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Glossary

Assistant Someone who is registered as working with a childminder to assist in the care of children in the childminders home.

Child with a disability A child who has a disability for the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Childminder A person who is registered to look after one or more children they are not related to on domestic premises for reward. The care they provide takes place on domestic premises, which are not the home of the child, or they care for more than two families mainly in the home of one parent. Childminders work with no more than two other childminders or assistants.

Domestic premises A place that is used wholly as a private dwelling - someone's home.

Early Years Foundation Stage The learning and development requirements and welfare requirements which Early Years' providers must comply with www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/eyfs

Early year's provider A person who provides early years services. This includes anyone registered on the Early Year's Register, and schools (maintained and independent) which provide early years services. The registered person may be a company, committee or group or the childminder.

Early year's provision Learning, development and care for a young child.

Ofsted Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England. An independent, non-ministerial government department, responsible for arranging and inspecting a range of education and children's services, and for inspecting and regulating early year's provision and registered childcare. From April 2007 the organisation's full title changes to the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, but will continue to be known as Ofsted.

Parent Any one who has parental responsibility for a child or has care of a child.

Practitioner Any adult who works with children in a setting.

Premises Any building, area or vehicle where childcare is provided.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator SENCO The named person responsible for overseeing inclusive practice in your setting.

Setting Any out-of-home provider of early years services for children from birth to five years old, such as childminders, local authority nurseries, nursery or early years centres, children's centres, playgroups, pre-schools, or schools in the independent, private or voluntary sector and maintained schools.

Young child A child is a young child from birth until the 1 September after their fifth birthday.

Policies and procedures

As a registered childminder you must have policies and procedures in place to meet with the welfare requirements. While not all policies and procedures are expected to be in writing, they must be in place and be clear to parents and any assistants where used. Ofsted will check the clarity of your policies and procedures by asking you, the parents and any assistants' questions about them.

The following shows which policies must be in written form. You may decide to write more policies as this is a good way to show parents that you have a clear understanding of your duties, and will also support you during the Ofsted inspection process.

Written policy requirements for childminders

Policies and procedures must be in written form for:

- risk assessment
- safeguarding children
- complaints
- accidents and incidents.

For specialist childminders **all** policies and procedures must be in written form. Each person is required to have their own copy and these must also be available for parents.

Writing a policy

A policy is individual to the care you provide; it enables parents and assistants to have a clear understanding of your policies and procedures. A policy needs:

- an aim
- a clear statement about what your policy is seeking to achieve.

The following pages are intended to help you think about policies and procedures you will need to consider. It is meant as a starting point and is not a definitive list. It is good practice to review your policies and procedures each year, or when you have a change of working practice.

Examples of policies can be found at www.devon.gov.uk/docbank

When using any templates taken from other sites you must tailor them to suit your own needs.

Safeguarding

Refer to page 22 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and CR2.1 Childcare Register.

This written policy and procedure needs to be in place to protect children, parents and carers. The welfare, safety and protection of children is paramount. These procedures must be in written form.

For further guidance The Department of Health (DoH) has produced a booklet called *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*. You can download this booklet from www.everychildmatters.gov.uk or <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk> or order a copy by calling **0845 60 222 60**.

You can also find information on the Devon County Council website at www.devon.gov.uk/child-protection If you believe a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse contact Devon County Council on **0845 155 1013**.

Safeguarding children training is contact the training team on **0800 056 36 66**.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including people who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is your prime responsibility to protect the safety and wellbeing of all children in your care. Where assistants are used, you will be the named person who has overall responsibility for following up any concerns they raise.

You have a duty to all children and parents to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that comes to your attention, including reporting suspicions around abuse to all relevant people identified by the [Devon Safeguarding Children Board \(DSCB\)](#), including Ofsted. You will need to follow procedures as set out in the Devon Safeguarding Children Board Guidance and follow their advice on any action necessary.

You should have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and be able to follow safeguarding policy and procedures appropriately. Policies should be in line with the DSCB guidance procedures.

You should be able to respond appropriately to:

- any significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general wellbeing
- unexplained bruising, marks, or signs of possible abuse
- signs of neglect
- comments a child makes which may give cause for concern.

It is important to protect yourself from allegations of abuse. Because of the nature of your work you are vulnerable to allegations of child abuse, so it is important to have policies and procedures in place, following the principles of good practice, to protect the children, yourself, your family and any assistants working at your home.

You need to avoid putting yourself in situations which may lead to allegations being made against you. Make sure that:

- the safety and welfare of the child is always paramount
- you fulfil your responsibility and duty towards children by working in partnership with parents
- you conduct your relationship with the children and their family in a professional manner at all times
- you carefully follow all policies and procedures for working with parents and carers.

Suspected abuse outside your setting

These procedures will come into action if you suspect any child is the victim of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect outside your setting. Please refer to the flowcharts on pages 10–14 in *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*.

You will need consider the situation immediately and lead a thorough investigation. Depending on the initial findings, some or all of these steps should be taken.

- The child's parents should be told if you think this will not put the child further at risk - if you are not sure you should get professional advice.
- The matter should be referred to Children and Young People's Services and you will need to co-operate with any investigation by the police and Children and Young People's Services.
- You should work with the child and, if appropriate, their family in partnership with other agencies.

As a result of suspected abuse a comprehensive, confidential report will need to be compiled. It will need to include:

- a description of the alleged abuse or neglect
- a diary of events
- accounts of any meetings with parents
- any action taken
- steps taken to support the child
- any lessons learnt
- details of any resulting changes to be made to your setting's procedures or practices.

Suspected abuse by assistants in your setting

As the designated person if anyone makes an allegation against a member of your staff you will need to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation with the child's parents.

The assistant the allegations have been made against will need to be suspended pending further investigation. The matter should be referred immediately to Children and Young People's Services and you and the person concerned will need to co-operate with any investigation by police and Children and Young People's Services.

Ofsted will need to be told of the allegations and told the outcome. The child's parents must be kept fully informed throughout. You will need to work with the child and their family to offer them support and rebuild trust. You will need to check your policies and procedures and review them as necessary in light of the allegations and the outcome of any investigation.

As a result of the allegation a comprehensive, confidential report will need to be compiled and circulated to the parents and other interested parties. It will need to include:

- a description of the allegation
- a diary of events
- accounts of any meetings with parents
- details of your investigation and the involvement of any professionals or agencies
- any action taken
- the steps taken to support the child and family
- any lessons learnt from the allegation and resulting investigations
- details of any changes to be made to your procedures and policies.

Recording visitors

You are not expected to have a written record of all visitors entering your premises. Ofsted will ask how you safeguard children, ensuring their safety and the procedures you take to ensure that no intruders can enter and that no-one who visits has unsupervised access to any child.

As a childminder you must make sure you consider how you stop unchecked adults that may visit during working hours from being alone with any child.

Use of mobile phones, cameras, computers and web cams

You must have a policy on the use of cameras, computers and mobile phones which takes into consideration:

- mobile phones:
 - must not be used to take photos of children in any circumstances, by yourself, any assistants, any other person who has access to the children while you care for them - this also includes children taking photos of each other
 - do not allow children to take photos of you, any assistants or any adults on the premises on mobile phones
- cameras:
 - permission must be sought from parents to enable photos to be taken
 - there must be agreement on their purpose - this may be for record-keeping or display purposes
 - photos should be the property of the child and the parent, and should not be kept once the child leaves your care, unless prior agreement on each separate photo is agreed with the parent
 - images should not be kept on computers
 - it is an offence to distribute or publish any images of children without the parents' consent
 - always explain to the child why you are taking the picture and make sure that it clearly depicts the background of the room or the place visited
 - be able to justify the reason for taking all photos and be prepared to explain your reasons for taking a photo if challenged by Ofsted, or a parent or anyone as part of an investigation should this arise
 - always make sure children in photos are appropriately dressed, for example if using paddling pools make sure they are wearing swimsuits or trunks
- Computers and web cams:
 - you should make sure that any access to the internet or computer programmes is suitable for the age of the child who is using the equipment
 - you should agree a policy on the use of computers with the parents
 - you must not store images of children on your computer
 - you should make sure that no-one on the premises or while on excursions exposes the children in your care to violent or indecent images
 - web cams should not be connected while children are in your care, to make sure they are not inadvertently used.

Working with parents and carers

Refer to page 23 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You must engage with parents and provide them with information about:

- the type of activities you provide for the children
- your daily routines
- information about assistants where used
- food and drink provided for the children
- your policies and procedures
- your complaints procedure
- contact details for Ofsted letting parents know that they can complain to Ofsted if they wish
- what happens if a parent fails to collect a child at the appointed time
- what happens if a child goes missing.

Working in partnership with parents is valuable, and important to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. You should aim to form a good relationship with parents, so that developmental, social and health-related information about children can be exchanged easily and comfortably.

You should try to achieve a strong working partnership with parents by:

- helping the child to settle and developing a genuine bond with the child and their parents
- making sure that you are available to talk to parents
- making sure that parents can arrange private discussions at agreed times
- keeping information provided by parents about their children confidential and treating it on a strict need-to-know basis
- making sure that information about the children's activities during the day is available to parents on a daily basis - they can be told the information or read it in the child's development book
- making sure that if there are any concerns about the child's wellbeing during the day every effort will be made to contact the parents or the emergency contact
- asking parents to keep you informed of any changes to personal circumstances, such as change of address, telephone number, doctor or emergency contact
- asking parents to keep you informed of any circumstances which could have an effect on a child's emotional wellbeing, such as bereavement, separation or illness in the family.

Registration system

You will need a system for recording the times of arrival and departure of children and the arrival and departure of any assistants.

Late or uncollected children

You should consider:

- whether it is appropriate to charge a late collection fee
- setting a time limit before your uncollected child procedure starts.

Your procedure for uncollected children should cover:

- attempting to contact parents or carers or both
- finding details of emergency contacts for the child.

Never attempt to take the child home yourself, or allow someone who has not been authorised by the parents or carers to collect the child to take them.

If all of these measures fail, contact the police or the Devon Safeguarding Children Board.

Exeter **01392 384444**

Barnstaple **01271 388660**

Out of hours emergency **0845 6000 388**

A report should be written up as soon as possible after the incident and a copy sent to Ofsted with an action plan. The incident should be recorded in the incident log. Always have an emergency contact list including contact details for the Devon Safeguarding Children Board, your local police department and all emergency services.

Complaints

You must record and deal with complaints and this must be in written form. Complaints may be received verbally, in written form or by email from parents.

Responding to complaints

The EYFS and the Childcare register require that:

- all complaints must be investigated
- you must respond to the parent who made the complaint in writing, or by email if they have requested this, within 28 days
- Ofsted can ask for complaints to be made available for any specified period of up to three years.
- You must record the complaint, the outcome of the investigation and action taken by you in response.

The following guidelines explain what needs to be written in each section of the sample complaints log available at www.devon.gov.uk/docbank

Source of complaint

You need to record who made the complaint. If someone complains to Ofsted about your practice, they will normally refer the person making the complaint to you in the first instance. If Ofsted carries out an investigation into your suitability to provide childcare following a complaint, they will tell you the outcome of the investigation. Where they do this, you should enter Ofsted as the source and the Ofsted complaint number, if known.

Nature of complaint and details of the complaint

The record is only for complaints relating to the Welfare Requirements under the EYFS or Childcare Register. You must record here one or more Welfare Requirements the complaint refers to. If you are unsure you should refer to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the accompanying practice guidance or the Guide to registration on the childcare register. You must record all details associated with the complaint, taking care not to name individuals, for example use child A or parent B.

How complaint was dealt with

You must provide information on how you investigated the complaint. You will need to record:

- the process you took to make sure that the complaint was fully investigated, where assistants are used this should include interviews
- who was involved in the investigation - without identifying any individuals named in the complaint including assistants or any child
- any referrals you made to an external agency, for example a local authority, an Environmental Health department or Children and Young People's Services.

Actions and outcomes

You must give details about the outcome of your investigation. You will need to record:

- any actions identified by you
- any actions identified or taken by Ofsted
- any action taken by another external agency, where you have their permission to do so
- the outcome of your investigation - identifying any areas where you feel you could make improvement to your setting
- if you dismissed any assistants following the investigation and if so, under what circumstances
- if you have dismissed an assistant for misconduct because they placed a child at risk of significant harm.

Admission policy

Your setting should be accessible through fair and clear procedures.

Before a child attends your setting the parents or carers must complete and sign the contract or registration form. This gives your setting vital information, such as:

- name, home address and date of birth of the child
- name the child likes to be known by
- starting date and the number of sessions needed each week
- arrangements for paying fees
- arrangements for collecting the child
- name, address and telephone numbers of parents or carers or both
- emergency telephone numbers
- name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor
- information about special diets or allergies
- illness and inoculation details
- parental consents on emergency procedures
- consent for photography for monitoring, advertising and evaluating
- consent to take part in off-site activities
- information about who has legal contact with, and parental responsibility for, the child.

Payment policy

It is important to draw up a contract with the parents on your payment policy. This must be signed by the parent or carer.

Parental involvement

Parents or carers should be asked to give you any information they feel will help you to take the best care of their children.

Involve parents formally and informally in shared record-keeping making sure that they have access to all written records on their child. Make sure that all parents are given information on a regular basis about their child's progress and have an opportunity to discuss it with staff.

You should welcome the contributions of parents, whatever form these may take.

Make sure all parents know the systems for registering queries, complaints and suggestions.

Your setting should be a place where parents feel welcome and at ease.

- Always be warm and welcoming to people.
- Always maintain appropriate boundaries with parents, carers and children.
- Make sure children only leave the session with someone authorised to collect them. We would advise you to have a password system if a parent has notified you that someone different is collecting their child.
- Take care when drinking hot drinks in a room where there are children.

Equal opportunities

Refer to page 25 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

You must promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice, and must make sure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of their:

- ethnicity
- culture
- religion
- home language
- family background
- learning difficulties
- disabilities
- gender
- ability.

Your equal opportunities policy should make sure that:

- your setting is open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their education and care

- you never discriminate against anyone because of race, ethnic group, gender, ability, disability, age, status, sexuality, medical requirements and social or family commitments
- all children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured
- information is included about how all children, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, will be included, valued and supported, and how reasonable adjustments will be made for them - if you are unable to care for a child you should consider other care within the local region that may be able to support that child's specific need and notify the parent
- you are committed to working with parents and other agencies.

If you become a Specialist Childminder and are entitled to take funded children you should also include information about how the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice is put into practice.

Activities and play equipment should allow children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities should be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

The self-evaluation form will enable you to review, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your inclusive practice.

Inclusion

Inclusion involves enabling all children to have the same choices and opportunities in accessing services in their community whatever their needs.

Think about:

- how you promote inclusion
- how children and adults are included, valued and supported
- working in partnership with everyone involved in the child's development - seeking the views of the children and families and valuing their contribution
- recognising children's rights and safeguarding their welfare
- increasing awareness of special needs, minority groups and groups that can be discriminated against
- encouraging children and adults to have a positive self-image
- challenging unacceptable language and actions or beliefs which may be prejudicial or exclusive to others.

Health

Refer to page 26 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

You must:

- promote the good health of the children
- take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection
- take appropriate action when children are ill.

You must have an effective policy on administering medicines. The policy must include effective management systems to support individual children with medical needs.

Medication policy

- No medication should be given to any child without the written permission of a parent or carer, even if prescribed by a health professional.
- Always check the name and the date on the medication.
- All medication given to children must be recorded in the medicine log.
- The medicine log should be signed by you and parents or carers.
- Each child should have a separate sheet in the log to ensure confidentiality.

You should ask parents about the medicines that their child needs to take and ask them to give you details of any changes to the prescription or the support needed. If giving the child prescription medicines needs technical or medical knowledge training should be provided for staff from a qualified health professional. Training should be specific to the individual child concerned.

Medicines should only be taken when it is essential and you should usually only accept medicines which have been prescribed by a health professional. Medicines should be stored strictly in accordance with product instructions. You should consider how you will get to the medicine in an emergency. Sample medicine forms can be found at www.devon.gov.uk/docbank

Illness and injury

Refer to page 26 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You must tell Ofsted and Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) about any:

- serious accident involving a child
- illness or injury to a child
- death of a child.

You must also tell them about any action taken and must act on any advice given. You must notify them as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident happening. You will commit an offence if you do not comply with this requirement without a reasonable excuse.

You must have a current paediatric first aid certificate. First aid training must be approved by Devon County Council and be consistent with guidance set out in Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Great care should be taken at all times to prevent injury to children. However, accidents will happen and the way they are dealt with is extremely important. You must

- keep a record of accidents and first aid treatment in an accident log
- tell parents about any accidents or injuries sustained by the child while in your care and of any first aid treatment given
- make sure the parent or carer signs the accident log when they collect the child
- use an individual sheet for each child to ensure confidentiality
- wear safety gloves when dealing with blood, saliva or other body fluids
- be aware of procedures for phoning for an ambulance
- make every effort to contact the parents or carers

- make sure the contents of the first aid box meet the requirements set out in the paediatric first aid course
- discuss the procedure for children who are ill or infectious with parents, including the possibility of exclusion
- discuss the protocol for contacting parents, or an adult designated by the parent, if a child becomes ill or receives minor injuries while in your care.

Refer to *Spotty Book: Notes on Infectious Diseases in Schools*. You can get a copy of this from the Devon Health Protection Unit on **01803 861833**

You should make sure that any animals on the premises are safe to be around children and do not pose a health risk.

Where necessary you must comply with RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).

Food and drink

Refer to page 27 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

You must tell Ofsted about any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises.

Fresh drinking water must be readily available at all times and you must provide healthy and nutritious snacks for all children, accommodating special dietary needs and preferences. Think about when you will give meals and snacks when you plan your daily routines, taking into consideration when the children will arrive and leave.

You need to be aware of your responsibilities under food hygiene legislation, including registering with your local Environmental Health Department.

If parents provide packed lunches, you should let them know what can be stored safely and discuss appropriate food. Special dietary needs may be included in one of your policies, or be a policy on its own. It needs to record how individual needs are recorded and met, including details of:

- allergies
- strong likes or dislikes
- cultural or religious requirements.

You will also need to consider your policy and promotion of healthy eating.

No smoking policy

You must make sure that children are in a smoke free environment. You should have a no smoking policy which makes sure no one smokes, or consumes drugs or alcohol on the premises while childcare is being provided or in the presence of any child receiving childcare.

If, in exceptional circumstances, children are expected to use a space that has been used for smoking, you need to make sure that there is adequate ventilation to clear the air.

Behaviour management policy

Refer to page 28 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You must have an effective behaviour management policy. A behaviour management policy should be a positive document which promotes good behaviour. You and any assistant should act as role models and the policy should be applied consistently to ensure continuity of care. Children's behaviour must be managed effectively in a way that is suitable for their stage of development and particular needs.

Your setting must work in partnership with parents to make sure individual behavioural needs are met in your policy.

Childminders, their assistants and any person living or working on the premises must not threaten to or use corporal punishment against a child. They must not threaten to use any form of punishment which could have a negative effect on the child's wellbeing. You must not give corporal punishment to a child you provide early years provision for and, so far as it is reasonably practicable, you should make sure that corporal punishment is not given to any such child by:

- any person who cares for, or who is in regular contact with, children
- any person living or working on the premises.

It will not be considered a breach of the behaviour management policy if corporal punishment is used to avert immediate danger of personal injury or death of any person, including the child.

Physical intervention should only be used to manage a child's behaviour if it is necessary:

- to prevent personal injury to the child
- to prevent personal injury to other children or an adult
- to prevent serious damage to property
- in exceptional circumstances.

Any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour should be recorded in the incident log and parents should be told about it on the same day.

All incidents, no matter how small, need to be recorded accurately in the incident log. There needs to be a separate sheet for each child to ensure confidentiality. This must be signed by you and the parent or carer.

Suitable people

You must notify Ofsted of:

- any change in your name or address
- any changes of any person 16 or older living or working on the premises

This must happen where practicable to do so in advance, however no later than 14 days following the event occurring.

Safe recruitment and the use of assistants

The employment of assistants

You may want to employ an assistant; it is not enough to just seek permission from parents about using an assistant; the use of assistants has to be agreed by Ofsted.

Role and purpose of an assistant

The role of the assistant is to assist in the daily running of the provision. The assistants, of which you can apply to have up to two, cannot be used to replace the childminder for lengthy periods. It may be possible to get written agreement in some cases for the assistant to care for the child in the absence of the childminder for a short time.

How to request the use of an assistant

You must notify Ofsted in writing with the name and address of the person you plan to use, including details of how you plan to use the assistant. The person must consent to this as Ofsted will contact them to check they are suitable and perform a Criminal Records Bureau check. Once this has happened Ofsted will advise the childminder and the assistant of their decision. You cannot use an assistant until Ofsted have confirmed their decision in writing.

Legal requirements when using assistants

Assistants are used in addition to the childminder, and must be supervised. The arrangement for using assistants differs on the Early Year's Register and the Childcare Register.

Requirements for the Childcare Register

- Only if agreed by Ofsted may assistants over the age of 18 be able to look after children in the absence of the childminder. This would only be allowed for short periods of time.
- Any assistant under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times.

Requirements for the Early Years Register

- Minimum ratios must be followed.
- There should be one person who holds a paediatric first aid certificate on the premises at all times.
- The risk assessments are in place and suitable emergency procedures are in place, for example in the event of a fire.
- Suitable arrangements are made for assistants' absences.
- Assistants are fully aware of, and understand, all policies and procedures.
- Suitable arrangements are in place for supervision of students or any unvetted adults.

Where childminders show they can meet these requirements at all times and where Ofsted agree assistants are suitable and it is in the best interest of the children, they may agree that an assistant can be left alone for short periods, either on or off the premises.

Examples of periods that may be agreed are:

- where a baby is sleeping and would have to be woken to go out
- leaving children at home while the childminder or assistant collects others from school during bad weather
- when the childminder takes one child to an appointment and may not be able to fully care for the other children.

In addition to Ofsted's agreement in writing childminders must:

- have the child's parents' agreement
- make sure that assistants and themselves are not caring for more children than they are allowed to
- discuss and agree all arrangements with Ofsted
- have a condition of registration that allows them to do this.

Responsibilities and accountability

Assistants should have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Induction training should be given to help them understand how you operate and clearly identify their role. Induction training should include matters such as daily procedures, evacuation procedures, and child protection and health and safety issues.

It is essential to refer to page 51, of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS to make sure that the appropriate adult to child ratios are established and maintained.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures

You need to consider your procedures in case of minor disagreements with an assistant. You can seek help from the Devon County Council Human Resources helpdesk on **01392 385555**.

Disciplinary procedure

A more serious situation arises when a dispute cannot be resolved. In this instance instant dismissal is possible only in extreme circumstances of gross misconduct.

Examples of gross misconduct are:

- ill-treatment of children
- theft or fraud
- assault
- malicious damage
- gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others
- being unfit through abuse of drugs or alcohol.

Otherwise, an employee should not be dismissed without appropriate warnings. Any disciplinary matter should normally be dealt with in stages.

Consider your procedures for:

- verbal warnings
- written warnings
- final written warnings
- notice of dismissal
- appeals.

Suspension

If the circumstances appear to warrant instant dismissal, an assistant may be suspended.

Code of Staff Conduct

This describes the behaviour and professional conduct expected from each member of staff towards children, parents and colleagues. The code includes a commitment to all the setting's policies and procedures.

Premises and security

Refer to page 33 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The premises, indoors and outdoors, must be safe and secure. You must:

- notify Ofsted of any changes in the facilities used for care that may affect the space and level of care available to the children
- take into account general indoor and outdoor security, such as which doors are locked or unlocked
- consider how you will verify the identity of visitors
- have a defined procedure for emergency evacuation of the premises.

If registered for overnight care it may be appropriate for a Fire Safety Officer to inspect the sleeping area.

Outings

There must be proper control in place which is appropriate to the:

- environment
- nature of the visit
- children involved.

A risk assessment should be made before the outing and the person in charge of the outing should:

- get parents and carers to sign a consent form for the visit
- make sure that the trip has been planned thoroughly
- take the registration forms in case of any emergency
- make sure the parents and carers have a contact number - consider taking a mobile phone
- take a first aid kit
- take any medication needed by individual children, such as inhalers
- be aware of protecting the children from strangers
- closely supervise the children.

Organisation

Refer to page 37 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You must plan and organise your systems to make sure that every child has an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

You must have effective systems to make sure that the individual needs of all children are met and every child must be assigned a key person. In childminding settings, the childminder is the key person.

You must promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, and must make sure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.

You should value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. This is part of the respect for each child's cultural background that is central in all early years' settings. Alongside support in the home language, you should provide a range of meaningful contexts in which children have opportunities to develop English. As they move into the Key Stage 1 curriculum, English will be crucial as the language they use to access learning.

Care, learning and play

Your activities should promote:

- building positive relationships with children
- encouraging children to try activities, explore and experiment
- organising resources to reflect the ages and abilities of children
- practising inclusion
- planning
- relationships between children and staff
- learning right from wrong
- learning and development.

Refer to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.

Training is available through

Early Years and Childcare Service **0800 563666**

Early Years Advisers **01392 385525**

Trio development workers

Lost child policy

You should have a policy for dealing with finding that a child is missing, this should cover:

- how you will keep other children in your care safe while you search for the child
- searching the venue and the immediate area outside the building

If the child is not found, you must contact police and the parents or carers of the child.

A report should be written up as soon as possible after the event and a copy sent to Ofsted with an action plan. The incident will need to be recorded in your incident log.

Health and safety at work

Refer to the publication *Health and Safety at Work*, which can be found in this binder in the Health and Safety section.

Fire policy procedure

Refer to the publication *Health and Safety at Work (Fire Precautions)*, which can be found in this binder in the Health and Safety section. Also refer to the document A short guide to making your premises safe from fire. You can get a copy by phoning **0870 12 26 236**

Example fire routine

If you discover a fire:

- immediately raise the alarm
- evacuate the children and leave the building

If using an assistant they could be the nominated person to:

- dial 999 and ask for the Fire Service
- wait for the Fire Service to answer
- give the full address clearly.

Everyone else should evacuate the children in your care using the nearest available exit and keeping the children together, you should all go to your assembly point. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so by the Fire Service.

Fire risk assessment

All childcare settings need to be prepared in case of emergencies. There is information about fire procedures in the document bank at www.devon.gov.uk/docbank

It is the responsibility of all settings to ensure that fire safety has been considered. This is particularly important where overnight care is offered. The main things to consider are:

- identification of fire exits which must be kept clear at all times
- roles and responsibilities – who will do what on any given day in the event of a fire or other emergency?
- evacuation procedures
- safe places and identified meeting areas
- who to contact
- making sure all staff (including volunteers and new staff), parents and where appropriate children know and understand the policies and procedures
- encouraging the children to design a visual plan of the procedure; if their age and ability permit.

Confidentiality policy

Your work with children and families will sometimes bring your setting into contact with confidential information. You will need to make sure that everyone working in, and using, your childcare service can do so with confidence.

You should respect confidentiality by:

- making sure that parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children (except in exceptional circumstances, where data protection laws stipulate it would not be in the best interest of the child) but do not have access to information about any other child
- not passing on information given by parents or carers to any assistants without permission
- keeping any anxieties or evidence about a child's personal safety in a confidential file and not sharing this information with any assistants unless following your safeguarding children policy
- making assistants and students aware of the confidentiality policy and the need to respect it.

Documents

You must maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to meet the needs of the children.

Data

All providers must record for each child in their care:

- full name
- date of birth
- name and address of every parent and carer known to you
- the name and address of the parent the child normally lives with
- emergency contact details for parents and carers.

As part of the Early Years Census for children receiving the entitlement to early year's provision you must record and submit to Devon County Council each child's:

- full name
- date of birth
- address
- gender
- ethnicity (if a parent has specified it)
- Special Educational Needs status
- number of funded hours taken up during the census week
- total number of hours - funded and unfunded - taken up during the census week.

Records must be easily accessible and available for inspection by Ofsted.

Your records

You must keep this information and documentation.

- Your name, home address and telephone number and of any other person living or employed on the premises.
- Name, home address and telephone number of anyone else who will be in regular, unsupervised contact with the children attending your setting.
- A daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises, the hours of attendance and the names of any assistants, the time they arrive and leave.
- Your certificate of registration, which must be displayed.
- A record of the risk assessment clearly stating when it was carried out, who by, date of review and any actions taken.

Examples of daily registers and risk assessment guidance are available at www.devon.gov.uk/docbank