



**Men in Early Years Network Meeting 19.04.2016**  
*Guest Speaker: Marvin Rees*

## Planned Agenda

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Time	Item
2.30	Welcomes and introductions
3.00	Marvin Rees – he will be here to discuss what can be done to give children the best possible start in life and share some of his own experiences with us
4.15	Beverage and biscuit break
4.30	General network updates, feedback from Southampton
5.00	Any other business
5.15	A quick word on our next guest speaker and future meeting agendas
5.30	End

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## Minutes

- Welcome and introductions (During this there was a discussion with Seb about what it is like to work in an academy and the expectations of him as a member of staff. There was also a lot of discussion with the men from Redhouse about how their setting works.). Around 20 people at this meeting, similar to recent numbers.
- Shad went over the Agenda then Jay told the group some updates- We've been funded for another year by BCC, if anyone would like to give some of their time to help support the group that'd be great, Outreach work with Fairfield, gradually being given access to the council's database to reach out to others etc.
- Small discussion about MiEY's networks there are around the uk.
- Nationally we make up 2% of males working in early years but within Bristol we make up 6-7% of the early years workforce.
- Discussion about routes into early years and how we can encourage more men/teens to get into the line of work and our own experiences of how we ended up in our current jobs- interestingly a lot of guys were discouraged from working in early years originally but feel attitudes have changed towards men working in early years over the past five years.
- **Marvin Rees** speaks about what it was like for growing up in Bristol being mixed race and the insecurities he had because of this. He then spoke about the male role model he had when he went to school and how important that was for him growing up.
- Marvin continues to talk about his career and research that shows the importance of early years in connection to mental health in adults and that it is our job to give children the best possible start. He asks "How can we give children the best possible start in life?"
- Marvin speaks about working with Empire boxing club and a group that was run there for fathers to help provide them the skills they could use to become a successful father and have a positive impact on their children's lives.
- The discussion moves on to how we engage with fathers and how difficult that can be for them to come and access groups/spend time in school when it is female

dominated. It then continued on to speak about how to reach out to the most vulnerable families/fathers and the challenges that come with that.

- Chat about one voice/mindfulness and the impact it should have on children and how it will help them regulate their emotions. Talk about how it is cost effective and having a positive impact on the children they have been using it with.
- Marvin talks about his experience of working with a group of young children that have mental health issues and asked them what we can do to support them. They told Marvin that helping them when they were in primary school they feel they would have benefited from.
- Discussion about raising the profile of working in early years and how it is a profession! How do we raise the profile to make people in general realise that working in early years is a valid profession and career that involves a lot of work to help children learn from a very young age.
- A large group discussion about pay and the difference between early years and how it changes and increases as children get older.
- Marvin speaks about health in relation to the discussion, he speaks about how the health sector in Bristol is very fragmented and how there are too many people trying to lead it. He then asked that we send in an email with our 5 top priorities to help raise the profile of early years for him to share with the mayoral candidates.
- We continued with our chat about pay which moved onto a discussion about schools respecting their staff and giving to them and how the staff give back and when they won't it makes us want to stop giving our time. Marvin then linked this to how having a happy work force then it will have a positive effect on the children that we are working with. He then spoke about how it is more about the skills a person has than whether they have a degree that makes a good EYP and that because of this it opens the door to more people to come and work in early years.
- Talk about giving children nutritional food throughout the day and providing it for children that attend breakfast clubs, staying for lunch and after school clubs.
- Marvin speaks about if he does become mayor how he feels he will be a positive role model to fathers.
- Marvin would like us to email him with our ideas on how to improve our status, priority of early years and early years nutrition.
- Jay speaks about how he feels it is important for us to follow up on Marvin's offer and send him our three important topics for him to focus on as a mayoral candidate. (Jay wrote down notes on what the guys suggested)
- Jay feeds back to the group about the MiEY's national conference to the group, he spoke about one of the workshops that he attended during the day and how it emphasised on the importance that the MiEY's networks are important as a support tool for men. He then told the group that this is what the group is for and that is anyone ever wanted that support it was there.
- Shad feeds back about a workshop he attended during the conference, about a piece of research done by Sheffield university called 'Professional love in early years settings'. Shad then tells the group how he would like to do a piece of research similar in Bristol around perceptions of men. This brought up a chat about whether it is appropriate to give children hugs or not and about 'no touch' policies.
- Jerome has temporarily had to stand back from the leadership of the network alongside Shad and Jay currently so if anyone would like to help run the group they are invited to join.
- AOB- A chat about possibly changing the times for next years meetings.

- Next guest speaker- Dr Jo Warin coming to talk about her experiences of spending time in Sweden with male early years practitioners.
- Close/