

# Delivering integrated services – how to make it work[!]

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During the last decade the arguments for the importance of the early years and integrated ways of working appeared to be won.

We saw massive investments in early education and strong central support for early years services.

We now live in interesting times!

Resources are great and over the last 20 years we have been fortunate to have funding through *Early Excellence* and *Sure Start* programmes- *but* integration is not dependent on resources

Integration is more a mind-set – a commitment to bring together professions and expertise to find ways to work together to support children and families in our communities

It can be about large all *singing and dancing* centres but also about steps each setting can take however small

In the next half hour I will touch on :-

- Why we should work in an integrated way
- Our long history of integrated provision
- Learning from my last 37 years



# Why we should work in an integrated way

- EPPE- 'Disadvantaged children benefit significantly from good quality pre-school experiences, especially where they are with a mixture of children from different social backgrounds....Good quality can be found across all types of early years settings; however quality was higher overall in settings integrating care and education and in nursery schools'

We improve well being now and enhance out comes by:-

- Bringing together education and care focusing on the child's needs
- Bringing together children and families across our communities
- Drawing on a wide range of expertise and extending our knowledge
- Finding ways to support parents as they study or work to support their families



# Our long history of integrated provision:-

- Integrated provision has a long history – Froebel , Owen...
- At the beginning of the 20 century pioneers such as the Macmillan's established early years provision with aims and practices remarkably similar to those we describe as integrated today
- In the 1970's funding for urban renewal lead to a new wave of integrated provision often called nursery centres or combined centres and to innovative projects to bring practitioners together
- The *National Association of Nursery Centres* was formed by and for practitioners as they developed new ways of working
- By the 1990's integrated centres had established their identity and ways of working.
- In the early 21 century *Early Excellence* and *Sure Start Children's Centres* continued to innovate and share practice across the sector
- However today we have closures of children's centres, dropping *Every Child Matters* and focusing on targeting, 30 hours per week for some parents only, 2 year old places for some children only.....

# Thomas Coram and integrated working

- 1745 Captain Coram
- Corams work over the last 271 years reflects changing attitudes to children and families
- 1970's Jack Tizard one of the first children's centres
- 1990's Gillian Pugh – *More than the sum of its part*
- 1999 *Early Excellence Centre*
- 2003 The first *Sure Start Children's Centre*
- Today's Centre – no longer a Sure Start Children's Centre but still integrated



# Learning from my last 37 years

- I am lucky to have worked in and with a range of settings seeking to integrate provision :-Neighbourhood Network in Kensal Town , teacher in Day Nursery programme, Dorothy Garden -one of the first Early Excellence Centres , National Association of Nursery Centre , Thomas Coram-the first Sure Start Children Centre ...
- Some models were well resourced and some less so but in all the key element was the commitment and belief of the individuals

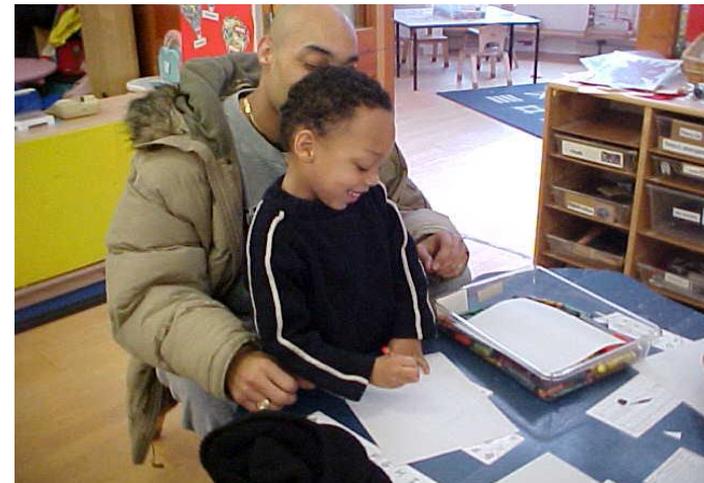
There are always challenges:-

- Understanding and respecting a range of services
- Finding ways to bring different funding for different polices together to work in an integrate
- Working with professionals from different training /practice backgrounds
- Crossing professional boundaries and bringing people together
- Differing priorities for different agencies
- Maintaining momentum
- Time and resources



# *But* there are strategies to address them

- A shared vision , bringing the best from the past, recognising different perspectives and histories, and focusing on what we want for children and families now and in the future
- Finding ways of working together based on what is best for the children and families?
- Learning from others who have done it and finding our own ways
- Focusing on what we can do and doing something
- Understanding education and care are always integrated for the child
- Building self help and support – between settings , in an area....
- Drawing on the resources and resourcefulness of parents and communities
- Keeping committed to what we believe is important for children and families and being rigorous about ditching what gets in the way
- Time and patience!



# Conclusion

- The investment and attention over the last decade has made the sector stronger
- The workforce is better qualified [though not as well qualified as we would want].
- The relationships we have developed with parents, carers and communities over the years remains as a strength.
- The relationships we have built with colleagues from a range of professions through programmes such as Children's Centres and Extended Schools are still available to us
- And remember -we have been here before!

To address the challenges we need to be clear about what are the essentials.  
Crucially we have to work together to preserve the quality of our early education and what we believe is best for young children and their families

