**Early Years and Childcare Service - Supporting children with SEND in Early Years**

**07 November 2019**

1. **Background**
   1. An amount of £2.7m has been identified from previous Early Years underspend of the DSG that Schools Forum have agreed should be reinvested into Early Years particularly around supporting children with SEND to access their education.
   2. There was an intention as part of the agreement that the investment should lead to a reduction in expensive external placements for children later in their lives.
   3. Activity should therefore be linked to an “invest to save” model.
   4. The Early Years and Childcare Service are overseeing the spend of £1m of the overall £2.7m budget.
2. **Outline of Proposals**

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| Project Name | Amount of Funding | Brief Outline of Project |
| Childminder Inclusion Network/Support | £300k | An inclusion network specifically for childminders which can offer training and support to childminders who meet quality criteria, with a brokerage service for families seeking more specialist childcare. It will also enable wider support for all childminders so that we can more holistically enable a graduated approach within the mainstream in local areas.  This could be linked to Children’s Centres and other local facilities to enable childminder groups to also enable opportunities for peer support.  Currently there is no support for childminders who are offering education/care to children with SEND and this is historically a gap. |
| The Castle Approach | £200k | A project to improve the local offer in two areas of Birmingham, led by two of the City’s Maintained Nursery Schools (Castle Vale in Erdington district and Weoley Castle in Northfield district).  The proposal is to utilise the existing Early Learning & Community Childcare Hub in Weoley Castle and create a hub at the Children’s Centre in Castle Vale to bring together the Child Development Centre, Early Years Inclusion Support, Birmingham Forward Steps, Health Visitors, Areas SENCOs, Children’s Centre Staff, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Sensory Support and any other services to identify and support children with Special Educational Needs at the earliest point possible. This will be run as a pilot with an evaluation at the end with a view to rolling out the system across the city. |
| Well Comm Project | £500k | The proportion of children reaching a Good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage in Birmingham is in the bottom quartile of all LAs across the country. Speech and Language can make a crucial difference in the level of attainment.  WellComm is a speech and language toolkit, specifically designed for children up to six years old. It screens language skills and, if intervention is identified, offers suggestions for fun, play-based activities in the Big Book of Ideas to move children forward.  This project will enable us to purchase a toolkit for all early years education settings across the city and will be rolled out alongside a programme of training. The aim is to develop the early years workforce across the sectors and whole early years system by offering “train the trainer” opportunities to enable sector-led champions. |
| **Total Resource** | **£1.0m** |  |

**Contact Officer**

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