

Voluntary Contributions

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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Voluntary Contributions

Most nurseries invite parents/carers to make a voluntary monetary contribution to the nursery on a weekly basis and these contributions are used to support the work of the nursery. However, there is guidance around voluntary contributions which we must be aware of:

- Parents/carers should not be reminded if they have not paid their contribution – paying is voluntary.
- Parents/carers should not be judged on whether they make a contribution. It should not affect the child's, parents' or carers' nursery experience in any way.
- Nurseries should be aware of the demographics of the contexts of the nursery before suggesting the weekly contribution amount.
- Nursery should not depend on voluntary contributions as an income.
- This money should not be used to purchase expendable materials i.e. goods which should be bought from the allocated nursery budget.
- In best practice, the views of children, parents and carers should be sought about how the funds could be used or spent.
- This money should be used regularly and should not be left in the nursery funds to accumulate into a large sum of money.
- Nursery should inform parents/carers of how the money is being spent on a regularly basis perhaps through the nursery newsletter or other communication forums.

The Scottish Government is committed to increasing ELC for all children in order to give all children in Scotland the best start in life.

“Supporting children and families is at the heart of this Government’s programme. We know that investing to create the conditions for the best start in life pays dividends: enabling each child to develop fully his or her potential, to learn, to contribute, and enjoy a happy, fulfilled life.”

(A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare in Scotland)