

## Committee Network Zoom Meeting

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020

10 - 11.15 am

### Attendees

Sticky Fingers Pre-school  
Sholing Community Pre-school  
Happy Bunnies Pre-school  
Riverside Pre-school  
Mansel Minis Pre-school  
Regents Park Pre-school  
Bitterne Community Pre-school  
Redbridge Pre-school  
Brambles Pre-school  
Little Berries Pre-school  
Ladybirds Pre-school  
Squirrels Corner Pre-school  
SCPA  
Belinda – SCC  
Jo – SVS

### Introduction

Every setting was offered the opportunity to introduce themselves and what was going well or causing a challenge during the Covid 19 pandemic. The majority of pre-schools are running well, and staff and families have settled back into the new term.

The following points were raised:

**Covid 19 risk assessment:** each setting should have a Covid 19 risk assessment that needs to be monitored and updated on a regular basis. Committee trustees need to be aware and regularly monitor this risk assessment to ensure that the pre-school is compliant with Covid 19 guidance and updates.

**Numbers of children on roll:** for some pre-schools they have seen the number of children returning after the summer break has been lower than expected due to parents changing working patterns or the fear of Covid 19. For others they have seen children returning and receiving lots of enquiries.

The Early Years team are monitoring this on a weekly basis for the Department for Education (DfE) and have also noticed that some areas of the city have less predicted children attending than others. There is currently a small promotional campaign on Southampton City council Facebook where Early Years and Childcare places have been promoted (<https://www.facebook.com/SotonCC/> 6.10.2020)

**Pre-school reserves:** some pre-schools were having to dip into their unrestricted reserves this term. If you have reserves then check out if you have a reserves policy and what it says about using reserves, what proportion are restricted and the remaining unrestricted. You can find out more about Charity reserves in this useful document from the Charity Commission <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-reserves-cc19> and writing a reserves policy <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-financial-reserves>

**A positive Covid test in your setting:** your lead practitioner/manager has been given guidance, that should have been shared with you, about what to do if you become aware of either a staff member or child that has been tested positive for Covid 19.

The first thing to do is call the DfE helpline 0800 046 8687 where they will support you in making decisions about who needs to isolate for 14 days and who doesn't. They can also give you advice about other Covid 19 related queries. You can also call the local Public Health England office who can provide further advice on 0344 225 3861.

You also need to tell Ofsted that you have a case and whether you are closing the setting and if so for how long.

Call the Early Years and Childcare team as they will need to take some details from you about the person with Covid and offer support where necessary. This call will also inform the funding team of your closure.

If you are based on a school site it would be worth contacting the school to inform them of the result and what you plan to do about closing before you tell parents. If you have childminders who you share care with then advise them too.

**School closure:** some schools have had to fully or partially close to pupils and staff to isolate for 14 days due to a positive Covid 19 test result. If this is the case, then you need to remind parents that their isolating child needs to remain at home and not accompany their sibling to pre-school.

**NEF funding during Covid:** If you have to close due to your bubble or setting isolating then you will still be paid your NEF funding. However, if a parent chooses to keep their child at home due to the fear of catching Covid 19 and the pre-school is not closed then there would be no funding for that child. If the child is on holiday for 2 weeks, then the funding continues. As most settings are receiving guaranteed funding this term (the same as last autumn funding) you could choose to use the funding to cover this.

**Statutory Sick Pay:** One setting was having difficulty trying to administer the new sick pay, thank you to Clare at Riverside who has provided the link to the Government website which explains this in more detail <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/what-youll-get>

**Staff wellbeing:** One setting explained that they had provided each of their practitioners with a gift bag this week which had spread a feeling of appreciation amongst the team. Other settings have done similar things however there was a word of caution about gift vouchers. HMRC are very clear that the business needs to pay tax and national insurance on any monetary (including gift vouchers) gifts however if it is considered a trivial benefit, see

guidance here <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-trivial-benefits> there is no need to pay tax.

Everyone agreed that in these challenging times that their staff team have shown real dedication and commitment often working extra hours, through holidays and overcoming their own anxiety and fears. This also applies to the committees who have also found ways to work effectively to ensure that their setting is open for the local children through the pandemic.

From the beginning of the autumn term all pre-schools have re-opened to offer childcare for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. This is down to all the people who are connected to these providers to enable this to happen, thank you, we know how difficult and challenging this has been over the last 7 months.

## **AGM's**

A couple of the pre-schools have already held their AGM's via Zoom over the last few weeks. Both explained they had been successful however here are a few things to consider

- During parent inductions and meetings identify which parents are able or willing to use Zoom/Teams/WhatsApp
- Read your constitution or memorandum of article to see how much notice you must give parents of the AGM, how many people need to attend, who can vote etc.
- Set a date and time, often online meetings are better attended as parents do not need babysitters and do not need to be during pre-school time which means working parents can join in
- Before the meeting send an email or post a note explaining why you are holding an AGM, what will happen and the need to vote in a new committee. You will also need to gather all the paperwork needed for an AGM, these will be minutes from the last AGM, Chair and Lead practitioners report, financial report.
- You will need to know who will be attending or sending apologies for the meeting so parents will need to let someone know. This could be the lead practitioner or someone on the committee but make sure you make this clear in your correspondence. You can set up a free booking system on Eventbrite which lets people register for their place and you will know who is attending. It also has a function for ticketed chargeable events e.g. for fundraising, but you have to pay for this function.
- If a parent is unable to attend, they could vote by proxy, but the committee will need to nominate someone who will be at the meeting to pass on these votes.
- If you are using Zoom then you have 45 minutes free use, after this it may close the meeting down. If you think your meeting is going to last longer than this, then contact SVS as they may be able to help as they have a licence for longer meetings.
- Think carefully about who will facilitate the meeting, share the rules with all the participant and if there is a chat facility then nominate someone to follow them and answer the questions where appropriate.

Of course, you might consider having a social distancing AGM however this is not advisable and carries a considerable risk to the participants. Therefore, a risk assessment would have to be completed and full Covid rules and guidance would need to be followed.

Once you have a new committee it is really important that you notify both Ofsted and the Charity Commission of any changes. During an Ofsted inspection the inspector will have a list of the nominated person, who the trustees are and the name of the lead practitioner, make sure they are up to date and correct as this could jeopardise the outcome of the inspection

and potentially make the pre-school inadequate or requires improvement both of which could affect your nursery education funding.

One area of concern was how to recruit new committee members when socialising whilst waiting to collect children was more challenging. It was felt that it was important to involve the pre-school staff to help promote the importance of parent involvement in the pre-school and this might be being part of the committee. One pre-school was holding a pre-zoom meeting with all their new parents to introduce them to the existing committee and to explain the importance of being part of running of the pre-school.

The parent committee pamphlet is still available on Southampton Information Directory and many pre-schools have devised their own to share with new and existing parents.

## **Any Other Business**

### **City of Culture bid 2025**



We're delighted to share that Southampton is bidding to be the UK City of Culture in 2025. The UK City of Culture is awarded to one city, every four years, for one year. Previous winners have reported increased tourism, investment and employment for their cities.

The Southampton 2025 team have launched their social media channels [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) - so check them out.

The bid [website](#) provides information, announcements, as well as options for getting involved. Hearing from local people is a key part of the bid - find out more about how [you can get involved](#). There are three wonderful ambassadors already supporting the bid; Craig David, Lawrie McMenemy MBE and Shelia Permalloo, and more will be announced in the future.

### **Covid Champions**

Would you like to be the first to know the latest information and guidance from Public Health England about how to stay safe during the pandemic and share with your families, staff team and the community that you live in? To find out more or sign up follow the link

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/how-to-help/community-champions.aspx>

### **Covid 19: challenging times**

Over the next few months, you might be working with families that are struggling through these difficult times due to unemployment, furlough and uncertainty. The So:Linked website offers practical and emotional support to people in Southampton <https://www.solinked.org.uk/>

### **Kickstart**

This is a new scheme for 16-24 year olds that gives them the opportunity to have a 6 month placement helping them into employment. If you would like to find out more about this follow the link <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme> .

Belinda will find out a little more about this and whether there is a possibility of a group of Early Years and Childcare providers could provide 30 places.

If you are interested in apprenticeships, then contact Sara Warry-Powell from Solent Apprenticeship Hub (Southampton City Council) who specialises in early year apprenticeships. Sara's contact details are 07918 367 792 or email

[Sara.Warry@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Sara.Warry@southampton.gov.uk)

### **Fundraising**

We briefly discussed different ways of fundraising whilst we are social distancing, if you have any brilliant ideas then let's share during our next meeting.

### **Committee Training**

Jo and Belinda can offer free basic training around roles and responsibilities for whole committees or repeat the session during a committee network meeting if there is enough demand for this. Please let Belinda know if your committee is interested in taking up this training.

### **Next Meeting**

**Autumn term:** 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 @ 10am via Zoom (link and password to follow)

We will continue to discuss Covid 19 and the challenges you face but this is will also be an opportunity to bring along new committee members as we will be discussing how we induct new committee members and the important information they need to have or knows.