

Minutes
Early Years Providers Forum
12th February 2026, 10am-12pm
Chalford Room, Shire Hall

	Agenda Item	Comments / Notes	Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies:	<p>Apologies: Lynne Adamson (Look After Me); Sarah Penston (Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust); Anita McKelvey (GCC Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency and Business); Cath Davenport (GCC EYFS Quality and Improvement Officer); Carole Mercier (Duke of Gloucester Playgroup); Heidi Berry (Newent Early Years); Kayleigh Hoskins (Coalway Playgroup); Amy Stevens (The Secret Garden, Tuffley); Sue Bodenham (GCC)</p> <p>Attendees: Sam Fisher (Tithe Barn Pre-School); Margaret Hewis (Earlybirds Playgroup); Vicki Richardson (Kings Stanley Play Group); Jade Craswell (PATA (UK)); Lisa Taylor (St Roses School); Molly Harper (Dingley’s Promise); Sarah Hylton (GCC); Jane Shotbolt (GCC)</p> <p>Minutes: Denise Webb (GCC Administrator)</p>	
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting: Conflicts of Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matters arising from previous minutes. • No conflicts of interest. 	
3.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of Childrens Centres was sent out. • BSIL logo to be added to e-shot newsletter. Logo to be shown on setting’s websites and correspondence – anything funded should display logo. 	Done Done
4.	Updates from Chair:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing to update. 	

5.	Presentation from Vicki Richardson, Kings Stanley Playgroup:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VR gave a presentation about her setting which was well received. • Kings Stanley Playgroup is a charity, run from a 2-room terrapin building. They are committee run from current childrens' parents. There are 30 children from 2 years old who mainly live in the village. • The playgroup runs term-time only 9am-3pm. • 8.45-2.45 hours links with picking up from school and for parents that work have soft opening and close, booked in advance 8.30am-3pm for £3 per day. All in their policies, prospectives and welcome pack. • Children self-register in the mornings. • Elm room is the messy room where they also have snacks and lunches, and children sit on key group tables with key person. There are 5 key groups. • Willow room is for mark making, home corner, construction, toys and role play. • There are 7 members of staff plus team support worker and college student. • Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays have mixed ages attending. Tuesdays and Thursdays have children entering school. • Maths Champions Programme and Phonics are focused activities. • 12 children on My Plans or EHCPs and some currently being assessed. • Sensory corner is a new addition due to the high number of children with additional needs. Bubble machine was donated by a parent, and there is a light box and cushion fidget board. • They use My Happy Mind: myHappyMind - Empowering Children's Mental Health & Wellbeing for calming, white noise and music playing and objects of Reference from DBV Programme. • Each term lots of topic planning including childrens' ideas. This term focus is on nursery rhymes. • Lots of outside space - mud kitchen, woodwork bench, construction and painting, plus outside sensory area. Raised a lot of money to employ a proper landscaper. • There is sensory planting. They grow pumpkins and swedes, and have chalk boards and mirror boards for mark making. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pets – 2 ducks, 1 rabbit and lots of fish. Raised ducks from eggs. Live on-site during the week then go home at weekends and holidays with a member of staff. Big fish tank with snails as well. • To support children’s curiosity have enrichment programme, 1 special activity each term from Sprint Active. Previously there was a Polar Express PE session and Owl experience with Wrens birds. This term chicken eggs to raise which a local farm will take on afterwards. Last term hatched butterflies from caterpillars. • They participate in the following programmes; DBV English programme, Dingley’s Promise, My Happy Mind Silver accredited, Woodlands Trust Green Tree Bronze award, Maths champion, Emotion coaching through Bristol and Beyond. • Feed mainly into Kings Stanley school. • It was asked whether they get any feedback from schools about how children are doing at the end of reception. It was noted they had a bit of a problem getting feedback from Kings Stanley as they would not provide ELG quoting GDPR. Took advice from Leaders and Managers meeting and asked for strengths and weaknesses and the school has now replied. The nursery have implemented on those weaknesses and having staff meeting about what they need to push on. It was noted that the Early Years team can give settings feedback as well. • For transitioning into school the school teacher is invited over or have a zoom meeting, or for child with SEN invite SENCO to TAC meetings. Invite teachers to put transition plan in place – some do engage and some not so keen. For SEN children on plans Vicki attends first TAC meeting at school for handover. • SH urging head teachers to give feedback so that settings can address ELG they are behind with. • It was noted that children can lose skills over summer holidays and schools are asked not to make assumptions in first half term. 	
6.	GSCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucy Faithful Foundation (LFF) – their mission is to create a world free of child sexual abuse. Increase of Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) is encroaching on primary schools. It is aimed at older children but interesting to share as effects whole family as well. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LFF have created ‘Pop-Ups’ that appear on illegal websites that state they are accessing illegal images/videos and to click the link for further/anonymous help. • 75% of people that have accessed illegal websites have clicked the pop-up link. • Shore website and anonymous live chat are available for help and advice: Shore - Lucy Faithfull Foundation • 15% of girls/young woman and 8% of boys/young men under the age of 16 have experienced HSB. It was noted that that age group should be referred to as children not young women or young men – even more important when talking about sexual behaviour. • 52% of all HSB reported are child on child abuse between the ages of 10- and 17-year-olds. • Traffic Light Tools for identifying HSB can be found on LFF, Brook and NSPCC websites. <p>From April 2026, the following documentation will be brought into force. Legal power will be given to staff using reasonable force/restrictive interventions used to stop a child hurting themselves or others, damaging property, causing disorder or causing a criminal offence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This must be recorded and reported correctly including name, needs of pupil, time, date, location, duration, account of the incident including triggers, de-escalation strategies and reasonable force used, and post-incident support for all parties involved. • A procedure must be in place to report all incidents to parents <u>on the same day</u>. • Please find attached: Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance which will come into effect from April 2026. • It was noted this is standard practice for Early Years settings already. 	
7.	Updates from Early Years Service:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding rate consultation closed last week, 300 responses, half of sector, representing all provider types and localities. • 86% went for Option 1 and 14% for Option 2. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously, Early Years team would have taken paper to cabinet to agree to consult and adopt. Now they require another paper showing the outcome of the consultation for approval for SH to implement Option 1. Needs to be done by 27th February. • Last year the amount Local Authorities retained went down to 4% and many LAs challenged this. This year it is 3% even though budget has almost doubled and we have retained 2.9%. That doesn't give enough to cover hourly rate to providers but have passed on the maximum possible. • BSIL have delivered lots of webinars. Coming to end of development phase but can't begin delivery as waiting for cabinet paper to show what we are using it for. Emailed proposals to DfE for parent programmes that we want to deliver. However, recently received email from DfE saying that it has just been passed onto relevant department. • Bartongate will be first Best Start Family hub. Were only going start with that one, but as it is cheaper to do signage for all at the same time so are currently identifying a Childrens Centres in each district. • Charging compliance has to be published on websites. Sam in Early Years team is working very hard to assist settings. It is a new burden on LAs to make sure everybody has complied with no extra money from government to do this. Have had some tricky issues with some providers refusing to be compliant. Have been waiting since April for legal support from GCC team but said they can't translate what doesn't exist. As it is too complicated have had to go to a Specialist Contract legal firm who are helping with individual cases and looking at the Provider agreement. • Problems updating information on Glos Families Directory are currently being resolved. For the time being make sure websites have been updated and hang fire on adding to Glos Families Directory. • Children with SEND not accessing full time entitlement – reminder that settings must only claim hours children are accessing the setting. For extra hours apply through SENIF. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Inclusion Champion Platform. On back of success of DBV programme, which was an intensive programme, 30 providers signed up to it and the first few are working their way through it. Another Enhanced Inclusion Programme (EIP) is available similar to DBV to support as many settings as possible. One provider had to withdraw. 18 should get Inclusion Champion status. EIP needs to be reapplied for every 3 years. Start looking at re-submitting evidence to get new accreditation after 2 years after it has been granted. Award valid for 3 years. Contact Advice line with any queries. Two Early Years conferences planned, Friday 6th November 2026 and Saturday 24th April 2027 – both will offer the same format. Settings that can't book onto first conference will be given priority for second conference. Have decided to make numbers lower as November 2025 was too big. Dingley's Promise new offer of Silver and Bronze packages for LAs and drive around SEN training. DfE is launching SEND inclusion training – not sure how it will fit with Dingley's Promise training? DfE will choose somebody and Dingley's Promise, as an organisation, works closely with the DfE and will submit for procurement. It was noted Dingley's Promise courses are very easy to read and easy to absorb. It was asked if a setting is due to renew Mark of Achievement in July, what should they do if funding is being run down in June. Molly to look into. 	
8.	Forum members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Margaret Hewis from Earlybirds Playgroup, is retiring and will be leaving the Forum after today's meeting. Everybody thanked her for her attendance at the meetings and wished her well. Earlybirds will become a PATA managed group. Advertise for Cheltenham member on e-shot bulletin. Need Childminder rep – JS to ask Caroline Vans. 	JS/CV
9.	Update from Schools Forum:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phil Haslett took report to schools forum. A setting helped a parent apply for school place and it was noted that the online form is very difficult to navigate for foreign speakers if they haven't got any support. 	

		<p>It was noted that Childrens Centres can help parents and settings should signpost families to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free fruit. SF was not allowed to take to Schools Forum as funding comes direct from DfE. It was noted that some schools share with their Early Years settings. Settings can check out Tesco Fruit and Veg for schools: Fruit & Veg for Schools Hub - and Parenta free fruit and veg box for new customers from April: Early Years Settings Receive Free Fruit & Veg! Parenta.com? 	
10.	Items to take to Schools Forum:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	
11.	Any Other Business:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-mandatory wearing of gloves when changing children – It is expected good practice that proper equipment is available to maintain good hygiene practise but can do other things instead such as washing hands. SH has to write climate impact report and is frequently asked questions such as ‘are you making sure settings are using soap rather than gloves, washable nappies etc.’ There is a company called Green Bottoms that collect dirty nappies, clean them and then recycle them into other products: Home - Green Bottoms Funding – charging for Tapestry. It isn’t a mandatory requirement to provide therefore parents can’t be charged as it amounts to tools for business related costs. Any behavioural learning tools are classed as business expenditure. Representation at EYMDT – it was decided to have a rota so that SF isn’t expected to attend every meeting. JS will put the rota together – can join online or face-to-face, every 6 weeks, Wednesday afternoon 2-4pm. Web page will have tile for EY Provider Forum. Template to be sent round for photos, description and email addresses for settings to contact. DW to do. It was asked whether anyone wanted to come along and observe weekly Request to Assess panel. LT, VR and SF would like to attend. If anybody else would like to attend please let DW know. 	<p>JS</p> <p>DW/ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that Dingley’s Promise is an assessment centre for short term support then most children will transition. With regards to EHCPs if every child was allowed to stay at Dingley’s Promise there wouldn’t be room for any more new children to be assessed. Need to explore if something else needs to be commissioned especially for children waiting for Special Schools. Do we need more places like Dingley’s Promise? • Children that need to go to Special School is something that is covered in EYMDT which enables a much better assessment of a child. If a child with high needs is put through EYMDT at age 2 you have done everything you can. It gives access to Educational Psychology Service and funding, and when a request for an EHCP is raised there will be more evidence of enhanced levels of support and the progress the child has made leading to a much better plan than one that is too early. • SENIF is available to maintain placement, to access entitlements to do everything you want to do. • LT mentioned that the reason they don’t send many children to EYMDT is because they are run more like a school and don’t need additional funding. It was pointed out that it would give access to EPS, and its not just about funding but getting child on people’s radars. • Looking at what data can be collated to better inform Special School planning in the future. Some information is available from Casework team, and Health Visitors notification process for children on SEN. Not all children can be seen but those notified to Early Years will need Special School so looking at what information should be on there, is there something else HVs could do to alert us, and can it help with forecasting how many Special School places would be needed? • DSL – LT agreed to take notes at Schools Forum when SF is unable to attend. SF to let LT know when she can’t attend. • JC gave out a copy of PATA (UK) Impact Report 24/25. JC to email copies to JS and SH. 	<p>JC</p>
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12.	Date of Next Meetings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th May 2026, 10.00am – 12.00 noon, face-to-face, Chalford Room, Shire Hall – booked. • 15th October 2026, 10.00am – 12.00 noon, face-to-face, Chalford Room, Shire Hall – booked. 	

EY PROVIDER FORUM: Members List – 3/9/25			
Name	Locality	Setting	Email Address
Kayleigh Hoskins	Forest	Coalway Playgroup	bcplaygroup@btinternet.com
Heidi Berry	Forest	Newent Early Years	heidiberry.newentearlyyears@gmail.com
	Chelt		
	Chelt		
Carole Mercier - resigned 19/3/26	Cots	Duke of Gloucester Playgroup	financedukeofgloucesterplaygroup@hotmail.com
Vicki Richardson	Stroud	Kings Stanley Play Group	kingsstanleypg@gmail.com
Sam Fisher (Vice Chair)	Tewks	Tithe Barn Pre-School	tithebarnpreschool@gmail.com
Sarah Penston	Glos Nth	NHS Foundation Trust	sarah.penston@icloud.com
Amy Stevens	Glos Sth	The Secret Garden, Tuffley	amyford82@hotmail.com
Jade Craswell	Gloucester	PATA (UK)	Jade.Craswell@pataglos.org.uk
Childminder Rep (at least 1)			
Lynne Adamson (Chair)	Tewks	Look After Me	lookafterme@live.co.uk
Sally Woodhouse	Cots	Woody's Childminding	sallywoodhouse@btinternet.com
Special Schools Rep			
Independent Schools Rep			
Lisa Taylor	Stroud	St Roses School	lisa.taylor@stroses.org.uk
Glos Assessment Centre			
Megan Harper	Glos	Dingley's Promise	megan.harper@dingley.org.uk
Attendees from GCC:			
Sarah Hylton	Head of Early Years and Childcare Service (GCC)		sarah.hylton@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Jane Shotbolt	Early Years Manager (GCC)	jane.shotbolt@gloucestershire.gov.uk
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Sue Bodenham	Finance Support Manager	Sue.bodenham@gloucestershire.gov.uk
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