**Notes and Actions from the Children First Pioneer Areas Meeting**

**Welsh Government offices, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ**

**9 December 2019**

**Present:**

**Children First Pioneer Areas/Partner Organisations**

Lindsey Watkins (LW), Newport, Millbrook Primary School

Mel Simmonds (MS), Save the Children

Sarah Mutch (SMu), Caerphilly, Caerphilly County Borough Council

Allison Harris (AH), Neath Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Claire Jones Barnett (CJB), Neath Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Jess Allen (JA), Cwm Taf, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Sian Evans (SE), Cwm Taf, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Syd Dennis (SD), Cwm Taf, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Caryl Alban (CA), Carmarthenshire, Carmarthenshire County Council

Noeline Thomas (NT), Carmarthenshire, Carmarthenshire County Council

Jo Hughes (JH), Powys, Powys County Council

**Welsh Government**

Sarah Melkevik (SM)

Nia Griffiths (NG)

Maxine Chichester (MC)

Rhys Davies (RD)

**Apologies:**

Catrin Thomas (Gwynedd), Diane Jones (Cwm Taf), Deb Job (Conwy), Marisa Moon (Barnardo’s)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

SM welcomed the group, round table introductions were made.

1. **21st Century Schools and Colleges: Community Hubs Pilot**

NG kindly spoke to the group about the 21st Century Schools and Colleges programme and work on the Community Hubs Pilot.

* The ambitious school building project has received £3.7b investment.
* Focus on well-being of learners, parents and carers.
* There is a need to update the 2003 Community Focussed Schools Guidance.
* £15m investment on a pilot to build community learning centres. 21 community and learning hubs will be provided across Wales.
* Projects have included developing sports facilities, community meeting rooms, childcare opportunities, co-location of services, a café and multi-use spaces.
* The pilot is working on the basis of the following themes:

» Widening family and community engagement;

» Extending the use of physical assets for community use;

» Co-locating services to form community hubs.

* Presentation is attached.

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**Action 1:***LW to put NG in touch with Prof. JoAnne Ferrara at Manhattanville College*

**Action 2:** *NG to make links with the Pioneer group going forward.*

1. **Routine ACE enquiry**

SM updated the group on the pilot the Welsh Government are running with Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Blaenau Gwent health visitors undertaking routine ACE enquiries with mums and dads at the six week and six month contacts. The aim of the pilot is to examine the feasibility of conducting ACE enquiry, within a health visiting setting, and to explore the acceptability of ACE enquiry to service users and practitioners.

Presentation attached.

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1. **ExChange website**

SM informed the group that following discussion in our September meeting, she has set up a Children First Pioneer page on the ExChange Wales website hosted by CASCADE Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre at Cardiff University.

<http://www.exchangewales.org/children-first-pioneers>

Case studies have been written for inclusion.

**Action 3:** *NT/CA, CT, LW and JH please clear the Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Newport and Powys case studies and return to SM.*

1. **Welsh Government update**

Since the last meeting

* We have formally brought in 3 Pioneers, Neath Port Talbot, Powys and Conwy – welcome.
* ACE Cardiff wanted to be revisited in 6 months, will pick this up in the spring.

Feedback on ACEs 5 Nations

* The Welsh Government hosted the ACEs Five Nations Network meeting in Cardiff in November with PHW and the ACEs Support Hub.
* It went really well, good sharing of activities.
* Had presentations from Robert Green, Pencoed Comprehensive as a trauma informed school, Matt Jukes, Chief Constable South Wales Police talking about EATP and policing based on understanding vulnerabilities.

ACEs review

* The Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services has asked us to undertake a review on ACEs policy. This will commence by an externally contracted body to take place in the New Year.
* We find it quite a timely time to look back and reflect on whether ACEs are the best way to improve outcomes for children, review our evidence base, consider the language of ACEs in the context of strengths and deficits and consider the imperative to look at wider adversity.

Systems Change Network and Barnardo’s

* Welcome to Mel, she will have a standing invitation to these meetings.
* Work on the Systems Change Network has paused temporarily whilst some internal restructuring takes place.

Meeting arrangements for next year?

* SM checked in with the group about the continued value of these meetings. Agreed to continue to hold them termly, we will aim to hold them predominantly within the Pioneer areas, with a view to making them more practical and participatory in nature.

**Action 4:***SM to explore whether she can share presentations from the ACEs Five Nations Meeting.*

1. **The National Mission and changes to the curriculum in Wales**

MC and RD talked to the proposed changes to the curriculum in Wales based upon the National Mission.

* The Welsh Government has been working with a network of more than 175 pioneer schools to lead the development and support of the new curriculum.
* The new curriculum replaces existing key stages with ‘progression steps’. The intention is that learners will progress along the same continuum of learning for each AOLE. Progression points are signalled through progression steps at five points on the continuum of learning, relating broadly to expectation at aged 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.
* The Health and Well-being AOLE has five “What matters?” statements, which include:

» Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.

» How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being;

» Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others;

» How we engage with different social influences shapes who we are and our health and well-being;

» Healthy relationships are fundamental to our sense of belonging and well-being.

* Draft guidance on the six AOLEs has been consulted on schools will begin designing their own curriculums to be delivered in 2020.
* Draft guidance attached.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/?_ga=2.26589247.365045840.1575977106-1780325917.1569858130>

1. **Strategic updates from Pioneer areas**

**Powys Children first update**

* Powys are a 1½ years into the Children First model.
* Coverage is five estates in Newtown.
* Initiatives have included a raising aspiration project - A project which engages with all Year 6 pupils from 3 primary schools on a monthly basis to inspire young people towards the world of work and their future aspirations.
* The project is engaged with ‘Street Games’ who have now held a multi-agency training event in Newtown and are working with volunteers to run activities for children outside of the school day.
* The kindness project is led by the Youth Club, children write kindness cards and pass these on. The Youth club also have a Christmas walk taking place in conjunction with the Youth Club and the Local primary school to spread the kindness message on one of the housing estates. They are also working with early year’s settings to make them kind institutes.

**Carmarthenshire Children First Pioneer update**

* Carmarthenshire have been working on a physical regeneration project in the Tyisha ward. They have managed to get a commitment in the plan, agreed by the local authority, to explore community hub opportunities. They have been challenging this work to ask what this work is going to put back into the community, and how they plan to talk to the community.
* Carmarthenshire has secured ½ a post to take forward the physical regeneration project, they will be focussing on involving the community.
* A local group of volunteers has become a constituted group and are training its members in various roles, chairperson, minute taker etc.
* Nawr Arts has been working with parents and teachers using the expressive arts to explore positives about the community.
* Carmarthenshire took part in a holiday hunger play pilot at half term.
* They have been involving the community on work around active travel.

**Cwm Taf Children First Pioneer update**

* Please see case study for update for Merthyr.
* SD updated on some of the work, Lou the coordinator had done in the two Rhondda Fach Hubs.
* The number of people registered for reading has risen from 141 to 253, this is because of children taking the initiative with their parents and carers.
* ACEs and making every contact count training has taken place.
* A Neighbourhood Network Group has replaced the Rhondda Fach Implementation Group. 17 volunteers are working with families and young people in the community hub.
* Work has taken place on living walls, the sensory room and well-being bags.
* The plan for the area is to have 10 hubs, with at least 50% led by 3rd sector partners.
* The Your Voice survey gives the views of 5000 young people across Rhondda Cynon Taff. The themes arising influence the development of the hub.
* Cwm Taf are exploring how Flying Start can be delivered to all those who need it rather than based on a geographic area.

**Neath Port Talbot Children First update**

* The Pioneer has a school readiness focus.
* As an Early Years Pathfinder they are using funding to fund a part time engagement worker to undertake hands on work with families.
* Neath Port Talbot are looking to go a piece of work to make sure that the people using the Children’s Community are the right people who need that level of support. They are using a poverty tracker (linked to housing benefits).
* Engagement work with schools continues, specifically looking at opportunities to put on activities after school.
* The Children’s Community has been running managing money sessions, self-esteem classes, dad’s groups, storytelling sessions through Tiny Tots groups and Communities for Work drop in sessions.
* Basic skills learning will take place in the New Year.
* The Children’s Community has strategic and operational groups set up.

**Caerphilly Children First Pioneer update**

* Their SHEP Programme was very successful. Bridging the Gap provided funding for the trips.
* Caerphilly has a volunteer group who are constituted, and have been trained to apply for funding.
* The ICC reception area is being redesigned. They are piloting the parents network running the building, including booking rooms etc.
* WHQS work is ongoing including murals in the local area.
* Lansbury Park has moved from 1st to 3rd in the WIMD rating.
* The Lansbury Park Facebook group is collecting and donating food parcels.
* Caerphilly is developing a graphic novel for young people on anti-social behaviour.
* Through the Parent’s Network a part time mental health worker is delivering low mood consultations.
* As an Early Years Pathfinder, work has taken place on a regional basis using Vanguard to map family interventions.

**Newport Children First Pioneer update**

* Much of the activity has focussed on the Bettws Early Learning Community (ELC).
* Millbrook Primary School is known locally at the Newport North Hub, with a focus on 0 – 8 years.
* Newport is also an Early Years Pathfinder with a focus on 0 – 7 years.
* Bettws ELC has set up a project board, a project group and a project team and all the necessary governance arrangements.
* The Bettws ELC vision is ‘Happy children learn’.
* The project team is made up of people on the ground and members of the community. Activity is guaranteed based on an MOU, which their line managers have signed up to.
* They are currently working on themes arising from the toolkit.
* Millbrook has been working with Flying Start and childcare settings to consider transition arrangements into nursery places.
* The school’s Parent Voice Matters group have asked for information on mental health support to be updated.
* Millbrook was awarded re-accreditation of centre of excellence in financial education status by Young Money Education for their work with families and credit unions.
* The school will be putting on a breakfast with Santa, for learners, parents and families.
* Their whole school theme is ‘Making a difference’.
* A new group of learners are taking on Heddlu Bach responsibilities, including one learner who has been sharing his experiences with knife crime in the area.
* Rebecca Thomas has been appointed as a programme manager within the Bettws ELC, the focus will be on three work streams 1. Health including mental health, 2. Attachment and 3. Capacity of the community, including celebrating Bettws.

**Action 5:** *Please let MS know what would benefit you with regards to the Save the Children System change Work.*

**Gwynedd Children First Pioneer update**

* No update given.

**Conwy Children First Pioneer update**

* No update given.

**7. AOB and Finish**

SM asked for suggestions for further meeting speakers. Suggestions included:

* Trying again to get a representative from the Well-being of Future Generations office.
* Discussion on funding opportunities, possibly someone from the flexible funding team.

**Dates for next meetings:**

**March date TBC. Cwm Taf offered to host.**

**June date w/c 15th June TBC**

**Oct date w/c 5th Oct TBC**

**December date 7th Dec TBC**

**Action 6:** *SD to confirm date for March meeting.*

**Action 7:***Any volunteers to host the June, Sept and Dec 2020 meetings please contact SM.*

**Summary of actions**

**Action 1:***LW to put NG in touch with Prof. JoAnne Ferrara at Manhattanville College*

**Action 2:** *NG to make links with the Pioneer group going forward.*

**Action 3:** *NT/CA, CT, LW and JH please clear the Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Newport and Powys case studies and return to SM.*

**Action 4:***SM to explore whether she can share presentations from the ACEs Five Nations Meeting.*

**Action 5:** *Please let MS know what would benefit you with regards to the Save the Children System change Work.*

**Action 6:** *SD to confirm date for March meeting.*

**Action 7:***Any volunteers to host the June, Sept and Dec 2020 meetings please contact SM.*