

Supporting On-Campus Childcare (SOC) Meeting

3rd February 2022

Attendees:

Pauline Young (Childcare Services Manager)

Janice Bindon (Deputy Childcare Services Manager)

Meg Crossman (SU Community Officer)

Ben Palmer (SU Change and Inclusion Manager)

Gabriella Caruana (Parent)

Fiona Dickinson (Parent)

Tamsin Foxwell (Parent)

Chris Young (HR Deputy Director: Safety and Employee Wellbeing Services)

Apologies:

Student Union Representatives

1. Introductions

Attendees Introduced themselves and described their role / relationship with the Nursery.

2. Matters Arising (November SOC)

Staffing and Recruitment:

- a. PY has liaised with recruitment and the casual worker job application page is open. This has been renewed and will run into may. Overall, numbers of casuals on the roll remain low.
- b. JB has been in contact with various agencies to investigate possibility of accessing casuals through this route. None of the University approved providers appear to have capacity to provide nursery casuals at this time. **JB will contact other local providers to see if they may have availability.**
- c. CY has followed up with Workforce Development to discuss possibility of engaging some apprentices to build additional staffing capacity. **CY to report back at next meeting.**

Catering

- d. CY has discussed food provision with procurement. There are very few local providers who appear able to meet the Nursery's needs. However, Bath Sap has expressed an interest in tendering for the contract. A trial is being run with Bath Spa after Easter to test provision.

Key Person Role

- e. PY advised that the Nursery would be looking top host parent consultations in late Spring so that all parents can meet their designated Key Person.

Technology

- f. Teams sites have been established for all rooms and this appears to be a helpful way of sharing information with parents. There was a concern raised around whether this site should be used for Covid related messaging especially if advising of a child having a covid infection. CY advised that a page has been developed to advise parents of arrangements if children contract Covid or have Covid like symptoms.

CY advised that staff are not expected to check emails at weekends but had agreed to have Teams messaging enabled on their personal phones. There was discussion around how parents and carers who are not University employees are able to contact emergency contacts out of hours through teams. FD advised that it should be possible to “deeplink” to Teams via the website. **CY to speak to Digital to see how this can be achieved. CY will in the interim add his own email address to the emergency contacts as he will check emails at weekends.**

Parents Interactions with Nursery

- g. CY has arranged with AV for Nursery to borrow the 360° camera to film the rooms.

3. Room Leader Feedback

Sophie Burgess, Nursery Room leader, attended the meeting to provide an overview of how room activities are planned. In most weeks, activities tend to be quite spontaneous and are based around what the children say they would like to do. There are bigger pieces of work that are more formally planned, such as festivities or specific topics which the Nursery can share with parents through the Teams site.

Sophie explained that each child has an Independent Learning Journal that parents are welcome to take home and look at or to view in the room setting. It was requested that where parents do take these home that they are returned promptly to enable these to be updated.

TF asked whether it would be possible to develop a set of FAQ's / Advice for parents and carers around common issues. SB advised that room leaders would be happy to contribute to the development of these guides if parents could identify issues that they would like to see covered.

Parent reps to identify potential FAQs.

4. Childcare Services' Manager's Report

The report was distributed to Parent Representatives. Key discussion points are outlined below.

a. Food Safety

A food safety audit was undertaken by ahs's Food Safety Compliance manager. This identified a few areas for improvement and an action plan has been developed to address these areas.

b. Staffing and Recruitment

The existing vacancy within Nursery has now been filled and the successful applicant, Miki O'Grady had commenced work on 4th January 2022. There are no current vacancies.

c. Covid issues

There were a number of cases in Covid (staff and children) which had resulted in room closures during the last quarter. The Nurse is continuing to bubble rooms and staff to try to minimise risk of multiple room closures.

5. Terms of Reference

CY tabled the revised ToR for SOC. These were agreed by the meeting. It was agreed that the ToRs should be published on the Nursery website. **CY to action.**

6. Sickness Policy / Website

PY provided a copy of the Nursery's Sickness policy. The Nursery subscribes to an external provider (the Learning Alliance) that prepares model policies based on OFSTED and related guidance. The parent reps noted that it would be helpful if the policies linked out to the guidance sources (such as the guidance for educational settings that is issued by Public Health) as this would improve understanding of how local policies have been arrived at.

It was noted that this and other policies should be published on the Nursery website and/or within the Team site.

FD noted that the current website (and associated policies) are not easy to read. It was suggested that paragraphs should be shortened and that the use of bullet points would make reading easier. It would also be helpful if policies could include a short summary providing an overview of what policies are about (and any changes when revised).

Parent reps also asked if the site could be made more engaging with the inclusion of more photographs and video content.

CY advised that these points need to be factored in to work to revamp the website but that currently capacity to carry out this work is limited

7. Feedback from Parents

FD and GC provided the following feedback from parents:

- Parents had been really happy to have opportunities to come into the nursery at Christmas (for singing), and also for Chinese New Year, and would welcome more opportunities to participate in similar activities.
- Parents had enjoyed helping out with Forest School and again would welcome opportunities to lend a hand with this and other activities. The possibility for helping clear the garden or to help with DIY activities was discussed. It was agreed that these areas would be explored to see what further assistance parents and carers could offer (subject to University policies on working on premises).
- Is there a way of setting up a mechanism for donating things that the Nursery might want (such as fabric)? It was suggested that this could be advertised on the rooms Teams sites.
- The food provided by Minimeals has been very high quality.
- Individual Invoices. Parents are keen that they have individual invoices provided. **CY to follow up with finance to see if a timeframe can be given for this.**

Date of Next Meeting:

3rd May 2022 @ 10:30 a.m.

Location: Wessex House Room 3.36