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# West Sussex Early Years Quality Improvement Criteria



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## Introduction

The Quality Improvement Criteria was developed by West Sussex County Council Advisors to support settings review and evaluate the quality of their provision. The criteria have been reviewed to reflect changes within the sector, particularly related to the changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

High quality settings will have an ongoing process of reflection and development of their provision which will feed into their setting improvement plan. The Quality Improvement Criteria is designed to support settings to identify and prioritise areas for development. The document includes key themes and provides descriptors of sound practice. The descriptors cannot cover all aspects delivered by the setting, but they give a brief description for practitioners to use to identify strengths and areas for potential improvement. Settings can decide to use the whole document or choose specific sections that they want to focus on as part of their own development plan.

This document is designed as a flexible tool to be used by different settings in a way that meets their needs. Each setting has a unique context and needs to adapt to these to provide the best experience for children, families and their staff. To support this, the tool should be used by practitioners to reflect on the statements and consider what this would look like in their own context.

The tool can be used by different types of settings – including childminders, day nurseries, pre-schools and out of school providers – but providers will focus on the areas that most directly relate to the work that they do in their setting.

New providers, and those expanding their setting, may want to choose the most relevant sections to support them in identifying areas for improvement.

Involving the whole staff team, including the leadership and management, of the setting and will support the whole team to take ownership of the quality within the setting. Involving parents of children attending the setting will give a different perspective on the quality of the setting's provision which will inform the reflection and improvement plan.

Having reflected on provision and practice and developed your setting improvement plan, you may wish to look at tools available to support you on our [website](#).

## Processes to support reflection and delivery of consistently high quality practice

- Keeping up to date with research and changes to legislation and then using this to reflect on and develop your practice, ensuring compliance.
- Reflecting on the impact that changes in cohort, staffing, the environment have on practice and the experiences for the children and the progress they make.
- Asking questions such as “why are we doing this?” “what does it feel like to be a child in this setting?” or “what impact does this have for children?”
- Gaining feedback from children, families and other partners/stakeholders to inform your views and plans.
- Involving the whole team. Supporting them to understand and engage in the process of change and embed the new practice.
- Supervision can be used as a tool to support all staff to engage in the quality review process.
- Peer support and mentoring can support all staff to be engaged in reflection and quality improvement. Practitioners need training and support to ensure that this process is meaningful and effective.

## Articles about reflective practice

[Professional Reflective Practice](#)

[Developing Self-Reflective Practice](#)

[Reflective Practice: What is Reflection, why should it inform our practice and what does it involve?](#)

[Self-Evaluation - How To Reflect On Your Practice](#)

## Section 1 – Supporting Children’s Learning and Development

### 1.1 Providing an Appropriate, Stimulating Learning Environment

- All the EYFS Areas of Learning and Development are supported throughout the learning environment, both indoors and outside and adults support all children to access a range of experiences to support them to make good progress.
- Daily routines are consistent, and practitioners support children to follow these routines with the use of visual prompts and positive language.
- Routines are planned to meet the needs of the children and allow them to engage positively with the learning experiences available.
- Routines have some flexibility, and adaptations are made to meet the needs of all individual children and their families.
- The learning environment is regularly evaluated, adapted and resourced to ensure sound and open-ended use by all children.
- Continuous access to free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor learning environments is embedded in everyday practice.
- The importance of outdoor free-flow play is promoted with parents.
- Displays are created by children, sometimes in collaboration, and include a range of evidence from self-initiated opportunities celebrating the learning process for children.
- All staff assess and act on any potential risk throughout the day to keep children safe at all times.
- Children are challenged and are supported to manage appropriate risk in their learning.
- Children are encouraged to take risk to support their learning and development
- Children are supported to access the full range of the curriculum provided, including the recommended amount of physical activity.

### 1.2 Parent Partnerships

- The setting has a welcoming ethos and proactively works with families to make them feel welcome and have confidence that the setting can meet the needs of the child right from the very first contact.
- Practitioners build positive relationships with all families to ensure they work together to meet the child’s needs, building on the child’s starting points and home experiences.
- Practitioners are confident to initiate and maintain sound relationships with parents e.g., workshops, open sessions.
- Practitioners adapt their methods of engagement to ensure that all parents feel valued, included and supported to secure the best outcomes for their child.
- A positive and responsive relationship between practitioners and parents allows the child to feel secure and their family supported at all times.
- Practitioners promote and value the involvement of parents in their child’s learning, drawing on information from the family as well as sharing their professional expertise to support the family to provide a positive home learning environment.
- Parent views are used to shape and develop policy and practice within the setting.

- Parents are aware of any additional funding the setting receives for their child and are involved in discussions about how it can be used to support them and in evaluating its effectiveness.
- Parents feel confident to share any concerns they have and know that these are listened to and acted upon.
- Parents have regular opportunities to discuss and contribute to the continuous quality improvement of the setting. Information about the quality of the setting, approaches to learning and child development is shared with parents/carers in a variety of ways to meet the needs of all families.
- Parents' views are gathered to inform curriculum planning as well as plans for their own child. Practitioners actively seek and value the parents' knowledge of their child and engage them in their child's learning.

### **1.3 Adult Child Interactions**

- Practitioners are responsive to children. Conversations are led by both children and practitioners, including 1:1 opportunities. The pace and language levels used by adults adapts to the individual child.
- Practitioners ensure that they spend time interacting with all children to build positive relationships and to support their learning and development.
- Adult child interactions are regularly observed, and feedback provided to staff with training or coaching offered as appropriate.
- Practitioner use of visual prompts, sign and gesture is used consistently and soundly within the setting.
- Adults give children time and encouragement to use their individual communication skills in a variety of ways.
- Progress of children of different ages and developmental stages is consistently supported through skilful adult interactions and sustained shared thinking.
- Skilful adults extend children's communication, vocabulary, comprehension and learning.
- Children are given time to question, reflect and make connections in their thinking.
- Through warm and fair interactions, boundaries and expectations are consistently applied. These are flexible when necessary, according to individual children's needs.

### **1.4 Starting with the Child**

- Information is gathered about the child through the transition process to ensure the child's needs and interests are understood and planned for when a child starts at the setting or moves into a new group.
- Parents are genuinely valued in the planning for their child as the child's first educator. Their views and the home learning environment is included within all planning to meet the needs of the child.
- The child's voice (contributions and opinions) is actively sought, valued and has a significant impact on provision and practice.
- Practitioners know the children in their setting and are able to respond sensitively, including by adapting their provision, based on the needs the child is communicating.

### **1.5 Providing an Appropriate, Ambitious Curriculum**

- The setting has a sound understanding of the children's background and starting points and plans an effective and ambitious curriculum, based on this knowledge.
- Curriculum planning is appropriate and ambitious for the cohort of children within the setting.
- The curriculum aims to build on children's strengths and interests as well as broaden their experiences.

- The curriculum is underpinned by the setting's focus on play-based learning and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- All practitioners are confident to talk about the setting's ethos and overall curriculum plan as well as the intent, implementation and impact of all the experiences offered to children.
- Parents' views are gathered to inform the setting's curriculum planning as well as plans for their own child.
- The balance of adult guided and freely chosen experiences reflects and responds to children's interests and next steps for learning.

## **1.6 Meeting the Needs of All Children**

- Staff have a secure knowledge of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of all children in the setting and this knowledge is used to provide effective support to all children and families.
- Diversity is celebrated and valued by all practitioners through everyday routines, play experiences and interactions with adults and children.
- Children's home language is celebrated and valued within everyday practice.
- There is policy for inclusion that demonstrates a commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all children and adults. All adults apply this policy consistently and it is shared with parents.
- The Equalities Act is reflected in the ethos and policies of the setting and the setting is proactive in adapting its provision to meet the needs of individual children.
- Vulnerable children and their families are identified. Additional support is planned for children with delays in their learning and development, their progress is monitored and additional support accessed if needed.
- Vulnerable children and their families are identified. The children are supported soundly through a range of strategies and planning tools.
- The setting uses the CLaWBA to support them with identification of vulnerability.
- Practitioners engage with positively, and in a timely manner, with other professionals to support the needs of children. They act on advice given and share relevant information to enable appropriate support to be put in place.

## **1.7 Supporting Children with SEND**

- All staff are confident to monitor children's progress and identify delays in children's learning and development quickly. Any delays identified are discussed with parents and a plan of support put in place quickly.
- All practitioners take responsibility for using a graduated approach in identifying and planning for children's individual needs. SENCO/INCO ensures that progress and outcomes are monitored and reviewed by all adults involved with the child.
- All practitioners regularly use and implement the strategies and advice available on the Tools for Schools and Education Settings website and monitor the impact of strategies on outcomes for children.
- The SENCO/INCO soundly carries out role responsibilities, e.g., graduated response, register of identified children, support for vulnerable groups.
- The SENCO/INCO contributes to the ongoing review of all setting policies.
- The SENCO/INCO role is recognised and valued by the setting management and sufficient non-contact time is given during work hours to carry out roles and responsibilities soundly.
- All practitioners are well supported and enabled by SENCO/INCO, e.g., INSET, cascading training, support to new staff in carrying out person centred planning and implementing the graduated approach.
- The SENCO/INCO support all staff to use the existing resource available to them effectively to meet the needs of children.

- The SENCO/INCO monitors the effectiveness of the support provided and provides/requests additional support when needed.
- The setting's Local Offer is flexible to meet its own needs and the needs of the children and families in the area. There are clear mechanisms in place for children and their families to feed back on the setting's Local Offer. This feedback informs future decision-making and planning.

## **1.8 Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Development**

- All practitioners have a strong understanding of children's emotional development and the support needed at different stages.
- Support for individual children is based on sound understanding of child development and how to help children with their next developmental stage.
- Practitioners maximise opportunities to work in partnership with parents/carers in promoting positive behaviour for all children between home and setting.
- Practitioners model and promote positive behaviour, giving clear and consistent expectations and boundaries. A consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour is applied across the setting, which is shared with parents.
- Practitioners are "trauma informed". They understand that children's experience will impact on their emotions and behaviour and adapt their responses to children to reflect their understanding of the child's needs.
- Practitioners support each other as they support children who may be emotionally dysregulated. All staff understand the impact that this can have on the adults supporting a child in stress and are empowered to request support if needed.

## **1.9 Supporting Transitions**

- Practitioners are proactive to ensure that all children and families are supported and well prepared for transitions.
- Parents are engaged in the transition process for their child and feel confident that the setting understands and responds to their child's needs.
- Practitioners consider all the transitions children make when starting at a new setting, when moving on to a new room or setting and during the day. They plan the support children might need to manage these transitions based on their knowledge of the child and the previous transitions they have experienced.
- Practitioners use all transitions as a learning opportunity for children. They consider the needs of individual children when planning transitions.
- The setting links with other settings that a child attends to enable a consistency of approach in meeting the child's needs.
- The setting has good links with other settings and schools that support the transition process.
- Practitioners initiate and engage with relevant professionals at the earliest point to carry out Supported Transitions for the children who need individual planning and support at points of key transitions.

## **1.10 Observation, Planning and Assessment**

- Planning starts from observation of the child's strengths and interests. Information is gathered from home and others involved with the child. All information gathered informs planning for the child within the setting.
- Information on children's progress is analysed and used to inform practice and provision as well as individual planning.
- Staff have high aspirations for all children and soundly scaffold learning based on their knowledge of each child.

- Planning soundly supports each child’s progress and development, taking account of different ages, developmental stages and interests. It is shared with all adults involved with the child.
- Practitioners are confident in planning “in the moment” as they observe and reflect on what the children are doing and saying. They respond swiftly to “teachable moments” as they occur.
- All staff have sound knowledge of child development and use this to effectively support all children and offer early intervention when appropriate.
- Key staff review the progress of children aged between two and three and provide parents and/or carers with a short-written summary of their child’s development in the prime areas. Tools to Support Settings Evaluate Their Provision

## **Tools to Support You Reviewing Learning and Development In Your Setting**

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, sections:
  - Providing an Appropriate, Stimulating Learning Environment – 1.1-1.6
  - Adult Child Interactions - 1.14-1.15
  - Starting with the Child - 1.16
  - Providing an Appropriate, Ambitious Curriculum - 1.3-1.6
  - Meeting the Needs of All Children - 1.11, 1.13
  - Supporting Children with SEND - 1.12 & 3.68
  - Supporting Transitions - 2.3
  - Observation, Planning and Assessment - 2.1-2.6
- Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook
- SEND Code of Practice
- WSCC Website - [Practice support - West Sussex County Council](#)
- Setting’s most recent Ofsted report
- The child’s voice - children’s ideas, requests, feelings, opinions, contributions, preferences – both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication
- Parent voice – written and verbal feedback, survey responses
- Professional visit reports
- Any Quality Assurance schemes used within the setting
- Review of planning and assessment information – including the setting’s curriculum planning, group/child level planning documentation, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Early Years Inclusion Support Plan (EYISP), Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs), Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Children’s Learning Journals
- Self-review audit tools – for example, ECERS/ITERS, [Accessibility Audit, Communication Environment Evaluation Tool, Inclusion Framework](#)
- Staff observations and appraisals
- Setting Continuous Professional Development (CPD) records
- Feedback from Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator/Inclusion Co-ordinator (SENCO/INCO) and Room or Age Group Leads
  - Equality and Accessibility Audits
  - [Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS](#)
  - [Learning environments – Birth To 5 Matters](#)
  - [EYs-and-CMs-curriculum-guidance](#)
  - [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)
- [Progress check at age two – Non-statutory guidance for the EYFS](#)

## Section 2 – Welfare and Organisation

### 2.1 Leadership and Management

- Roles and responsibilities are clearly allocated to ensure leaders and managers are effectively able to carry out their roles and there is contingency in place to cover staff absences.
- All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are enabled to carry them out effectively.
- Leaders and managers have the experience and confidence to support, inspire and lead their team.
- Leaders and managers identify and support staff to develop their leadership and management skills and consider succession planning as part of their role.
- The setting's organisational structure is successfully planned so that practitioners are provided with a clear path of professional development.
- The setting has developed a culture of peer support and challenge as well as regular and robust supervision of practice to support the well-being and development of all staff and children.
- Leaders and managers monitor the quality of provision, practice, planning and assessment ensuring that children's individual needs are met.
- The management team welcome feedback from all practitioners and actively engage them in the continuous improvement of the setting.
- The management team welcome feedback from all partners and use the views of others to inform the setting's development cycle.
- All practitioners who have a key role share elements of best practice and CPD opportunities within and beyond the setting.

### 2.1 Safeguarding

- All staff have attended multi agency training through the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and the designated person has attended specific training to support them in their role.
- Training is followed up within the setting to ensure all staff have the knowledge that they need to identify and act on any potential safeguarding concerns.
- All practitioners actively support and promote the wellbeing of children to ensure that they are healthy, safe and secure.
- The child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are embedded in practice and consistently applied.
- Staff are engaged in the development of policy and procedure and understand their roles and responsibility in supporting children's safety and wellbeing.
- Policy and practice is kept under review to ensure that it reflects West Sussex procedures, the needs of the setting and developments in safeguarding practice. Any changes are disseminated to all practitioners, parents and partners including owner / committee.
- The setting has a clear whistleblowing policy and all staff understand the need to raise concerns and how to do this.
- Information is shared appropriately with relevant agencies in a timely and sound manner.
- Sufficient non-contact time is allocated during work hours to ensure the designated person's role is carried out soundly.
- The setting promotes and plans for children and staff's safety and well-being.
- Staff supervision is embedded in practice and staff feel confident to use this to reflect on their own practice and identify any concerns they have.
- Peer supervision is embedded in practice and there is a culture of self-reflection and peer feedback within the setting.

- Staff meetings are used as a forum to support safeguarding in the setting and ensure staff knowledge is up to date and embedded in practice.

## 2.2 Information and Complaints

- The setting has a clear policy and procedures to deal with complaints.
- The setting refers to Ofsted and LADO appropriately.
- All information and complaints are recorded and reviewed appropriately.
- Managers respond to complaints professionally and use as an opportunity to review and develop their provision and practice.
- Information and documentation is recorded appropriately, regularly reviewed and updated.
- A clear, sound, secure system is in place for holding all relevant records and information relating to the safe, efficient management of the setting. The provider understands their Data Protection responsibilities.

## 2.3 Medicines, Illnesses and Injuries

- Policies and procedures for administration of medicines reflect current requirements and legislation and are known and followed by all practitioners.
- Where necessary, additional training is provided by a qualified health official and is specific to the individual child concerned.
- Practitioners are clear about contacting all relevant agencies about illness, incident or accident where appropriate.
- The provider knows and understands the procedures for reporting a notifiable disease to Ofsted and where necessary to act on advice given by the Health Protection Agency.
- Clear, recording procedures include monitoring and evaluation of the accident and incident book. This is part of the overall regular risk assessment procedure.
- 12-hour paediatric first aid qualifications are renewed on a three yearly cycle for all practitioners.
- Practitioners hold a 'First Aid in the Workplace' qualification.
- The setting looks for ways to further improve child safety and wellbeing – for example, [Millie's Mark](#), [PANCo Training](#) and [Sun Safe Nurseries](#).

## 2.4 Food and Drink

- Practitioners have access to information about children's food intolerances, preferences and any cultural factor impacting on the diet of individual children.
- Menus are planned to meet the needs of the children and to provide food of a high quality – including use of [Food safety - Help for early years providers](#).
- There are clear guidelines for sharing information with parents/carers about what their child eats in the setting and for providing advice and support to enable families to provide a balanced, healthy diet.
- Parents are supported to provide healthy lunch boxes where appropriate. [Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Providers are fully aware of their responsibilities for food hygiene and disseminate this information to all practitioners.
- The setting actively promotes oral health with children and families [Oral health - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#), [Early Years' Foundation Stage -- Oral Health Foundation \(dentalhealth.org\)](#)
- Meal and snack times are used as a learning opportunity for children – including discussion about healthy living.

## 2.5 Safe Sleep

- Up to date guidance on safe sleep is followed at all times – [The Lullaby Trust - Safer sleep for babies, Support for families](#) and [Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome \(SIDS\) - NHS](#).
- Sleep space is organised to ensure safety for children – including checks of bedding, temperature, cleaning and space between children.
- Sleeping children are monitored regularly and accurate sleep records are kept of all checks carried out.
- All sleep arrangements are risk assessed, including the safe evacuation of children who are sleeping.
- Parent partnership includes working with families to promote safe sleep arrangements at home and in the setting. Practitioners balance parental preferences with their professional knowledge to ensure children are kept safe while sleeping.

## 2.6 Smoking, Alcohol/other Substances

- All practitioners, parents and / or other users are made aware of and follow the policy ensuring there is always a smoke-free environment both inside and out.
- Practitioners have individual induction packs containing relevant policies and procedures and complete health declarations annually, self-certifying their medical suitability to work with children.

## 2.7 Behaviour Management

- The Behaviour Management / Social and Emotional Development policy is regularly reviewed and reflects current practice.
- Relevant training is attended regularly and cascaded soundly to all staff.
- Practitioners understand children's social and emotional development and they actively support children to develop their understanding and skills.
- All staff use appropriate language and have a consistent response to children's behaviour. They talk about feelings and emotions and model appropriate responses to their own emotions.

## 2.8 Safer Recruitment EYFS

- A high level of information is sought regarding practitioners before they start work (e.g., registration with ISA, DBS, references, complete employment history, qualifications, medical suitability).
- There is a robust induction policy that ensures all staff – temporary, permanent, apprentices, students, and volunteers – know and understand their responsibilities within the setting in order to support the wellbeing of children.
- Ofsted are kept fully informed of any changes to the services provided that may affect the suitability of the provider or persons caring for children.

## 2.9 Supervision

- Supervisions are planned for each member of staff on a regular basis and should include discussions about personal well-being, opportunities for self- reflection and celebrating successes.
- Effective supervision provides opportunities for staff to discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, including child protection concerns.
- Effective supervision will help to identify solutions to address issues as they arise.

- All practitioners will benefit from coaching to improve their personal effectiveness based on mutual discussions and set actions.
- Practitioners are aware that they should not wait until supervision to raise concerns and know that leaders and managers will make time to speak to them if they request this.

## **2.10 Qualifications, Training, Skills and Knowledge**

- Leaders and managers are qualified to level 4 or above.
- There are high levels of qualifications throughout the setting.
- The setting employs a graduate to lead practice in the EYFS who has EYPS/EYTS/QTS or is on a pathway to achieving this status.
- The practitioner training and development record is regularly reviewed and used to inform the cycle of the training and development plan. This identifies and supports the individual's training needs.
- All practitioners have annual appraisals and regular 1:1 supervisions, which are recorded and monitored. These identify further support and/or training needs for individuals or the setting.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is provided in a variety of ways and has an impact on practice and provision in the setting and on improving outcomes for all children.
- CPD is linked to setting improvement plans and performance management. The soundness of CPD is measured and is shown to have an impact on practice and provision in the setting and on improving outcomes for all children.
- CPD is linked to individual and setting needs and takes account of individual learning styles. In group settings, training is cascaded to support continuous setting improvement.

## **2.11 Staffing Arrangements**

- Advanced planning is in place and is regularly reviewed to ensure that adult/child ratios are always met and maintained.
- Contingency plans are in place to address staff absences and emergencies. Where bank staff are required, the setting ensures that disruptions are kept to a minimum ensuring the child receives a consistent experience.
- There is a clear leadership / management structure within the setting.
- Staff deployment is monitored to ensure that children are always well supported and kept safe.

## **2.12 Risk Assessment, Premises and Equipment**

- All practitioners are aware of and adhere to policies regarding safety and security, which are regularly updated in line with current legislation.
- Parents / visitors are informed of safety procedures in place.
- Risk assessments are carried out on visitors to the setting and regularly reviewed and recorded.
- All practitioners are fully conversant with procedures, which include specific risk assessments for each outing. They are regularly monitored and reviewed and communicated soundly to parents.
- Risk assessments are working documents, which are regularly reviewed by all practitioners.
- Opportunity is provided for parental input as well as committee / landlord participation.
- A robust Health and Safety policy is in place, which is reviewed regularly, and a named Health and Safety Officer keeps practitioners up-to-date with new regulations / legislation.
- Clear, recorded evacuation procedures are in place and a detailed Fire Log Book is in place. This is regularly reviewed and identified issues are resolved.

- Fire regulation inspections and Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) inspections are carried out annually.
- The provider is fully conversant with Ofsted requirements and timescales relevant to any changes to the premises.
- Procedures are in place to review and evaluate the suitability of premises and equipment in order to ensure the needs of all children are met.
- The provider owns the building and/or takes all necessary steps to ensure other users outside setting hours do not have a negative impact on the quality and safety of the provision.

## **Tools to Support You Reviewing Welfare and Organisation In Your Setting**

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, sections:
  - Leadership and Management - 3.69-3.73
  - Parent Partnerships - 3.74
  - Safeguarding – 3.4-3.8
  - Information and Complaints - 3.75-3.77
  - Medicines, Illnesses and Injuries - 3.45-3.47 & 3.51
  - Food and Drink - 3.48-3.50
  - Safe Sleep - 3.60
  - Smoking, Alcohol/other Substances - 3.57
  - Behaviour Management – 3.53-3.54
  - Safer Recruitment - 3.9-3.13
  - Supervision - 3.22-3.23)
  - Qualifications, Training, Skills and Knowledge - 3.20-3.21
  - Staffing Arrangements - 3.28-3.44
  - Risk Assessment, Premises and Equipment - 3.65 & 3.58
- Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook
- WSCC Website - [Practice support - West Sussex County Council](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- [West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#)
- Setting policies reviewed against legislation and guidance available
- Organisational structure records
- Job Descriptions and contracts of employment
- Information and Complaints book
- Attendance Records and Visitors' Book
- Risk Assessments
- Fire Evacuation log
- Medication forms and records
- Accident/Incident book
- Safeguarding records
- Staff recruitment, training and performance management records
- Policies and Procedures
  - All relevant statutory guidance documents

## **Section 3 – Business**

### **3.1 Income and Expenditure**

- All operating costs and income streams broken down and forecast. They are assessed, accurately recorded and reported on a monthly basis.
- There is at least a 1-2 year cash flow forecast in place.
- The number of children needed to breakeven is known.

- Occupancy is forecast at least 12 months ahead.
- The setting uses historical evidence of trends of take up of places to inform planning.
- An overdraft is not required or there is occasional managed use of an overdraft facility.
- There are no outstanding HMRC payments.
- There is a contingency fund with enough reserves for exit costs.
- Fundraising activities are planned and take place regularly.
- Where applicable, the setting is registered with the Charity Commission.

## 3.2 Funding, Monitoring and Information

- The setting actively seeks out all available funding streams, including external funding to support their activities.
- The setting returns the FE agreement and complies fully with associated data requests.
- Government funded hours are delivered with no additional charge to families, in line with the Provider Declaration. Invoices clearly state what is free and any additional charges are itemised.
- When parents sign up for their child to attend the setting, or when they change their sessions, the setting ensures that they understand what this will mean to the fees that they pay so parents can decide whether or not they are happy with the arrangements.
- Any voluntary contributions are clear and payment of this is not a requirement in order to take up a funded place.
- The setting understands any additional government funding available to them (e.g. Early Years Pupil Premium, Disability Access Fund, Inclusion Funding, Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)) and uses this effectively to support the needs of the children.
- The setting uses fee paying hours to support their sustainability. The setting returns WSCC monitoring and information forms promptly. They have a full understanding of the requirements and reasons for this monitoring.
- Parents are made aware of support for paying for childcare including Tax Free Childcare, Free Entitlement, Tax Credits, Universal Credit and Care to Learn. [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Free Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)

## 3.3 Debt

- A clear fee policy and procedures are in place and agreed with parents. Debt management solutions /payment plans are in place as needed.
- The setting has a clear, robust policy and procedure in place, which is adhered to consistently at all times.

## 3.4 Committee/Trust (where applicable)

- The shared governing document or constitution is used to inform the committee of the rules that govern the operation of their setting.
- A safer recruitment strategy is in place to ensure there is always a full complement of committee members, as set out in the constitution/governing document. This includes a full induction and ensuring that all committee members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- The committee are actively engaged in the management of the setting.
- Ofsted are kept fully informed of any changes to the Committee. A detailed handover procedure is in place for changes to the Committee.
- The committee are aware of any personal financial implications there may be should the setting close or be in financial difficulty and take steps to limit these where possible.
- [Committee-run childcare – what you need to know - Ofsted: early years \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

### 3.5 Business Planning

- There is an up-to-date Business and Marketing Plan, which identifies clear objectives and targets identified from the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis.
- The business plan is regularly reviewed and updated by all relevant stakeholders.
- The marketing budget is used effectively at identified key times of the year.
- Opportunities for expanding the offer is explored with current childcare needs and local need. Any possible links with local providers are explored to provide care for children before and after school/nursery.

### 3.6 Making Changes to your Business

- The setting ensures they report all changes to your registration to Ofsted within the required timeframes. For example, change of manager, registered person, committee changes, charity changes, partnership changes, joining an agency, changes of those living in childminded settings and any significant event or changes to operation or contact/personal information.
- The setting report to Ofsted and the Family Information Service changes such as expanding their current space or adding new age ranges to ensure records are up to date.
- The setting ensure that appropriate advice is sought for any changes that may need to be made to their current registration.
- The setting ensures they regularly update their profile form on the online provider portal the Family Information Service to ensure their information reflects their delivery model.

### Tools to Support You Reviewing Business In Your Setting

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework
- [Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook](#)
- WSCC Website - [Business support - West Sussex County Council](#)
- Bank statements
- Cash flow forecasts
- Income and expenditure records
- Occupancy forecasts
- Business and marketing plans
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis
- Setting profile and Census data
- [Free Entitlement Provider Declaration](#)
- Local planning and understanding of the current and future local market - [Securing sufficient childcare in West Sussex](#)
- Consultation responses from families on their childcare needs
- Debtors' list
- Fundraising records
- Contingency planning
- Policies and procedures
- Changes to your business and registrations - [Early years and childcare registration - GOV.UK](#)
- [Report changes to registered people in your nursery or other daycare \(EY3\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Section 4 – Reviewing Practice

This template provides a framework to review your practice and gather views from others. We recommend you use a small section of the QIC at a time to support you in reviewing practice and implementing changes in a managed way.

### Identifying Key Areas for Improvement

Area To Review	Strengths Identified	Areas for Improvement