

OPERATIONS MANUAL TEMPLATE WITH GUIDANCE CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Redkite Innovations Limited
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KEY

- **BLACK TEXT** – Where a section is complete with content, this is where Redkite and MLC have built content fully to assist the childcare providers. Or suggested text that could be utilised by the provider.
- **GREEN TEXT** – Notes by Redkite that identify what a provider should do with a particular section. This includes examples in specific sections.
- **RED TEXT** – Is placeholder text where you need to add the business name or make a decision on a timescale.
- **INSERT TEXT HERE** – This note occurs throughout the document as a reminder to add content of your own, or additional content to the chapters and section that are more complete.
- **DIAGRAMS** – These are generally examples to explain a particular thing but often won't represent specifically what you would/could use in the business.

What is an Operations Manual and why is it useful?

Many businesses in the UK are started by people with an idea about what they want to do or be, or to fill a gap that exists out in the world of work.

At Redkite Innovations we describe the activity that comes from an idea as ‘what’ a business does. This is everything we do as business owners on a daily, monthly and yearly basis to not only set up the business but to run it well. We may be alone, we may have a team, we certainly have a product and customers, so ‘what’ we do is incredibly important.

If you have attended any Redkite Innovations workshops or training you will also know that we believe that all businesses should not only to think about ‘what’ they do, but ‘why’ they do it. When you start with ‘why’, then what the business does in its general activity and what its customers benefit from is true ‘value’.

So, where does the operations manual come in? Well, if as a business we are just doing things in any order or in a certain way, and we don’t understand why we are doing them then it’s not only chaotic it’s incredibly stressful! As a business owner you will feel like you are continuously scrabbling to survive, make money, deliver for your customers and simply get through the day.

“It’s time to take control of the business rather than it feeling like the business is controlling you.”

To do that we have to be more effective at ‘what’ we do, and efficient in the way we do it. This is where your operations manual comes in. We don’t need to be scared of an ops manual, it’s there to support the business, not slow it down or crush people under it (yes we all think of a massive, dusty out of date book). There are a number of ways a good operations manual can help the business:

- It’s a single source of information for what the business does. All in the one place.
- It makes processes easy to understand, easy to follow and consistent. (Important for areas like Ofsted and other regulation and compliance).
- It helps new team members learn quickly and have something to refer to. (Even more powerful when coupled with training).
- It’s a place to look when things go wrong to make sure everyone in the team takes the right action under pressure. (All the emergency services have processes so they can be effective).
- It will help prevent mistakes being made on those really important tasks that you do, however large or small.
- It can be available in paper form, electronically or as posters and printouts to use.
- It can be reviewed and made better year on year as the business improves how it works.

A well written, easy to understand manual is what’s really needed to make sure everyone can keep the business running effectively and efficiently.

In childcare provision, the combination of well trained, caring people that are good at their job in a culture that embraces change and improvement, together with a strong and supportive operations manual can only be a success.

This operations manual template from Redkite Innovations will help you achieve that aim of a successful, profitable and happy business.

The Redkite Innovations, Coaching and Training Team.

Using this manual template in your childcare business

Redkite Innovations has created this 'template' as a partially complete Operations Manual for Childcare providers in the UK. In effect it's much more than a template; any business that follows the guidelines for building it and adopts the recommended content from the Redkite Innovations team will have a stronger business.

Many providers have thriving businesses, but a number struggle to manage the business aspects of delivering childcare provision into the community. Whether the business is private or authority funded, is made up of multiple sites or just a one-person business with a few children, there are many areas to manage.

We understand the challenges of managing income and covering the 15 or 30 hours' childcare provision, making sure Ofsted compliance is met, and actually running the business successfully.

Having worked with a number of childcare providers in different situations we have come up with an Operations Manual template that we think will improve the running of any provider however large or small they are. This is because the manual is built of sections and if some sections aren't relevant then they can be taken out.

Having taken onboard the feedback and discussed the problems providers face, we have added guidance content to a number of manual sections to really help those business owners that struggle or can't find the time to create all their own procedures and policies. Areas of the business like understanding and being ready for Ofsted inspections, what a good process is and how to train staff. With guidance on understanding and managing finances and planning around cashflow and income as we know this is a hot topic.

By working directly with providers, delivering training courses to assist in the business and helping them build a relevant operations manual we know childcare providers will be in a better place.

How to read and put content into the manual template

One thing that needs to be clear about an Operations Manual and its content, it broadly follows three types of content. Most of the text within a manual will be one of the following:

1. **A Policy** – A policy can be written internally, or can come from an authority that requires compliance such as Ofsted, Health and Safety or the Local Authority. A policy can be broadly defined as a description of something and '**why**' it needs to be done.
2. **A Process** – A process is a list of steps or requirements that show activity that supports a policy. Effectively this is '**what**' should happen or be done.
3. **A Procedure** – A procedure follows on from a process and identifies exactly '**how**' people carry out the activity.

An example would be:

- The Local Authority have a policy that childcare providers track visitors to the business.
- The process is all visitors must be signed in and accompanied at all times and signed out.
- The procedure is that when a visitor comes get them to sign the visitor sheet, accompany them to wherever they are going. Stay with them until they are finished, then see them out after they have signed out on the visitor sheet.

In each chapter within this manual template there are different types of entries/additions for you to use. This is to enable you as a childcare business owner or manager to populate this template and make this 'The' manual for your business.

What you can expect to see is the following:

- **Chapter Title** – This identifies what the chapter covers.
- **An introduction to that chapter** – this will have text you can leave that we have written as an example, and Redkite guidance notes, with space for you to add your own content.
- **Sections and Subsections for each chapter** – These sections have specific procedure and policy about the areas highlighted in the chapter and within the business. This will have guidance notes and possibly examples to help you build new processes you don't have or improve the ones you already have. It may be that you simply drop your current policy, process and procedure into that section.

You will also see:

[Redkite Insertion Notes] – Wherever you see the bracketed notes in the manual Redkite are giving you guidance on the kind of messaging and content that you as the business owner should put in a particular section of the manual. For ease these notes will be in Green.

Here is an example chapter section to show you what we mean.

This one is lifted from the recruitment section of the manual:

Subsection 9.4a Job and Person Specifications

[This subsection is important because it identifies what a particular job role in the business has in terms of daily activities and responsibilities, but also the kind of person you want in the business. This helps the team work better and creates a good culture.]

[Suggested Text] For each of the roles in the business we have a Job and Person specification listed in the chapter. This is for all Managers and team members who create adverts and for new employees and is especially useful for asking questions and interviewing against.

For a Nursery Nurse:

Job Spec –

- Able to look after children in the setting.
- Qualified to 'xxxx' level.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

Person Spec -

- Experience working in a similar childcare setting.
- Calm under pressure as this nursery is a busy environment.
- Prepared to do ongoing training and learning.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

For Admin Assistant:

For Supervisor

Each chapter will have a combination of green guidance text, and placeholder examples of what could be in there. This is to enable you to either build your own chapter with the guidance, or put in the policy, process and procedure you already have in the business.

Some chapters are almost all completely built by the Redkite team, such as the Ofsted and Data management chapters, as we know these can be particularly complex. The content we have added should really help the business be better or more consistent in how it manages crucial areas like compliance. We have simplified it and made the info much more user friendly.

We hope this example and explanation will get you well underway in populating this template for your own childcare business.

The content and layout of the manual and its importance

The Redkite team have spent time with childcare businesses and the local authority, the content and layout of the manual is based around a number of key objectives.

The manual:

1. Should house all the important compliance information for childcare provision in the UK and help businesses manage that well.
2. Should help businesses understand where they have gaps in policy, process and procedure. I.e. if there is a section in the manual but no policy or procedure within the business to fill it, that needs to happen.
3. Has guidance notes to help businesses of all sizes and types to meet the provision requirements set by government, whether a multi setting business or a child minder.
4. Is thorough but understandable for all staff members within any business.
5. Is somewhat modular, so that chapters can be removed or left unpopulated as required.
6. Has taken into account feedback regarding challenges that the local authorities think childcare businesses face.
7. Can continue to be improved and grow in line with the business growing and improving.
8. Is written in a way that supports activity that aligns with Redkite's training delivery.

While an operations manual can take many forms within various businesses, our experience has shown that this type of manual in both paper and electronic format, when supported by the people within the business and used alongside good forms and software, is very effective.

The next section is the 'Table of Contents' for the manual that shows all the Chapters and Subchapters we think a childcare business needs.

After the contents we then get into the chapters specifically with the guidance notes and examples.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

SECTION 1.1 MANUAL ORGANISATION

This manual is organised into chapters and then into sections. These have subsections, to provide clear guidance on how the business will operate.

SECTION 1.2 OWNERSHIP OF THE MANUAL

This manual and all its content is owned by [Insert Company Name]. No individual or any external party has authorisation to copy, duplicate, lend or sell any or all parts of this manual.

SECTION 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

This manual has several purposes. To guide Nursery Managers and all members of staff in sustaining a productive and safe childcare environment. To provide specific procedures that mean any particular area of the business runs efficiently and effectively, but more importantly in accordance with Ofsted requirements. It also states management policy and procedure to meet government compliance. Finally, the manual serves as a reference point for any questions or queries any nursery team member may have.

SECTION 1.4 IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

All the content of this manual is confidential and protected by copyright. There are very specific areas such as fees, any trade secrets that give [Insert Company Name] competitive advantage, and those that contain personal details. Prior to seeing this manual and any other sensitive information pertaining to the business, all new employees will sign 'Non Disclosure Agreements'. This is a legally binding document that protects the company's confidentiality. [Insert Company Name] takes very seriously the protection of its Intellectual Property and key business information.

SECTION 1.5 KEEPING THE MANUAL CURRENT

This Operations Manual is a growing and improving document that will require periodic updating in accordance with new law and compliance. Or changes in the structure and processes within the company. The senior team will ensure that all manuals will be updated as and when required.

CHAPTER 2 - INTRODUCTION TO [INSERT COMPANY NAME].

Section 2.1 A Brief History of [Insert Company Name]

[This section is important for a number of reasons. Both new employees and external people can read this part of the manual and really understand the journey of hard work and success the business has taken. It's critical that the business has a collective message about 'where it is come from and where it's going'. More detail can be added about Mission, Vision and Values in a later chapter.]

Key Note: During your Redkite training days you will have built a profile of the company and identified 'why' and 'what' you do and how that creates a strategy for the business. That work will be what you use to fill in these chapters in the manual.

Insert text here

Subsection 2.1a What we do in the business

[This subsection is a high level look at the services that the business supplies to both parents, the local authority and the wider community.]

Key Note: This subsection can also help with marketing activity, as having a clear understanding of your services, how they benefit people and their use are key to good marketing.

Insert text here

Subsection 2.1b The age groups we support

[It's important to be very clear about who we support and why, that way the team has a connection and an understanding of the groups we support.]

Key Note: Also useful for marketing

Insert text here

Subsection 2.1c The area we operate in

[Geography is very important, senior team members, staff and parents who have a good idea of where the nursery operates in terms of the area, how large that area is or in fact if the business has multiple sites.]

Key Note: Also useful for marketing

Insert text here

Section 2.2 The Mission, Vision and Values of [Insert Company Name]

[This is where the strategy of the business that you have worked on comes in. When you built your 'Business Model Canvas' and identified your 'Value Proposition', you were building what your 'mission' was and where you want the business to be in the future, i.e. the 'vision'.]

Key Note: Remember what you put here can be changed in the future. It makes sense that during your annual review of the manual that you revisit these chapters and make sure they still represent what the business is doing and wants to do.

Insert text here

Subsection 2.2a The vision for the nursery

[A vision statement can be as simple as a single sentence or can span a short paragraph. Regardless of the individual details all effective vision statements define the core ideals that give a business shape and direction. These statements also provide a powerful way to motivate and guide employees.]

Research shows that employees who find their company's vision meaningful have a higher level of engagement with the business. More engaged employees are often more productive, and they are more effective corporate ambassadors in the larger community.

Given the impact that a vision statement can have on a company's long-term success and even its bottom line, it's worth taking the time to craft a statement that reinforces your ambition and motivates staff.]

Key Note: Vision and mission statements represent some physical activity, but they are more to do with attitude. This means all business leaders need to make sure that these statements are reinforced, adopted and understood by all members of the team.

Insert text here

Subsection 2.2b The business mission statement

[A mission statement is a simple paragraph that covers – what we do, why we do it and for whom we do it. It's a clear identification to customers, clients, partners and everyone that we have a clear idea what the business is doing.]

Key Note: Smaller businesses may not have to 'state' a mission statement, but actually the business owner(s) will know why, what and for whom they do what they do, so why not write it down. If it seems hard, get the team together and discuss it, see what you come up with.

Insert text here

Subsection 2.2c The values we embrace

[In the childcare industry 'trust' is paramount, it's the only way parents will leave their children in your care. One of the reasons parents will trust you is when the business values align with their values. E.g. the people in the childcare business will look after my child in the same way I do. To help people understand that, and for staff to embrace the core values in the business they must be stated. These values are adopted by everyone in the team.]

Key Note: Values are not particularly complex, they should be simple and understandable, something like this.

[Suggested Text] At [insert company name] we value a child's learning at all times. This means that all of our nurses and carers will engage with a child whatever the question they are asking and whatever it relates to. We do not ignore a child's general learning.

This not only tells parents how you treat their children, but Ofsted are looking for these kind of values in the business to achieve an 'Outstanding' rating. These values can be added to the Ofsted 'Self Evaluation' process documentation. We would suggest 10 or so core values for the business.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 3 - OFSTED REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER BUSINESS COMPLIANCE

Section 3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the operations manual covers the most critical requirements of the industry. There are a number of compliance requirements for providers in the childcare sector, from larger multi site nurseries to child-minders. These include health and safety and fire management, data protection for information stored and of course Ofsted. This chapter deals with all the compliance areas required for the business.

Firstly, Government legislation requires periodic inspections of any business that's registered on the 'Early Years Register'.

Many of these sections have been taken directly from the Ofsted documentation on the government websites. This whole chapter can be seen as a checklist, policy, process and procedure set and actions to be taken to meet the requirements to achieve a 'good' rating.

While this chapter makes no claim to guarantee a 'good' rating, following the guidelines, procedures and completing the checklists all contained here as part of your daily operations and activity can only help achieve that rating.

As the official documentation can be confusing at times, these sections will bring clarity and explanation to what the Ofsted requirements are, so all members of staff in the business can understand and comply to benefit the team and the business.

In a number of the sections there will be references to Ofsted documentation and forms, also internal policy, process and procedures, with associated forms, spreadsheets and material situated in various other chapters of this operations manual.

Section 3.2 Ofsted Myths and the Facts

This is a list of myths lifted directly from the Ofsted government website that represent the most common misconceptions amongst childcare providers.

All Managers and staff should be aware of these myths and the factual answer.

NOTE: This is critical reading for all new staff members starting with the business and should be part of any induction process. (See the HR section for further details). Where the text and information in this chapter is in italics and quotation marks (“”), it is directly taken from the 'Early Years Inspection handbook'.

“Ofsted has produced this document to confirm the facts about our early years' inspections and to dispel those myths that can sometimes result in unnecessary workloads for registered child carers. It should be read alongside the [early years inspection handbook](#).

Our aim is to expose misconceptions and highlight specific practices that are not required by Ofsted, so that we can make the inspection process as clear and straightforward as possible.

The purpose of Ofsted's early years inspections is to make sure that registered child carers are providing a good quality of care and education, as required by the [Early Years Foundation Stage Framework](#).

Inspection plays an important role in helping parents to make informed choices about the type of care available for their child, and advising parents and carers about the quality of care young children are receiving.

Myth Subject	Myth	Fact
1: Notice period prior to inspections	<i>Ofsted cannot carry out inspections without any notice.</i>	<i>Ofsted can carry out inspections without notice. No notice inspections normally, but not exclusively, take place when someone has raised concerns about a setting.</i>
2: Paperwork	<i>Ofsted wants to see as much paperwork as possible. Paperwork should be stored in a folder marked 'Ofsted'.</i>	<i>Ofsted does not want to see a particular amount or type of paperwork during an inspection. Settings should use whatever approach to paperwork that suits them and are free to file it however they like. Each inspection is unique and inspectors will only ask to see evidence they consider appropriate to that individual setting, usually determined by their observations of teaching and learning. The paperwork most often requested is listed on pages 10 and 11 of the <u>Early years inspection handbook</u>, but it is unlikely that an inspector will want to see all of these documents at every inspection.</i>
3: Paperwork	<i>Ofsted prefers to see paper assessments rather than those recorded electronically.</i>	<i>There is no prescribed way of conducting or recording assessments, as long as it is effective and helps children's learning, development and progress.</i>
4: Paperwork	<i>Ofsted expects leaders to complete a written self-evaluation form (SEF).</i>	<i>Childcare providers do not need to produce a self-evaluation form, but managers and staff should be able to discuss the setting with the inspector. Inspectors will ask staff about the quality of care and activities they provide, and how well the setting is meeting the learning needs of all children.</i>
5: During Inspection	<i>During an inspection, Ofsted expects the manager to be available at all times to speak with the inspector.</i>	<i>Ofsted does not expect managers to be immediately available to speak with the inspector. Inspectors want to see settings operating as they would on any other day, and they will work around normal timetables. Meetings with managers will take place at a mutually convenient time during the inspection.</i>
6: During Inspection	<i>Ofsted inspectors may consider a cup of tea/coffee or biscuits as bribery. Or, they may expect a cup of tea/coffee even when a setting has a 'no hot drinks' policy.</i>	<i>Inspectors follow a strict code of conduct and all inspections are carried out without bias, regardless of any refreshments offered. Staff can offer inspectors hot drinks if that is their normal visitor protocol. If a setting has a 'no hot drinks' policy, inspectors will not expect the rules to be broken on their account.</i>
7: Grading and feedback	<i>Only managers can attend the feedback session at the end of an inspection.</i>	<i>It is not true that inspectors will only give feedback to managers. The feedback session is confidential until the final report is published, but other staff can be included where it is feasible.</i>
8: Grading and feedback	<i>Ofsted will never give a higher overall judgement than the grade a provider has awarded itself in its self-evaluation form (SEF).</i>	<i>Completing self-evaluation forms are not compulsory, but where they are made available, they will not determine Ofsted's overall judgement of the setting. With or without a SEF, inspectors will consider how well the setting understands what it is doing effectively, and how it can maintain or improve standards.</i>
9: Grading and feedback	<i>A childcare setting cannot achieve a judgement more than one grade above its previous inspection outcome.</i>	<i>A setting can improve by more than one grade. If Ofsted finds during the inspection that a setting has improved by more than one grade, the inspector will judge it accordingly.</i>
10: Complaints	<i>Making a complaint about an inspection will go against a childcare setting the next time it is inspected.</i>	<i>Ofsted does not take into account any past complaints lodged by a setting when making inspection judgements. Inspectors act fairly and without bias at all times, and their judgments are based solely on evidence. Inspection reports are also quality assured by other inspectors before they are finalised, to confirm that judgements are firmly supported by evidence.</i>

Inspections are not designed to catch staff off guard, nor do inspectors prepare a list of trick questions to ask providers. Inspectors are qualified professionals, trained to evaluate the quality of an early year's setting, highlighting both good practice and areas for improvement."

As part of the ongoing review of the operations manual which has its own chapter, these myths and facts should be periodically checked at the Ofsted government website. This ensures changes or new additions to the list are made to the table above.

Section 3.3 The Early Years Inspection Handbook from Ofsted

All the subsections in this particular section of the manual summarise what the Ofsted inspectors are looking for when they come to the business. Using this section as a basis for how the business operates will not only assist the inspectors but help with compliance and getting to the right place when an 'inadequate' rating is received by the business.

NOTE: It is a requirement that all managers in the business are familiar with and have read the Ofsted 'Early Years Inspection Handbook'. The following subsections in this manual highlight the critical sections of the Handbook, but do not represent the whole handbook verbatim.

All staff members should be aware of the content of these subsections, but managers need to be able to action the requirements.

Subsection 3.3a How providers are selected for inspection

The guidelines for inspection times are:

*"The current inspection cycle runs from 1 September 2012 to 31 July 2016. All providers listed on the Early Years Register before 1 September 2012 will normally have their setting inspected at least once within this four-year cycle. Providers **not** on the Early Years Register on 1 September 2012 and registered after this date will normally have their setting inspected within 30 months of their registration date."*

Scheduled inspections are infrequent, but the likelihood of more inspections or a no notice inspection occur when Ofsted '**receive a concern**' about a setting and risk assessment concludes and inspection is needed

*"All provision judged as inadequate will be re-inspected within **six months**. Only provision judged as inadequate with enforcement¹ will be monitored. During the monitoring process, Ofsted may take further enforcement action if there is no improvement. If the provider has had two consecutive inspections that have judged it as inadequate and judged inadequate at a subsequent third inspection Ofsted will consider taking steps to **cancel their registration**."*

"All pre-school and nursery provision judged as 'requires improvement' will be re-inspected within 12 months."

Subsection 3.3b Priority Inspection versus Scheduled Inspections

Within the business our aim is to only see Ofsted when there is a scheduled inspection based on the requirements of our entry on the Early Years Register. But there are other occasions when the business is subject to a 'Priority Inspection' and this will come with 'no notice'.

It's important that all staff and managers fully understand the policies and procedures that relate to an Ofsted inspection so that if we receive a Priority Inspection all will be in order.

There are two main reasons for a Priority Inspection:

"The first relates to a matter of fact that the provider does not dispute. In these cases, the provider may have notified Ofsted of an incident in accordance with regulations or, where they have not done so, they accept that an incident occurred. In these cases, the inspector should focus on what happened and discuss with the provider whether the incident was preventable and what lessons have been learned."

“The second relates to a situation where a parent or another person alleges that something happened and the provider denies it. In these instances, the inspector should not try to prove or disprove the concern, but should focus on observations during the inspection and whether these lead to any concerns about compliance. For example, if the concerns related to excessive crying in the baby room, the inspector should make sure they visit the baby room during an introductory tour; they should plan to observe the room and hold a discussion with the staff and parents who use it.”

Within the business we need to prevent as far as possible the likelihood of parents reporting an incident or a concern to Ofsted. This is helped by making sure all staff within the business are open and honest about incidents and keep the communications with the parents and all parties open, clear and honest.

This is particularly important for situation two above. For situation one, we have policies and procedures for reporting incidents within the business.

NOTE: Reporting of incidents and problems and the way to do it can be found in the ‘Communications Chapter’ of this operations manual.

Subsection 3.3c When an incident is confirmed as having occurred

We strive to make sure that no incidents that Ofsted would deem unacceptable happen within the business. It is everyone’s responsibility to meet these requirements. Occasionally something will happen, and could come from an outside party or we have reported it ourselves.

When this happens there are a clear and stated set of expectations that any Inspector will have when they attend the business to carry out an inspection after an incident. They are looking for the following:

- *The provider’s attitude to the incident.*
- *The provider’s compliance with requirements, such as notifying Ofsted.*
- *Whether it was a one-off incident or whether there are other examples of non-compliance recently associated with the setting.*
- *The provider’s willingness to learn lessons from any incident and any improvements they have made between the time of the incident and the inspection, supported by clear evidence.*
- *Compliance and the quality of risk assessments, staff induction and professional development.*

All members of staff will make sure inspectors are treated with respect and that they understand what is being assessed and looked at. Paying particular attention to the final point about compliance and the associated documentation.

NOTE: Risk assessments, staff induction and professional development documentation can be found in the ‘General Section’ of this operations manual.

Managing incidents is all part of the operational activity of a childcare business. When handled correctly, inspections that happen because we reported an incident can have beneficial effects:

“The provision may be judged good or outstanding where the evidence supports this, even if the inspection is taking place because of possible non-compliance. Judgements are not pre-determined; there are no limiting judgements. The fact that a provider notifies Ofsted of an incident and uses the learning from it to improve the quality of the provision is generally considered to be the sign of a responsible provider.”

“When the inspection follows an investigation, the inspector should check that the provider is compliant with any actions or other enforcement measures that result from the investigation.”

Subsection 3.3d No children on the roll on inspection day

Ofsted recognises that businesses that are smaller, new or may just be child-minders may not have any children on site when an inspection occurs. So there are guidelines relating to all of those situations.

Ofsted indicate that inspections cannot be deferred, but can be organised to fall on a day when children are in attendance. This is fine for scheduled inspections of course, but not for Priority Inspections.

The key points of the guidelines from the handbook for ‘no children present’ are as follows:

*“Where there are no children on roll, the inspector must make it clear at the start of the inspection (or during the initial telephone call) that the inspection will not be a full inspection but a check that the provider continues to be suitable to remain registered. **As a result, no grades will be given against the four key judgment’s.** The inspector will make a judgment only on the **‘Overall quality and standards of the early years’ provision**’ with one of three possible outcomes:”*

- *met*
- *not met with actions*
- *not met with enforcement.*
-

*“Where a judgement is **‘met’**, the inspector will not make recommendations.”*

*“In instances where the provider does not meet one or more of the learning and development requirements and/or safeguarding and welfare requirements, the inspector must consider a judgement of **‘not met’** and either issue a notice to improve or consider enforcement action. In these cases, the inspector must follow the guidance for inadequate judgements.”*

If the business is subject to an ‘Overall quality and standards of the early years’ provision’ then all staff need to endeavor to help the inspector as much as possible to get a ‘met’ outcome. If a decision of ‘not met’ with either actions or enforcement is given, the business senior management team in association with the staff need to make the relevant changes and implement them as soon as possible to prevent further risk to the business.

Subsection 3.3E Inspection details when no children are in attendance.

Ofsted recognise that the majority of businesses that will fall into this category (i.e. not a full inspection due to having no children present) will be small, new or Childminder based businesses.

“The majority of inspections affected will be of childminders; a small number may be childcare providers. The main purpose of the inspection is to fulfil Ofsted’s legal duty to inspect registered providers within a defined period and to report in writing on certain matters. The inspection will report on whether the provider continues to demonstrate suitability to remain on the Early Years Register (and, if applicable, the Childcare Register).”

The areas an inspector will discuss and check are highlighted in the table below.

The inspector will	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>has premises suitable to educate and care for children</i>
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assess whether the provider:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>is able to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements</i> • <i>is able to meet the care, learning and development needs of children.</i>
The inspector will check if the requirements of the Childcare Register are met:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providers must confirm that they meet the requirements of the Childcare Register, if applicable.</i>
The provider must demonstrate how they will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>meet the learning and development requirements</i> • <i>meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements</i> • <i>develop and deliver the educational programmes</i> • <i>identify children’s starting points and ensure that children make progress in their learning through effective planning, observation and assessment</i> • <i>safeguard children</i> • <i>work in partnership with parents, carers and others</i> • <i>offer an inclusive service</i> • <i>evaluate their service and strive for continuous improvement.</i>
The provider must tell the inspector:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>how they have addressed any actions and/or recommendations from the last inspection and how this will improve the provision for children’s care and learning.</i>

“If, during the inspection, the provider decides to resign from the Early Years Register and remain registered only on the Childcare Register, the inspector must collect sufficient evidence of compliance with the Childcare Register requirements by referring to the ‘Childcare Register requirements: childcare providers on non-domestic or domestic premises’ factsheet.² “

This may or may not be applicable to the business at any point in time, and adhering to the Ofsted chapter of the operations manual should ensure that the business is prepared for both a full inspection and an inspection with ‘no grading given’.

Subsection 3.3F Checklist for inspection requirements for staff

Other sections of the operations manual indicate the policy and procedures that relate to the questions in the table above that the inspector will ask.

The following checklist needs to be part of the training for every member of staff that could be hosting the inspector during an inspection of the business.

Senior team members must be aware of the following:

- 1 Know where and how to access the documentation relating to confirmation of entry on the Childcare Register and what the requirements are.**
- 2 Understand what the businesses 'learning and development' systems are and be able to state them and show any associated paperwork and/or software.**
- 3 Understand and know the businesses 'Safeguarding and Welfare Policy', the requirements of the policy and explain how it operates within the business. Also specifically show how the safeguarding policy applies to the children on the business premises.**
- 4 Explain and demonstrate how educational programs are delivered in the business and how this develops the children. Including specifically demonstrating software and understanding the benefits and efficiencies of the software/methods chosen.**
- 5 Explain the planning, observation and assessment process for the children within the business and show any relevant documentation as requested.**
- 6 Describe how the business communicates with its partners and customers, and how it operates in an inclusive way. Identifying local policies and procedures for communication with all these parties.**
- 7 Identify how performance within the business is measured and recorded, and how changes and improvements are made. Showing any specific change management processes in place.**
- 8 Know the details of any previous inspections and especially how any improvements were made based on changes required arising from the last inspection.**

This is an essential checklist for the business and should be part of any training and induction phase for new employees that will be required to manage an inspection and support the inspector as needed.

Section 3.4 What the inspector will do before the inspection takes place

This applies to the 'Scheduled Inspections' carried out to ensure compliance, not when an incident has occurred or a report has been made.

The next three sub sections and the lists of activity and documentation provide checklists for what will need to exist and be accessible for inspections.

Subsection 3.4a Previous inspections, outcomes, registers and other info

So an inspector can carry out a thorough inspection of the business they will do a number of checks prior to coming and while the business can't influence this information, it is key that the business understands what the inspector knows from these pre-checks.

There will be the normal register and details check for the business and previous inspection outcomes.

There are two key areas that as a business we need to be fully aware of when engaging with an inspector.

1. Previous inspection reports, outcomes and actions:

- Is the business fully aware of these outcomes and actions from any previous concerns raised, and has any corrective action happened? – It's important that those involved in the last inspection and applied improvements are present where possible to explain those improvements.
- That all discussions about previous inspections are open and honest.

2. General available information about the business:

- Is the business aware of any articles or activity on the internet or web in general regarding the business and areas like safeguarding? – If that is the case someone present really needs to know.
- Be aware that the business website will be checked (where applicable), so it needs to be relevant and up to date with key information.
- Where a self evaluation form has been completed and submitted, that the detail is known and embraced by the team. It wouldn't go well if the self evaluation form content wasn't aligned with the activity within the business.

Subsection 3.4b The notification call from the inspector

To get the most from a scheduled inspection the inspector will make a telephone call firstly to introduce themselves to the business and identify what needs to be available during the inspection.

It is recommended that the business leader(s) take this call and make sure the requirements are noted during the call. It will cover areas such as:

- The inspection setting and registration status.
- Other requirements like informing parents, understanding the inspection will have joint observations with the business representative, and that discussions with staff and managers is required.
- Identifying the range of documents that will be reviewed.
- Establishing certain other pieces of information, age ranges, numbers on role, funded places, premium funding and arrangements for additional support for special educational or care needs.

NOTE: This is a good time to ask as many questions as you need to as the inspector is required to provide time to do this on the call.

Subsection 3.4c A list of the documents they need to see

Part of the phone call with the inspector will involve a discussion as to the availability of a set of very specific documents. While this list isn't exhaustive, it exists in the Ofsted handbook and it should be taken that these items will be reviewed and inspected.

NOTE: The following list represents what should be available at all times, up to date and active as documentation. This is critical as the business does not know when a non scheduled Priority Inspection will happen based on an incident report.

<p>A current list of documents relating to staff:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qualifications, including paediatric first aid</i> • <i>Information about training and / or career professional development of staff</i> • <i>Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) records and any other vetting documents.</i> • <i>A summary of any other recruitment checks and vetting carried out on staff.</i>
<p>Logs of incidents and accidents:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Logs recording accidents, exclusions, removals from the roll and poor behaviour.</i> • <i>Logs recording incidents of discrimination and racism.</i> • <i>Logs recording complaints and resolutions.</i>
<p>Safeguarding and Child Protection:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local policies regarding the management of safe guarding and child protection.</i> • <i>A list of referrals made to the designated safeguarding person with details of the resolution.</i> • <i>A list of all children who are an open case to social care / children's services and for whom there is a multi-agency plan.</i>
<p>Childcare business information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A register / list showing the date of birth of all children on roll and routine staffing arrangements.</i> • <i>Information about the supervision of staff (in group provision)</i> • <i>Any reports of external evaluation of the setting</i> • <i>The self-evaluation document if the provider has not already submitted it.</i>

There are individual sections in this Operations Manual that relate to the activities that generate and/or maintain the paperwork in the table above. The associated forms and processes must be identified and present in the manual so that all staff members know why we carry them out and what forms to use.

Managers and Team Leaders need to make sure this list is up to date and ready for inspection.

Section 3.5 When a Scheduled Inspection takes place

On the day of inspection there will be a number of activities that happen within the business. The inspector will carry out the following four activity sets:

- Arrival and inspection overview.
- Observation and evidence gathering.

- Evaluation of policies and procedures.
- Discussion regarding self evaluation.

All of these activities will take place during the inspection and will probably cover approximately three hours in the business. They may be carried out in any order.

NOTE: The order of activities carried out by the inspector will depend on whether it is scheduled or priority driven visit.

Subsection 3.5a Arrival and Inspection Overview

There will be a feeling that the inspector is taking control of the situation as they will have very specific actions to take. You can expect the following to happen:

- The Inspector will turn up and indicate who they are. They are obliged to let you, and we should, contact Ofsted right away to confirm the identity of the inspector. If you are a team member, seek out a Team Leader or Manager at this point.
- They will ask you to display a 'notice of inspection'.
- The Inspector will want to talk to parents, and this will likely happen right away. Don't interfere or worry about this, if everything is as it should be this isn't a problem.
- They will want to discuss a timetable for the inspection to check a number of things.
 - Confirming the accuracy of or any changes to the information about the setting.
 - Check staff qualifications, including paediatric first aid, and record them in the evidence base.
 - Conduct a tour of the premises to follow up any issues that arise.
 - Meet directly with the provider.
 - Carry out some joint observations.
 - Arrange meetings with staff.

NOTE: If this is a priority inspection triggered by a report this extra activity will happen.

The Inspector will refer to any concerns that have led to the inspection being prioritised. They will be mindful of confidentiality, and they will not indicate who the complainants were.

Subsection 3.5a Observation and Evidence Gathering

During the inspection the Inspector will be gathering evidence and making notes. This is what they are here to do so there should be no staff member interference. The Inspector will however ask a number of questions of both team members and managers regarding the operation, learning and quality of teaching within the business.

This will cover four specific areas.

1. Observation and discussion directly with practitioners and children.

- *Observing the children at play.*
- *Talking to the children and practitioners about the activities provided.*
- *Observing the interactions between practitioners and children.*
- *Gauging children's levels of understanding and their engagement in learning.*
- *Talking to practitioners about their assessment of children's knowledge, skills and abilities and how they are extending them.*

- *Observing care routines and how they are used to support children's personal development.*
- *Evaluating the practitioners' knowledge of the early years' curriculum.*

2. In Group Provision the inspector will track experiences of at least two children.

- *The quality of the practitioner's assessment knowledge of each child.*
- *The progress check for any children aged two.*
- *The impact of any early years' pupil premium funding on the children's progress.*
- *The discussions held with each child's key person and information about progress.*
- *Any records the provision keeps that show how they have tracked the progress children make, including recording any concerns about the children's development in the prime or specific areas of learning or both.*
- *Whether children are developing skills in the prime areas that help them to be ready for their next stage of education, including school.*

3. Joint observations with a senior member of the business.

- *Gain an insight into the effectiveness of the provision's professional development programme for practitioners.*
- *Assess the quality of the provider's monitoring and evaluation of staff's practice.*
- *Check the provider's view of staff's interactions with children.*
- *Assess how effectively the manager supports staff to promote the learning and development of all children.*

4. Meeting with parents.

- *Engage directly with parents and to ask their opinion on how well the provision works.*

All staff members need to support the inspector as much as possible during this part of the inspection to enable all the evidence they require to be collected.

NOTE: It is highly likely that the inspector will require discussion time in private with a senior team member or the business owner.

Subsection 3.5c The Evaluation of Policies and Procedures.

During the initial telephone conversations with the inspector for arranging a scheduled inspection there will be reference to all the documentation that **will** be checked. In addition to that there are also a number of **optional** procedures that may be asked for during the inspection. It's likely that they are connected to the self evaluation content that the business provided.

1. Policy and Procedure Compliance Guidelines

There are some very tight guidelines regarding the documentation management that need to be followed.

- All the businesses documentation must be in English.
- Childcare providers are required to have written policies and procedures as set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

(Childminders are not required to have this but all team members must be able to define them for inspectors and parents).

- Additional legislation outside of Early Years Foundation Requirements must be compliant and managed.
 - i. Health and Safety.
 - ii. Data Management and Collection.
 - iii. Safeguarding.
 - iv. Employment Policy and Handbook.
 - v. Anti-Discrimination.

- Documents must be made available by the end of the inspection – so the best approach is to keep them stored on site.

All these additional compliance areas are covered and managed in the operations manual under the relevant HR, Health and Safety and Handbook Chapters.

2. The Specific list of documents checked

This list is the same as indicated in subsection 3.4c, documents identified on the initial pre-inspection call that will be inspected.

A current list of documents relating to staff:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Qualifications, including paediatric first aid</i> • <i>Information about training and /or career professional development of staff</i> • <i>Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) records and any other vetting documents.</i> • <i>A summary of any other recruitment checks and vetting carried out on staff.</i>
Logs of incidents and accidents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Logs recording accidents, exclusions, removals from the roll and poor behaviour.</i> • <i>Logs recording incidents of discrimination and racism.</i> • <i>Logs recording complaints and resolutions.</i>
Safeguarding and Child Protection:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local policies regarding the management of safe guarding and child protection.</i> • <i>A list of referrals made to the designated safeguarding person with details of the resolution.</i> • <i>A list of all children who are an open case to social care / children’s services and for whom there is a multi-agency plan.</i>
Childcare business information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A register /list showing the date of birth of all children on roll and routine staffing arrangements.</i> • <i>Information about the supervision of staff (in group provision)</i> • <i>Any reports of external evaluation of the setting</i> • <i>The self-evaluation document if the provider has not</i>

	<i>already submitted it.</i>
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NOTE: It should be expected that all of the documents and policies identified in the table, together with all the policy and procedure documents identified in the additional compliance legislation in the list above WILL be checked during an inspection.

All of the forms, data, checklists, policy and procedures relating to these areas are kept and referenced in this manual. All staff members need to be aware of this and all managers need to keep all associated paperwork up to date.

3. Additional/Optional policies and procedures checked

Inspectors can decide during the visit to look at and check other areas of the business in terms of policy and procedure. These generally sit in the areas of staff management and improvement and business learning and planning.

This list is an example of what they could ask to look at:

- *A sample of planning and assessment documents.*
- *A sample of induction, training and professional development records.*
- *The provision's self-evaluation.*
- *Recruitment records.*
- *Staff qualifications and deployment.*
- *Staff training for safeguarding practice and procedures.*
- *Records of complaints.*

This section represents an almost complete list of what can be inspected by an Ofsted inspector. If the business endeavours to have a relevant policy and procedure for each checking point, with clear and associated forms and checklists, then everything will be in order for the business whether the inspection is scheduled or priority.

Subsection 3.5d Discussion Regarding Self Evaluation and quality Provision.

If, as it's not mandatory, the self-evaluation 'Part A & Part B' submission documents have been completed by the senior leadership team, it's because the self-evaluation is to understand and describe what the current quality levels are in the business when delivering on the childcare provision. This also includes understanding the improvements that need to be made.

The business may or may not have completed a self-evaluation. If this hasn't been done the inspector will not reference it as part of the inspection or evaluation. Completing a self-evaluation is seen as an indication that the business understands itself and could be used to aim towards a higher rating than 'good'.

NOTE: Even if the business has not submitted a self-evaluation it must demonstrate to the inspector (via the senior leadership team) the level of quality the business delivers in its environment, how the children's learning needs are met and an awareness of ongoing improvement.

Once these areas have been discussed with the inspector they will bear them in mind when continuing the inspection to see how real they are.

Performance Management and Professional Development will be an important part of the discussion. Inspectors will ask for evidence of effective supervision of staff, performance management and training within the business.

More importantly they are looking for an understanding of how this improvement of the staff and management capability impact's the children's well-being, learning and development.

Subsection 3.5e Safeguarding and Ofsted Inspections

All inspectors that come into the business to carry out an inspection will be fully familiar with the safeguarding requirements and policies. They have an understanding of how safeguarding works and base their observations and recording on the government documentation:

'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings'

The business should have a fully compliant and understandable safeguarding policy. All staff members must understand the policy and work within its guidelines at all times. This will be critical during the inspection as it's one of the most important aspects of the childcare provision.

There is no separate grade within Ofsted compliance for this area, but inspectors will always have a regard for how well children are helped and protected so they are kept safe.

NOTE: This operations manual has a specific chapter about safeguarding and all staff should be aware of what safeguarding within the business means and how it applies to children.

Section 3.6 Final Judgements from Ofsted and what to expect

The inspector will require a meeting with the senior team or business owner at the end of the inspection to discuss observations and outcomes.

The Ofsted requirement is that the inspector will weigh up the whole situation and identify any concerns they have, this includes ongoing concerns from previous inspections and the actions taken.

There are a number of key statements taken directly from the handbook that are very important at this stage.

- *The inspector must take account of everything they have learnt about the provision when making their judgements. This includes any concerns that might still have an impact on the setting's compliance with requirements and the effectiveness of improvement plans over time, as well as what is seen in the setting during the day.*
- ***Actions and recommendations for improvement should make clear what the provider needs to do to improve.** Actions must refer to the requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework but should not simply replicate its wording. Recommendations must focus on areas that **are preventing** the setting from improving.*

Settings that are **judged to be outstanding** are also likely to have areas that leaders have identified themselves that can improve further.

- The inspector is **not** expected to check that each of the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework is being met. However, if in the course of collecting evidence **the inspector finds that a particular requirement is not being met**, they should take this into account when reaching judgements.
- If one or more of the **statutory requirements is not being met**, this should be reflected in the judgement on leadership and management, as well as in any other judgements where it is relevant.
- Failure to meet a statutory requirement will not always result in a judgement that the setting is inadequate. The judgement will be made in relation to the impact of the failure to meet requirements on children's safety and well-being, their learning and development or both of these.

These statements help the business understand the motivations or reasons behind an inspector's decision, especially if the decision is 'inadequate' so that further action is required.

From a leadership and management perspective, when the business receives an inadequate rating based on not meeting legal requirements it is generally seen and felt that this is a failing of the management team.

- *When a setting **does not meet the legal requirements** at the time of the inspection, the inspector must take into account any previous non-compliance. A provider may commit a series of minor breaches that, taken individually, do not have a significant impact on children. Similarly, a history of previous non-compliance in the same, or different, areas is likely to indicate either **the provider's lack of knowledge of the requirements or unwillingness to comply with them**. In such cases, the inspector is likely to **judge the leadership and management to be inadequate** because the provider does not understand the statutory requirements sufficiently.*

This is the main reason for having an up to date and utilised Operations Manual to make sure that all the statutory requirements in terms of paperwork and how the business delivers the provision are the best they can be.

When this all works and is in place, it's unlikely the business will fall into an 'inadequate' situation. In addition to that, good self-evaluation, and an awareness of ongoing improvement across the whole business can lead to a rating of 'outstanding'.

NOTE: Parts 94 – 108 of the Early Years Inspection handbook identify exactly what an Inspectors actions will be depending on their findings. Some actions may be immediate and admin based; others require the issue of a welfare notice if there is a safeguarding breach.

During the inspection final meeting, senior team members need to feedback on how the inspection went and if necessary the conduct of the inspector.

- *At the feedback meeting, the inspector should explain that its purpose is to share the main findings of the inspection and any actions and/or recommendations for improvement. The inspector must make it clear that the findings are restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel and that they must remain so until the provider receives the final report.*
- *If the provision is judged to be inadequate, however, the provider must inform the local authority immediately after the inspection.*

It is an offence to fail to notify Ofsted of a significant event or fail to comply with a condition of registration.

ALL senior team members that are likely to be part of the meeting to discuss the judgement must be fully aware and comfortable with these particular sections of the handbook.

Subsection 3.6a The Evaluation schedule and what it covers

In the Early Years Inspection Handbook, Part 2 refers to the evaluation schedule and lays out all the grade descriptions. They fall into a number of specific sections.

1. Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early year's provision.
2. Effectiveness of leadership and management.
3. Quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
4. Personal development, behaviour and welfare.
5. Outcomes for Children.

Within the handbook are listed the observations and evidence that an inspector will use to apply a grade to a specific area of the business.

NOTE: While the businesses intention is to achieve or maintain an 'outstanding' rating, it is IMPORTANT that all staff members within the business are very clear about what activity falls within the 'Inadequate' sections of these 5 inspection areas.

The Part 2 evaluation schedule will be easily accessible by all team members at all times and will form part of any induction training within the business.

Section 3.7 Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation

[Suggested Text] The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) changed as of 25 May 2018. Within the business we need to have adopted the new regulations and have very specific processes and procedures regarding data in place and working.

Any previous systems that we were using are now not compliant, so all team members and associated staff that deal with data that falls inside the regulation must be familiar with company policy, process and procedure.

[As a childcare business, and assuming you are already operating you will/should have a Data Protection policy in place within the business. This is especially critical where children are concerned for safeguarding as well as compliance reasons. If the business is newly set up then this section is especially relevant as you will be receiving Ofsted inspections.]

Key Note: It's important that a policy is written that reflects legislation followed by a process of what has to happen with that data within the business and a procedure for access, amendment and review.

Subsection 3.7a What you need to know for the business

[Suggested Text] The Information Commissioner's Office has a number of guidelines and a specific checklist that the business uses for GDPR to remain compliant.

One of the key messages is:

“Many of the GDPR's main concepts and principles are much the same as those in the current Data Protection Act (DPA), so if you are complying properly with the current law then most of your approach to compliance will remain valid under the GDPR and can be the starting point to build from. However, there are new elements and significant enhancements, so you will have to do some things for the first time and some things differently.”

The checklist when looking at GDPR is as follows:

1. **Awareness** - You should make sure that decision makers and key people in your organisation are aware that the law is changing to the GDPR. They need to appreciate the impact this is likely to have and identify areas that could cause compliance problems under the GDPR. It would be useful to start by looking at your organisation's risk register, if you have one.

[As a business that may well have one owner or manager, you must not underestimate the work involved in making sure you are compliant, especially if you are setting a system up from scratch.

2. **Information you hold** - You should document what personal data you hold, where it came from and who you share it with. You may need to organise an information audit across the organisation or within particular business areas.

[The GDPR requires you to maintain records of your processing activities. It updates rights for a networked world. For example, if you have inaccurate personal data and have shared this with another organisation, you will have to tell the other organisation about the inaccuracy so it can correct its own records. You won't be able to do this unless you know what personal data you hold, where it came from and who you share it with. You should document this. Doing this will also help you to comply with the GDPR's accountability principle, which requires organisations to be able to show how they comply with the data protection principles, for example by having effective policies and procedures in place.]

3. **Communicating Privacy Information** - You should review your current privacy notices and put a plan in place for making any necessary changes required by GDPR.

[Under the GDPR there are some additional things you will have to tell people. For example, you will need to explain your lawful basis for processing the data, your data retention periods and that individuals have a right to complain to the ICO if they think there is a problem with the way you are handling their data. The GDPR requires the information to be provided in concise, easy to understand and clear language.]

4. **Individuals rights** - You should check your procedures to ensure they cover all the rights individuals have, including how you would delete personal data or provide data electronically and in a commonly used format.

The GDPR includes the following rights for individuals:

- the right to be informed
- the right of access;
- the right to rectification
- the right to erasure
- the right to restrict processing
- the right to data portability
- the right to object
- the right not to be subject to automated decision-making including profiling.

[The right to data portability is new. It only applies:

- to personal data an individual has provided to a controller;
- where the processing is based on the individual's consent or for the performance of a contract; and
- when processing is carried out by automated means.

You should consider whether you need to revise your procedures and make any changes. You will need to provide the personal data in a structured commonly used and machine readable form and provide the information free of charge.]

5. **Subject access requests** - Procedures should take account of the GDPR rules:

- In most cases you will not be able to charge for complying with a request.
- You will have a month to comply, rather than the current 40 days.
- You can refuse or charge for requests that are manifestly unfounded or excessive.
- If you refuse a request, you must tell the individual why and that

they have the right to complain to the supervisory authority and to a judicial remedy. You must do this without undue delay and at the latest, within one month.

[If your organisation handles a large number of access requests, consider the logistical implications of having to deal with requests more quickly. You could consider whether it is feasible or desirable to develop systems that allow individuals to access their information easily online.]

6. **Lawful basis for processing personal data** - You should review your current privacy notices and put a plan in place for making any necessary changes required by GDPR.

[Many organisations will not have thought about their lawful basis for processing personal data. Under GDPR because some individuals' rights will be modified depending on your lawful basis for processing their personal data. The most obvious example is that people have a stronger right to have their data deleted where you use consent as your lawful basis for processing.]

You will have to explain your lawful basis for processing personal data in your privacy notice and when you answer a subject access request. It should be possible to review the types of processing activities you carry out and to identify your lawful basis for doing so. You should document your lawful bases in order to help you comply with the GDPR's 'accountability' requirements.]

7. **Consent** - You should review how you seek, record and manage consent and whether you need to make any changes. Refresh existing consents now if they don't meet the GDPR standard.

[Consent must be freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous. There must be a positive opt-in – consent cannot be inferred from silence, pre-ticked boxes or inactivity. It must also be separate from other terms and conditions, and you will need to have simple ways for people to withdraw consent. Public authorities and employers will need to take particular care. Consent has to be verifiable and individuals generally have more rights where you rely on consent to process their data.]

If you rely on individuals' consent to process their data, make sure it will meet the GDPR standard on being specific, granular, clear, prominent, opt-in, properly documented and easily withdrawn. If not, alter your consent mechanisms and seek fresh GDPR-compliant consent, or find an alternative to consent.]

8. **Children** - Start thinking now about whether you need to put systems in place to verify individuals' ages and to obtain parental or guardian consent for any data processing activity.

[GDPR brings in special protection for children's personal data, particularly in the context of commercial internet services such as social networking. If your organisation offers online services ('information society services') to children and relies on consent to collect information about them, then you may need a parent or guardian's consent in order to process their personal data lawfully. The GDPR sets the age when a child can give their own consent to this processing at 16 (although this may be lowered to a minimum of 13 in the UK). If a child is younger, then you will need to get consent from a person holding 'parental responsibility'.

This could have significant implications if your organisation offers online services to children and collects their personal data. Remember that consent has to be verifiable and that when collecting children's data your privacy notice must be written in language that children will understand.]

9. **Data breaches** - You should make sure you have the right procedures in place to detect, report and investigate a personal data breach. Some organisations are already required to notify the ICO (and possibly some other bodies) when they suffer a personal data breach. The GDPR introduces a duty on all organisations to report certain types of data breach to the ICO, and in some cases, to individuals.

[You only have to notify the ICO of a breach where it is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals – if, for example, it could result in discrimination, damage to reputation, financial loss, loss of confidentiality or any other significant economic or social disadvantage.]

Where a breach is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, you will also have to notify those concerned directly in most cases.

You should put procedures in place to effectively detect, report and investigate a personal data breach. You may wish to assess the types of personal data you hold and document where you would be required to notify the ICO or affected individuals if a breach occurred. Larger organisations will need to develop policies and procedures for managing data breaches. Failure to report a breach when required to do so could result in a fine, as well as a fine for the breach itself.]

10. Data protection by design and data protection impact assessments. - GDPR makes privacy by design an express legal requirement, under the term ‘data protection by design and by default’. It also makes PIAs – referred to as ‘Data Protection Impact Assessments’ or DPIAs – mandatory in certain circumstances.

A DPIA is required in situations where data processing is likely to result in high risk to individuals, for example:

- where a new technology is being deployed;
- where a profiling operation is likely to significantly affect individuals; or
- where there is processing on a large scale of the special categories of data.

If a DPIA indicates that the data processing is high risk, and you cannot sufficiently address those risks, you will be required to consult the ICO to seek its opinion as to whether the processing operation complies with the GDPR.

[You should therefore start to assess the situations where it will be necessary to conduct a DPIA. Who will do it? Who else needs to be involved? Will the process be run centrally or locally?]

11. Data Protection Officers - You should designate someone to take responsibility for data protection compliance and assess where this role will sit within your organisation’s structure and governance arrangements.

You should consider whether you are required to formally designate a Data Protection Officer (DPO). You must designate a DPO if you are:

- a public authority (except for courts acting in their judicial capacity);
- an organisation that carries out the regular and systematic monitoring of individuals on a large scale; or
- an organisation that carries out the large scale processing of special categories of data, such as health records, or information about criminal convictions.

[It is most important that someone in your organisation, or an external data protection advisor, takes proper responsibility for your data protection compliance and has the knowledge, support and authority to carry out their role effectively.]

12. **International** - If your organisation operates in more than one EU member state, you should determine your lead data protection supervisory authority and document this.

The lead authority is the supervisory authority in the state where your main establishment is. Your main establishment is the location where your central administration in the EU is or else the location where decisions about the purposes and means of processing are taken and implemented.

This is only relevant where you carry out cross-border processing – ie you have establishments in more than one EU member state or you have a single establishment in the EU that carries out processing which substantially affects individuals in other EU states.

If this applies to your organisation, you should map out where your organisation makes its most significant decisions about its processing activities. This will help to determine your ‘main establishment’ and therefore your lead supervisory authority.

Subsection 3.7b Relevant Government documentation and guidelines

[Suggested Text] There are a number of online resources, documents and white papers that cover GDPR in detail and they are all available to read to make sure the business is compliant.

All those responsible in the business for managing GDPR (as detailed in subsection 3.7c below) need to be fully familiar with the operational requirements of GDPR in the business. So they can police the compliance aspects and make sure that the risk of a security is minimised.

Additional awareness is required by all staff with relation to how the GDPR requirements meet the childcare industry and the storage of data for children.

The following articles explain in detail the whole GDPR requirement.

- Guide to the General Data Protection regulation (Information Commissioner’s Office)
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr>
- Privacy notes, transparency and control (Information Commissioner’s Office)
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/privacy-notice-transparency-and-control/>
- GDPR Consent Guidance. (Information Commissioner’s Office – PDF)
<https://ico.org.uk/media/about-the-ico/consultations/2013551/draft-gdpr-consent-guidance-for-consultation-201703.pdf>
- Conducting Privacy Impact Assessments – Code of Practice (Information Commissioner’s Office – PDF)
<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1595/pia-code-of-practice.pdf>
- Article 29 Working Party (European Commission – Justice and Consumers)
http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=50083.

- Guidance for Organisations on designation, position and tasks of DPO's (European Commission – PDF)
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2016-51/wp243_en_40855.pdf
- Guidance on identifying a controller or processor's lead supervisory authority. (European Commission – PDF)
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2016-51/wp244_en_40857.pdf
- Guidelines on the right to Data Portability.
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2016-51/wp242_en_40852.pdf

These links and PDF documents have much more information regarding GDPR and all team members designated as 'Data Protection Officers' must keep up to date with these articles.

As well as DPO's all management team members must be familiar with the content in these links.

Subsection 3.7c A GDPR checklist for the business

[Suggested Text] So our business can remain complaint with GDPR there are a number of components to managing it. The main checklist and overview information is in this subsection.

The Data Protection Officers for the business are:

Name	Job Title	E-mail	Phone

This list must be up to date at all times.

General Checklist:

- **Allocation of DPO status.**
- **Annual (or more frequently) review of GDPR policy.**
- **Annual review of process and procedure identifying still 'fit for purpose'.**
- **Amendments of policy, process and procedure based on GDPR compliance requirements changing.**
- **Creation of additional policy, process or procedure for a change in the business, additional services or moving into previously avoided GDPR compliance.**

Key Note: Where possible you should have more than one DPO in the business, ideally enough to make a small team. This covers the business for any immediate questions and queries. But it also gives time and scope to review the GDPR system in the business. It

would be disastrous for a childcare business to have a data breach involving their children's data.

The potential legal action, brand and reputation damage could close the business down from loss of income to loss of customers and everything in between.

GDPR like workplace pensions and Health and Safety must not be ignored or installed in the business in a half hearted or incomplete way

SECTION 3.8 HEALTH AND SAFETY AND FIRE COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW

[As a childcare business, and assuming you are already operating you will/should have a number of health and safety procedures in place. As part of your business and Ofsted compliance you need to make sure your health and safety policies are current and fit for purpose.]

Key Note: The business doesn't need to add all the Health and Safety documentation to the manual, use this chapter as an overview of 'what you do' and 'where you keep the paperwork'. You also need to have all the review history in place.

Insert text here

Subsection 3.8a Health and Safety Management System for [Insert Business Name]

[The HSMS is the collective name for the documentation that covers all the health and safety activity within your business.]

Key Note: Where a business can afford it (and the expense may be too much versus the risk management) we recommend a local H&S Advisor to carry out a full inspection and provide a report. The business can then bring everything up to date and engage the advisor/consultant to carry out an annual check. But more importantly be available to the business in case of an incident.

This help moves the stress and responsibility from the business leaders and places it with the consultant. For small businesses this can be as little as a few hundred pounds a year for the HSMS to be managed.

Insert text here

Subsection 3.8b Fire Action Planning and inspections

[Fire Action Planning is a key part of your HSMS. Everyone in the business must be trained and know their roles and what happens during a fire. This action plan also covers areas like fire equipment servicing, emergency lighting tests, fire drills and all the associated logs.

Key Note: Again, an H&S Consultant can manage this for a business as part of the HSMS. That said all the staff must be trained locally, and all the drills etc. carried out in accordance with the regulations.

Insert text here

Subsection 3.8c Risk Assessments

[Risks assessments are part of a childcare businesses daily life. What you put in this section of the manual is an overview of the risks assessments, what they cover and why, and where the forms are kept. This way all staff are aware of the full range of risk assessments that are required within the business environment.]

Key Note: We would suggest you have a table in this section, something like this:

Area	Specific Area	Frequency
Playrooms	Room 1	Daily
	Room 2	Daily
Whole Building	All Rooms	Annually

This only represents an example, the table will need to be built for your specific business and all its risk assessments.

Insert text here

Subsection 3.8d Care of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

[A table similar to the risk assessments could be used to list all the relevant COSHH assessments that are active in the business.]

Key Note: We would suggest you have a table in this section, something like this:

Substance	Hazard Level	Location
Bleach	Hazardous	Cleaning cupboard
Soap (hand)	Low risk	Toilets, sinks
Paint (brushes, fingers)	No risk	Play materials cupboard

This only represents an example, the table will need to be built for your specific business and all its risk assessments.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 4 – GENERAL POLICIES PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Section 4.1 Introduction

[SUGGESTED TEXT] THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SECTIONS OF THE OPERATIONS MANUAL OUTSIDE OF THE OFSTED AND COMPLIANCE CHAPTERS. THIS IS WHAT MAKES [INSERT COMPANY NAME] GOOD AT WHAT IT DELIVERS FOR ITS CUSTOMERS AND STAFF. A WELL WRITTEN AND UP TO SET OF POLICIES THAT EXPLAIN WHY WE NEED TO DO ACTIVITIES A CERTAIN WAY, WITH A PROCESS TO MAKE SURE IT'S DONE RIGHT AND A PROCEDURE THAT IDENTIFIES HOW TO DO IT.

THIS MEANS WHATEVER YOUR ROLE IN THE NURSERY YOU CAN COME TO THIS MANUAL FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO DO SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T DONE FOR A WHILE, OR TO SHOW A NEW STAFF MEMBER WHAT TO DO. THIS IS A LARGER PART OF THE MANUAL AND ALL STAFF SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH EVERYTHING IN THE CHAPTER AS IT RELATES TO ALL THE OFSTED COMPLIANCE AND OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS WE NEED TO MEET.

[This will be the largest section you will build out for the Operations Manual. It's really where all the daily activities are listed and where the process and procedure for each activity is explained and should be trained into staff.

While some policy will be in the operations manual, for example the HR policies in Chapter 9, you don't need to add all the company policy to the manual. But where you create a process and a procedure it needs to reference a policy.

The key aim here though is not to overcomplicate these so staff members can't understand or are overwhelmed trying to read the processes, it should be usable and staff should go to it for help.

Any information provided needs to be:

- **Relevant** – explain about the right things in the right way.
- **Timely** – up to date, easy to find and access.
- **Accurate** – correct, compliant and factual.

The key to good process and associated procedure is to break tasks down into manageable chunks. If any particular tasks or activity in the business requires more than two pages of text to action it, then it needs breaking down.

As long as tasks are grouped appropriately in the manual, staff will be able to find everything they need when they need it. It becomes a particularly good tool for training new staff members too.

Key Note: This section will be the one you take the longest to get right. Once it's running properly your staff will see this part of the Operations Manual as the 'go to' section when they don't know how to do something or in an emergency. It will act as the reference that will make everyone consistent in their delivery as there will be no excuse.

Here is an **EXAMPLE** of a relevant policy, process and procedure built for a childcare business.

Policy (why we have this policy) – Arrival and Departure of Children

The nursery has a policy that covers the arrival and departure of children because we have a duty of care to make sure both the child and the parents/carer are comfortable with the transition of the child into and out of our nursery on a daily basis. This keeps the relaxed, happy and the parents/carers informed.

Nursery Arrival and Departure Policy.

We need to manage the following situations:

- **Arrival.**
- **Departure.**
- **Late arrivals and collections.**
- **A parent/carer failing to collect a child.**

The following guidelines must be adhered to within those situations:

Arrival:

- It is the policy of the nursery to give a warm welcome to each child on their arrival.
- The parents/carers should not try to access the nursery more than 5 minutes before their child's session begins without prior arrangement as this may result in being asked to wait.
- The main entrance to the nursery and the internal corridor doors are kept locked and secure at all times.
- Staff will not let in anyone unknown to them enter the nursery and will call a senior member of staff to assist if unsure.
- If the parent requests the child to be given prescribed medicine during the day the staff member must ensure that the medication procedure is followed.

Departure:

- Parents/carers should not collect their child over the dinner time period (11.30-12.30) unless absolutely necessary so not to disturb the other children during their meal.
- Children under 16 years of age cannot collect children from the nursery.
- Children must only be released to persons authorised to collect them.
- The nursery must be informed if anyone other than the parent/carer or the persons mentioned as authorised to collect a child changes. The nursery should be made aware of the name, physical descriptions and any other information staff or parent may deem appropriate or a password for this new person.
- If an unauthorised person attempts to collect a child the staff will explain why the child cannot leave with them. Staff will contact the parents/carers to clarify the matter. The child will not be handed over unless staff have been authorised to do so by the parents /carers. Proof of identity maybe required.
- The Nursery closes promptly each day at 6.00pm and parents/carers should be off the premises by this time.

Late arrival of collection.

- Whenever possible parents should make the nursery aware of late arrivals and collections.
- Where late collections occur, refer to 'additional payments' policy and 'child ratio management' as both may come into force.

Under the influence:

- If an adult arrives to collect a child, whether this is the parent/carer or another designated adult and they are deemed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, staff must follow the procedures.
- Where an adult is deemed unsuitable to drive due to suspected alcohol or drugs consumption and may endanger themselves and others if they do, staff may contact the

police.

Failing to collect:

- Where a parent/carer fails to collect a child staff must follow all the steps of the 'failing to collect' part of the procedure.

Process (what we need to cover) and procedure (how we need to do it) – Arrival and Departure of Children

This example directly relates to the policy so the two parts should relate to each other and makes sense. I.e.

- Any requirements for the process should relate to expectations in the policy.
- Any actions in the procedure should relate to the guidelines in the policy.

Key Note: This layout for all your processes and procedures is very user friendly. It's easy to read and understand with steps to follow, and a diagram as a visual explanation of who does what and when. Try and build all of your processes and procedures from this template for familiarity with your staff.

Nursery Arrival and Departure Process and Procedure.

Overview:

These are the requirements for when parents/carers bring their children to the nursery or pick them up. Including guidance for late or under the influence activity. All requirements must be met by staff members when carrying out this procedure as outlined below to make sure the business, the children their parents/carers are safe and compliance is met.

Requirements of the Process:

- A warm welcome is given.
- Access is controlled until 5 minutes before session starts.
- No unknown people must enter.
- Identify any medication requests.
- No collections over dinner period.
- Only over 16's can collect children.
- Only authorised people collect.
- Proof of identity required when an authorised unknown person collects.
- No child released to unauthorized person.
- All parents out by 6pm.
- Manage any late arrivals/collections for the day.
- Manage additional payments for late arrivals/pickups.
- Check for under influence, and make a call of child's safety.
- Call Police where necessary.
- Follow fail to collect procedure as required.

Procedure:

Arrivals -

1. A member of staff (preferably the child's Key Worker) should be available to welcome

and acknowledge children and parents on arrival. The arrival of children should be calm, relaxed and happy as possible.

2. The parents/carer should sign the child into the nursery checking the time and the number of hours corresponds to their booking.

Departures –

1. Activities at the end of the session should be planned to encourage the children to be calm, relaxed and to tidy up before they go home.
2. Staff (preferably the child's Key Worker) should make time to talk to the parents/carers, to discuss the child's time in nursery and share any information about the child recorded in their daily diary/sheet.
3. Wherever possible the nursery staff should meet the people authorised by parents and carers collect their child before they need to pick them up.
4. The parents/carers should sign the child out of the nursery.
5. Make sure all parents have left by 6pm.

Failing to collect –

1. In the event that a child is left at the nursery at the end of a session two members of staff must remain on the premises.
2. One staff member must contact the parents/carers and ascertain when the child can be collected.
3. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted, then the people named as the Emergency Contacts must be called. Both members of staff must stay with the child until the child is collected.
4. If the parent/carer or Emergency Contact persons cannot be contacted, then the Senior Nursery Nurse or Nursery Manager must be informed.
5. If by half an hour after the end of the nursery session no contact has been made with the parent/carer or emergency contact, then the Senior Nursery Nurse or Nursery Manager must contact The Front Door Service.

Late Arrivals and collections –

1. Where a child arrives late the full fee for the session booked will still be required unless otherwise stated by the manager.
2. Where a parent/carer is late to collect a child after a booked session the nursery has the right to add charges to the fee payable at the hourly rate.
3. Make the parent/carer aware of the extra charges that could be incurred.
4. Make the parent aware of the nurseries legal liability of staff/child ratio.

Collections under the influence –

1. the Nursery Manager will assess whether the child's safety and welfare may be impacted if released into this person's care and another suitable person will be contacted from the child registration form
2. Staff may contact the Police if they think there is a need.

Related Documents:

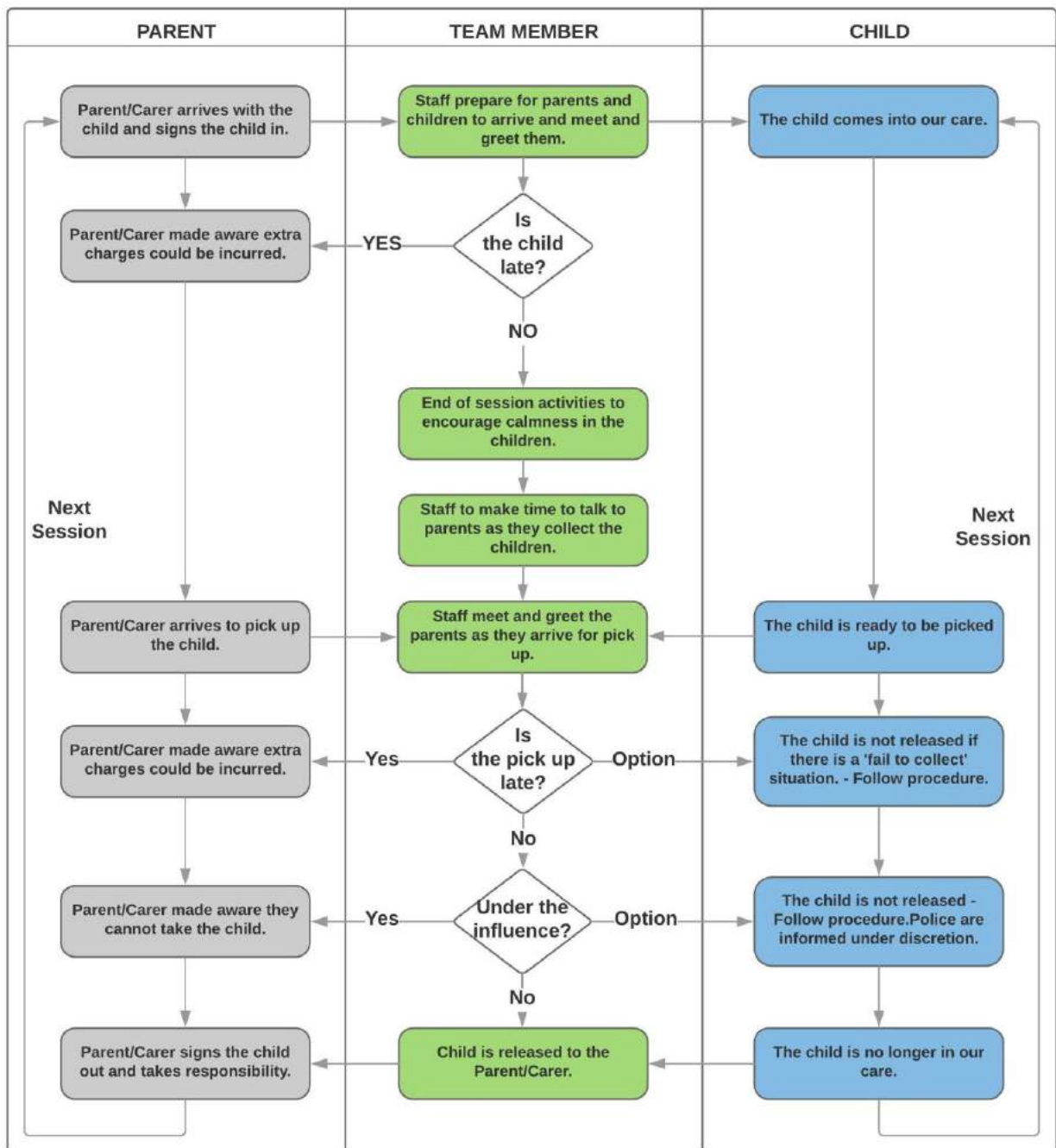
- **Nursery Sign in Sheet** – Location – By the door in main reception.
- **Child Registration Form** – Location – Admin Office – Filing Cabinet.

- **Childs Daily Diary Sheet** – Location – Admin Office – Admin Desk.
- **Child’s Emergency Contacts** – Location – Admin Office – Admin PC – Emergency Contact Details Spreadsheet.

This flowchart clearly identifies what each party involved in the procedure does during the time this particular procedure is active.

It also identifies the actions and when to look at other key elements of the procedure like ‘fail to collect’ and ‘under the influence’.

Arrival and Departure Flowchart Process:



Section 4.2 Premises Management and Operation

[Suggested Text] There are a number of processes and procedures that support the business in good management of the premises, maintaining safety and keeping everything in good order. Some of these are compliance requirements and others are 'best practice' for the business.

All staff members need to be familiar with all the activity in this section, as they may find themselves carrying out these procedures. Many of them are daily but some happen less frequently.

A number of these procedures could identify problems that will need escalating right away to a Senior Management Team member.

Key Note: This is where all the practical procedures will be and usually have an accompanying form to fill in.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.2a Risk assessment overview

[Suggested Text] All the risk assessment policy, processes and procedures are in this sub-section of the manual.

Please refer to these whenever you are unfamiliar with the procedure for carrying out a risk assessment within the business.

Key Note: It makes sense to gather all the risk assessments in one place so staff members get used to knowing where to look and going to this part of the manual for answers.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.2b Daily risk assessments

Key Note: Add all your daily assessments in here. It's up to you whether a form is kept here as a template. If not, make sure the forms are easy to access. Also make very clear who (job title) can carry out each assessment.

Just like the example at the beginning of this chapter, make sure you content a policy to the process and procedure for each daily risk assessment. Don't assume anything is already known when writing these procedures.

Subsection 4.2c Monthly and annual risk assessments

Key Note: Add all your daily assessments in here. It's up to you whether a form is kept here as a template. If not, make sure the forms are easy to access. Also make very clear who (job title) can carry out each assessment.

Subsection 4.2d Works and maintenance during operating hours

Key Note: Add a policy for how these works are done, who controls the environment and sections of any work areas as required. Link this chapter into 'Visitor Management.'

Section 4.3 Child Management

[Suggested Text] The processes and procedures in this child management section are critical in terms of being followed and directly related to legal and government compliance. These must be adhered to at all times, as breaking procedure could affect child safety.

Key Note: Group all the critical procedures together in one area as they relate to things like important compliance or safeguarding of children.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.3a Illness management

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.3b Medication management

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Subsection 4.3c Sleep management

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Subsection 4.3d Biting Procedure

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Section 4.4 Visitor Management

[Suggested Text] The nursery has a very clear policy on visitor management. There are broadly 3 types of visitor:

- Maintenance and work related. (dirty work)
- Business, compliance or staff/people related (clean work)
- Parents, customers and children.

Each has their own set of processes and procedures in terms of being compliant, safe to work, controlled within the business environment and the level of accompanied time.

Key Note: There are a number of policies connected to this section, not least of all Safeguarding, health and Safety and inspections.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.4a Contractor and tradespeople visitors

Key Note: There will likely be a number of procedures linked to managing onsite work with maintenance contractors. Including licenses, qualification checks, sign in and sign out, onsite chaperoning, risk assessment around work areas. Segregated areas of work, number of workmen, access points, dust and debris control.

Subsection 4.4b Business and inspection related visitors

Key Note: These visitors will be easier to manage than maintenance contractors, but certain additional procedures may need to be followed. Understanding access to documentation, GDPR and what can and can't be divulged to the visitors.

Subsection 4.4c Parents, potential customers and children.

Key Note: These will usually be the easiest visitors to manage, but chaperoning and giving a very good impression are critical here. So you may have policy about 'what new parents should experience' for example. They will also be very concerned about safeguarding and health and Safety. For the children the procedure needs to involve 'experience' of the activity.

Section 4.5 Trips and Outings Procedure

Key Note: Add in the associated policies, processes and procedures into this section.

Section 4.6 Outdoor Play Procedure

Key Note: Add in the associated policies, processes and procedures into this section.

Section 4.7 Settling in Procedure

Key Note: Add in the associated policies, processes and procedures into this section.

Section 4.8 Customer Service Procedures

[It's really important for any childcare business to have a specific set of customer service procedures that deal with certain events that happen in the normal day to day operations of the business. These are generally about the philosophies or how the business operates and a clear outline for complaints management. While we have outlined a few critical subsections below, we suggest the provision adds in here their own current methods, just make sure they are complete.

Key Note: This is where all the practical procedures will be and usually have an accompanying form to fill in.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.8a Customer/Parent Service Philosophy

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.8b Customer/Parent feedback

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.8c Customer/Parent complaints policy

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Insert text here

Subsection 4.8d Customer/Parent complaints action/response

Key Note: Add not only a process and procedure but also the full policy in these sections as no mistakes can be made.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 5 – FINANCIAL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Section 5.1 Introduction

[SUGGESTED TEXT] WE NEED TO BALANCE THE INCOME WITH THE OUTGOINGS, AND MAKE SOME PROFIT ALONG THE WAY. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FINANCIAL POLICIES, PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES OPERATING WITHIN THE BUSINESS. THIS CHAPTER COVERS THE MOST CRITICAL ASPECTS OF MANAGING MONEY THAT COMES INTO THE BUSINESS AND THAT IS SPENT DURING NORMAL OPERATIONS.

These policies, processes and procedures cover areas such as income received from the Local Authority in the form of payments to deliver child support (15/30 hours), also direct private payments from parents and any other grants the business can get for training.

The outgoings will cover business overheads for the building, salaries for the team, consumables within the business and any government payments in terms of taxes.

We have these procedures in place to balance the finances and keep the business lucrative and stable. If the business were to close through poor budgeting and financial management, then that affects jobs and the local community.

While it isn't everyone's responsibility to manage finance in the business, it is the responsibility of the team to safeguard the money that is spent, and be efficient and not wasteful. The following sections explain how we manage the finance in the business in key areas.

Section 5.2 Basic budgeting activity in business

[Budgeting varies widely from business to business, dependent on size, or whether a business is a limited company or not. Documentation may be none existent, light or compliant for government requirements.

We recommend that whatever the size of business, even for a one-person provision, a basic spreadsheet of income versus outgoings needs to be used, to make sure there is always money to cover what goes out in costs.]

Key Note: Finance doesn't need to be complex. But we do recommend businesses that are registered limited companies engage an accountant to manage finances and tax returns and payroll where there are a number of employees (especially with new pension auto enrollment).

Basic budgeting starts with identifying money coming in and money going out on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis. If this is done correctly it doesn't take too much time and can reduce stress for business owners. Knowing what is happening with the money is better than ignoring it.

Microsoft Excel is available to most businesses and can be used to track costs within the business. The picture below is a basic spreadsheet; many businesses will have more than this which is great. This one shows \$ but it works equally well for £'s or any currency.

In this section describe how you manage the budgets in the business and the tools you use, also who's responsibility it is.

4	Starting Balance	1,500												Total	Avg
5	Total Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Total Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	NET (Income - Expenses)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Projected End Balance	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500		
9														Monthly	
10														Total	Average
22															
23	BUILDING EXPENSES														
24	Mortgage/Rent													0	0
25	Home/Rental Insurance													0	0
26	Electricity													0	0
27	Gas/Oil													0	0
28	Water/Sewer/Trash													0	0
29	Phone													0	0
30	Cable/Satellite													0	0
31	Internet													0	0
32	Furnishings/Appliances													0	0
33	Lawn/Garden													0	0
34	Maintenance/Supplies													0	0
35	Improvements													0	0
36	Other													0	0
37	Total HOME EXPENSES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
38															
39	TRANSPORTATION														
40	Vehicle Payments													0	0
41	Auto Insurance													0	0
42	Fuel													0	0
43	Bus/Taxi/Train Fare													0	0
44	Repairs													0	0
45	Registration/License													0	0
46	Other													0	0
47	Total TRANSPORTATION	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
48															

Section 5.3 Managing income

[As we see from the table above, there are a number of income items in the top section. Your business will probably have the same. Some direct income from parents, some from local authorities and also from grants. It's really important that you track when all these payments are due to come in, so you can plan spending within the business when you have funds available.

This will also act as a reminder to get all the paperwork ready to claim the funding you are due, at the right time for your business and without missing any government deadlines. This is covered in other subsections of the manual.]

Key Note: If you don't manage the timing of your income and what spending is associated with that income, you could find the business with financial penalties or interest charges. Worse still the business goes into debt before a payment comes in, on the hope that the payment will come in and cover the debt. With childcare provision the amount you think you will get based on the predicted childcare coverage may not be what you expected. This could be disastrous for a small childcare business.

In this section create an overview for each income stream in terms of:

- Who it's from.
- When it comes in.
- Approximately how much it is.
- Any other relevant info.

Subsection 5.3a Planning for income from the Local Authority

[For most childcare businesses this is the largest portion of their income. It stands to reason that this should have the most attention paid to it, and those that are responsible for claiming it know exactly how and when to claim it.]

Key Note: In this section have a simple process that identifies how income is claimed from the Local Authority and when it will come in. A process that answers the following questions:

- **What are the timescales for?**
 - **Filling in the forms, dates etc.**
 - **Submitting the forms, dates etc.**
- **Who will fill out the forms?**
- **Who will put together the evidence for the forms, registers etc?**
- **Where are the forms kept in the business?**
- **Where are the previous forms for guidance?**
- **Where are the links to .gov websites to help with the submission?**

It's a good idea to build the process out as a 'one pager' much like the examples in Chapter 4 of this manual.

Insert text here

Subsection 5.3b Planning for income from Parents and Customers

[Much the same as planning for the Local Authority, there should be a process for this within the business. It may not be as official but the income needs to be tracked and understood.]

Key Note: In this section have a simple process that identifies how income is brought into the business, via bank payments, direct debits, cash. And what forms are used to track it, and how is the income added to the budget spreadsheet.

This is about a process that manages regular payments into the business, rather than large quarterly or annual payments from the authorities.

This needs to be managed closely to prevent the business coming under legal threat from customers for not handling money correctly.

Insert text here

Subsection 5.3b General budgeting and managing costs

[The critical component of budgeting and managing costs is knowing when and how much is going out of the business at any one time. It's being able to go to a spreadsheet that is up to date and know that when an unexpected cost comes into the business, a boiler repair or agency worker cover, that the money can be found.]

Key Note: The best way to manage this is to understand 'cash flow' into the business which is covered later on.

The activity in this section should explain how the spreadsheet shows what the predicted budget requirement (costs) is for each month of the coming year, and the projected income against that cost. These are mostly 'best guess' as we can't predict 100% accurately.

But, as we work through the year we add 'actuals' into the spreadsheet as each month goes by. These are the actual figures of what was spent on costs and what actual income came in. If we do this year after year we get better at predicting the budget for the following year.

This might sound daunting, but training is worthwhile for the business owners/managers to understand this better.

Here's an example:

	January 2008			January 2008 YTD		
	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Actual	Variance
ACTUAL vs. BUDGET						
Income						
Salary	3,446	3,446	0	3,446	3,446	0
Other Income	6,000	9,416	3,416	6,000	9,416	3,416
TOTAL Income	9,446	12,862	3,416	9,446	12,862	3,416
Non-Discretionary Expenses						
Auto	225	155	71	225	155	71
Debt Service	250	250	-	250	250	-
Food and Groceries	200	12	188	200	12	188
Household and Clothing	150	102	48	150	102	48
Insurance	225	197	28	225	197	28
Internet	15	15	-	15	15	-
Power (Electric/Gas)	200	402	(202)	200	402	(202)
Rent	1,425	1,425	-	1,425	1,425	-
Tax	1,100	2,202	(1,102)	1,100	2,202	(1,102)
Telephone Service	50	44	6	50	44	6
TOTAL Non-Discr.	3,840	4,804	(964)	3,840	4,804	(964)
Discretionary Expenses						
Cable Television	30	24	6	30	24	6
Charitable Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dining Out	150	167	(17)	150	167	(17)
Entertainment	150	126	24	150	126	24
Vacation	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL Discretionary	330	317	13	330	317	13
Surplus After Expenses	5,276	7,742	2,466	5,276	7,742	2,466

Section 5.4 Understanding and managing cash flow in the business

[Cash flow is truly critical to any business and childcare provision is no different. Cash flow is simply the amount left over each month or at the year end after everything has been paid. Whatever size the business is, having some available cash is the only way an unexpected expense can be covered, for example building repairs.

It also means the business can spend on improving itself, grow and actually be more efficient. Having a good operations manual helps a business improve its cash flow. Having good budget management also helps with understanding cash flow.]

Key Note: This section is more about setting a policy on cash flow requirements in the business, such as:

- **How much are we aiming to have each month? - E.g. 10% cash flow? So if our costs for the month were £10,000 we would be looking to have £11,000 income which would give us £1000 cash with which to do other things.**
- **How do we track spending of the cash flow pot? – E.g. if we have £2000 in the business bank account, how do we decide what to spend it on and when. It could be that we spend £1000 on new electronic devices for the children, and keep the other in the bank as we know that there is going to be an increase in the gas bill in two months' time.**
- **This activity would be tracked in the budget spreadsheet.**

Insert text here

Section 5.5 Understanding and managing debt and non payment

[Much like cash flow, managing debt, i.e. money not coming into business when it is supposed to, is a problem. This is especially dangerous to the business if cash flow is not managed very well.

It's not very easy to 'make' people pay, so there are a number of policies, processes and procedures that revolve around picking the right customers, making sure they have the means to pay and managing the situation when they don't. This can be really hard as no childcare business is likely to turn a child or parent in need away, but the business has to be strong about its income and cash flow.]

Key Note: This section should have a procedure like the others in finance that outlines a series of steps to recover money when it's late being paid or in fact is unlikely to be paid.

Things to consider are:

- **When payments are late you could do the following:**
 - **Speak directly to the person involved when you see them, and do this regularly.**
 - **Send an official letter indicating the debt owed, the original timelines and how late it is.**
- **You could consider adding interest as the debt gets older. This may work on customers that are businesses as it will affect their cash flow. It may not work on people who have low income.**
- **If there is a complete refusal to pay and a break down in contact, the small claims court may be the only option. But you must have made a number of attempts to recover the funds through meaningful and respectful communication first.**

One of the best ways to prevent having to do this debt recovery is to be very clear about payment expectations from the beginning and act very quickly once the debt is going late. The longer you leave the situation or ignore it, the worse it will be.

Insert text here

Section 5.6 Payment methods inside the business

[Suggested Text] Incoming and outgoing payments to the business come in various forms, bank payments, and cash are the most common. Generally, payments are managed by the business owners and senior team members. As much as possible we use systems to automate payment from parents usually through a 3rd party agency. These subsections identify how specific payment types are made.

Subsection 5.6a How and when we pay the bills for the business

[The business has to have a clear procedure for paying its bills, whether it's utilities, salaries or local arrangements for incidentals like groceries.

Where possible most will be direct debit, so cash flow management is critical to make sure funds are available for those payments, to reduce charges.]

Key Note: In this section have a table with a list of the payments that go out, not with actual costs as that data is sensitive. Something like.

Cost Type	Payment Method/Timing	Paid By
Payroll	BACS/Monthly	ACME Wages Ltd
Utilities	Direct Debit/Quarterly	NatWest Bank
Rent	Cash/Monthly	Nursery Manager

Insert text here

Subsection 5.6b How we manage payments from the authority and customers

[Where government agencies are concerned the payments are likely larger and more spread out, but there needs to be a process attached to these payments as there will normally be a direct distribution of money to pay for certain things as soon as that finding lands in the account.]

Key Note: Have a process here that covers things like expected dates, immediate payments to certain areas, who will move the funds, who will sign off the spending of the funds etc.

Insert text here

Subsection 5.6c How we handle petty cash

[If the business has a petty cash provision, there needs to be a process for managing the cash usage.]

Key Note: Have a process here that manages the petty cash. It needs to answer questions like:

- **How much is in the petty cash as a float E.g. £100?**
- **Who is authorised to spend it?**
- **Who is authorised to top it up?**
- **Who manages the receipts from spending it?**
- **Who adds the spend to the budget spreadsheet?**
- **Where is it stored?**
- **How is it kept secure? Keys, access etc?**

Insert text here

Subsection 5.6d How we handle expenses

[If the business uses personal expenses for managers and staff, there needs to be a usage policy, much like petty cash but a bit more complex.]

Key Note: Have a procedure here that manages expenses. It needs to answer questions like:

- **Under what circumstances can employees claim personal expenses?**
- **What do they need to keep to claim them? I.e. receipts.**
- **How do they claim them back? Is there a form?**
- **Who signs off the expenses for payment back to the employee?**
- **How is the employee paid back? BACS payment with monthly salary?**
- **How is this tracked in the budget spreadsheet?**

Insert text here

Section 5.7 A list of associated financial forms

[Suggested Text] All of the financial activity within the business has an associated form that needs filling in when the activity happens. This activity is then collated into the budget sheet. There is a simple process that all financial activity has:

- 1. Requirement to spend.**
- 2. Authorisation to spend.**
- 3. Form filling with details.**
- 4. Purchase made.**
- 5. Receipt processed.**
- 6. Budget Spreadsheet updated.**

Additional process for expenses

- 7. Payment approved.**
- 8. Payment processed.**
- 9. Payment received.**

There is a requirement that all employees in the business follow this format.

Subsection 5.7a Insert a financial process here

[There will be a number of financial processes in the business, list them here and build a subsection for each]

Key Note: Remember, all the steps of each process built must follow the steps in Section 5.7

Insert text here

Subsection 5.7b Insert a financial process here

[There will be a number of financial processes in the business, list them here and build a subsection for each]

Key Note: Remember, all the steps of each process built must follow the steps in Section 5.7

Insert text here

Subsection 5.7c Insert a financial process here

[There will be a number of financial processes in the business, list then here and build a subsection for each]

Key Note: Remember, all the steps of each process built must follow the steps in Section 5.7

Insert text here

CHAPTER 6 – MANAGING CHANGE AND PROJECT PLANNING

Section 6.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] Change is inevitable in any business and here at [Insert company name] we have a thorough process that helps us manage any changes the business has to make. This can be in response to something that happens during our day to day operation. Or it may be in response to an Ofsted inspection that requires an improvement or a change in compliance. It may be that we have enjoyed a successful period financially and we want to grow the business, add another function or start a new additional childcare operation somewhere else.

Whichever it is the whole team will need to discuss the potential change and how it affects staff, our children and parents. Then plan everything that needs to happen to implement this change successfully and efficiently.

This chapter identifies all the steps required to implement change within the business.

Section 6.2 Understanding why a change needs to be made

[Suggested Text] Changing something just because we can, is rarely successful. Even when forced by policy most team members struggle to adopt a change that they weren't involved in or have an understanding of 'why'. Here at [Insert Company Name] we have thorough understanding of why a change needs to happen, how it's made and what those changes are, through good planning and discussion.

Example:

A good example is when government legislation changes and there is a requirement for childcare providers to change how they operate. In recent times the new 30 hours' childcare allowance has created a reason for change.

In effect this is a 'new project' that will require the following outcomes:

- An understanding of how the 30 hours' provision affects:
 - Parents and the scheduling.
 - Staff numbers and cover in the business.
 - Financial income from the Local Authority and how that affects the business.
- A roll out of changes within the business in terms of policy, procedure, hours.
- A trial to see if its something the business can sustain.
- Recruitment if more staff are required.
- Training for the new recruits.

There will be other considerations for such a big change, but it makes an important example. Many others changes are much smaller and everyone in the business should understand why they need to be made. The Senior Management Team will discuss the potential changes, look for feedback from staff and even help deploy the changes. This way the changes will be relevant and have the best chance of 'sticking' and being successful.

Key Note: The suggested content here is exactly that, suggested. In our experience many companies apply a change in response to a requirement but often don't have a clean and simple process in place.

Section 6.3 New Projects in business

[Suggested Text] Any new projects within the business follow a few simple processes so that we understand them better in terms of what we need to do and when. These are business tools that include forms and software that help build the project out. These tools give us clarity around the steps we need to take and who will do them.

They can be used for any project from changing room layouts all the way to planning a new nursery area. The tools we use in the business are:

- **Project Initiation Document (PID)** – This is a form that is filled in at the start of the project when the information isn't complete. When filling it in we can identify what and why the change needs to happen and its benefits, and who it will affect and who will be involved in making the change happen. A high level activity plan and what assumptions and risks there are is included as well.
- **A Process Map** – This is basically a flowchart of activity that indicates what needs to happen and in what order, and also who does it. It is very much like the 'swim lane flowcharts' in the General Procedures and Policies section of this manual.
- **A Gantt Chart** – The PID is an overview, the process map gives up tasks and people and the Gantt chart adds time to the project. It takes the tasks and adds dates and times to them to make sure we understand how long it takes to deploy the change within the business. Also 'dependencies', i.e. which tasks have to be done before others, which means we can reduce any delays by making sure those critical tasks get done as quickly as possible.

These tools may be unfamiliar to many team members, but mostly the senior team will manage all this activity. The point here is that everyone involved in the project can fully understand all the steps required and what part they play.

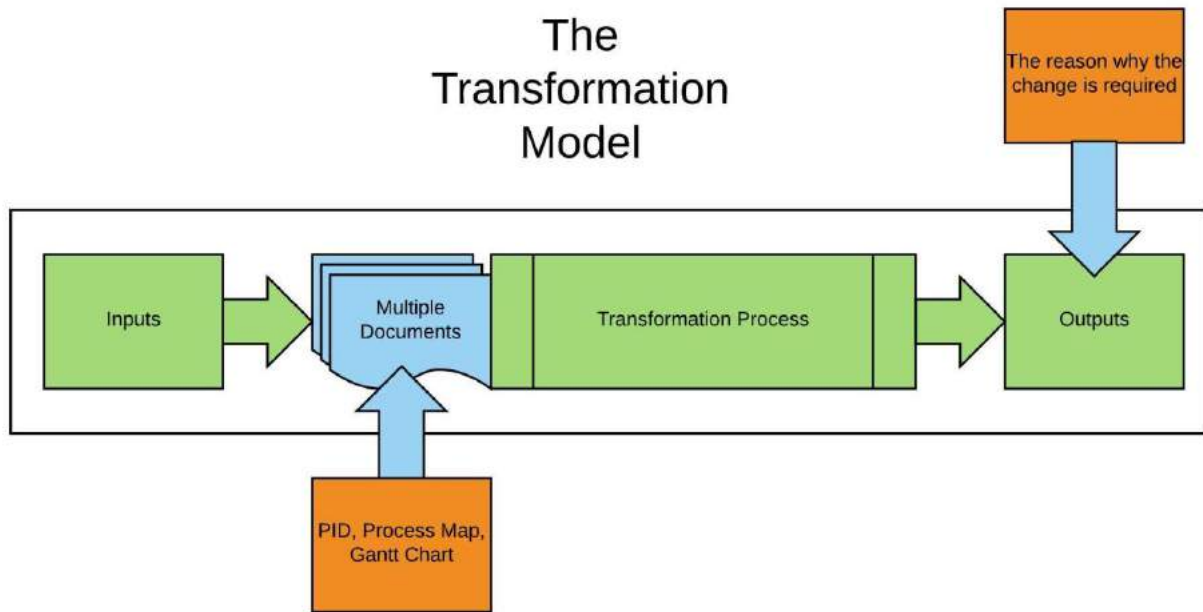
Key Note: These are just a few of the tools that can be used for project and change planning. Staff can be trained in the use of these tools as required. Another key point is that for smaller changes these may not be required, but when there are a number of tasks that need to be carried out, there are multiple people involved and a cost to the business, these will help keep the change/project on time and on budget.

Subsection 6.3a Planning the project detail

[Suggested Text] The project detail is referring to all the activities and tasks that need to happen. Using a very simple model we can make sure all that detail is captured.

In the 'Transformation Model' diagram below we can see how to explore what it is we need to have to implement the project and then what we need to do.

This is all about understanding all the connected tasks, materials and people to get to where we need to be in the most efficient and cost effective way.



Here is an example of how we use the model to identify what we would need for a simple change in the storage space within the business.

Example: A new shed in the garden for storing toys (larger outside items)

1) Overview (Why)

As we have increased the amount of time the children spend outside in recent weeks, we have purchased a number of new larger play items for the children. These can't be just left outside and bringing them all in is not only time consuming for the staff, they are taking up a lot of space in the main inside playrooms. This is made worse in poor weather as we are trailing rain and dirt into the inside areas when moving the items. This requires time cleaning up. We need an outside solution for the storage of the toys.

2) A secure and stable wooden shed (Output)

A shed would serve as a great place to put the toys providing dry storage near the outside play area, secured with a lock to protect the contents (maybe even an alarm). It needs to be big enough to get everything in, but not so big that it dominates the outside space. Also it could do with decorating in a fun way, rather than being just a big brown shed.

3) All the materials and time required (Inputs)

We need to look at a list of what we need:

- Time to research what shed we need and where we get it from.
- Money to purchase the shed.
- Measurements for the right size shed.
- All the parts of a shed of a decent enough quality to be safe and last a long time.
- A place to put it marked out. (check it fits).
- Time to collect it or receive it when it's delivered.
- Tools and people to build the shed.
- Time to help or supervise the build.
- Materials and people to decorate the shed.

Note: this list could be much more detailed if needed.

4) Project plan (Multiple Documents)

We have used the following planning tools

- PID – This has been completed with the reasons why, the outputs that we are looking for, the people involved in the shed project, who will be affected etc. The size needed, what will be stored there.
- The Process map – To plan out all the tasks that come from understanding the inputs needed to do the project, and who will do them.
- The Gantt chart – That tracks all the key times like, delivery, how long to build it, how long to decorate it etc.

5) Transformation Process (Doing it)

Having the right people doing the right things at the right time. Understanding when to get people in to do the work based on knowing the breakdown of tasks, approximately how long things will take and having some contingency built in. This also includes managing costs correctly for the whole project and understanding from the outset how much the whole project will cost.

The Outcome of planning the project correctly

Using this whole method means that whoever is looking after or is responsible for the project (Project Manager) has all the information they need to make sure everything goes to plan.

This will:

- Save money.
- Save time.
- Be easy to manage.
- Reduce the chance of work being repeated.
- Reduce the chance of unexpected problems.

Without planning, any or all of the following could happen:

- The wrong size shed.
- The wrong quality of shed.
- The shed not fitting in the space thought.
- The shed being delivered when no one was there.
- No agreement who would build it.
- No agreement who would decorate it.
- No scheduled time to do any of the work.
- Tradespeople turning up but with no access to the play area at the time they come.
- More cost returning the shed for a replacement.
- More cost for rescheduling build.
- People frustrated at the poor planning.
- Stress and pressure.
- No documentation that may be needed at a later date.

Poor planning has a number of negative effects that the business can't afford and doesn't have the time to manage. Where a simple project or change has a number of people or activities involved, this simple model with the tools identified will make deploying the change much more efficient and effective.

Key Note: Not all the changes in the business require this level of planning. A procedure change may just need an update to the ops manual with some training of staff to follow and adopt the change. That said a PID even for a change so small is a good idea.

Subsection 6.3b Identifying the project costs

[Project costs are handled in the same way as any other costs within the business. When planning the project there needs to be a clear understanding of costs incurred in completing the project, and ongoing costs and where the funding will come from. In the shed example there may have been a recognized need for a while, but the cash flow situation has prevented carrying out the project. This is another reason why budget and cash flow management is critical to the business]

Key Note: For project costs it's best to use a separate budget spreadsheet to the business budget sheet. That way if you have a specific budget in mind you have a 'total' to work with.

Things to consider are:

- Each and every 'input' into the project has a cost, including time. The finer the detail you have in the inputs the greater the accuracy of the budgeting and the better the availability of 'spare' cash reserves.
- As a general rule there should be a 'contingency' built in that usually amounts to 10% of the total project budget. So for £1000 it's £1100. There are always a few unexpected costs that arise, so don't plan your budget to the penny.

You should always endeavor to stick to your budget and good planning will help this. Poor planning and poor budget control will always lead to the project costs being higher than expected.

Insert text here

Subsection 6.3b Managing project delivery

[Projects rarely manage themselves well. This doesn't mean you have to micro manage every aspect, what it does mean is that as a Project Manager you should schedule in time to check on how things are going, that all is on time with your Gantt chart and the team are happy.]

Key Note: You can set 'milestone checks' for your project. This is a mutually agreed point in the project (usually a few milestones) where you get together with the team delivering the project and look at how things are going. Each milestone should have a predefined set of tasks on the Gantt chart that should be completed by that time.

If things are behind that's where you either adjust the schedule or 'catch up' in some other way. Not meeting milestones often incur costs.

Insert text here

Section 6.4 Documentation relating to managing change

[All change in the business, whether it leads to a small change in procedure or results in a more complex and longer term project needs to have that all important reason 'why'. The business needs to have a one-page process that has a form that identifies, explains and tracks change in the business.]

Key Note: A 'Change Management Form' is a simple one-page form that identifies all the critical information when a change is applied in the business. Over time it becomes an archive of improvement that can be advantageous in a number of areas including financial

borrowing, Ofsted and other situations where the business needs to show incremental improvement.

Something along these lines would work.

Change Request

Change Request

Project: [Project Name]

Project:	[Project Name]	Date:	1/29/2018
Requestor:	Author	Request #	Enter request number
E-Mail:	Enter e-mail address	Phone:	Enter requestor phone
Type:	Choose type of change	Reason:	Reason for change
Priority:	Priority of change	Required:	Date required by

Change Description (Detailed description of the change. Reference attachments if necessary)

Description:

Justification:

Impact if not implemented:

Alternatives:

Impact Analysis (Describe how the change will impact the project & business in the following categories)

Scope:

Risk:

Schedule:

Budget:

Approval

Approved: Is change approved

Signature: _____ **Date:** Date approved.

1/29/2018
[Type the Company Name]
1

Section 6.3 Trials and pilots of new software systems

[This can represent a huge change as there are many software packages available to childcare providers that track many important aspects of the business. With that in mind not only should the roll out of new software be seen as a 'full project' that needs scoping out and managing, it's also critical to run a 'pilot' of the software to trial whether it's good for the business or not.

Simply put, adopting software without fully testing it within your business can be an absolute disaster.]

Key Note: Many of the packages you will look to use in the business will have trial periods and an expectation that you will want to give it a go in the business before committing to heavy payments. There are a number of things to consider:

- **Why are you interested in this particular package?**
- **What are the particular benefits over the current system in place?**
- **If a trial is undertaken:**
 - **Who will be involved?**
 - **How long will it last?**
 - **How far reaching will it be within the business?**
 - **What are the costs for trialing the package?**
- **Who will run the trial internally?**
- **What support are the software manufacturers giving you?**
- **Do the staff understand the need for this change?**
- **Are they trained to carry out the trial?**

These only represent a few of the key questions and considerations when making such a large change.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 7 – MANAGING COMMUNICATION IN THE BUSINESS

Section 7.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] Excellent communication is critical for a business to be efficient and effective. In a similar way to implementing change, there are proven methods of communication that really help the business work in a better way. All employees need to fully understand these communication policies so that everyone who deals with the business gets the same response, treatment and style that meets the company values highlighted back in Chapter 2 of this manual.

Some of this Communication Policy relates to dealing with government agencies, and while that would normally be a manager's role, all members of staff may find themselves dealing with someone from an important government agency at some point. This will be the case when Ofsted carry out inspections, and the Local Authority or Health and Safety Executive may also visit. It's very important that everyone on the team understands how to communicate with these people as well as the children and parents.

Section 7.2 Communication procedure and policy

[Suggested Text] Here in [Insert Company Name] we have a very simple and specific policy that is based around 'treating everyone as we like to be treated'. This extends to all forms of communication whether verbal or written and covers interaction with both our customers/parents and each other within the team.

The way this works is that all communication is made by the right people and the information is timely, relevant and accurate. That way we don't spend time chasing up mis-information that could have a knock on effect on the business, or worse still our safeguarding of the children.

With that in mind there needs to be a clear understanding of what information levels exist. For the business we have three distinct communication levels. These are also covered in the GDPR section of the manual:

- **Confidential and actionable information** – This includes communication around personal or sensitive data, or in the event of an emergency and where immediate action needs to be taken.
- **Sensitive information** – Some of this information could be personal data but probably relates to the business and how it operates, what makes it a success and is only usually shared with employees and trusted external parties.
- **General information** – This is all the other communication and interaction that is neither sensitive or urgent and is discussed and moved around on a daily basis.

In understanding these three types of information all employees will know when they are in possession of particular information. If they are about to say it or share it somehow, they understand this communication policy and adjust what they are doing accordingly.

Key Note: It's not usually enough to make sure people read these sections of the manual. It may be that there is some team training around communication, confidentiality, safeguarding and data protection.

Insert text here

Subsection 7.2a Email and written

[Suggested Text] For email and written communication within the business and for sending outside, there are two specific considerations:

1. **Who is the communication meant for?** – To further explain this, it's not just that you are sending information to a specific person, but who else may access that information, who might it get passed onto?

This information may well be sensitive or even confidential, you need to be sure that it is constructed in the right way and that it is actually going to the right person with the relevant and specific content it should have.

Example: You send an email to a parent about an incident with their child, indicating what happened and who was involved. The questions are:

- Is emailing the right way to make contact?
- Are you sure it's going to the right parent?
- Have you named other parties in the email, could there be repercussions?
- Can you be sure they won't share that information with other parents?

This is a particularly strong example, but it highlights why we have to be very careful about getting the right information to the right people.

2. **Does the content fall inside all our data protection and safeguarding policy?** – Most emails and written communication won't fall into this category on a day to day basis. But when it does the business has a policy that a senior team member checks the content before communication is made.

Example: You post on Facebook a message to your friends that you will be working late tonight as the children are staying for a particular class session. During that session which was based on Halloween you took a few pictures and posted them on Facebook showing how much fun was had.

- Is taking pictures and posting them on Facebook breaking Child Protection regulation?
- Is taking pictures and posting them on Facebook breaking Data Protection regulation?
- Did you seek permission?
- Who has access to those pictures on facebook?
- Did you give any names or details?

Doing something like this seems innocent enough, but it can contradict regulations and also affect safeguarding.

All written communication must be polite and clear - aggressive or inflammatory statements rarely help any situation.

Key Note: Again, specific training within the business is recommended to make sure that the written Communication Policy is fully understood and adhered too. It could also include guidelines on personal usage of work email, posting and using social media.

Insert text here

Subsection 7.2b Face-to-face and telephone

[Suggested Text] Face-to face communication is even more important than written, as it is a two-way information exchange with very little time to assess if the information being passed contravenes any guidelines and is accurate.

This is especially important if you are confronted by an angry customer/parent. This problem is explained and a solution given in the General Procedure and Policies section under 'customer service'.

All the guidelines for written communication are valid here too, with the additional requirement for all team members to be calm under pressure, polite and helpful. This needs to be particularly apparent during Ofsted inspections or when government agencies are in the business.

If team members do not know the answers to specific questions, it's fine for them to find another member of staff to answer. All employees should be familiar with the Ofsted chapter of the manual that describes in detail what will be expected during inspections, and this will include fully engaging with staff.

The same applies to telephone conversations.

Key Note: It's a good idea to make sure the team understand the types of interaction that may happen with visitors to the business and customers/parents. Having a policy of who deals with who is a good step. I.e. for Ofsted scheduled inspections make sure you have all the right people in place that know the right information and can discuss with the Inspector.

Insert text here

Section 7.3 Dealing and communicating with government and authorities

[Suggested Text] As a childcare provider we have regular communication with the authorities due to the level of compliance and regulation involved. Whether it's regarding funding for childcare, Ofsted compliance or any other particular area, the policy is that senior team members or business owners will deal with the majority of this communication and activity.

This will include all the form filling and written communication that happens annually. Also when there are updates and changes that require a change to this ops manual.

Key Note: Have an organization chart that identifies who to go to about specific information within the business that is confidential, sensitive or compliance based.

Subsection 7.3a Managing local authority and government communication

[Suggested Text] The general policy regarding communication with government and authorities is that senior team members or business owners will carry most of this out whether it is written, verbal or otherwise.

There will be occasions where this is not possible so the whole team must be aware of the communication policies.

Key Note: Have an organization chart that identifies who to go to about specific information within the business that is confidential, sensitive or compliance based.

Subsection 7.3b Managing communication with other agencies

[Suggested Text] Communicating with other agencies means all the 3rd party suppliers that support our childcare provision. This includes utilities providers, consumables providers, help agencies, software suppliers and many others.

Communicating with these agencies will not fall just inside the remit of the senior team, it could be an area of responsibility for any team members. Generally, the business will deal with all these suppliers the same way, but occasionally there are challenges to work through. The senior team or business owners will take over at that point until the issues are worked through.

Key Note: Have a list of suppliers for the business and identify on the list who is the normal point of contact within the business. Have a second person as contingency on that list. Make sure all the people allocated know they are the point of contact for that particular supplier.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 8 – REVIEWING POLICY, PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

Section 8.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] In the childcare sector both the Local Authority and the Government are continuously reviewing and changing compliance regulations to make sure the businesses are safe and are giving the children in their care exactly what they need.

There are a number of drivers for these changes. It could be an event that had national coverage drives a tightening of regulation, or new guidelines are released that cover a different provision or it can even be an internal event within the business.

Whichever it is [Insert Company Name] has a culture and value set that drives continuous improvement in everything we do. This means embracing change wherever possible and keeping current with regulation. This safeguards not only the children in our care, but staff and the business that represents our livelihoods.

If we keep our policies, processes and procedures up to date as things change then it's easy to manage.

Key Note: It would normally be a member of the Senior Management Team that makes the changes, but the whole team that the change affects should be part of the review prior to making the change. All updates should work for the people they affect.

Section 8.2 Annual review of the operations manual

[Suggested Text] Once a year a number of the team will get together for a few meetings to make sure the manual is as it should be in terms of covering everything. As a generic checklist, the following will be looked at.

- Any additional policy, process and procedure that were added through a change.
- Revisions required to current policy, process and procedure to make them more efficient and effective.
- A very specific check on the compliance sections to make sure they are still current.

Generally, a Senior Management Team member will run the meetings.

Key Note: A few hours spent once a year and another few hours updating throughout the year will mean the business is more efficient as it runs. You may think you don't have time, well you will have less time if staff members are continuously making mistakes through undocumented and untested process and procedure.

Insert text here

Subsection 8.2a Updating key content

[Suggested Text] It's critical that when we update content that it's done in a thorough and complete way. It may be that you have a number of processes that need updating with a different procedure. It's not feasible to have a single manual in one place within the business. There will be copies in other places and associated forms with particular processes.

Therefore, it's imperative that whoever is responsible for updating the manual content that they:

- Have access to all the areas of the business where the manual content is kept – computers, the cloud, filing cabinets etc.
- Have access to all the information required for the change – Government documents, Ofsted, notes from Senior Management.

It may be that a business owner or Senior Management Team member has identified or created the need to change and content, but it may be an administrator that makes the actual changes. Once all the content has been updated for a particular change, a second person needs to check that the changes are complete.

Key Note: THIS IS WHERE MOST BUSINESSES START TO DISCONNECT FROM THE MANUAL. IF YOU DO NOT UPDATE PROPERLY THEN THE COMPLIANCE SECTIONS OF YOUR MANUAL MAY NOT MEET LEGAL REQUIRMENTS AND THIS COULD LEAD TO OFSTED ISSUES.

Insert text here

Subsection 8.2b Adding new policy, process and procedure

[Suggested Text] Adding a new policy, process and procedure has a number of elements to it that doesn't just include a change to the manual. Any new additions need to have been through the following actions:

- A problem or change reason has been identified and documented.
- In section 6.4 there is a change management process that needs following.
- The scope and actions in the in the new policy, process and procedure have been drafted.
- The changes have been tested in the workplace, don't make or add anything that hasn't been identified as 'fit for purpose'.
- The draft is turned into a fully documented policy, process and procedure that can be added to the manual, with associated forms created, in the same format as everything else.
- The team and all employees that this addition affects, need to be updated regarding the change and given training in the new procedures as necessary.

The updating process is not a trivial thing as it will change the way the business operates.

Key Note: If this updating process isn't done correctly it's possible that multiple staff members could be carrying out different versions of the procedure within the business. This creates problems, instability and can affect compliance.

Insert text here

Section 8.3 Compliance and government policy

[Suggested Text] Within our business there are a number of legal compliance policies and procedures that have a particular processes attached to them.

A good example is the preparation and actual inspections that Ofsted carry out inside our business. We need to be continuously aware of changes to any legislation around the compliance which not only covers areas like Ofsted, but also GDPR (Data Protection), Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and HR.

Changes to the Operations Manual in these critical areas will always be carried out by the business owners or Senior Management Team. They will be directly responsible for any actions coming from non-compliance.

Key Note: The business must allocate a group of people (or person in a smaller business) that is responsible for this kind of updating within the Operations Manual. Having someone who will be directly responsible helps bring a diligence level to updating the manual that may not be present in a general staff member. Not usually through a lack of care but more a lesser understanding of the importance of compliance, as it can often be felt that it 'gets in the way'.

Insert text here

Subsection 8.3a Reviewing official documents and identifying updates

[Suggested Text] Generally the business will be informed of any changes to polices driven by the Government or Local Authority. But someone in the business will be responsible for keeping up to date with the Government websites and for communicating with the Local Authority about changes.

This will also cover changes to policy that may not affect our business dependent on what are they apply to or size/type of business.

All changes need to be brought to the attention of the business owner or senior management team. So that a change process can be started for the Operations Manual.

Key Note: It is suggested that the business sets up systems like subscribing to newsletters and updates from compliance bodies like Ofsted or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Or where budget allows have a consultant expert in these areas to track and inform of updates.

Insert text here

Subsection 8.3b Creating policy, process and procedures for new legislation

[Suggested Text] It will usually be a business owner or member of the Senior Management Team that will update any policy, process and procedure for the compliance sections. This is especially important when new content is being built for new legislation. A good example of this could be the 30 hours' childcare provision.

Before creating all the new content, the business needs to be very clear on the content, scope and deployment of the new policy, process and procedure within the business. It may even be a requirement to get legal sign off on any activity that meets or pushes against the new legislation.

It's pretty common that when new legislation comes out it will change frequently in the first year, and that the business needs to be very diligent in keeping pace with those changes.

The business will carry out the following activity:

- Assemble a team of people to review and create recommendations based on the new legislation.
- Assess the effect and what the potential actions are.
- Identify if the business can deliver the changes from the new legislation.
- Build a change management plan to deploy the new legislation policy and requirements.
- Build a process and procedure set to carry the new legislation out within the business.
- Trial the change before full commitment.
- Choose to adopt or not.

Key Note: It may be that the business needs 3rd party consultants and legal to help review the changes and what they mean to the business as it may be that new legislation means that the business no longer qualifies or has to do something radically different that is outside of its capability. Generally these changes are pretty large and wide ranging and may not only include Operations Manual changes, but recruitment and training.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 9 – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HR)

Section 9.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] Human resource management is one of the critical activities within the business that every team member and employee is part of. Whatever your role in the business the policies and procedures in this chapter of the Operations Manual affect you. All members of staff should be fully up to date with the contents of this section.

It has many policies that are required by law and the government for compliance. Each of the sections and subsections has not only an overview of what that policy is, but also any policy or procedure that's associated with it. Many of the sections of this chapter are relevant for Ofsted ratings.

Key Note: The layout and content of this chapter represents what many businesses would need in place. We suggest that you populate this chapter with all of your HR content that already exists within your business. It may be that you don't need it all, but some of it is definitely a legal requirement.

There are explanatory notes on many of the sections to help with adding content.

Section 9.2 Performance management

[Depending on the size of your business you may or may not have a performance management system. If you have staff some form of system is recommended so that they can flourish for the business and in themselves.]

Key Note: A number of these sections will be looked at by Ofsted as they are very keen on understanding an employees learning and growth as well as the children.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.2a Appraisals

[Appraisals are what companies use to describe meetings between staff and managers to discuss employee performance. They vary from in depth once a year reviews to unscheduled meetings throughout the year. Whichever method is used the content and outcomes from these appraisals needs to be accurate, meaningful and relevant for that particular employee.

Key Note: Whatever method you choose to carry out, it's a good idea to have a form to fill in during the meeting to track the discussion so it can be referred to at a later date if needed.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.2b Setting aims and goals

[To make the appraisals meaningful for employees, setting and an aim or two for each person with measurable goals is a great way to improve the business effectiveness. It also encourages employees to learn and improve themselves.]

Key Note: When you set goals they need to be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. If they are then it means goals can be met by all parties.

Insert text here

Section 9.3 Staff training

[Training is essential for a business to be effective and efficient. You will already have training systems in place for First Aid, Safe Guarding, Food Prep etc. This section is about explaining to staff why training is important and a key part of the business.]

Key Note: It would be good to list all the training types within the business, in this section.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.3a Individual training

[Individual training is required to make sure your employees are compliant, but also to make your delivery on a daily basis consistent and of a high quality. Without individual training people can be doing different things in the same area of the business. This would make parents nervous and Ofsted too.]

Key Note: Have an individual training schedule where you track all the training, when it's delivered, to whom and when re-training is due.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.3b Team training

[Team training is like individual training, but has the added benefit of all the people being able to feedback immediately on potential change within the business. It can often be good for morale too.]

Key Note: Have a team training schedule where you track all the training, when it's delivered, to whom and when re-training is due.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.3c Mandatory compliance training

[This is the critical training required by government agencies that will definitely be part of Ofsted inspections.]

Key Note: Have a compliance training schedule where you track all the training, when it's delivered, to whom and when re-training is due.

Insert text here

Section 9.4 Recruitment

[This section should have a full overview of your recruitment process in the business. Looking at what the gap is, who you need and how you will carry out the recruitment. It's important to have this process fully documented to make sure it's consistent. This is particularly important as there are a number of extra activities in childcare provision such as DBS and other background checks.]

Key Note: Everyone who takes part in the recruitment process needs to be fully familiar with the whole of this section.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.4a Job and person specifications

[Job and person specs help you identify exactly who and what skills you need to fill the gap in your business. They also form part of any advertising for the position.]

Key Note: All roles in the business including new ones should have an up to date and relevant job and person spec.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.4b Interview and selection process

[This needs a very clearly outlined process that identifies what you will do in terms of activity to sift through CV's, assess, match and select for interview. Also who will carry out the work.]

Key Note: Getting this process fully documented will save you time and help get the right candidate first time.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.4c Starting and induction process

[Every new employee should go through an induction process to introduce them to the business. This could be as little as a day being shown how the business runs, reading this manual, H&S and other compliance regulation. It could last a few weeks and involve training days and other content.]

Key Note: This needs to be a documented process that is managed by the senior team.

Insert text here

Section 9.5 Legal documentation

[There will be a number of legal documents tied not only to the business but employees. The business needs to make sure these are catalogued, stored safely and managed in terms of who should and shouldn't see them.]

Key Note: A policy around legal document management within the business needs to exist.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.5a Employee contracts

[Each employee in the business should have a contract of employment that they have signed and agreed to that is kept on file. They should also have a copy. Reading and signing of this contract can be part of the induction process]

Key Note: Not having employees on contracts in certain circumstances could invalidate your business insurance. Make sure you check.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.5b Employee pensions

[The business needs to make sure it understands the governments pension requirements for employees. This can often be managed by the company accountants and/or payroll.]

Key Note: Provision of pension for employees is now a legal requirement.

Insert text here

Section 9.6 Staff Handbook

[The staff handbook contains all the relatively standard policies that many businesses have. Some are legal requirements; some are specific to the business. You will already have many of these in place in the business.]

Key Note: Add all your business policies to the relevant sections. Some may or may not apply to you.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6a Statement of employee terms and conditions

[A description of the terms and conditions so that there is no ambiguity or misunderstanding]

Key Note: This is a general set that covers all employees.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6b DBS and criminal records check

[This subsection needs to explain why the business carries out DBS checks, how often and when.]

Key Note: DBS is required for childcare provision.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6c Probation periods

[In a childcare provision environment a probation period is required. Monitoring an employee's capability and activity within the business. Feeding back and training where appropriate.]

Key Note: Probation periods can be of any duration, the norm is 1 month, 3 month or 6 months.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6d Your attendance at work

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6e Flexible working

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6f Company premises

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6g Protecting company assets and employees

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6h Your appearance

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6i Personal property

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6j Telephones and correspondence

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6k Smoking and other substances

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6l Confidentiality

[Confidentiality is a requirement in childcare settings due to the nature of the service. This policy subsection should be completed and driven by safeguarding policy, Ofsted policy and general data protection which has a section of its own in this manual.]

Key Note: Have a concise but clearly outlined policy on how confidentiality is managed within the business. It also needs to state disciplinary activity if confidentiality is broken.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6m Anti bribery policy

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6n Corporate entertainment, gifts and hospitality

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6o Valuing diversity statement

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6p Valuing dignity statement

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6q Ambassadorial role

[Having a policy around ambassadorial role means that all employees in the business understand that all of their actions and how they deal with customers/parents reflects on the whole business all of the time.]

Key Note: Have a policy that explains this role and the kind of behaviors that do and do not fall inside the role.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.6u What you should do in the event of a problem

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Section 9.7 Holiday

[The business should have a well laid out and clear holiday policy in terms of notice given, sign off etc, with associated forms for employees to use.]

Key Note: Holiday needs to be managed well within the business. Managed badly it upsets people, cause gaps in delivery and increases costs.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.7a Booking a holiday

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Section 9.8 Sickness

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.8a Notification of absence

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Section 9.9 Conflict management

[Having a clear policy on how conflict is managed in the business is very important. Conflict can spiral out of control and end up in disciplinary action or, worse, Gross Misconduct and dismissal. Having a policy that means that all employees have the knowledge to understand what conflict looks like and who to report to and what to do is essential.]

Key Note: Have a well structured policy around this subject. Consider training for some employees so that they know how to manage conflict when it arises. Especially senior team members.

Insert text here

Section 9.10 Customer management

[Customer management has a complete section in this manual. This subsection should be a summarised list of the do's and don'ts of customer management. Things like not responding badly to abusive parents and such.]

Key Note: Have a specific list of do's and don'ts that summarises all the information in the customer management section.

Insert text here

Section 9.11 Disciplinary procedure

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.11a Main principles

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.11b Establishing the facts

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.11c Keeping you informed

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.11d The disciplinary meeting

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.11e The right to be accompanied

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Section 9.12 Disciplinary action

[Add your local policy for this section.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.12a First warning for misconduct

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.12b Final written warning

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.12c Action short of dismissal

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.12d Dismissal not gross misconduct

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Subsection 9.12e Dismissal for gross misconduct

[Add your local policy for this subsection.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

Section 9.13 Appeals

[Add your local policy for this section.]

Key Note: Make sure the policy is clear and relates to everyone.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 10 – MARKETING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Section 10.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] Here in [Insert Company Name] we have a number of marketing policies and procedures that at any one time are running or on hold and may involve some or all of the team. The purpose of marketing the business is to inform and educate people as to why they should choose our childcare business as their only option.

It's about letting parents and carers know that not only do we care, but we have the same values as they do and are experts in the childcare field. The following marketing activities, process and procedure are what we utilise within the business.

[Marketing channels are the lifeblood of your business. Within marketing you may not reaching the right size of audience to sustain your childcare business whether large or small. Only in the case of childminders could word of mouth or referrals possibly sustain the business. Even then a good social media presence that's cheap and some advertising is relevant.

Now, marketing can be expensive if done incorrectly; wrong time, wrong place, wrong message can have just the opposite effect on your business. So a sound understanding or outside help is required to get it right. It's not about guessing, it's about research, good quality 'copy' (the text and messaging through marketing) and high quality pictures. That all come together to deliver a relevant and powerful message about your business to your customers and clients.]

Key Note: Many smaller businesses with tight budgets attempt to do the marketing themselves, build materials and take pictures. Unless you have done these disciplines in a previous role as a marketer, photographer and copy writer, then the quality could be too low. 'It will do' rarely does the trick and a business can lose more money doing it wrong and having to have it done professionally in the end anyway. That doesn't mean you should spend lots on your marketing campaigns - relevant and targeted is the key.

Section 10.2 Press and print marketing

[This is the most common form of marketing for local businesses and has been around for decades. The types of press and print we are talking about is:

- National and regional TV, Radio and newspapers.
- Local and community newspapers.
- Bus adverts.
- Banners in prominent positions (your fence or roundabouts) or pop up e.g. one you take to the park.
- Flyers and leaflets – available in libraries or schools.

Much of this type is called 'push' marketing, which hits a larger audience even though you are really targeting a specific smaller sub group. This can mean, especially if its leaflets and print items, that you have quite a lot of wastage by getting the message to people that won't need or use your childcare business. But it can be relatively inexpensive, unless your aiming larger at national and TV coverage.]

Key Note: In reality this type of marketing is relevant only for larger multisite businesses and those that can afford the wastage. For smaller 'local' nurseries and childminders, marketing channels like Social Media and face-to-face are much more relevant.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.2a Leaflets, adverts and notices

[As a smaller childcare business you need to be targeting the local area, within say 5 – 10 miles. As there will also be other childcare businesses within that range, your marketing needs to be clear, punchy and encourage local people to come to you. Where print marketing does have an effect is in the following areas:

Put leaflets and posters in:

- Doctors surgeries
- Libraries
- Mother and toddler groups
- Schools (where not competing)
- Council community information points

Make sure your business signage is prominent and easy to read from a distance.

Key Note: You need something that tells everyone you are here. This needs to be seen by passing traffic. We hear regularly ‘well I didn’t know you were here’. So see if you can gain a space on the building or in a position on the street that can be seen by foot and vehicle traffic.

Insert text here

Section 10.3 The company website

[A company website is a critical component of any marketing strategy, and it can be pretty inexpensive these days as there are packages out there that help business owners build nice looking websites easily. But the quality of the copy and content needs to be very high, especially pictures of the business.

The idea is that in sales terms you want a potential customer (a prospect) to ‘self-qualify’ a couple of times when they look at some marketing materials. This simply means they need to be thinking, ‘mmm, I like the look of that I need to find out more’. Effectively the website has done the first bit of engagement of a new customer.

If your website is built well and the messaging is good it will make parents want to visit and take a look. There are some key things the website has to do, as they will be questions parents want answering.

- Tell a story of how the business works.
- Provide a way to make contact or find you.
- Opening times.
- Ofsted and food hygiene ratings.
- Awards and industry recognized activities.

Remember this is about engagement to come and see you, it’s not about giving every bit of information so they can make a judgement call by looking at the website. Leave some questions unanswered. This links into the training in the ‘Customer Relationships’ segment of the ‘Business Model Canvas’ where we talked about ‘personal’.]

Key Note: We would highly recommend that you don’t put up prices and that kind of detail. You may be more expensive than a rival but be absolutely worth the difference. They need to visit your business so you can tell them directly why.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.3a Website content

[The sole purpose of the content of the website is to make them believe the following:

“Yes, I can see my child enjoying themselves there, it looks like a fun, safe environment. They have a good Ofsted rating and seem to have everything in place; I’m going to visit them”.

The kind of content required to make them feel like that is based around the following areas:

- **Trust** – You need them to start trusting you from the first view of your website. So the landing page must be bright, easy to read, have key messaging that builds trust. Big, clear and colorful pictures of the business environment with children doing activities, safe, fun, engaged.
- **Credibility** – This comes from some detail about the business. Have a half page of the business history, how long in business, number of children, awards and accolades, geographical areas serviced. Ofsted and other ratings too.
- **Values** – Indicate what sets you apart from other businesses, what aligns your values to those of your customers i.e. care, interested in a child’s development and learning. A half a dozen or so easy to read bullet points with values. For example; Safety – say why you think it’s important and give an example of how you manage safety within the business.

Also think about the following too when writing copy:

- Think about your website possibly being a single scrolling page.
- Make sure your website works on mobile devices too.
- Make sure it can be read and accessed pretty quickly and has distinct sections like those suggested above.
- Make sure you appear in searches for childcare, nurseries, pre-schools, breakfast clubs, afterschool clubs, holiday clubs. Having these terms, a number of times within the ‘copy’ helps with searches.
- Invest in SEO (search engine optimization) with a 3rd party company. Also things like Google AdWords.

Have a clear and easy to read contact page with address and business details and contact email and phone number.

Ask some of your current parents to feedback on the website, what do they think? Is it easy to use? Does it make the place look like fun for the children?]

Key Note: REMEMBER, WITH ANY DETAILS OR PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTENT OF PARENTS AND ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, YOU MUST FOLLOW GDPR (Data Protection) POLICY ABOUT PERMISIONS, USAGE, STORAGE AND ACCESS.

Insert text here

Section 10.4 Social media marketing

[For most childcare providers, the most relevant form of marketing and promotion will be Social Media. Within social media there are several options e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. You are about the community, you are in the community and the most effective form of social media is Facebook as it is very community focused in how people use it.

Much like the website content and copy, what you put on Facebook needs to drive trust, credibility and values.

Why do childcare providers use Facebook?

- Find, reach and connect with potential customers.
- Stay connected with, and communicate with, existing customers.
- To build trust, interest and loyalty by interacting with parents so that ultimately they will continue to use you and hopefully recommend you to their friends.
- To produce content that users will share with their social network or recommend to their friends. (be aware of GDPR compliance as some of your content will not be shared and should be locked to your page).

Key Note: There's one very important difference to note regarding social media versus things like your website or banners and leaflets.

One shot messaging – The messages on your website and in leaflets and banners and usually most print marketing are effectively 'static'. They represent a single message of a situation at the point they are read. They don't evolve or change generally.

Evolving messaging – Facebook, Instagram, blogs and video posts are different because they plot a journey of the business and the people. An ever-changing evolving story that can be followed.

The single biggest mistake that businesses make with social media is TO FAIL TO KEEP IT UPDATED'.

A Facebook page with no new content or poor content on it says 'we can't be bothered', 'we are too busy to add content', 'we don't care about our messaging'. This just means that customers will assume you are the same within the business. If you are going to commit to social media marketing, and we suggest you do, then give it the time, respect and quality it requires to be effective.

Look at the 'Contagious' handout in your file. This develops STEPPs, a few key areas we looked at in your workshops were:]

Social Currency	People share what makes them look good to their friends. So if you share things that are useful to parents they will share it with others that may also find it valuable. They are looking for the 'thanks for sharing that was really useful' reaction as they gives them standing.
Triggers	Top of mind, tip of the tongue. You are reminding people that you are there, are doing a great job. This will ensure that the parents have good opinions and when asked will sing your praises.
Emotion	People share things that elicit emotions, its why there are so many cats and dogs on FB. Children have the same effect depending on what they are

	doing. Good little videos of funny stuff are shared. Film quality is not critical.
Public	If its public people with copy it, so best thing is to blow your own trumpet and get in first with authenticity.
Practical Value	Useful things get shared – childcare is full of good stuff that you know and parents don't but need to!
Stories	People remember stories, not facts. So put things in stories that will be remembered and be shared. Make it personal.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.4a Facebook

[The key objective in all Facebook activity is to give your business a personality that people like, trust and have loyalty to. The way to gain this is to provide useful, practical, informative value to parents whether this be about:

- Child development
- Getting the kids to eat their greens
- Something good to do over the holidays
- Giving their child a great start in life

Therefore, the metrics that we want to use are:

- **Likes** – people liking a post – we need to monitor what works and what doesn't to gain likes.
- **Followers** – we want as many families as possible to hear about us.
- **Shares** – this widens the audience as a post shared reaches all of the sharer's friends.
- **Comments** – this is investing in the page – giving their opinion.
- **Reach** – this is the eye balls that may have seen your post.

It is always important to understand the metrics. Facebook has got details about what happens to your posts. It's equally important to monitor what time works best, some posts will be great at lunch time when the parent is eating, others at tea time and others on a Friday etc. Like the TV we need to play to the audience and give the right type of post at the right time.

In thinking about marketing the critical thing to remember is that you are telling people what you do and showing them why it's important. There is no hard sell, you are defining yourself and telling people about it.

You run the business every day but parents and the community don't hear about it. Facebook allows them that window into your world and the wonderful things you are doing.

Importance of stories

During the programme we will talk a lot about the value of stories. They are important for the following reasons:

- Stories are the most effective way for people to listen and engage.
- To be effective, stories must connect with the reader's emotions.
- Stories are exceptional vehicles for describing your vision, communicating goals, instigating change and earning buy-in.
- Stories illustrate an organisation's values.
- Sharing stories creates bonds and strengthens relationships.
- Stories are wonderfully motivational.

Therefore, they provide the most effective means to relay information and engage with parents. They are also a function of everyday life in childcare. So, using a story structure is the most effective way of being remembered. Ideally each of you should build up a library of stories that can be used when needed.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.4b Managing posts and comments on Facebook

[Posts and comments on Facebook can be really good for the business but there are rules that need to be followed or things can go wrong very quickly.

Unfortunately, in real life many people will speak, comment, judge, agree or disagree and decide a course of action on very little information let alone facts. Social Media and especially Facebook amplifies this attitude many times!

If you or one of your staff members posts something that a few people don't like, then comments and disapproval can go viral in minutes putting both your business and brand in potential risk. It sounds potentially disastrous, but there are ways to make sure posts and messaging are managed. We suggest you use the following approach:

1. One key person in the business is responsible for managing the Social Media pages like Facebook. Normally called the 'Community Manager', they will:
 - a. Create posts, answering comments, add pictures and stories, upload videos, monitor stats.
 - b. They will control the password's and the content coming from other team members to keep the messaging consistent.
2. If visitor comments are allowed, restrict it to those that have 'liked' the page.
3. Monitor the site daily to see any comments, and put the filter on that comments are 'approved' before they appear on the page.
4. Make sure all permissions for picture/video content are in place before posting.
5. Have a roll out plan for events, i.e. before and build up, during and after. Tell the story.
6. Don't ever get into an argument about anything on the comments page.

Key Note: Whoever looks after the Facebook page for the business and all the Social Media activity should be 'tech savvy', fully understand how to use all the controls on the page and what the page looks like on different devices.

Insert text here

Section 10.4 Face-to-face marketing

[We have covered print, digital and social media marketing, but another ‘channel’ is simply face-to-face marketing. Building advocacy with your customers is the surest way that they will mention you when they go about their normal business and you aren’t with them.

There is no better way for one person to get a feel of trust and credibility about a business than from another person, and especially when they have a child placed within your business.

On all occasions where there is interaction with your direct customers, in this case parents and carers, all members of staff should understand the importance of relationships built from that direct contact.

Key Note: It’s also important to remember that as much as trust and credibility can be gained from personal contact, so can the opposite. Worst still is a situation where your other marketing channels, digital, print and Ofsted ratings are not agreed with or conveyed by your customers!

Insert text here

Subsection 10.4a Events

[One of the best ways to have the most impact across the biggest number of customers both new and current, is to host a well planned and managed event. The types of events could be the following:

- **A simple coffee morning for the parents** – In a relevant space, managed by a couple of staff members on hand to answer any childcare related questions. Position yourselves as the experts and you are showing you have nothing to hide in the business by having them there. Lots of trust and advocacy is built.
- **Outdoor event** – Preferably in summer, but allows a larger audience, encourages interaction. Sports and fun days etc. Well managed, safe and well attended. Makes people think the business is efficient and effective.]

Key Note: There are a range of events you can do and other businesses are already doing. But don’t overstretch on anything you are planning. Success is defined by simple and high quality.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.4b Parent Interaction days.

[This may or may not be relevant to your business, many already do it. It is a great way of again building advocacy, but also getting feedback from parents for improvement.

Insert text here

Subsection 10.4c Partnerships

[This area is little more complex, there are a number of potential partnership opportunities when it comes to advertising and marketing your childcare business. It could come in the following forms.

- Partnership with a school nearby for events or activities in school time or otherwise. This builds good relationships, any parents that come into that school with childcare age children will likely get referred to you.
- Partnerships with particular local suppliers. Toys, food, materials. Sticking with a supplier that has likeminded values increases the area awareness of your business as they will talk about you.
- Partnerships with other nurseries for overspill of provision, relationships are built and contingency is added. Both operationally and from a marketing perspective this is good.
- Sponsorship deals that benefit you and a supplier. Joint marketing could reduce spend but extend reach.

Think wider in this area as the more businesses and people you are working with the broader your reach for potential customers.]

Key Note: A very recent example I went to had a Head Teacher from a nursery who had used a digital software platform to streamline the communication and consolidate all the documentation online (the online safeguarding form was a particular success.) giving a talk on how the nursery had improved so much.

The audience where local businesses but also people from the education sector. Having people talk about your business as a great and innovative business out in the world might touch the Local Authority or other relevant bodies.

She had a partnership with the digital company that built the platform to give three of these talks around the city of Leeds. All good marketing.

Insert text here

Section 10.5 Map your customers

[When you have customers register with your business you have some of their address details, postcodes etc. If you map these out using Google maps, then you can see where they come into your business from. This has relevance for:

- Thinking about where your customers are densely collected in certain places. (possibly a local estate?)
- Thinking about areas that are close that don't seem to come to you. (why is that?)
- Allowing you to also map your competition against your customers.

Key Note: This kind of research helps you not only target your marketing to areas missed and to reinforce areas where you are already popular, it helps you understand the competition too. For example, if there is a massive hole in your coverage within a mile, there must be a business there that's doing some great things. Go and find out what it is.

Insert text here

Section 10.6 Marketing action plan

[This table represents the kind of content you need to build and why your marketing would be a success. It covers activity, brand, research, customers and more.]

Your Values	<p>Why? Your values are critical to your personality, it is what the parents will remember most about you and what they will say.</p> <p><Customer Jobs of VP, list the words you want people to use/talk about you, if you consistently use them, people will begin to use them to describe you></p>
Business Development Goals	<p>Why? This comes from your BP, its about ensuring that you focus your marketing on targets e.g. we need more babies so ensure that babies are highlighted in the posts not the 3 year olds as that part is full.</p>
	<p><indicate the 5 issues that will determine success or otherwise over the next 3 years></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Brand development	<p>Why? This is important as impacts on whether people even look at your business. So, we want to focus on enhancing perceptions or addressing weaknesses in what we post.</p>
	<p><What is your brand reputation in the local market and what factors are influencing it e.g. location. What are the 3 critical things can be done that can build your brand reputation?></p>
Competition/Customer trends	<p>Why? It's important to see what the competition are doing. So its good to look at their Facebook accounts and see what they are posting.</p>
	<p><Describe the local market e.g. new nurseries or new house building, business development. How do you identify and develop new customers? Context Map></p>

	<p>My competitors are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. <p>Local things that will affect by nursery are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 																																				
Marketing Objectives	<p>Why? We need to have targets, not to hang ourselves but monitor our success.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 																																				
Your customer segments	<p><detail the target customers and their no's e.g. 9 babies, 24 x 2 year olds (Define Your Customer)></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="507 1473 1396 2072"> <thead> <tr> <th>Customer</th> <th>Registration/Target no's</th> <th>Current no's</th> <th>Gap you want to fill</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Babies</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 years</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 years</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 years</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Morning club</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After school club</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lunch</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Customer	Registration/Target no's	Current no's	Gap you want to fill	Babies				2 years				3 years				4 years				Morning club				After school club				Lunch							
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<p>Map your Customers</p>	<p>Why? Understanding where your current parents come from allow you to consider where and how you seek to attract new parents.</p> <p><On map mark where your customers come from (postcode analysis) Attach this as a print out to the plan but detail in here what you have taken from it e.g. the majority of parents live within 1 mile etc.></p>				
<p>Route to finding parents/customer channels</p>	<p>Why? This is about understanding what you do now, so be honest.</p> <p><Describe how you target parents e.g. Facebook, website, word of mouth, what are your key regular activities used to promote the nursery? How many Facebook posts per week? When was the website last updated?></p>				
<p>Calendar of Activity</p>	<p>Why? You are doing a lot each and every day to deliver the best for every child. This provides ample material for posts that play to your values. The ideal is to use routine events to create 3 posts per event eg bonfire night allows you to talk about safety, local displays and</p>				

	pictures after.
	<Map out the key activities/events throughout year, Celebrations – birthday, anniversary>
Early Years Foundation Stage	<p>Why? This provides a great opportunity to tell stories about how you are meeting Ofsted and Government outcomes as part of your everyday activity – this is stuff that parents won't always see and understand but you do it every day. These strands in EYFS provide a great opportunity for you to talk about your values and the learning environment using stories of how you do it.</p>
	<p>< 7 learning areas and 4 principles></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Communication and language 2) Physical development 3) Personal, social and emotional development 4) Literacy 5) Maths 6) Understanding the world 7) Expressive arts and design <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unique child 2. Positive relationships 3. Enabling environment 4. Children development way/rate
Staff Profiles	<p>Why? Critical to your business personality is your staff. Therefore posts which highlight your staff in terms of things that they love to do e.g. running the Great North Run, cycling etc. generates a view of people that are often seen as just 'nursery staff'. Some staff will be reluctant to talk about themselves but may be happy to give their recommendations eg 'Jenny gives her best ideas for places to go this weekend' or '3 ways Jane gets children to clean up after messy play'</p> <p>Certificates/award posts about your staff shows experience and quality.</p>

	<p>Don't forget the chef! Highlighting the chef and the high-quality meals provided by them with imagery and posts of praise can prevent worries by parents.</p>
	<p><What are your staff doing></p>
<p>Videos</p>	<p>Why? Photos are great but videos get shared and highlight your values better than a photo. So look at capturing little 20-30 second videos of children in messy play, or outdoors. These would be more likely to be shared by viewers.</p>
	<p><Your ideas for what would make a good video></p>
<p>Local Events</p>	<p>Why? You are part of the community and so promoting local events that are of interest to your children is a good way to show this. If you join local groups it will allow you to promote your activities and raise your profile in the community</p>
	<p>List local Facebook groups serving your community.</p> <p>List the events that take place in your local community that provide an opportunity to promote your daycare</p>
<p>Useful Information and Reminders</p>	<p>Why? Useful information will be shared. So, think about sources to get information that will be of interest to parents.</p> <p>Used to remind your followers about key information e.g. enrolment</p>

	<p>week, important dates, events or activities which require children to bring in an item for show and tell or should be dressed in certain clothing etc.</p> <p>Consider timing e.g.) sharing an article about “fun things to do with the kids” near a bank holiday or school holiday would be more appreciated.</p> <p><weather (sun cream), food menu, traffic changes, etc.></p>
<p>Timing when to do things?</p>	<p>Why? Timing is everything. The average Facebook posts lasts a few hours before they go so far down the newsfeed that they won't be seen. Therefore, it's important to time things right so think what would parents appreciate at lunchtime or what is better as they sit down after putting the children to bed. You can set the time when yours posts will appear on your Facebook page, so this can be done a week or more in advance.</p> <p><EYFS early evening, activity lunch time, day/week/month/year ></p>
<p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Why? Partnerships help you develop and build your business. So always good to have them or develop them. This could be a school, businesses etc</p> <p><Do you have organisations that you work with that support the growth and development of your business eg local school? Are these formal or informal? ></p> <p>List your current partners:</p> <p>List your target partners:</p>

<p>Competitions</p>	<p>Why? Having regular little competitions is a good way to engage with parents. These can take many forms eg the scariest face Halloween that encourage parents to comment and hopefully share the posts. Don't always think about the '1st' but it could be a random eg 10th person to share the post etc.</p>
	<p>The following competitions will be run over the year:</p>
<p>Instagram</p>	<p>Are you a member of Instagram? This can be linked to the Facebook page and encouraged via Facebook</p>
<p>Reviews</p>	<p>Word of mouth is very valuable. Encouraging parents to write reviews on the Facebook page which can be seen by the public will add value and credibility.</p>
<p>Aesthetically pleasing</p>	<p>Basic editing of photos- removing red-eye and adding photos to collages can make content more appealing to look at and less time consuming for the viewer. Posts which include photos are more attractive to the eye than plain text posts.</p>

Insert text here

CHAPTER 11 – SALES ACTIVITY IN THE BUSINESS

Section 11.1 Introduction

[Sales much like marketing is an important part of your business activity. All childcare providers understand the cycles that children go through while they are looked after within the business. It makes sense that there is specific sales activity to engage parents for the next year of their childcare.

For businesses like childcare there is a natural turnover rate each year that can really affect income and budgets. This is known as ‘attrition rate’. Managing the attrition rate means that a businesses balances those leaving the business with new people coming in. It should be an aim to reduce the attrition rate and have a growth situation year on year.

Having a strong understanding of what a parent wants for their child, coupling that with relevant marketing messaging and having the right culture and atmosphere within the business will go a long way to converting a prospect into a customer.

This is defined by the value proposition.]

Section 11.2 Understanding the Value Proposition

[In the Redkite workshops you will have explored what the value proposition is using the VP canvas. This identifies the ‘jobs’ that parents have to do, the ‘pain’ they have doing it and how your business can help them with that. In fact, if the business understands that and more in terms of additional value that can be added, it’s much easier for a parent to say yes to your business.

You need to have a clear and defined value proposition so it can be communicated by everyone through all the marketing channels, events, face to face and print and press materials.]

Key Note: Without a clear value proposition what differentiates you from the nursery or provision down the road? What if they are clear about the value they offer? Your attrition rate could be affected if you don’t have a clear plan about how to attract new parents to your provision.

Insert text here

Section 11.3 Everyone is a Sales Person

[As childcare provisions are numerous and you likely have a number of other businesses in your area, it’s very important that all of the team are always aware of speaking well about the business.

This isn’t about training everyone in sales, it’s about having a culture of advocacy that helps to make parents in the area aware of the business and its benefits.

E.G. A parent that’s with another provider is a neighbor of one of the nurses in your business. Via a flyer drop this parent becomes aware of the business, and in a discussion in the street your nurse lets her know she works in the business.

Just describing how the place works, what it’s like, being an advocate of how it runs and discussing it in a good light might just be the ‘tipping point’ that the parent requires to come to business and have a look.]

Key Note: Team members that are part of great culture, where systems are strong and the provision is really good will always want to speak about how good the place they work is. If they are unhappy or stressed that will not be the case. They may say nothing at all.

Subsection 11.3a Visits to the business

[These are a must for parents to be comfortable. But they have to be managed for the best experience. All staff must be comfortable answering questions from new parents or potential parents when they are looking around the business.

It could be one of these interactions that makes or breaks the deal, and as managers you may not always be there to do it.

Key Note: Have a very clear policy, process and procedure for hosting any parents that are visiting. Know who they should talk to about certain things, what you want to show them. It's no different to buying a car, most people won't buy before they have driven a vehicle. So make sure they experience all they need as parents to help them say yes.

Insert text here

Subsection 11.3b Direct Sales Activity

[As a manager or owner you will always be looking to sell when you are out and about. This may not be places specifically, but you are selling the business as a whole. With good marketing activity there will be a number of prospect parents come into the business. It's imperative you know exactly the approach you want to make to them. Keep it simple and consistent.]

Key Note: It may be that certain members of the team have some sales training that helps them understand the approach and close techniques to sign up new parents coming into the business. It's not enough to sit and wait for them to come to you.

Section 11.4 Sales and Finance

[It sounds obvious but sales are directly connected to finance in a way that whether the parent comes in under the 30 hours' provision or as a fully paying customer this is all managed as income into the business at certain times of the year.

Thinking about sales as your direct income helps you identify exactly how many new parents you need to meet budgetary targets to cover outgoings. This means that when you know that marketing activity can be aligned to that target and everyone can be part of the push.

Letting the people responsible for engaging new parents have targets for the numbers needed is a good way of managing the attrition rate both financially and from an activity perspective.

E.G. Current attrition rate is about 5 parents a month leaving. In a 3-month period that's 15 parents. That relates to £X income lost in the business. So plan some quarterly marketing activity that could be an event, flyer drop or advert (or combination) that could bring you in 15+ new parents and balance the attrition rate.]

Key Note: Sales activity can be continuous and probably should be. But without some targets driven by budgeting and marketing activity at the right time, it's really hard to know if you are affecting the attrition rate in the right way. Like everything a plan is needed.

Insert text here

CHAPTER 12 – BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

Section 12.1 Introduction

[Suggested Text] The Business Continuity Management System (BSMS) within [Insert Company Name] is critical due to the nature of the business and the importance of safeguarding the children while continuing to offer childcare provision and sustain the business. Any loss of provision caused by an incident that affects the business directly can have a critical effect on parents and other organisations. Not meeting the delivery capability, will have associated financial repercussions.

As a relatively small business there isn't unlimited budget to overcome some of the disasters than can happen. But in many cases the business should be able to continue to operate within certain timescales after initiating the 'Business Continuity Plan'.

As part of the best practice activity within the business [Insert Company Name] is utilising the Government's approach to understanding and deploying BCM within the business.

Section 12.2 BCM Responsibilities and accountability

[Suggested Text] The management and control of Business Continuity (BCM) is the responsibility of the senior team members or owners. Who are fully committed to meeting the requirement of making sure that in the event of an incident or disaster that disrupts working activity, the business is effectively running again in a very short space of time.

The person(s) appointed to manage the administration of the BCM Programme are:

Name	Position	Phone Number	Location	Email Address	Notes

The definition of an incident is:

Any incident, large or small, whether it is natural, accidental or deliberate, which causes major disruption to your organisation.

Via

Internal system failures or external emergencies such as extreme weather, flooding, terrorism, or infectious diseases.

This whole chapter is devoted to understanding what business continuity means within our business and the activities that need to be managed and carried out to make sure the continuity is effective.

This starts with a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) that identifies the following:

- [Insert Company Name] critical resources within the business.
- A site risk assessment.
- The strategies the business has regarding BCM.

This is followed by a Response Plan that has a number of components:

- Exercising the plan.
- Maintaining the plan.
- Reviewing the plan.

With sections identify BCM Awareness and Training.

Key Note: It's really important that your business has some kind of BCM plan in place. It has a number of benefits; it gives the parents/customers confidence that the business can deal with problems. It also means the business can continue to run and not be at risk of closing from financial loss through no income or damaged customer base and brand.

Section 12.3 Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

[Your childcare business needs to carry out a Business Impact Analysis so that it can identify what the critical parts of the business are that any kind of plan can reinstate very quickly so the business can resume in the event of an incident.

The [Insert Company Name] key products and services.]

Key Note: We suggest you identify these as 'services' and look at 'impact' and 'effect' on both the business and the customers. It would look something like this:

[Insert Company Name] has 2 Key products and services that would be affected by incidents:

Service 1) Safe childcare services for parents to leave their children with.

Impact of disruption:

- a. No safe spaces to host the children.
- b. No space at all to host the children.
- c. Not enough staff to cover the children as per regulation.
- d. Possible health risk to children and staff.
- e. Loss of capability to provide service over a longer period than expected.
- f. Potential loss of revenue from closure time.
- g. Additional spending deploying BCM plan.
- h. Impact on morale.
- i. Impact on Ofsted compliance and other requirements.

Effect on stakeholders (parents/carers, other provision points, local authority)

- a. Disrupted family lives with potential loss of income.
- b. Unfamiliar provision for the children creating unease.
- c. Requirement for Local Authority to provide alternative provision.
- d. Potential revenue loss for any/all stakeholders.

Service 2) Learning provision within the childcare business, growth and support.

Impact of disruption:

- a. Potential loss of data on each child.
- b. Loss of access to devices and systems for learning.
- c. Time needing to be made up.
- d. Learning disruption and poor continuity for the child.
- e. Additional spending deploying BCM plan.
- f. Impact on morale.
- g. Impact on Ofsted compliance and other requirements.

Effect on stakeholders (staff, children, parents)

- a. Learning disruption and poor continuity for the child.
- b. Increased costs to repeat the work.
- c. Staff demoralized and potentially having to use alternative systems.
- d. Increased concern for parents over quality of learning.

Key Note: There are a number sub-services that fall within these 2 main areas, 3rd party supplier and other connected businesses. Other provision sites if part of a group. As a business you need to make sure your Business Impact Analysis is complete and accurate.

We would suggest that you involve all of the staff in the business in the initial discussions, as they may often know or see something as critical that to senior staff members is seen as having minimal impact.

Insert text here

Subsection 12.3a Maximum Tolerable Period of Disruption (MTPD)

[The ‘Maximum Tolerable Period of Disruption’ refers to how long the business can be inoperable before it’s in real danger both from a delivery perspective and financially. It’s important that the business knows how long it can actually be ‘down’ before failing.]

Key Note: For every childcare business this will likely be different based on location and options related to the BCM plan. The key factor here is:

WHEN CREATING THE OPTIONS FOR THE PLAN, ALL NEW PROVISION MUST BE BASED ON FACT NOT ASSUMPTION.

Don’t, for example, just assume a space you know is mostly free will always be free as an alternative location. Actually research availability.

This is an example MTPD table:

In the table below the MTPD is identified for the critical services for **[Insert Company Name]**

	First 24 Hours	24-48 Hours	Up to 1 week	Up to 2 weeks
Service 1	Tolerable	Maximum	Intolerable	Intolerable
Service 2	Tolerable	Tolerable	Maximum	Intolerable

Exceeding the MTPD would mean both financial damage and a loss of reputation.

Disruption in excess of 2 weeks and over a prolonged period would affect the viability of the business.

Subsection 12.3b Recovery Time Objective

[The Recovery Time Objective is about setting a timescale to get the services back up and running, ideally inside the maximum tolerable period for the business. This is about understanding directly the activities related to the critical delivery activities in 12.3.

This is an example RTO table:

In the table below the RTO is identified for the critical services within **[Insert Company Name]**

	First 24 Hours	24-48 Hours	Notes
Service 1	N/A	RTO	Realistically reconnecting with partners and securing new space appropriately could take 48 hours but the aim is 24 hours.
Service 2	N/A	RTO	Realistically starting work on learning again could start early but Service 1 is more important immediately after the incident.

The senior team or owner needs to be confident that the identified RTO's are somewhat achievable when thinking what's available in terms of space and equipment required.

Key Note: The only major risk to these RTO's is around team availability, if a significant proportion of the team are down then the capability to deliver on both service 1 & 2 could be severely affected. Replacing team members would usually fall outside the 1-week period in reality.

The table needs to identify timescales that are realistic both in terms of actual threat to the business, but also when it comes to a plan to restart the business inside the indicated 'maximum' timeframe.

Subsection 12.3c Critical activities to deliver key services

[The business needs to have a high level list of those critical activities that need to be continued in business continuity scenario, so that all the stakeholders involved know the business is in good shape even after an incident.

An example (but probably incomplete) list would look like this:

[Suggested Text] In the event of an incident there are a number of key activities that **[Insert Company Name]** must be able to deliver to satisfy services 1 & 2 identified. In any continuity scenario the business must be able to:

- Assemble a team of nurses and staff that are familiar with the work and have the skillsets to carry it on.
- Recover and access all critical files on children, including meds, food and other information.
- Recover and access all associated documentation relating to business operation such as procedures, process, risk assessments, registers etc.
- Have access to development equipment including PC's, tablets, printers, servers and other associated hardware.
- Have access to all the development software with appropriate licenses and access levels regarding the children's learning.
- Have the ability to secure all data to the standards and levels required by Ofsted and other compliance agencies.
- Have the ability to keep physically secure all children, staff and equipment within whatever new space provision has been provided.
- Have access in the space to activity based equipment for the children to use.
- Have access to some data connections both internet and phone for normal operation.

- Deliver the correct ratio of staff to children as per regulation.
- Provide the correct level of health and safety, hygiene and GDPR standards required by Ofsted.

Key Note: Most BCM plans usually need all these critical areas of delivery covered, but it doesn't mean everything. Remember, if the aim is to have the business up and running within 48 hours, then having all the toys for the children is a 'nice to have' not essential or critical.

AS A BUSINESS YOU MUST NOT ASSUME THAT BUSINESS CONTINUITY IS ONLY FOR MAJOR DISASTERS. YOUR BCM PLAN COULD BE ACTIVATED FOR SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A SHORTAGE OF STAFF BECAUSE OF A FLU EPIDEMIC.

It's there for you to initiate and use whenever the business is challenged with an incident that will disrupt its service delivery capability.

Section 12.3 BCM Critical Resource Identification

[Having identified critical resources to continue operations as near to normal as possible, there are very specific areas that need to be covered in the business as part of the plan. The following areas are examples of what you should be thinking of.]

Key Note: Remember, these areas need to be very specific based on your business size and type and scope of provision. These examples are a good starting point.

[Suggested Text] To ensure ongoing continuity during or after an incident there are a number of critical resources that the senior team have identified as a requirement. These fall into 5 categories and each has a list of those resources.

People

As there are a number of work disciplines within the business, they can be broken down and suggested levels given to meet the Recovery Time Objective (RTO).

Service 1 will be the priority in most incident situations.

- **Senior Management Team** - 1 member.
- **Admin Support** – 1 member.
- **Staff members** - 25% of the studio team (circa 2 people).
- **External Parties (Optional)** – enough people to make a team of 4 in total.

The team should represent approximately 40% of the current business headcount, and cover all the disciplines required to get service 1 back online. This would be a priority over service 2.

Two caveats to this team exist:

1. The whole team may be required where the business is very small and had 4 members or less. If there are less, then as per the option highlighted above, external help to deliver the BCM plan may be required.
2. At least one member of the senior team or the owner **MUST** be present for activation of the BCM plan.

Premises

[Insert Company Name] is fortunate to operate from a fully serviced building that has shared occupancy. But in the event that the whole building is compromised there are other alternatives. The following list identifies those alternatives.

When the incident is:

1. **Internal and confined to the childcare provision within the main building.**
 - There are alternative rooms available within the building.
2. **Internal and confined to the whole building.**
 - There are alternative spaces within a 1/4-mile radius belonging to partners e.g. local school.
3. **Internal and external with an area effect of up to 1/2-mile radius around the childcare business.**
 - A rental space within the area may be available, a school or similar venue.
4. **Large scale external affecting a larger geographical area.**
 - Possibility of working onsite directly with another childcare provider in the local area.

Technology

Fortunately, the technology and software used within the business is readily available to purchase and quickly. The only challenge technically would be restoring the critical data need to continue work and the time it takes to ring fence and secure it all in the new location.

Technology required would be:

- PC's and Laptops recovered from incident area or purchased locally.
- Associated peripherals like tablets.
- Portable servers and storage devices.
- Security and networking hardware such as firewalls and switches.
- Telephone equipment including mobile phones.
- An internet connection of a reasonable speed and reliability.

Suppliers:

- PC World.
- Other PC hardware vendors.
- Online vendors such as Amazon and Dell.
- Identified and trusted suppliers of higher end hardware such as firewalls and secure data storage.

Most suppliers will deliver within 24 - 48 hours, so within the RTO, and assuming a complete technology loss has occurred. (fire, flood etc.)

Information

There are a number of critical information stores that will need to be recovered in the event of an incident.

Document sections covering the following:

- Security.
- Business Continuity.
- Administration and risk assessment.
- Ofsted documents and compliance.

Partner information including:

- Contracts and legal.
- Software and licenses for learning tools.

Certain HR Information relating to:

- Contact Details.
- Personal Details.
- Files on the children.

Certain Financial Information:

- Financial Processes.
- Financial access and operational details.

Access passwords and controls:

- All related business and system passwords.
- All control and access overviews.

Where possible all informational data is stored on the network drives and the cloud and will be backed up, including digital copies of any hard copy paperwork.

Suppliers and Partners

All the suppliers that the childcare business uses need to be part of the BCM plan.

- I.T. support services for networking and infrastructure support.
- Hardware suppliers for replacement equipment.
- Recruitment agencies to provide people with technical expertise.
- Consumable suppliers, food, cleaning materials etc.

Section 12.4 BCM Risk assessment

[A childcare business is very familiar with risk assessments as there are a number in operation within the business as part of the compliance requirements for childcare provision.

Unlike individual assessments say for areas in the business, this is an overview risk assessment with a table, that is relevant to the whole business and in fact directly connected to Business Continuity.

[Suggested Text] A very important part of understanding how effective continuity can happen is to identify the risks relating to the services that business delivers.

This chapter has a Risk Register and associated matrix that identifies the risks that the business faces, the likelihood of it happening and the impact level of each particular risk.

This is an example risk register.

	Action to Take	Type of Risk	Risk Description			Pre-response Assessment		
ID			Cause(s)	Risk(s)	Effect(s)	Probability	Impact performance	Risk Exposure
T1	Tolerate	Loss of staff.	Fire, flood, terrorism, natural	The loss of a large number of the team with	A catastrophic delay in delivery or a	1	5	5

			disaster.	all the tacit knowledge and capability for the current deliverables.	position for the business that is insurmountable.			
T2	Treat	Loss of staff.	Staff turnover, individual illness and accident work related or otherwise.	The loss of key members of staff with critical delivery knowledge and capability may have gone.	This will slow us down and require recruitment and new learning.	3	2	6
T3	Treat	Loss of data or access to data.	System hacking, data destruction, fire, flood, terrorism, natural disaster.	Data is damaged, lost or unreachable.	All the work has to be done again. Data compromised and released. Contracts broken. Relationships destroyed. Reputation damaged.	2	4	8
T4	Tolerate	Loss of premises.	Fire, flood, terrorism, natural disaster.	The loss of a working space and all the amenities including power, light and connectivity.	Removal of the ability to continue working for a period of time. Financial damage.	1	4	8
T5	Treat	Loss of access to premises.	Power loss, relationship with building owners breaks down.	Time delays getting work done based on access being denied for an extended period.	Unable to provide childcare provision as expected, relationships damaged.	2	2	4
T6	Transfer	Loss of equipment .	Fire, flood, terrorism, natural disaster.	Time delays getting work done based on equipment needing to be replaced.	Unable to provide childcare provision as expected, relationships damaged.	2	3	6
T7	Treat	Loss of communication including internet.	We don't control the systems of communication within the premises.	Critical communication of information and data is delayed or disrupted.	Contractual obligations may not be met, milestones missed, relationships damaged.	3	1	3
T8	Treat or Terminate	Loss of suppliers.	Relationships have broken down, poor service, none payment.	Time delays getting work done based on certain services needing to be found.	Unable to meet require provision in terms of compliance and Ofsted. Business is suspended.	2	1	2
T9	Transfer	Financial	No funding to	Not all the	Removal of the	3	3	9

		impact of loss.	carry out highest impact BCM response.	BCM activity can be actioned.	ability to continue working for a period of time affecting delivery and contractual obligations. Relationships may be damaged.			
T10								

The actions that would be taken when identifying the exposure to a particular risk fall into 4 categories.

- **Treat** – use of BCM to reduce disruption by ensuring the activity continues at, or is recovered to, an acceptable minimum level (RTO) and timeframe stipulated in the BIA.
- **Tolerate** – you may decide that you are willing to accept the risk as the cost of implementing any risk reduction strategies outweigh the benefits.
- **Transfer** – for some risks the best response may be to transfer them. This might be done by conventional insurance or contractual arrangements, or it might be done by paying a third party to take the risk in another way. This option is particularly good for mitigating financial risks or risks to assets.
- **Terminate** – in some circumstances it might be appropriate to change, suspend or terminate the service, activity, function or process. This option ought only to be considered where there is no conflict with the organisations objectives, statutory compliance and stakeholder expectation. This approach is most likely to be considered where a service, activity, function or process has a limited lifespan.

Where the table identifies that the action for a particular risk is to **TREAT**; then there are already systems in place to mitigate the risk to **BELOW AN EXPOSURE SCORE OF 10**. (maximum of 25)

Where the table identifies that the action for a particular risk is to **TOLERATE**; then the chance of this happening is deemed low enough to tolerate **BELOW AN EXPOSURE SCORE OF 5**. (maximum of 25)

All other risks will be mitigated by **TRANSFER** or **TERMINATION**.

Subsection 12.4a BCM Probability and Impact matrix

[The risk registers for BCM shouldn't be too detailed or complex, identify the highest threats for the whole business. As an overview a matrix can be used to see how many of the threats seem high all the way through to those that are acceptable.

The scores have been assessed in the Risk Register based on impact and probability, the numbers generated can be identified on the matrix.

They have been plotted onto a risk matrix diagram to identify the businesses exposure to each particular risk. Mapping the risks in this way assists the senior team or owner in identifying and implementing an action based strategy to reduce the risk.

COMPLETION BY THE SENIOR MANAGMENT TEAM ONLY

	VHI	5					
	HI	4					
PROBABILITY	MED	3	T7	T2	T9		
	LO	2	T8	T5	T6	T3	
	VLO	1				T4	T1
			1	2	3	4	5
			VLO	LO	MED	HI	VHI

NEGATIVE IMPACT

Subsection 12.4b Updating the register and adjustment of the exposure score.

[There should be an updating procedure for the Risk Register and matrix, because any good BCM plan will be updated in the same way that this operations manual would be.

[Suggested Text] There a number of occasions where the Risk Register may have additional risks added and scored appropriately. Or when a risk changes its impact or probability status.

These are those occasions:

1. **When there is a change in the scope of work in the business that requires additional:**
 - **People with a different or unusual and hard to come by skillsets.**
 - **An upgrade to the building or its access points.**
2. **When an actual risk on the register materialises and the studio has to activate its BCM planning.**
3. **When the business adds a new capability to its service and product provision that requires additional support.**
4. **When any activity within the business changes the results of a BIA.**
5. **When a review of the BCMS is carried out by the senior team or business owner.**

This list is not exhaustive and can be added to by the studio Senior Management Team as appropriate.

Section 12.5 BCM Strategy within the business

[BCM can be a complex part of a business if it's a much larger childcare provision, but whatever the size it's possible to deploy some simple strategies in the provision whatever its size. There are a few specific areas that need to be considered:

- **People** – One of the key components in childcare is having the right people to help when an incident occurs. It's good to think about the following – Team skillset, is there a good range? Good policy and procedures for people that may help but are unfamiliar with your business, that's what this manual is for. Cross training team members in different areas of the business can mean they can fill gaps when needed. Finally, having some trusted support people outside of the business can help, agencies, consultants etc.
- **Premises** – This is an obvious one but assumptions can be made that a place may be available. It's really important to know if a relocation is possible and whether that space is likely to be available when you need it the most. Make a list.
- **Technology** – You need to have an inventory list of the technical equipment you need for the business to operate for an extended length of time. PC's, tablets etc. These can be bought if needed and funds are available, or it may be a case of waiting for insurance payments.
- **Information** – There will be key information that is required for you to operate. You need to know what your essential information is that's required to keep things going. This really needs to be backed up offsite somewhere so you can access it if equipment is lost in the building (say from a flood). Cloud systems are good for that reason.
- **Suppliers and Partners** – Make sure all your contacts are up to date for quick access to the supplies you would need to get if you had to move premises in an incident scenario. Make sure you have more than one supplier option for each critical area.
- Stakeholder Management – Remember that in an incident a number of people will need to know. Parents, local authority and others need to be informed, have a strategy in place about how to do that.
- **Key Note: It might seem like a lot of work to have this strategy in place. Compared to the risk of the provision closing down because of a flood or fire, some of this preventative thinking could save the business and all the teams livelihoods.**

Subsection 12.5a Plan content

[Here in the BCM section of the manual you need to have a plan written that is simple enough for everyone to understand, but that is effective for the business in the event of an incident. There are some high level sections that need to be created.

1. **The purpose and scope of the plan.** - The purpose of the plan is to highlight all the key activities that need to happen in the unlikely event that an incident occurs requiring BCM. The scope of the plan will cover all the tasks at a high level that need to be carried out with plan activation.
2. **Plan ownership** - While everyone within the business will be involved in carrying out the response plan the business Senior Management have direct ownership of the plan in terms of activation, reviewing and amending the content for the plan.
3. **Plan version control** – It's key that the plan gets updated to a 'latest version' as the business grows and changes.

4. **Roles and responsibilities** - There are number of roles and responsibilities related to an incident response. Most will revolve around Senior Management, but at the time of an incident roles can be applied as necessary so everyone in the business should be familiar with this response plan. That familiarity will be embedded with relevant training and exercising of the plan. This will be the BCM Team.]

Key Note: It's critical to keep the plan as simple as possible so all team members can fulfil a number of roles as required within an incident.

Insert text here

Subsection 12.5b Plan Invocation

[Only members of management can generally invoke the response plan. **In doing so they automatically make themselves the Incident Controller.** When the response plan is actioned the Incident Controller should prioritise the following **initial actions**:

- Assess the immediate danger if any and take appropriate action (contact emergency services as required).
- Select people to form the BCM Team (ensure they are physically able and have the correct level of knowledge)
- Allocate priority tasks to the BCM Team members.
- Inform all critical stakeholders - family members, 3rd party suppliers, business partners (as required).

Once all the initial steps have been taken, begin the tasks and work required to meet the RTO.]

Subsection 12.5c Incident Management

[Management of any particular incident can vary greatly dependent on size and complexity. Correct incident management is essential to get the best outcomes for the team and the business. Have a clear set of steps for the Incident Controller documented in this plan.]

Key Note: For smaller or lesser incidents - like power outages, a less dramatic response is required and many of the steps in the plan may not be required. A lesser more operational (rather than emergency) response will be needed that drives the activity of the BCM Team towards hitting RTO based on critical activities.

Key Note: MAKE SURE AS A BUSINESS YOU HAVE AN UP TO DATE CONTACT LIST. IF YOU CAN'T GET HOLD OF KEY PEOPLE DURING AN INCIDENT THIS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS NEGLIGENCE.

Section 12.6 BCM Exercising

[For the BCM plan to be more than a section in this manual, the business needs to be committed to making sure the plan is both fit for purpose and evolves as the provision changes in size and work scope. With that in mind there are 3 key areas for exercising the plan that will ensure resilience.

- Testing systems.
- Validating the plans.
- Rehearsing with key staff.

This can be challenging in a busy childcare environment, but there are two methodologies we use to test the BCM plan. All employees within the business should at some point in the year experience this testing and/or be a key part of it.

The two methods are:

1. A discussion based exercise.
2. A table -top exercise with additional 'real world' checking where possible.

Each method is used once a year, and split so that the BCM plan is looked at effectively every 6 months.]

Subsection 12.6a Discussion Based Exercise

[This type of testing is carried out once a year and will be timed in such a way that it embraces any change in the way the business operates that is different to the last BCM plan test. It will also pick up any new team members and will more importantly engage and new Senior Management members that will likely have a key role in any plan initiation.

There is a need for a simple set of guidelines that will enable you to test a scenario through discussion.]

Subsection 12.6b Table Top Exercise

[In reality this exercise has all the components of the discussion, but there are a number of important and increasing scenario changes that reflect a 'real life' scenario more accurately.

An external 3rd party facilitator that would be able to add the following changes to the scenario.

1. Additional time pressures.
2. Additional environmental pressures.
3. Additional medical pressures.
4. Delayed support.
5. Delayed physical equipment.
6. Deteriorating or improving situational context.
7. Expect the scenario to run for a minimum of 2 hours.

The key here is not drive the scenario to failure, but have the 'unknown' element that the BCM team must deal with during the exercise.

This exercise will also be carried out once a year and sufficiently far away from the discussion exercise to properly test the current BCM plan.]

Key Note: It's imperative that any key staff in place in the business take part in these exercises, as their familiarity with the plan and dealing with a scenario will help in the real situation. Business continuity succeeds when team members are well trained in the potential scenarios that may occur even if they are discussions or table tops exercises.

All team members allocated to an exercise need to make sure they can attend and only very unusual circumstances will excuse any particular team member.

Section 12.7 BCM Maintenance and review

[It is the responsibility of the businesses Management Team to make sure the BCM Plan within the business is relevant and fit for purpose.

Maintenance means applying changes to the plan under certain conditions which may have made the plan either inadequate, incomplete or both.

Four key changes will generally drive changes to the plan and may even instigate an exercise to confirm all works as expected.

- **If there are any changes to your organisation, including restructurings, changed methods of the delivery of your critical activities.**
- **If there is a change to the external environment in which the organisation operates.**
- **Following lessons learned from an incident or exercise.**
- **Changes to staff.**

Generally, all other instances will be covered within the four areas. But the Management Team has the power to change the BCM Plan based on other reasons.

Key Note: It would be normal to carry out an audit and an exercise of the BCM plan annually. Then the plan details can be updated and training has been given within the exercise that highlighted the need for change. It's also recommended to keep a log of the changes each time the plan is updated.

Section 12.8 BCM Awareness

[There should be a commitment from the Management to keep the whole team aware of BCM within the provision. Embedding business continuity within the culture is essential because when an incident occurs any or all of the team could be involved or affected.

Testing the plan, exercising it so it can be improved is critical not only to protect the people, children and parents, but its assets and its productivity which support and drive the business.

The mechanisms that should be adopted are:

- **Involving staff in the development of the organisation's BCM strategy.**
- **Written and oral briefings.**
- **Learning from internal and external incidents.**
- **Discussion and Table Top based exercises.**

The Management Team will ensure that as many people as possible are involved directly in the exercises and the audit that happens annually within the business.]

APPENDIX 1

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

All the job descriptions for the [Insert Company Name] are listed here. It may be a particular provision will utilise some or all of these roles dependent on size and customer base.

Job Title

Overview

[A general description of what the role requires.]

Essential Skills:

- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

Desirable Skills:

- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

Tasks in this role:

- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.
- Insert content, Insert Content.

Line Manager:

[Identify here who they report to and how they will work with them.]

Working Hours:

[Identify the normal working hours here and details of any extra hours]

APPENDIX 2

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

[This is where you would put all the key parts of the Health and Safety Management System in the business.

Risk assessment forms

Fire action

COSHH

Etc

Etc]

APPENDIX 3

ASSORTED AGREEMENTS AND FORMS

[In appendix 3 have all the relevant 'standard forms' that you use in the business such as
Confidentiality agreements
Holiday forms
Sickness forms
Etc
Etc]

Confidentiality Agreement

It is quite likely that in the course of your employment at **[Insert Company Name]** we will disclose to you information which we regard as confidential. It is important to us that such information is kept confidential and to this end we require that information should not be disclosed or used by you except in the course of your employment at **[Insert Company Name]**.

We are asking you to agree to keep confidential all information disclosed to you concerning our business, in particular **customer/supplier information**, and will not make any use of such information without our prior written agreement. This does not cover information which is already generally known or which you can show was known to you prior to our meeting.

Please indicate your agreement to these terms by signing and returning the endorsed copy document.

[Insert Business Owner]
[Insert Company Name]

I agree the above terms

Signed:
