in receiving the funding.
6. **EYFS changes** – not a lot was known about these but the group welcomed some clarification about GCSE requirements and were also keen to understand when the new version would be published. Sue confirmed no plans in place to review the current inspection framework at the moment.
7. **30 hours** – the group discussed the challenges with providing 30 hours and, in particular, the additional charges for food. The logistics of allowing children to bring their own food for a 10 hour day in a busy nursery was discussed and many providers expressed concerns about breaching food safety legislation by allowing food where the temperature control was unknown. All providers would welcome clarity about this point.

- 8. References** – although providers recognised how valuable additional information was about an employee the main nursery groups reiterated their own legal advice that standard reference only should be supplied. LAs found this very unhelpful but the group discussed that there was therefore a need for rigor in the interview process and for probationary periods to be used effectively.
- 9. AOB** – clarification points
- Fire blankets, fire officer advice to be followed.
 - Timing of actions on action notice – these deadlines were unrealistic over the Christmas period.
 - Drones – concern was raised about drones being used to fly over nurseries. This area warrants further guidance where there are children at risk in the setting but all drones need a license so this can be challenged
 - Public liability insurance – for childminders – they need to be aware that they need it and where to get it as part of the registration process- PLI covers childminding activity- once registered it needs to be obtained before they start minding children.
- 10. Thank you** – Linda thanked Cheryl and Sue for hosting the meeting and for entering into productive dialogue with the group.

Date of next meeting; **21st June 2017, 10-12**