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Basic Acknowledgement format of AI tool use

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence

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Meeting Members and Agenda

School Setting – Primary School (Early Years Meeting).

Members in attendance:

Caitlyn Preece - Reception Teacher and ALNco.

Lydia Hill – Nursery teacher and Foundation Learning Coordinator (FLC)

Katrina Hawkins – Teaching Assistant and Eco School Coordinator (ESC)

Agenda for Team Meeting – 14/05/26

1. ALN - Transitioning to Reception, Caitlyn Preece ALNco
2. Parent Partnership - Transitioning to Reception, Caitlyn Preece ALNco
3. Training needs - up to date training, any training needs, Lydia Hill (FLC)
4. Curriculum –Designing the curriculum, Lydia Hill (FLC)
5. Eco Council – Litter around school, Katrina Hawkins ESC
6. Wellbeing – ALN stress, Katrina Hawkins ESC

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Introduction

Good morning, thank you for all coming to the meeting today. Our head teacher sends their apologies but has a budget meeting they needed to attend. Before we begin, I would just like to remind everyone of some certain points.

We have meetings to ensure we are working collaboratively, organise strategies, and make sure we are all on the same page (Allen and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2023).

Although meetings are not compulsory, they are needed to help meet statutory requirements and legislations such as Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and Education (Wales) Act 2014).

In line with the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) we must stay confidential where possible. To work well as a team, we need to be able to establish trust and security as that will help build relationships between employees and is important for effective collaboration (Amirzan and Noor, 2024).

We need to have effective communication so let's be respectful when listening to each other speak so we can help create a positive learning environment (Manhoran, *et al.* 2024).

Caitlyn will be taking the minutes. It will be hard to note down every word but try and prioritise the main parts to relay back to your fellow employees (Gibson, 2022).

The meeting should last under 25 minutes so it shouldn't affect class timetables. Let's keep to the agenda and stay on task to keep focused and stay on time (University of Greenwich, n.d.) as attention at meetings seems to decline after 30 minutes (University of Cambridge, 2023).

Has everyone received a copy of the agenda? I have bought copies with me today so you can all make notes if needed.

I have read the agenda for today however a copy would be appreciated.

Yes, I have one.

Great, let us make a start!

I'm going to start off now by discussing training and I am going to need to take the traits of an autocratic leader (Lewin and Lippitt, 1938) which also share many of the same characteristics as Goleman's (2000) coercive leadership style. Autocratic leadership has also been argued to closely resemble authoritarian leadership (Harms *et al.*, 2018). I wouldn't normally use this type of leadership as I know it often has negative connotations (Pizzolitto, Verna and Venditti, 2022; Yea *et al.*, 2024). I appreciate it often doesn't help with employee wellbeing (Bahadar, Ullah and Ayaz, 2023; Bruce, Shavega and Maulid, 2025), and I am conscious it can affect your creativity and work performance (Huang *et al.*, 2023). I do, however, acknowledge the performance of our school is only as good as the performance of our staff (Amirzan and Noor, 2024). That said, this is something that needs to be done as I need you to all comply with The Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2003 and complete the necessary training.

We have an in- service training (INSET) day coming up so we need to make it priority that these online courses are completed so we are working in line with Social Care Wales (2025). In Wales we are fortunate to have had an additional INSET day provided since this academic year through The Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2003. INSET days are also a great opportunity for team building activities and building relationships which we need to do because if attention is not given to how effectively we work as a team, it could impact our children's well-being and learning (Ranta *et al.*, 2023). We have a few members of staff that are due to go to category B safeguarding training. Social Care Wales (2025) state refresher training needs to be completed for this, every three years.

We have a few children transitioning with additional learning needs (ALN) and have a child moving up to reception in September who is diabetic. We will need to make sure staff are trained in diabetes and that knowledge and skills are updated annually (Children and Young People's West Midlands Paediatric Diabetes Network, 2022). According to Diabetes UK (n.d.) we need at least two members of staff who are trained in diabetes, but having more trained will help us build for capacity within the team and will help us to account for staff sickness and staff turnover.

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How we lead transitions within a setting is key. ALN can struggle with transition (Sims, 2019) and since I know we have ALN transitioning up to reception I think it would be a good idea to have training on this. To maximise positive transitions for our children we need to ensure we are working together (Moir and Johnson, 2021) and have effective communication. We don't want to be storming (Tuckman, 1965) by not working as a team. Transitions can cause anxiety, so we need to plan for this appropriately, if staff are not aware of these anxieties it can cause more issues for the children as the anxieties are likely to escalate (Parent *et al.*, 2018).

If anyone would like certain training, please let me know and I will do my best to book you on the relevant training. As a school we like to support everyone's professional development and know extending knowledge and gaining more skills and understanding will benefit professional practice and develop pedagogy (Welsh Government, 2018).

If it is okay I would like to have some training in both diabetic and ALN Lydia, it sounds quite interesting.

Thank you Lydia. I would like to volunteer to be one of the people trained, as I am both the reception teacher and ALNco. I will pass this information onto the relevant staff in reception.

Thank you both, the more people trained, the better.

Curriculum

Next, I would like to discuss the curriculum. We have had excellent feedback from parents about our previous concept, relationships but will continue to review and refine where needed as suggested by Welsh Government (2024b). How do you all feel it went?

I found it was brilliant for the wellbeing of the children, parents and teachers, which I will be talking about how this collaboration has helped with my issues later in this meeting.

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It was great to see the children bringing in pictures of their families and speaking positively about their home life.

Great, it's always nice to hear positive feedback and it couldn't have been done without the teams hard work.

Working in line with **The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021** we need to assess the pupils to ensure they are developing and that their learning is suitable for their needs. **Estyn (2022)** report when planning is insufficient, teaching is less effective. They also state if we are not building on children's previous knowledge then the tasks we set may not be challenging enough. If we use **Bruner's (1976)** scaffolding theory where temporary support is provided by a teacher or peer to help the child complete a task that is just beyond their current independent capability, we can develop work that is challenging enough. The Welsh Curriculum is compulsory for all children aged five and over (Welsh Government 2024b). **The Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care Quality Framework for Wales** state we need to ensure we are taking a holistic approach to the children's development **(Welsh Government 2024a)**.

For this term our concept is change. I have thought about what we could do to work in line with the curriculum, however I like to think of myself as a democratic leader **(Lewin and Lippitt, 1938)** so put on your green hats and get creative **(Bono, 1985)**. This could be a great opportunity to encourage change in our environmental footprint and explore how we can be more economically friendly. Katrina, as the Eco school coordinator what do you think?

I am glad you have mentioned this Lydia as I have had a couple of complaints from parents about the environment around our school and will be addressing this later involving potential solutions.

Ok we will come back to this later. Caitlyn, as ALNco I was also hoping we can work together to see how we can adapt our approaches and resources to be suitable and provide equity for our ALN children **(National Day Nurseries Association, no date)**. Hopefully we can remove barriers for them to learn.

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Yes, this is something that I am interested in discussing further in our next meeting. It is great to hear how our school is becoming more inclusive every day.

Thank you. We should have no problem hitting the four purposes within the curriculum, enabling learners to become ambitious and capable, fostering enterprising and creative contributors, developing ethical and informed citizens, and supporting them in becoming healthy and confident individuals (Welsh Government, 2022b). Being pedagogical leaders and educators, we should be guiding and facilitating learning as pedagogy is the heart of the curriculum, and we need to be looking at the 'why' and 'how' as well as the 'what' according to Welsh Government (2023). The quality of settings is directly linked to the quality of leadership and management (Ang, 2011), making the way we lead of high importance. Following structure and utilising our staff with different skill sets to bring new engaging ideas and build a high-achieving school can be related to McKinsey's 7 s's model framework (Sumbane *et al.*, 2023). One of McKinsey's soft S's talks about shared values much like Rodd (2013), which we hopefully all have regarding inclusion, wellbeing and the four purposes I've previously spoken about.

Caitlyn, would you like to continue with your points?

ALN

Thank you Lydia. Firstly, I would like to thank all staff for your dedication to our children with Additional Learning Needs (hereafter, ALN). Parents have been thanking us for our continued support with the development of their children, and they have seen a real difference in their children's confidence and belonging within our school. According to Maslow (1943), love and belonging needs need to be satisfied for self-actualisation to take place. It is great to hear that our staff are meeting those needs and that the children are flourishing under our care. This is supported by Firth (2018), who states that secondary socialisation, from school staff, is an important factor in how children develop in the early years.

However, parents have been raising concerns about their children starting full time school in September, due to their ALN. To address this, I will need to become a transformative leader. I understand that moral can be low, however, we need to

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commit to finding ways to develop our common goals, through a shared sense of purpose (Campbell-Barr and Leeson, 2016).

According to Tuckman (1965), teams go through four stages of forming, storming, norming and performing. The storming stage is defined as where members of a team are in conflict, defensive and may be critical of each other (Kumar, Deshmukh and Adhish, 2014). I think we could agree that the team is currently in this stage, due to our intergenerational team. Conflict is manifesting due to the different generations, who have alternative views of work (Garvey, 2017). I believe that we currently have poor group dynamics due to some team members not liking change. However, change is needed to support the needs of the children. According to the Welsh Government (n.d.) ALN is everybody's business, and all staff have the responsibility to ensure that children's needs are being met. We can all agree that we want to make this transition seamless, with minimal stress for both children and staff. Therefore, I believe that integrating our ALN group, into the main nursery class is essential for these children to thrive in September. This is because Estyn (2024) believe that schools need to ensure that high quality learning is taking place as well as meeting the needs of pupils. This is built upon by the Welsh Government (2016) who state that all pupils should be able to access common opportunities, relevant their needs, to ensure that they fully belong to the school community. Maybe the ALN children can join the main nursery class for 30 minutes a day to get used to being in their cohort? Lydia, what are your thoughts on this? Is this something that you can see being a part of the day-to-day routine in nursery?

Yes, I think this would be very beneficial for staff and for the learners. We look at our timetable and work out the best way to do this. Maybe free play would be a good time.

I just want to make sure as the wellbeing officer that we are also considering the pressure that we are putting on staff by doing this due to recent complaints of burnout?

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If I can get transition training sorted ASAP hopefully this will help the staff with support and knowledge. I will also look at training specifically for ALN to support with this.

Great, thank you both for your feedback. I recognise that this change can be a stressful time for everyone. Perhaps we could make this less stressful by introducing a visual timetable? This is a way of support children to understand where they are in the day, and what will be coming next (EYSEND Partnership, 2019; NHS Wales, n.d.). Additionally, they help pupils understand new concepts (NHS Wales, n.d.; Estyn, 2024). According to Estyn (2024), many schools already use visual timetables to support pupils with their learning and enabling independence.

I want to make sure that everyone knows how much your contribution matters during the stressful time. Rodd (2013) states that 'good leaders build teams by making everyone feel that their contribution matters...' Therefore, I greatly appreciate all of your determination to making sure the children thrive upon September. I want to make sure that everyone feels at ease during this time, so Lydia, is there any training that could take place to support this stressful change?

We have had people come in before to teach signalong so maybe we can get them back in and I can look at other communication training methods, so staff feel comfortable using picture exchange communication systems (PECS). Again, I think extra training in ALN would help support staff through this.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Thank you. According to the Department of Education (2010), parental engagement has a positive impact on children's education. This is built upon by Baker *et al.* (2016), who states that research has shown that effective school and parental relationships contribute to enhancing children's holistic development. Similarly, Hornby (2011) states that the most effective schools are the ones that encourage and support the involvement of families in the education of their children. Therefore, having a good relationship with families is a vital part of education. I recognise that in the case of parent partnership I need to be a collaborative leader.

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Collaborative leadership is defined by Siraj-Blatchford and Hallet (2014) as enabling a team to work collaboratively in a focused way, sharing knowledge and skills to benefit settings. It is central to the early years to work in a collaborative way, not only as a team but also with families (Siraj-Blatchford and Hallet, 2014). This is built upon by Rodd (2013) who believes that the quality of relationships forms the basis of the quality of services provided to children and families.

Therefore, it is essential for all of us to maintain healthy relationships with families to make this transition seamless. I believe that the best way to reassure parents about the transition to reception is to plan a morning where parents can come to meet with both nursery and reception teachers. Does anyone have any thoughts on this?

Yes, we have done this in previous years, and it's been really beneficial for parents, children and our staff team.

I can take pictures of the reception classes so parents and the children can become familiar with the setting.

Thank you for your feedback. The curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings states that building trusting relationships with families and sharing the same aspirations for development nurtures a child's sense of belonging (Welsh Government, 2024b). This can relate to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems. The theory suggests that there are four systems within a child's environment, influencing the child, affecting holistic development (Wilson, 2025; Mukherji, 2014). The closest system to a child is the microsystem, which lies the most direct and influential relationships to the child, which includes families and school settings (Wilson, 2025; Underdown, 2007, cited in Mukherji, 2014). Therefore, it is vital that we foster open dialogue with parents to provide a positive transition experience (Welsh Government, 2024b).

Finally, if anyone has anyone in your teams have any concerns and would prefer to speak privately, my door is always open to support staff and provide guidance (Welsh Government, n.d.).

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Thank you Caitlyn, lots of interesting things to think about there. Katrina, you mentioned earlier about some complaints. Would you like to expand on that?

Thank you, Lydia. I will begin with a more authoritative approach to ensure that both of you fully understand the message and that we avoid any confusion (Aubrey, 2011). If anything I say is unclear, please feel free to ask for clarification.

I have recently received complaints about the amount of litter in and around the school grounds, suggesting we may need to review the effectiveness of our Eco Committee and current strategies. My research indicates that children today often have limited knowledge of eco-friendly practices, linked to reduced access to outdoor environments, a situation worsened during COVID-19 and not yet fully recovered (Watts, 2021). Early years settings like ours can play a key role in improving children's environmental understanding through a variety of approaches (Watts, 2021).

A transformational leadership style is appropriate here, as I intend to inspire a shift in how we approach environmental education, using research informed practice to drive meaningful change. This is particularly relevant given that our school setting has significant potential for improvement across multiple areas (Lindon, 2011).

Caitlyn, because you work closely with parents, I would like a reminder in our monthly newsletter that we have a zero tolerance policy for littering on school grounds, to reinforce expectations and ensure that our school footprint remains clean and safe for all pupils.

Thank you Kat, I will make sure this is added to our newsletter.

Brilliant. It is encouraging to see us working together, building trust, and sharing responsibilities and expertise (Lindon, 2011). Drawing on Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team (2002), which mirrors the pyramid structure of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, an absence of trust can lead to vulnerability and hesitation in seeking support. This is not the case within our team today, and it is important that we continue to nurture this positive dynamic.

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We could also encourage parents to clean and send in recyclable materials, giving us more opportunities for outdoor projects and hands-on learning experiences.
(Scott, 2025)

I will also add this to our newsletter to inform parents.

Fab, this is really going to help with our outdoor learning.

Thank you Caitlyn. Cheng and Lee (2018) conducted a study showing that children who use recyclable materials demonstrate higher levels of creativity compared to when they use regular toys. Their findings also indicate that recyclables promote more complex and collaborative play, offering richer learning opportunities. Most importantly, using these materials helps reinforce the well known but often under practised message of “reduce, reuse, recycle” (Earth Day, 2026), strengthening children’s sense of environmental responsibility (The Curiosity Approach, 2023).

Perhaps, this recycling message could be a learning opportunity for the children?

We could get them to design and create posters about the benefits and display them around the school.

That's a brilliant idea. I know that my reception class would love to be involved in this.

Although Goleman’s (2000) affiliative style shares similarities with delegative leadership, they are not the same. Goleman’s approach is emotionally engaged and relationship-focused, while delegative leadership is more hands-off and offers minimal direction. I adopted this approach because it allowed others the space to take on their own leadership roles (Robert and Vandenberghe, 2021).

As I will be discussing the school’s eco-system, I want to shift into a more democratic leadership style to encourage your engagement and motivation (Aubrey, 2011). One person picking up litter cannot change the world, but a committed team can make a meaningful difference.

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Litter picking is an excellent starting point for becoming a more eco-friendly school and supporting the future of our children and the generations to come. Inspirations Nurseries and Forest Schools (2023) highlight its benefits, including increased environmental awareness, physical development, and teamwork. A short weekly litter-picking activity would be a strong first step.

This reflects a participative leadership style, as I am inviting you both to contribute to planning and implementing this idea, creating shared authority and collective ownership (Wang, Hou and Li, 2022). As Eleanor Roosevelt (n.d.) said, “It is not fair to ask of others what you are not willing to do yourself,” and I look forward to working alongside you on this project.

This is a brilliant idea. I know that the ALN children would love to be involved and have opportunities to take part in activities outside of school. This could really help develop their communication skills and sense of purpose.

We all know the saying, “sunshine is the best medicine” (Wessolowski *et al.*, 2025). As wellbeing advisor, I want to highlight that litter picking can support the mental health of both children and adults while also teaching them about the environment (Public Health Wales, 2020). It also aligns closely with the Curriculum for Wales by supporting all four purposes, and links particularly well with Humanities, Science, and Health and Wellbeing through exploration of human impact, materials, and outdoor learning (Welsh Government, 2022).

Leaning again into a more authoritarian approach, we must acknowledge the increasing complexity of ALN over time. Knight et al. (2024) found that children’s needs are becoming more complex, with more pupils presenting with ALN. Although official figures show a decline under the ALN Code, schools are reporting higher levels of ALN in classrooms. Estyn’s 2024 thematic report supports this, noting a rise in children with complex needs.

This increase places a heavier mental load on staff due to the additional work required to meet these needs effectively (Welsh Government, 2025). The pressure can lead to burnout, and it is important that we recognise and address this risk. For this reason, I believe that training on identifying and supporting burnout should be a

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high priority, alongside regular check-ins to ensure staff wellbeing is monitored and supported to foster support, teamwork and continuous improvement. (HFL Education 2026)

I agree. I have had numerous members of staff coming to me, letting me know about the effect ALN has had on their wellbeing. It would be great if something could be done to support staff.

I'm sure there are plenty of wellbeing courses out there but i will look into it.

Maybe we could also have our training days in a more relaxed or interactive environment, such as restaurants or escape rooms. What do you think? Are there any other ideas?

Maybe we could go on wellbeing walks during INSET days?

Any activities where we can work as a team will be beneficial to us.

I love the idea of wellbeing walks on inset days Caitlyn, that is something I will organise for our next meeting.

Gibbs (2024) notes that an authoritarian approach can limit autonomy and restrict leadership development, but in this situation a firm and clear stance is necessary to manage complexity and uphold children's rights (Stewart, MacDonald and Waters, 2024). We must also recognise the continued rise in ALN. While training is essential for providing the best possible care, we must also ensure that expectations remain manageable and do not overwhelm staff. Although I have requested additional activities and training, it is important to be clear that we must avoid placing excessive pressure on practitioners, as training can become burdensome when it is too frequent or demanding (Welsh Government, 2025).

I agree, ALN is on the rise in schools, and more support is needed for staff members. The mental health of staff needs to be prioritised as well as ensuring the best education is provided to the children.

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That concludes our meeting and I think this has been a successful one. Thank you to everyone for coming. We will aim to have the minutes written up and circulated within 24 hours recommended by Cabinet Office (2023).

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