

CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP
WOODHILL HOUSE – COMMITTEE ROOM 1
Wednesday 10th September 2008

10:00 a.m.

MINUTE OF MEETING

Present:

Maureen Rennie	Childcare @ Home (chair)
Chris Smillie	Working for Families
Anne Law	JobCentre Plus (for Gillian Robertson)
Kirsty McLean	Children & Young People's Advisor, N H S
Sarah Campbell	Grampian Racial Equality Council
Martina Hickey-Laing	Aberlour Childcare Trust
Fiona Rennie	Scottish Childminding Association (for Margaret Wylie)
Mandy Mayo	SPPA
Jenny Willox	Parent Representative
Susan Bain	Association of Quality Nurseries in Scotland
Maureen Strachan	Manager, Peterhead Family Centre (Social Work)
Jo Hughes	Education Officer (Early Years)
Moira Beverley	Education Accountant
Elizabeth-Ann Engels	Project Manager, Early Intervention
Caroline Hay-Crawford	Development Officer (Childcare Strategy)
Debbie Bruce	Training Officer (Childcare Strategy)
Jim Wilson	Scottish Enterprise Grampian
Alison Nicoll	Minute

Welcome

Caroline welcomed and thanked Maureen for accepting the position of chair and handed the meeting over to Maureen, who asked everyone to introduce themselves.

1. Apologies:

Shaunna Allan	Development Officer (Early Years)
Amy Pirie	Information Service Co-ordinator
Linda Pirie	National Day Nurseries Association
Cllr Richard Stroud	Elected Member
Margaret Wylie	Scottish Childminding Association

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.

3. Draft Minutes of Partnership Sub-groups for Noting:

Funding Task Group Meeting 2 July and 27 August 2008

There were no questions or comments

Training Task Group Meetings 3 September 2008

There were no questions or comments

Information Task Group 26 August 2008

There were no questions or comments

ACTION

4. Matters Arising from Last Minute:

a) Care Commission Complaints Procedure

Maureen and Susan met to write a letter asking for a meeting with Chris Stadames to discuss the right of appeal for providers who find themselves at the centre of a complaint by for example a parent. Issues raised would be concerns about standardisations and inconsistencies in how Care Commission Officers deal with complaint and responses from providers. Evidence is often based on one person's word or simply a matter of opinion and the quality of the evidence is often in question. Suggestion that perhaps concerns should be taken up with Scottish Minister was made.

Maureen and Susan will now arrange a meeting with Chris Stadames to discuss this issue

S B / MR

5. Early Years and Childcare Review:

Review now complete and it is thought that a paper will be presented in October to Committee. Mandy asked whether there would be any consultation in relation to the report. Elizabeth-Ann said that there has already been extensive consultation but that the report would probably be in draft form. If report does go to Committee in October then hopefully we should know more at the December Partnership meeting.

6. Childcare @ Home & Childcare 4 All Reports:

Childcare @ Home: Maureen reported that they had now received paperwork from the Care Commission regarding the running of crèches. They have employed 5 new members of staff, 2 of which are male. Possibility of crèches being housed within Community Learning facilities was discussed. Jo said she was getting a lot of Out of School care calls – esp. from rural parents returning to work and she was glad that Childcare @ home was an option she could give to parents where there was no OOSC..

Childcare 4 All: No report available due to Emma leaving. New manager started on Monday.

7. Working For Families:

Chris introduced the scheme to the group. Their main aim is to support parents back into employment, helping with childcare, travel, self esteem, giving 1 to 1 support and working with a variety of agencies. They have helped 810 parents across Aberdeenshire with 454 managing to get back to employment. They give support not just at the start of the process but throughout hoping to ensure they stay in employment.

Chris to give a copy of his presentation to be sent out to the group. Caroline asked if there was anything that Partnership could do – Chris said he already uses CHIS and Childcare @ Home.

8. Sarah Campbell – GREC - presentation

Sarah handed out packs explaining the services that GREC provide. She explained that they were based in Market Street some of their employees do work out in the shire on a regular basis. They provide counselling service, esp. for children who are victims of racist bullying), conflict resolution, working on a translation service, adapt project (working with young offenders) and provide a library of resources. Racist incidents involving children have been on the increase in some parts of the north-east (example, Macduff). Research carried out by schools and GREC show that usually this is among older children – the youngest recorded involved 8 year olds. However, because schools are not completing incident form correctly and because incidents between young children tend not to be reported (for many ethical reasons), the research is shelved and therefore does not give a true picture of what is actually happening.

9. Childcare Partnership Targets – Update:

- 12 Plus Holiday Activities:

Caroline presented the 12 Plus Activity Summer Evaluations to the group. It had been very well received, this year and those taking part valued content of what was delivered. Attendance was good in most areas, but Peterhead and Banchory had low attendance, with Ellon and Fraserburgh the best attendance. Information distribution via schools is still proving a problem and due to less availability of CLD youth workers, other staff had to be recruited.

It was felt that schools should recognise the value both for the parents and childcare. Banchory and Westhill are to merge for the October holidays, with Fraserburgh and Peterhead having transport provided for Mintlaw children.

- Fun Days: Weather was good apart from one session. Everything went well, and Fiona Rennie reported positive feedback from Childminders.
- Mini Highland Games: Numbers were high and again a positive feedback. Caroline was aware of the time children had to wait for events and possibly next year it will run over 3 days instead of 2 days – North, South and Central.
- Doric Book Launch: This is taking place tomorrow (11th September) Doric Poems have come from people aged 14 – 90+, and have been incorporated into a professional high quality book. It is aimed at the 9+ age group. Playgroups from Auchnagatt and Hoodles will attend the launch and take part. Maureen Watt, MSP is to attend and celebrity Joyce Faulkner (River City). Next project is to compile a similar book for 3 – 8 years old.
- Reading Festival: Stuart McBride launched the Reading Festival. Portlethen and Newtonhill staff were very keen – we funded 2 days of the Reading Bus and a CPD Session on Doric which received positive evaluations from School and Early Years Staff. (Jenny said that this had caused huge discussion in her family!) Each playgroup will also receive a free Sing-a-Ring session as part of this festival.
- Read Aloud with Children – Edmond Pegg is to present a CPD workshop to Voluntary/Private/Public nursery staff in late October at Portlethen Library. The group appreciate the importance of music, signing and literacy, and thanks to teachers in the area for the support.
- Training: Debbie reported that due to Procurement Legislation – the only training that was being offered at the moment were those which were ‘in-house’. Due to the size of the budget it is subject to European legislation. Debbie and Caroline are in liaison with Procurement and Legal to try and get a solution. Contracts and Specifications are being drafted at the moment for the tendering process. We have a good range of providers, as no one particular provider meets all our needs. Individual candidate needs need to be addressed.
- OOSC Music Project: 6 Music Percussion Boxes were purchased from last years budget and training sessions have been held in each area and OOS staff were invited to come along. Another 30 boxes are to be purchased from the money allocated and this will enable each club to have their own boxes.
- Intergenerational Project:
University are doing a training session at Banchory. Digital recorders are now being bought to allow young people to interview older people in order to gather local information.
Awards 4 All application is nearly ready for submission in order to get the funds to produce and publish a history booklet and a leaflet guiding people around an ‘Historical Walking Trail’. It is also hoped a DVD will be produced.
- Under 8’s Handbook: The launch will take place on 4th November in Portlethen Library
- Newsletter: Newsletter now out and has been revamped.
- New Daycare Places which the Partnership have funded: Annie’s Nursery – Inch – 16 new places and Edgehill Kids centre – Inverurie – 45 places (0 – 5 years).
- Banchory CEC – Outdoor Area by Caledonia Play to be completed and indoors - new flooring, repainted and dishwasher installed.

- Reading Bus Development – On hold due to review
- Play Strategy: On hold due to review
- Cooking Bus – Hope to be at Kintore either 1st week of Easter Holidays or 1st week of Summer holidays - still to be confirmed. After Schools Clubs from the area will attend.

Caroline reported that Partnership is to have a stand at the Parental Conference in Oldmeldrum on 27th September and will provide Information at the Early Years Fair at Alford on 27th September.

Reading Bus is to be at Alford on 23rd September. Some money has been set aside from the Doric Project for this.

KAIZEN:

Caroline said that there is to be a Kaizen on 12 Plus Holiday activities which she is to attend. This is to take place the 1st week of December and will include representatives from Leisure, Active Schools, and CLD. It was agreed that one programme across the shire of activities would be beneficial.

10. Polish Project:

The project is on hold at the moment. 20 to 30 families have been interviewed by a polish researcher who has lived in Scotland for many years, and the report needs to be analysed further. Translation problems were one of the issues that came out of the research, as was a lack of money for many polish families. More work is to be done on this.

11. Election of Vice-Chair:

Martina kindly volunteered and was nominated by Mandy and seconded by Jim

12. 2008 – 2009 Expenditure Update:

Due to Jean being off ill, this was limited, but when Jean is back a full financial statement will be circulated.

13. AOCB

1. Mandy informed the group about the Young and Healthy in Scotland Conference – Glasgow – Julie Donaldson (Gruffalo Author) and a Kinder Play Specialist from Denmark.

14. Date & Time of Next Meetings

Tuesday 9th December 2008 – Woodhill House – Committee Room 4.