

CHILDMINDING SUB-GROUP

Report By: Alison Murphy – Workforce Development Officer

Purpose

To seek approval from Partnership for the Childminding Steering Group to be formally adopted as a sub-group of Partnership.

Background

The Childminding Steering Group was set up to support the partnership between EYDCP and the National Childminding Association (NCMA) who were commissioned to develop Herefordshire's Childminding Service and the Children Come First Network. The full-time post of Childminding Services and Network Development Officer (CSNDO) was taken up by EYDCP on completion of that contract. At this time the steering group membership was broadened to support the growth in development and the integration of childminding services into initiatives such as Children's Centres.

Membership of the group has included officers of EYDCP, Children's Centre Managers, Job Centre Plus, Herefordshire Childminding Association (HCMA) and NCMA.

In May 2005, two further part-time members of staff were appointed; one to support Network development and a Support Childminding Coordinator who recruits and trains childminder volunteers to support prospective and newly registered childminders. Members of the childminding team have also encouraged the development of local support groups for childminders and use these sessions as opportunities for delivering training and as a means of encouraging use of the toy library.

The childminding team have successfully engaged with childminders and provide a wide range of professional development opportunities with excellent take up.

Childminders in Herefordshire are also taking up level 3 qualifications in large numbers via NVQ and the Diploma in Home Based Childcare (start date April 2006). Four members of the Children Come First Network are delivering funded nursery education and outcomes from Ofsted inspections are generally 'good' with some 'outstanding' judgements.

Proposal

At a meeting of the Childminding Steering Group the wide range of work now being delivered by the Childminding Team was acknowledged and it was felt that the Childminding Steering Group should be formalised as a sub-group of Partnership reporting to Partnership and to the Policy and Finance Sub-Group.

It was also felt that membership of the Steering Group should reflect the diversity of membership of the Partnership and, with the growing agenda of Children's Centres and Extended Schools, should include representation where possible from Health, Social Care, Library Service, Extended Schools, Children's Centres, Job Centre Plus, FE, HCMA, NCMA and parent representation.

RECOMMENDATION

- THAT (a) The Childminding Steering Group becomes a formal sub-group of Partnership with membership reflecting the diversity of services represented.**
- (b) Partnership note the considerable achievements of the Childminding Team and of Herefordshire's Childminders in general evidenced by Ofsted reports, the growth in the Network and the considerable rise in the take up of professional development and qualification training.**