

Leadership and teamwork in the early years

I acknowledge the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this work, Grammarly (2025), to assist grammatically, and Google Translate (2025) to support this work as an English as a Second Language on the 22nd of November 2025.

I confirm that I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before and after the use of AI tools, which I may be asked to provide as evidence.

Meeting Members and Agenda

School Setting

Members in attendance:

Kaitlin Dennis – Safeguarding lead

Jordan MacDonald – Nursery lead

Cristiane Ribeiro de Freitas - Additional learning needs coordinator

Lauren Hobbs – Family liaison

Amira – English additional language lead

Agenda for Team Meeting 24 November 2025 8:00pm

1. Kaitlin - Safeguarding – current policies and training
2. Jordan – Nursery lead – New staff member and training update
3. Cristine - ALNco – reinforcement of ALN observations
4. Amira – EAL – Changes in policy for EAL
5. Lauren – Family liason – parental engagement
6. A.O.B (Any Other Business)

Cristiane Ribeiro de Freitas Script:

Thank you.

I am Cristiane de Freitas, the Additional Learning Needs Coordinator in our nursery setting.

In this role, I support our team to recognise and respond to the individual needs of every child, whether those needs are social, emotional or developmental, ensuring that inclusion remains central to our everyday practice (Welsh Government, 2021). I also take responsibility for ensuring that what we do in practice reflects the expectations of the *Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Regulations 2021*, which require us to take a person-centred and proactive approach by identifying needs early, keeping accurate records, and involving families from the very beginning. In doing this, I am not only supporting individual children but also shaping how we, as a team, understand and respond to additional learning needs across the setting (Welsh Government, 2021; Gamble, 2024).

In our daily work, I am alongside you, interpreting what we observe during play and interactions and making sure that key information is recorded clearly and consistently (Department for Education, 2025). We already ground our decisions in shared professional judgement, and practice is strongest when influence is shared and expertise is distributed across the team (Harris, 2004). This is exactly the culture we are continuing to build here, using everyone's observations and ideas to shape the support each child receives. Ahead of reviews, I also meet with Lauren, our Family Liaison, to ensure that what we notice in nursery is communicated sensitively to families, and that what families notice at home is also reflected in how we plan support (Welsh Government, 2015; Cowne, 2019). Taken together, this evidence informs the development and review of Individual Development Plans, or IDPs, ensuring that each child receives support that is purposeful, consistent, and focused on helping them make meaningful progress (Welsh Government, 2021).

To support this way of working, I meet with you regularly to share and reflect on our observations, develop a shared picture of each child's strengths and areas for support, and keep children's needs central to how we plan, differentiate and respond each day (Protheroe, 2025; Rodd, 2013).

The ALN Code for Wales (2021) places clear responsibility on us to identify needs as early as possible, and *the Equality Act 2010* requires us to remove barriers and make reasonable adjustments so that every child can participate fully. When we identify those signs early, we can adapt our provision proactively so that children remain confident, engaged and included in everyday routines and learning (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021; Beaton *et al.*, 2021). However, we know that achieving this consistently can be challenging in our busy settings, and if we do not get this right, there is a risk that observation becomes a tick-box task rather than a reflective, meaningful practice, which would weaken both inclusion and the quality of our IDPs (Department for Education, 2025; Estyn, 2024).

That leads me to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) session I am planning. As ALNCo, I also have the responsibility to lead on inclusion by supporting staff through ongoing professional learning, rather than working in isolation with individual children (Beaton *et al.*, 2021; Corral-Granados *et al.*, 2023). With a new member of staff this term, as Jordan mentioned earlier, and more children showing emerging social and communication needs, this is an important moment to revisit how we observe and record what we see. Estyn (2024) continues to highlight that high-quality observation is a core feature of effective early years provision, and the Curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2020) expects practitioners to respond to children's development in a flexible, responsive and play-centred way. Refining how we observe, record and share information will help us to meet these expectations, respond confidently to Estyn's focus on children's progress, and uphold inclusive practice for all children.

During the session, we will look at a new, simple shared observation approach called "tracking choices". This involves focusing on the choices children make throughout the day, for example, whether they repeatedly choose outdoor play, prefer to stay indoors, or return to the same area or activity (Protheroe, 2025; Sharman, Cross, and Vennis, 2015). I have also prepared a short observation tips sheet for each room, which I will email to Jordan to display in the nursery areas. These tools will act as quick reminders, especially for new staff, helping us use a consistent approach when noticing and recording early signs that a child may benefit from extra support. They are also intended to build our confidence in using observations to inform decisions and future IDPs, reflecting the idea that people are more likely to keep using new strategies when they feel supported (Bandura, 1977, cited in Glen, 2023). After the session, I will also be looking at how these tools are working in practice, and I would really value your feedback on what helps and what might need adapting.

I am planning for this CPD to take place next Wednesday after school, and I will confirm the time and details by email. If anyone anticipates that time will be difficult, please let me know, and we will consider alternatives if needed.

I want to thank you all for the way you already notice, support, and include our children. This focus on how we observe and share what we see is helping us become a more consistent, reflective team and supporting every child in our setting to feel understood, valued and able to thrive. Thank you.

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