

# Staff Handbook

## 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.

#### Version Control:

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## **Staff Handbook**

Welcome to our ELC setting. I hope that you will very quickly feel part of the team and enjoy working with us.

As a new member of staff, I hope that this booklet will help you to settle in more quickly by answering some of your questions. Do not hesitate, at any time, to ask about anything else not mentioned.

(Headteacher/Manager)

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**Nursery Name**

**Nursery Address**

**Nursery Telephone Number**

**Nursery Email Address**

**Our Vision**

**Our Values**

**Our Aims**

## **Staff**

Headteacher/Manager

Nursery Teacher

Senior Early Years Officers

Early Years Officers (EYO)

Pupil Support Assistants (PSA)

Clerical Staff



## **Who is Who? What does everyone do?**

### Child Protection

The Child Protection Coordinator is:

The Depute Child Protection Coordinator is:

### First Aid

The First Aider is:

### Other Agencies

Educational Psychologist:

Pre-School-Education Home Visitor:

We are also supported by a variety of Health Visitors, Social Workers, and Voluntary Organisations.

## **The Nursery**

Brief description of the nursery.

### **Daily Routine**

Nursery session times, etc.

We do have a number of children who may come to nursery earlier in the morning, later at the end of session and stay/come for lunch therefore the staff work a rota to accommodate these children.

Some children have an extended day for a specific reason and stay for lunch.



## **Your Stay in Nursery**

On your first visit to nursery, you will be escorted around the building and given some information relating to our health and safety policies and procedures. It is essential that you are familiar with our Fire & Evacuation procedures.

When in nursery you will be assigned an area and a member of staff will be designated as your supervisor. Your supervisor will instruct you on your daily duties and talk to you about Health & Safety. Please check with your supervisor that what you are doing in each area is correct. Please inform a member of staff when you are leaving the playroom for any reason.

## **Correct Language**

Always make sure you use the correct language. Young children repeat what they hear.

## **Dress**

Dress Clothes must be neat and tidy. The nursery will try to accommodate fashion within reason. Please remember that the children in the nursery are here to paint and glue and therefore you will have to work with these materials. It is sensible to wear easy care clothes. Machine washable fabrics are found to withstand paint and glue stains better than some more expensive fabrics.

## **Confidentiality**

You will overhear many things being discussed by staff and parents concerning the children in our care. What you hear must never be repeated outside the nursery. It is our duty to respect the information we have been given about children.

## **Fair & Reasonable Treatment at Work**

Should you have a complaint in connection with the above please refer to Fife Council's whistle blowing arrangements.



## **Evacuation**

It is essential that all staff are familiar with the setting's fire and evacuation procedures. If the building requires to be evacuated the following action should be taken:

- The staff in the nursery, having checked all play areas and children's toilets, will escort the children out through the nearest usable exit as identified in each of the areas.
- Staff will take the daily attendance lists to the outside area and check that all of the children in attendance for the session are accounted for.
- Allocated staff will check the staffroom and adult toilets, closing doors as they are checked.

## **Curriculum**

In the preschool area we follow the Curriculum for Excellence. This is used as a basis for planning as well as giving a structure for children's individual personal learning plans.

## **Routines**

Staff work with the team leader to ensure the children have the best learning experience at nursery.

Staff interact with children, support their learning and observe and plan for them as a team.

Staff are responsible for observations and records of their Keyworker children in accordance with nursery policy.

## **Staff Room**

This is open to all staff and students on their break. Smokers may not smoke in the building or nursery grounds. Please keep the staff room tidy when using it. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the staff room is clean and tidy.



## Settling Children into Nursery

The role of the parents and carers remain central to their children's learning journey and therefore must be valued and involved in all aspects of ELC.

*“As the child’s supporting adult, everything you do for young children should promote, support and safeguard their wellbeing. You will have the day-to-day knowledge of how a child is settling in and progressing. You may also be a first line of contact for the parent or carer. The key to success for the child and family is building professional caring relationships. Your unique role in engaging and involving the child and family is important.”*

### - **Realising the Ambition (2020:38)**

It is of paramount importance to our nursery that all children in the nursery should be treated with great care and consideration. A new child and his/her family should feel comfortable, cared for and integrated into the life of the nursery as quickly as possible.

During the first two or three sessions the parents or carers should be encouraged to:

- Stay with their child (if required).
- Stay with their child for part of the time and use the parent's area to be close to hand (if required).

We can give advice on this if asked by parents or carers, but it is our preference that parents/carers should do what, in their experience, is best for their child. We fully appreciate that this can be a difficult time for both the adult and child.

It is our guidance that, so far as is possible, nursery sessions should run in the normal way when a parent or carer is present. The parent or carer should be able to see the regular pattern of what happens during the day, how the staff cope with anything unexpected and they should be able to see the level of care received by all children in the nursery.



## **Lunchtime Care**

Explanation of lunch provision.

### **Supporting Children at the Dinner Table**

- Staff will encourage children to eat a balanced diet.
- Staff should discuss individual needs with parents.
- Food will not be used as a method of reward or punishment, “food is just food”.
- If a child does not like something on their plate but wants more of another type of food, then it will be given.
- Lunch is a socially happy occasion and should not focus on who consumes more or less than any other child.
- Light, pleasant conversation is the topic of the day.
- Puddings are just another part of the meal, not rewards, and a meal without a pudding is equally acceptable. We do not want children to grow up with the same hang ups about food that many adults have.

### **Balance for the Full Day Child**

Good practice suggests children need:

- Balance of activities.
- Regular opportunities to be energetic and active.
- Opportunities to rest.
- Well-balanced diet.
- “Home-like” activities at beginning and end of day.

In research into full day provision (Stephens et al 2001)<sup>1</sup> a broad range of activities was seen as necessary in the playroom. Children were also generally enthusiastic about outdoor play or group games indoors. Some children were observed to be “not engaged” or wandering for varying periods of time. This may have been that they were dissatisfied with the activities on offer. Alternatively, they may have been exercising a positive choice to have “time out”. Children were not noticeably more tired or less willing to be involved in adult-led activities later in the day.

In the nursery outdoor play should be offered as part of the nursery experience every day unless the weather is extreme.



The Sun Awareness policy recommends avoidance of outdoor play between 11.00am and 3.00pm from April to September. All children wear sunhats between these months as well. It is therefore important that outdoor play is properly planned for outside during these hours and shade is available to the children. All playrooms should have some restful area where a child can seek a quiet time if they want.

### **Supervision of Students**

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for students, but all members of staff have responsibility for supporting students. The staff in the room will ensure that students become involved with the children in the area. Students should also be involved in the housekeeping duties for the relevant areas.

Staff will be responsible for signing students' worksheets where they have observed the activity and where the student has provided evidence as part of the daily diary.

Students should feel free to discuss any problem arising from their placement with the headteacher, teacher or staff supervisor.

Staff will make a commitment to complete the end of term reports on students' work in the nursery.

### **Teamwork**

The student is expected to work as part of a team.

- **Consultation & Collaboration:** Students will be expected to plan with staff, the activity to be undertaken in the following week. Students should also be willing to add to the daily diary/planning as well as to weekly planning.
- **Enthusiasm & Initiative:** Students are expected to demonstrate that they are flexible in their approach. When assigned to a particular area of the nursery awareness of the needs in other areas should not be ignored. All work requiring staff signatures should be seen by the appropriate members of staff before the activity is undertaken. Observation times should be negotiated with relevant staff members.
- **Willingness to learn:** Students must be ready to accept advice and to learn from members of staff. They should be able to accept and act on constructive criticism.





## **Behaviour Management**

The interaction of staff with adults as well as with children provides the model of good behaviour for the children in our care in the nursery.

It is important that we inform the children of the rules of the nursery and that we encourage and promote positive relationships, respect, and care for one another.

It may be necessary to explain to the child or persons involved why the behaviour is not appropriate or acceptable remembering it is better to negotiate than aggravate.

In arguments between children, it is always important to be fair.

Biting cannot be ignored but must be recognized as a stage of development for some children. Attention should be given to the injured party and the 'biter' reminded that this behaviour is not acceptable.

Tantrums should be dealt with as the case demands but usually diversion tactics work best. Supporting the child to explore a quiet area is also an acceptable technique.

Most behaviour incidents in the nursery are quite easily controlled. Problems of a more serious nature should be reported to the parent who may be able to help with the situation.

## **e-LIPS**

e-LIPS is a tool designed to help practitioners make and record observations about the language development of young children. This allows practitioners to gather information about how children interact, what they understand, and how they express themselves to both children and adults during play.

e-LIPS promotes professional discussion surrounding children's development, supporting staff to holistically plan 'next steps' whilst tracking progression and achievement.

All Early Years staff are required to complete e-LIPS training. Ideally, new staff should complete the online training module within 4-6 weeks of starting in post. Information regarding how to access this can be found [here](#).

Please note, Apprentice EYOs will undertake e-LIPS training as part of the Apprenticeship Programme. Information on when and how to access e-LIPS training will be issued by the Programme Co-Ordinator.

Staff who have completed initial e-LIPS training can refresh their knowledge surrounding the purpose and process of conducting e-LIPS observations by consulting the ['Refresher Sway'](#).



## **GUIDANCE FOR WORK IN NURSERY AREAS**

### **Art Area**

Painting should be available to the children every day - either on the easel or on a suitable table or both. This is an important area of development. It is around nursery age that most children will attempt representation. You may find these representations unintelligible but the child will be aware that they have drawn something 'real'. At this time a child may be willing to discuss the painting or drawing.

A PLP containing pictures or drawings is kept for each child, hopefully showing a progression in development. Collage work or gluing is also an area within which children can learn to express feelings and ideas. A wide variety of suitable materials should be made available for this activity - boxes of various shapes and sizes, sequins, tissue, beads, leaves, fabric, wool, straws etc. Clay and dough should be available on a regular basis and is also an expressive medium.

Drawing with various thicknesses of crayons, pencils, felt pens and chalk also offer a valuable art experience.

A variety of techniques may also be valuable in this area, but these should be introduced gradually and certainly never daily. The staff member working in the area is responsible for ensuring a suitable range of material is available for the activity selected. Clearing up and restocking should be done prior to the afternoon children arriving and again at the end of the day. Training will be required to encourage children to hang up aprons, wash hands etc.

### **Outdoor Area**

The outdoor area is a resource which should be available to all of the children on a daily basis. This is a very important area of development for all children and more so for many of the children who live in flats and have little or no access to outdoor play.

The area should be set up in the morning by the person who is covering that area for the day, with other staff and students helping, as necessary. A range of equipment should be made available with items being added or removed as the occasion demands.

### **Books & Story Corners**

A selected number of books should be available to the children at all the times. The books on offer should be changed on a regular basis and might be chosen to link with any interest of the day. Where appropriate, children should be involved in the selection from the wider stock room.



The story corner should be a quiet area for children and adults to share. Children should be encouraged to show respect for books, to treat them appropriately and to put them back when they are finished with them.

### **Home Corner**

This is an area of the nursery where observation is perhaps more appropriate than intervention. It is an area in which children should feel comfortable and do not need the presence of an adult.

The equipment in the home corner may be changed but should always include basic home items - sink, cooker, table, chairs, dishes, bed etc. Items should be as near the 'real thing' as possible - hopefully this will encourage respect for these items and lead to their proper use.

A hospital, shop, café, hairdresser etc should always be an addition to the home corner and should never replace it.

The children should be encouraged to keep this area tidy.

### **Writing Area**

This area is an integral part of the nursery and should always be available. It should be interesting and encourage children to 'write' and to make proper use of the area.

Pencils should be sharpened on a regular basis as necessary. Paper should be cut and not torn and be of suitable sizes for children to use easily. Equipment within the area can be changed as required by adding stationery items such as sticky tape (occasionally), paper clips, two-holed punch etc.

As with the other key areas in the nursery the children should be encouraged to keep this area tidy.

### **Block Play**

This is a core' area of nursery work and should be always available to the children. It is an important area of mathematical awareness.

There are different sizes of blocks, and these may be used separately or 'mixed and matched'. Other items – trucks, hard hats etc may be added to extend a child's interest or learning.

The children should be encouraged to tidy the area when they have finished, and this can be aided by the use of templates properly placed in the storage unit.



### **Sand & Water**

Sand should be available daily – wet sand as well as dry sand as they have different properties to be explored. Water play should also be provided daily.

Again, materials can be added to supplement children's learning as required e.g., boats, cars, containers, buckets, spades, shapes etc.

Children must be made aware of the dangers of throwing sand and should be trained to clear up (with help) any spills for which they are responsible.

### **Snack Area**

Snack should be varied with an emphasis on health and nutrition. It may be useful on occasion to offer children unusual or foreign food thus providing them with different tastes and also giving them an awareness of other cultures.

It is important that snack be seen as an opportunity not only for eating but also as a social occasion. It is also a great 'learning' area where children can be involved in pouring, mixing, cutting and spreading which all help to develop hand-eye co-ordination.

Children should be encouraged to clear up after baking/making and should have the opportunity and the training to wash and dry up after they have eaten.

The staff member in the area is responsible for the careful supervision of any equipment which has a heat source e.g., toaster, baking trays etc. They are also responsible for the health and safety issues around this area.

## **BASIC HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES**

It is essential that the children are trained to tidy up after they have finished in any area. The following tasks should be carried out at the end of sessions or whenever equipment and resources need cleaned in line with the nursery cleaning schedule:

### **Snack Area**

- Make sure the cooker and fridge are clean.
- Make sure the dishes are washed and safely stored.
- Make sure any washing required to be done is taken to the laundry room.
- Make sure that any other areas or rooms which you have been using over the course of the day, are left clean and tidy.



### **Sand & Water Area**

- The water tray is emptied, cleaned, and refilled.
- The sand tray is tidied, raked over and spills swept up.
- Sand and water equipment are sorted into their respective trolleys.

### **Home Corner/Music/Stories**

- The games and puzzles are sorted tidily on their shelves.
- Books are tidied and in place.
- Musical instruments are stored tidily.
- The home corner is tidied and set up for the next session.

### **Art & Craft Area**

- Surfaces including the easel are washed down.
- Paint pots are wiped. If there is paint left at the end of the day this should be sealed and stored for the following day.
- Pencils, crayons and pens are sorted and stored into the correct containers and the trolley tidied.
- The paper trolley is tidied and re-stocked.
- Glue tubs are refilled and sealed.
- Cupboards are tidied and wiped down.
- Powder paints are checked and refilled.
- Surfaces are given a thorough clean.
- Pencils are sharpened, felt tip pens are checked and replaced.
- The dryer for paintings is wiped down.

### **Outdoor Area**

- The members of staff on duty are responsible for the area.
- The members of staff responsible for the area must ensure that there is always an adult in the area to ensure the safety of the children.



## **BASIC REMINDERS FOR ALL**

### **Do**

- Remember that confidentiality should be always maintained.
- Remember that nursery encourages children's work rather than your own adult work. remember to encourage independence - children must be encouraged to put on their own coats, shoes etc.
- Join in with a group of children rather than joining a group which already has an adult working with them.

### **Don't**

- Regularly seek out individual children. All children are to be valued equally. Those seeking you out on a regular basis should be encouraged to join in with a group.
- Use loud voices or shout with children.
- Boss children - explain to them why you want them to do something.
- Sit on tables, units or sinks – it is important that you always set a good example.