

# **Early Years Investment**

## **Key Messages**

Forum members are asked to:

- Note the proposal for the £600k early years investment fund; and agree to the distribution method outlined below, as recommended by the Early Years Working Group.

## **1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1. In May 2021, and further to an action from the February Schools Forum, the Early Years Working Group agreed that the £600k Funded Early Learning (FEL) investment fund should be reinvested into the early years provision across the city.
- 1.2. The Schools Forum Early Years Working Group is now recommending how and when this funding should be distributed, given the pressures in the early years sector due to Covid-19.

## **2. Proposal for Distribution**

- 2.1. It is recommended that the investment funding be distributed using the number of hours paid to early years providers in the 2019/20 financial year.
- 2.2. This is in recognition that early years providers are continuing to face a financially challenging situation due to the ongoing pressures in the early years sector due to Covid-19.
- 2.3. This will allow each provider to set their own priorities to recover from the impact of Covid-19, as and when they feel it is appropriate.
- 2.4. Providers can still come to a local agreement if they wish to “pool” their funding with other settings.

## **3. Method of Distribution**

- 3.1. The funding will be allocated to all current providers (schools/PVIs and childminders) using their funded FEL hours in the 2019/20 financial year.
- 3.2. The funding will be distributed to Early Years providers in August 2021, following the Summer Amendment payment process to ensure all providers are funded.

## 4. Recommendations

Forum members are asked to:

- **Approve** the recommendation of the Early Years Working Group: to distribute the £600k early years investment by applying the distribution method as set out above.