

Notes for Early Childhood Forum Meeting June 8 2018 13.15

5th Agenda Item "From requiring Improvement to Outstanding"

Leah Morris, EYFS Manager at Richmond Avenue Primary School, Shoeburyness, Southend

Leah Morris gave a power point presentation of the work done to turn around the Early Years provision at Richmond Avenue Primary School. Their school served an area of many children with high special needs.

She was a powerful passionate speaker with great commitment and understanding of the needs of the child under six years of age and how they develop and she had the wary (!) trust of the Head teacher to turn the Early Years department around. The previous approach to early years had been a formal teaching approach. Her power point presentation documented the changes they made to the learning environment so that the children could move freely, become independent learners and were empowered to take care of their environment themselves. A clear point was made by the team that during inspections by OFSTED, that they would stay true to this focus. ie the children owned the walls, the display boards, etc.

She mentioned some of the significant influences that helped them work effectively with their young parents and the children's younger siblings coming into the school:

**The Wave Trust Report (0-2) (https://www.wavetrust.org/sites/default/files/reports/conception-to-age-2-full-report_0.pdf)

**The Keeping Early Years Unique organisation (<https://www.keyu.co.uk/>)

**The July 2015 Teaching and Playing OFSTED report (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444147/Teaching-and-play-in-the-early-years-a-balancing-act.pdf)

**The work of Emma Pickler (<https://thepiklercollection.weebly.com/>)

**The work of Sally Goddard-Blythe (<http://sallygoddardblythe.co.uk/>) and <http://sallygoddardblythe.co.uk/publications/>

She encourages everyone working in early years to strongly defend the unique qualities of children under 6, to protect and believe in your own way of approaching planning, following the child, and that by observing and focussing on the child you WILL reach the targets; focussing on targets you may well lose the child.

6th Agenda Item ECF Response to Labour Party Policy consultation (<https://labour.org.uk/issues/2018-policy-consultation/>)

-criticism of the way Labour also spoke of the 30 hours funding as if it is free. The money is not enough, so settings need to charge. It is not free. To portray it as such is immoral.

-Very comprehensive and covers all ages. Access to ongoing education at all stages.

-the vision of a National Education Service will encourage cross party collaboration

-time for a new education act - to be worked on perhaps by a select committee - cross party

-need select committee type decision making which will be longer term

- the 15 page document in Sweden (<https://sweden.se/society/education-in-sweden/>) was created collaboratively in cross party and then sent to all the government departments.

Melian (Chair) ACTION GROUPS PLEASE DOWNLOAD (from the link above the Labour Party Policy Consultation document) AND CONSULT AS INDIVIDUAL GROUPS AND RESPOND, PLEASE RESPOND!

**Melian speaking as chair of Campaign for the Advancement of State Education: There have been nine national organisations helping with the writing up a national education service from cradle to grave. They produced a document 4 sides of A4, and then had a big meeting in House of Common 4 weeks ago, and invited people to take it away. The object is to open up debate - it is a true working document. So again, please organisations, respond! Important to engage in this debate. This is a new longer term vision of what education should look like in this country. (The CASE document is being sent in a separate email).

**The Association for Professional Development in Early Years, acronym TACTYC (!), has published a response to the Labour party education document: (http://www.earlychildhoodforum.org/uploads/Labour-Party-Policy-response_TACTYC.pdf)

Comment:

-There is chaos in education under the current government. Schools have become academies and the land of the academies is being turned into business parks. The academy system is unaccountable.

-The 30 hours funding doesn't reach the children most in need, and registration is required every 3 months online, otherwise children lose their place

-Sure Start well financed - Margaret Hodge really pushing - you have had politicians really committed, to implement. Providing enough provisions to reach pram pushing in each local authority. Willing to look at detail.

Melian: Wanting to get back to Tracy Brabin - gave her a copy of our charter and we have given her some dates to meet our steering committee.

7th Agenda [Item Early Childhood Forum Membership and Finance.](#)

(Membership details are being sent in a separate e mail.)

8th Agenda Item [UPDATES AND FUTURE PLANS](#)

**The Association for Professional Development in Early Years (TACTYC) is holding a conference in November (<https://tactyc.org.uk/conferences/>) The aim of TACTYC conferences is to enable people interested in the promotion of high quality early childhood services to meet together and to share opportunities for the highest quality professional development, to offer and receive mutual support and to encourage debate and discussion. This years conference brings the opportunity to explore how we as early years advocates are able to:

*Develop and support professional confidence

*Advocate for children and families

*Inform policy and practice

**The National Education Union is running a campaign "Stop school cuts." (<https://neu.org.uk/campaigns>).

**The Preschool Learning Alliance has just published 'MINDS MATTER' . A report on the impact of working in the early years sector on practitioners' mental health and well being. The full report can be found here: (<https://www.pre-school.org.uk/mental-health-and-early-years-workforce>).

(Apologies, I had to leave before all the participants present had spoken so don't have full notes for the rest of this item.)

Next Early Childhood Forum Meeting is on 12 October.