

Modern Apprentices

Category: Early Years

Risk Management and Legal Implications

Failure to manage risk may impact on the delivery of Service objectives and the outcomes achieved by Service users. Education and Children’s Services aim to mitigate the implications by ongoing management and review of risk in all elements of work activity.

The production of this document is one way in which we aim to reduce our exposure to risk. By providing staff with information on good practice, making reference to other guidance that is available across the Council and providing clarity on how we should do things, we can ensure that the management of risk is intrinsic to what we do.

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Modern Apprentices

“There has never been a stronger focus on ensuring that the early learning and childcare experience is of high quality and meets the developmental needs of our youngest learners.the quality of the interactions that children have with adults who are caring for them fundamentally affects not only their enjoyment of early learning and childcare, but also contribution that this makes to their development. through the increased investment in early learning and childcare , and the commitment and dedication of the sector to practice that reflects the principles of nurture, and the importance of relationships, we move closer to realising the ambition of making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.”

(Maree Todd MSP, Realising the Ambition: Being Me)

Purpose

As we strive to create an inclusive workforce Fife Council continues to work in partnership with Fife College supporting college students on their childcare courses, i.e. .NC, HNC in Childhood Practice but it was clear that the Council needed to support this further to help build capacity to support the training of more early years staff, to enable us to reach the projected increase of staff moving forward with the new 1140 models.

The Service already had a very successful Modern Apprenticeship programme which was supported by the Workforce Youth Investment Fund to support young people under 25 years to train as Early Years Officers while on the job.

The apprenticeship programme was looked at again to remove the age barrier to try to recruit several apprentices and address the issue of diversity in order to attract people from different backgrounds. Fife Council also identified the need to build capacity and decided to deliver the SVQ 3 Social Services Children and Young People in partnership with the internal Fife Council SQA Centre.

Memberships and Registrations

Successful applicants were invited to attend a skills assessment session which consisting of a group participation to review how they interacted with each other to solve problems. They also completed an assessment for literacy and numeracy to ensure their skills and understanding were operating at National 5 level. Successful applicants then attended an interview and if successful were appointed to the post of Apprentice Early Years Officer, like all other employees they completed the Fife Council safer recruitment process, which includes a PVG and the registration with the SSSC. While in the programme these fees are paid for by the central team.

Supporting the new apprentices

Apprentices are supported by a mentor, a qualified Early Years Officer whose role is to be an example of best practice in the nursery setting. There is no other requirement for staff to fill in forms or assist with their SVQ. The main role we ask a mentor to do is explain



what they are doing and why they are doing it, if there is further reading that can be signposted for the apprentice then this would be favourable.

The apprentices are employed on either a term-time or full year contract with Fife Council therefore follow the same guidance and procedures as all other staff, they are line managed on a day-to-day basis by the Senior Leadership team in their Nursery and supported by a Project Officer within the central Early Years Team.

The apprentices' qualification is delivered by the in-house Early Years Training Team who are all SVQ Assessors, accredited by the SQA (Scottish Qualification Authority), they have experience of working in our early years settings and therefore have a sound understanding of Fife's child-centred approaches to learning.

All workshops will be held in the first year of the apprenticeship, on a monthly basis where apprentices will be signposted to the knowledge that is required to undertake their role. The apprenticeship is not like sitting in a classroom, there is a lot of self-study, group discussion and workplace reflection around current and best practice.

The training will include mandatory aspects of Early Years, such as approaches to developing positive attachments and language development in young children following on with additional Speech and Language, SOLIHULL and eLips training. These additional training course will be organised by the Early Years Project Officer and disseminated when available.

The apprentice will require access to a school PC/laptop that has internet connection to enable them to use the online programme, VQ folio. This system can be access anywhere but apprentices will work within an educational building to access this within their 5 hours study time. Additional work is encouraged in their own time to ensure milestones are met.

Continuous Professional Development

The apprentices do not require CPD reviews within the school/nursery until such time as they have completed their SVQ.

It is priority that apprentices are encouraged to see how other establishments operate but visiting other settings is not required until such time as the apprentice has almost finished the SVQ and has a good understanding of processes in their own setting. Transitioning to other settings too early causes confusion in work practices.

Helping the Early Years Service in Fife

Fife Council aims to maintain the programme in the coming years with 2 intakes of apprentices each year, starting in August and October.

Our aim is to ensure that all apprentices gain a valuable, enjoyable and informative learning experience which will prepare them to work with the children of the future guaranteeing they have the 'best start in life'.

Early Years in Fife



A full version of this support pack which includes FAQs can be found on FISH.