

Case Study - Dunnington P.O.P.P.E.Y York

Top Practice Tips

- Be willing to 'give it a go'
- Build up relationships with partners across the sector
- Meet with different settings to share practice and get different ideas

Background

Sarah Hardwell and Emma Patterson are both registered childminders who were formerly teachers in York. In their Shared Foundation Partnership, Sarah takes the role of chair and Emma that of secretary and treasurer. The partnership was already established when Sarah and Emma took it on three and a half years ago, but they have injected new energy and ensured its continuing success. York local authority support the Shared Foundation Partnerships across the city.

The partnership is located in a village setting with 4 childminders, a pre-school on school site, other nurseries in the village area and the school. Everyone meets together once a term and specific transition events are held twice a year.

Benefits

Having seen things from 'both sides' Sarah and Emma could see the benefits for childminders as they missed the 'staff room' chat. The partnership has enabled childminders to become part of a team and share in professional discussion.

Children are able to make smooth and effective transitions into school due to organised transition events – an informal event at Easter time and an event during the summer term where every child that is feeding in to the school is invited to attend. Sarah and Emma were able to establish links with all the Early Years settings in the area, including all children that were feeding in to the school to make the event a success.

HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

WORKS

Because the partnership sits in a small community all members of the partnership see each other informally on a regular basis – for example when collecting children in the school playground. The partnership is therefore knowledgeable about all the children within the partnership on a professional level. Regular meetings with other practitioners (such as a childminder playgroup they run) allows them to engage in professional dialogue around current and developing issues in childcare and they can also ensure a consistent approach to providing wrap-around care in conjunction with other settings.

A partnership agreement regarding data sharing (for transition between settings and also during moderation) and another agreement covering partnership wide events are used across the partnership. Parental consent is sought with admission documents regarding data sharing within the partnership ensuring that information about children is shared appropriately and effectively across the partnership.

Cross-moderation is carried out twice a year meaning that transition information will be useful when children are moving on to the next stage of their educational journey.

The partners are supportive of each other and offer a flexible service to parents across the village. At termly meetings, they make time for feedback from training attended by partnership members, ensuring that settings stay up to date and are able to access information from training which they may have been unable to attend directly.

What are the challenges?

In the past, there had been some concerns about working collaboratively because of the financial and competitive aspect of potentially losing business to other settings in the partnership.

Settings that 'straddle' different geographical localities may need to attend more than one partnership meeting which has an impact on time commitments.

What does the future hold?

Sarah and Emma are planning drop in sessions in the village hall for parents to give them opportunities to look at different options – for example to gain more information around funded places.

A review of all information sharing documentation will be carried out prior to May to ensure that the requirements of the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) are met.