



OBC Chairs Conference Call
Tuesday 21st January 2020, 15:00

In attendance:

June O’Sullivan	(JOS)	London
Rachele Parker	(RP)	LEYF /observer
Alison Beard	(AB)	
Cheryl Hadland	(CH)	South West
Pennie Akehurst	(PA)	East Midlands
Tricia Wellings	(TW)	West Midlands
Neil Leitch	(NL)	London
Simona McKenzie	(SiM)	London

Sara MacKenzie	(SaM)	South East
Clare Robson	(CR)	North
Juls Davies	(JD)	OBC Support
Apologies		
Elaine Sagar	(ES)	North West
Rachel Buckler	(RB)	North West
Jo Verrill	(JV)	North East

Welcome

JOS welcomed colleagues to the call and reaffirmed that the purpose of the call was to agree the key subjects that would form the basis of all the OBC meetings. Each OBC would also add relevant regional issues as necessary and other issues as they arose.

Ofsted Annual Report Launch:

JOS noted that she had been at the Ofsted Annual Report Launch this morning, which did not have a lot on Early Years. 96% of Nurseries are rated Good or Outstanding but there was no data that unpacked what proportion were old inspections. Ofsted noted the continual decline in childminders.

There was reference to a decrease in entry level apprentices against an increase in higher and degree level apprenticeships funded by companies with a large levy pot to the detriment of entry level candidates. Also concerns that over half the independent learning providers which provide training for 437,000 apprentices out of a total of 753,000 apprentices were judged required improvement or inadequate.

There was also a specific reference to the change in ownership of nursery chains as more of them are funded by venture capitalists as well as continuing international growth and the continual mergers and acquisitions. There was a reference that chains could share practice more easily as well as having more training for staff.

The group reflected on the proposed changes to the inspection of nursery chains as one inspection. NL opposed the inspection of nursery groups, reflecting that they are made up of individual settings and each can vary in practice. While policies and procedures can be



streamlined across nursery groups, the value of a policy comes from how it is implemented in the nursery itself. Other members agreed with him.

There was discussion about the acquisition of a “Requires Improvement” nursery and whether it should be registered as “Requires Improvement” or “Uninspected”. Noted that the timeline that Ofsted works for to update a registration of a new nursery is 24 weeks.

Safer Recruitment:

A recent experience of having three calls from Ofsted to raise, investigate and conclude how a manager with a disclosed disciplinary was recruited was discussed. The inspector said that when a disciplinary is flagged before starting the compliance checks we need to discuss with HR the applications and interview and agree the questions necessary to assure ourselves that the appointment would not breach our safeguarding procedures JOS asked whether this was common practice, or if this was something new? Others on the call noted that this was common practice and had experienced this before.

OBC London Meeting

It was confirmed that the London OBC will take place at the London Childcare Expo on 20th March - details still TBC. JOS requested that PA come to the London OBC to share information on her Eif review research.

OBC Structure

There was discussion about how to manage OBCs in some of the Ofsted designated regions as they covered a very big geographical area. The Ofsted areas are huge, so we need some more Chairs and possibly set up a Steering Group to coordinate a shared approach. There are no rules as to how you shape your area, but we request that it is a neutral role, not sponsoring or selling products. The role is OBC Chair as independent from your day job.

OBC Website and Social Media

There was discussion around whether to have an individual OBC or localised OBC websites. It was generally agreed that it is important to have the central website. The website has recently been updated and is now: www.theofstedbigconversation.co.uk; the previous website www.bigofstedconversation now has a message on it directing visitors to the new website.

JOS provided JD with an article on how to chair a regional meeting and this is live on the site: <https://theofstedbigconversation.co.uk/chairing-an-obc/>

It was discussed that more articles could be added to the website to support those thinking about chairing a meeting and ideas should be fed back in the group to decide on the further content.

Other pages of interest to be shared are:

- <https://theofstedbigconversation.co.uk/about-obc/> - tells the history of the OBC and also gives information about the structures and who should attend
- <https://theofstedbigconversation.co.uk/regional-groups/> - showing the structure of the regional groups in a map, that contains the current information of the regional chairs including links to emails and the regional pages.



- <https://theofstedbigconversation.co.uk/events/> - provides up to date listings of all of the current organised meetings in a list as well as a calendar view.

Each region has a page where details of the current contacts on record, their roles, contact details etc. plus a link to any organised meetings.

On the Regional Chairs page, we need each chair to send a short bio and photograph to add to the content.

JD offered to share the link interested people to their Regional Chairs.

We agreed a central Facebook Page which is currently being run by the NW. However, ES needs to remove NW from the page so it's clear it's the national Facebook so there is no confusion. JD has access to add content so plans to add all of the current meetings as Events and further promote the page on the website and via Social Media.

The Twitter Handle is @OfstedBigC
Hashtags to use are: #OfstedBigConversation and #OBC

The Twitter feed is currently showing on the homepage of the website and further social media links are to be added.

Facebook Group for the Regional Chairs and Admins. This has now been set up and JD has invited all that she is linked with; All Chairs will be made Editors / Admins so they can add their relevant contacts. This is a private group to share ideas and have discussions.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OBCRegionalGroups/>

Action: ES needs to remove NW from the page so it's clear it's the National Facebook page

Action: Each Chair to send a short bio and photograph to Juls to add to the Chairs Facebook

There was discussion around the calendar on the OBC website and updating the dates on "Next Regional Meeting". JD noted that this needs to be done manually.

There was discussion about setting up email @theofstedbigconversation.com - these could be forwarded to Regional Chairs.

Action: Every Chair needs to send the dates for their Regional OBC

Final agreed actions:

- To look at the OBC website and feedback regarding updates.
- To share the OBC website widely on social media.
- All to share minutes from recent meetings with Juls Davies to share on the website.
- Follow up on questions that were sent out after the summer call. PA could link her research in with this, PA will follow up with Jo Verrill.



- Noted that Ofsted have recently had training on SEND and ESOL - this may be a particular focus in upcoming inspections.
- Focus for this year will be PSED - it might be useful to get someone to speak at upcoming meetings on PSED and how it links with EYFS

Proposed agenda items for the 2020 OBC meetings

- Standard Ofsted update
- EiF and progress
- EYFS Consultation outcomes and impact for ELGs
- Chain inspection plans
- Manager data and recruitment/compliance queries
- GDPR and data processing - who owns what information?
- Impact of the shorter inspections
- Speaker on PSED and how it links with the EYFS

Notes: June O'Sullivan