

Group presentation

ECEY6011 _BIRM

Group participants

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Case study

During the most recent Ofsted inspection, one of the employees was questioned about the nursery's behaviour policy. However, the response provided was unclear and raised concerns about staff training and awareness of policies. This highlighted the need for a review and reinforcement of staff knowledge regarding nursery policies and procedures.

Additionally, complaints from parents have been increasing regarding poor communication about their child's daily activities and progress. Parents have expressed frustration about not knowing what their children are learning, eating, or engaging with throughout the day. This issue has led to a decline in parental satisfaction and concerns about transparency within the nursery. One major concern was the lack of sufficient safeguarding training for staff.

Case Study: Greatcoat Nursery

Setting Overview:

Greatcoat Nursery is a privately run daycare centre that accommodates 15 children under the age of 4. The nursery provides full-day care services for infants and preschool-aged children, ensuring a safe and engaging environment for early childhood development. The nursery operates with a team of four dedicated staff members responsible for supervision, education, and care.

Discussion: Enhancing quality of care in our setting

Hi everyone! Thanks so much for coming to today's meeting. I really appreciate you all making the time.

Today, we're going to focus on how we're preparing for our next Ofsted inspection. As you know, our nursery cares for 15 little ones, aged between 0 to 4 years, and we've got a team of four adults.

We'll look at the feedback from our last inspection and discuss how we can improve to keep providing the best possible care and education for our children.

Behaviour Policy:

First up, let's talk about our behaviour policy.

After our last Ofsted visit, we were praised for our positive behaviour management, which was great to hear. But we also saw the need to improve how we handle challenging behaviour.

The EYFS framework highlights how important Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED) is—things like self-regulation, managing emotions, and building relationships. To support this, we introduced the Emotion Coaching Model, where staff help children understand and express their emotions appropriately.

We also introduced the 'Golden Rules' initiative, where children help set behaviour expectations, giving them a sense of responsibility. Positive reinforcement tools like reward charts and praise have worked well to encourage kindness, teamwork, and resilience. This aligns with the Education Act 2002, which emphasizes promoting children's well-being.

Looking ahead, we plan to provide more staff training focused on managing challenging behaviour. We'll also develop new strategies, including workshops on positive behaviour management. As we know, children learn by watching us, so it's crucial we model positive behaviour ourselves (Learning Journal, 2022).

Creating a safe, supportive environment is key for the kids' overall development, and it's something both the EYFS framework and Ofsted stress. We'll regularly review our strategies to ensure they're working and keep parents updated on our approach. Platforms like Dojo or quick chats during drop-off and pick-up are great for this, helping us stay aligned with families (ASCD, 2017).

I did send an email to parents about this and got good feedback, though not everyone could respond due to internet or work issues.

I would like to discuss children's behaviour during lunchtimes, it has been noticed that children are not sitting whilst eating, posing a potential choking hazard. We need to implement strategies that promote positive behaviours. This may be challenging as a couple of children find it difficult to follow instructions and are easily distracted.

The early years inspection handbook highlights just how important it is for early years settings to maintain high standards. (Ofsted, 2024).

According to Sword (2021), strategies include praising children for staying seated during meals to reinforce positive behaviour. Clearly and consistently communicating mealtime expectations also helps children understand and follow safe eating practises.

The Department for Education (2024) and Sword (2021) both state that the EYFS framework requires settings to have a behaviour policy that supports children's well-being by encouraging positive behaviour, setting clear expectations, and guiding responses to challenges. This helps create a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment essential for children's development.

Furthermore, according to Hu (2024) BF Skinner's operant conditioning theory explains how behaviour is shaped by its consequences. Positive outcomes like praise or rewards make a behaviour more likely to be repeated, while negative consequences reduce the chance of it happening again. This approach is widely used in education to encourage good habits and learning by reinforcing positive behaviour with praise, rewards or encouragement.

According to Obee and Hart and Fabiano (2022), using simple language and visual aids can help reinforce these expectations. Consistency among staff in enforcing these rules ensures children understand and adhere to them.

Using visual timetables helps children understand their daily routine, easing transitions and reducing anxiety. Reward charts, such as star charts, encourage positive behaviour by recognising achievements with stickers or tokens. Displaying simple, visual classroom rules, such as 'kind hands' and 'good listening', reinforces expectations. Involving older children in setting rules gives them a sense of ownership and responsibility. Discussing the rules also helps them understand their purpose and encourages listening to others, supporting personal social and emotional development. This all lines with the EYFS Framework and UNCRC Article 12 as it encourages their independence and participation in decisions that affect them (UNICEF, no date).

Also introducing now and next boards which will be useful for children who need more structure or have additional needs.

According to Zulauf-McCurdy et al (2024) arranging workshops to support parents in promoting positive behaviour in their children would be beneficial as research highlights the benefits of such initiatives, showing that parent teacher collaborations can enhance children's social and emotional development. Studies also show that when educators and parents work together through workshops and discussions, children demonstrate better emotional regulation and behavioural outcomes.

Research also shows that parenting workshops on positive discipline reduce stress, improve children's behaviour, and promote supportive parenting. Workshops led by educators offer parents useful strategies for managing behaviour, supporting children's development at home and in educational settings (Carroll, 2021).

According to Freud (2021) ensuring staff are trained in positive behaviour management techniques and the importance of modelling appropriate behaviour is crucial. Children often imitate adults, therefore, staff demonstrating proper mealtime conduct can influence children positively.

Ensuring that all behaviour management strategies comply with the EYFS Statutory Framework is fundamental. This includes creating an environment that safeguards children's welfare and promotes personal, social, and emotional development (Department for Education, 2024).

Do you have any strategies we could use or share with parents?

Thank you, Janna, for responding to the question raised during our last inspection in 2021 about our behaviour policy. The staff member who was questioned at that time of inspection was actually level 2 student, who was not able to describe the behaviour policy of the setting and the guidelines of (EYFS,2024) behaviour policy , even though the inspector clearly stated in the results of inspection that the behaviour policy was well implemented. However, the staff qualification showed that it was not sufficient for them to know about the guidelines of EYFS framework (2024). To overcome this issue, the next step after implementing music therapy to control the behavior was to evaluate its effectiveness for children and parents outside the school, particularly for parents of special needs children. To ensure that this educator needs to consider learning and development considerations in sections 1.12 and 1.13 (DFE,2024).

To gather feedback on our music therapy strategy, an online questionnaire with closed-ended questions was sent via message, offering clear choices like yes or no. However, results showed parents struggled to assess their child's behaviour at home, limiting useful insights on the impact of music therapy. The questionnaire was conducted online, and the desired results weren't achieved, Reja et al., (2003) agreed in the study which suggested that web-based questionnaires whether open ended or closed ended often fail to bring the desired outcome.

To overcome this issue, we arranged staff meetings regularly to educate our staff about Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS,2024) requirements from an early year's educator. After a couple of sessions we realised that staff were having issues with childcare, which was the original issue to begin with. We checked with the stakeholders to see if we could have the childcare sorted for our staff by hiring a member of staff from the local agencies who are DBS approved. As the requirement of staff qualifications from Early Years,

Foundation Stage section 3.9 (DFE,2024) for educators to be DBS approved for child safety.

To ensure all staff are properly trained on our behaviour policy in line with (DFE,2024) behaviour policy we began holding regular meetings to ensure that what is being taught about behaviour policy is being implemented and understood well by the staff members.

To assess whether staff understand and implement the policy, we have meetings where staff are assessed on our behaviour policy and gain the knowledge of what is expected from Ofsted to achieve outstanding results.

The Department for Education (2024) states that all new staff should receive induction training when they start, helping them understand their roles and responsibilities clearly. This includes important areas like safeguarding, child protection, health and safety and what to do in an emergency. It is also vital that staff are supported to access regular training and development, so they can keep growing in their role and continue offering children high quality learning experiences.

It was observed that many children missed out on rewards because teachers only recognised those who followed instructions. To make every child feel valued, we introduced a reward sticker system, acknowledging each child's strengths, whether following rules or showing kindness. This approach encourages enjoyment and motivation, aligning with Zhen Wu et al. (2017), who highlight that children thrive when not forced to follow strict rules. Recognising each child's uniqueness fosters initiative, reflection, and cognitive development, as research suggests that children under five actively process how adults and their environment shape their growth.

Additionally, we transformed the thinking process by providing a soothing chair equipped with headphones that play soothing music. This approach helps children with special needs to reflect on their behaviour in a calm and supportive environment. Managing behaviour in a negative manner is against the requirements outlined in sections 3.58 and 3.59 of the early year's statutory framework (DFE,2024c).

Furthermore, a study by Van, As A.J and Excell, L (2018) agrees that integrating music into play based pedagogy can significantly enhance the learning environment.

The next step after implementing music therapy to control the behaviour was to evaluate its effectiveness for children and parents outside the school, particularly for parents of special needs children. To ensure that this educator needs to consider learning and development considerations in sections 1.12 and 1.13 (DFE, 2024).

Following our safeguarding policy and the EYFS framework, we ensure children's safety by checking a person's suitability to work with children and confirming they have a valid DBS before hiring. We strictly follow EYFS ratios, ensuring we have enough qualified staff to keep children safe and well-supported. This includes having at least one staff member trained in paediatric first aid on-site (Mabiza, nd).

To deal with online risks, we introduced measures to help parents safeguard their children from inappropriate content, such as on YouTube. Emphasising parental supervision, we mirrored our child-friendly approach within the setting. Additionally, our IT team installed a firewall to restrict access to educational and age-appropriate materials. These measures align with the EYFS Statutory Framework's Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (DFE, 2024), reinforcing our duty to protect children

Quality of Education and Personal Development:

Now, let's shift to how we can ensure a high-quality education and support the children's personal development.

Our goal is to help children grow cognitively, socially, and emotionally. Learning works best when children are playing, actively engaged, and thinking critically (DfE, 2024a).

From our last Ofsted feedback, we did well in curriculum planning but needed to improve differentiation for children with SEND and those learning English as an additional language (EAL). To address this, we created tailored learning plans with input from parents and external experts. We aim for an inclusive curriculum that values every child's background and experience.

We've also implemented a continuous provision approach, where children can explore resources and activities at their own pace. This boosts their independence and confidence and aligns with Article 29 of the UNCRC, which says education should help children reach their full potential (UNCRC, 1989). According to Benque (2020), in the 1960s, Psychologist Jon Piaget has emphasised the importance of play, and how it's vital for children's holistic development

As the new team leader for the preschool room, I have implemented several changes to support children's development and school readiness. One of the key changes is a traffic light system, in which all children begin the day on green. If they remain on green by the end of the day, their name is placed into a bucket, and a name is drawn to receive a sticker. In cases where the selected child has already gone home, they receive their sticker the following morning. This system serves as a positive reinforcement strategy to encourage school readiness. The concept of school readiness originates from Piaget's theory of cognitive development (1936) and is further defined by the EYFS Statutory Framework (2021) as "the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."

staff and Ratio

Ensuring quality care also means we need to manage our staff-to-child ratios effectively. Overburdened staff can struggle to meet children's needs, which affects care quality (Magloire, 2023).

Since 2023, changes have come into force that state, when the children are eating, they need to be adequately supervised which means they should be within sight and hearing of a member of staff (Foley, 2024). To implement this, there needs to be more staff during mealtimes around the children, the Health and Safety policy has been updated.

According to Magloire (2023) the staff to child ratios apply to the entire nursery setting, not just individual rooms. It is the provider's responsibility to determine how best to allocate staff across different areas.

According to the Department for Education (2024) in England, private nurseries that care for babies and young children under 4, must follow specific staff to child ratios.

The EYFS Statutory Framework sets out these ratio requirements, ensuring that early year's settings meet high standards of care and education. Foley (2024) also states that in March 2023 the UK government announced a change to the staffing ratio for two-year-olds, increasing it from 1:4 to 1:5. This change, which came into effect in September 2023, was intended to help childcare providers manage costs and make childcare more affordable for parents. However, some concerns have been raised about whether increasing the number of children each staff member cares for could impact the quality of care and individual attention children receive.

According to the NSPCC (2023) challenging behaviours may signal underlying safeguarding issues. It is our responsibility to assess these behaviours to determine if they stem from abuse, neglect, or other concerns. Therefore, we need to ensure that all staff members are trained to recognise behaviours that may indicate safeguarding issues and understand the procedures for reporting concerns, Jones (2016) and the Department for Education (2024) both state that regular training should be given to staff so they have 'up to date' information on safeguarding. Policies should be kept under continuous review to ensure updates on any new legislation or statutory guidance (Ofsted, 2024).

Nurseries need to balance meeting regulatory requirements with the individual needs of every child, including those with SEND in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. This includes making reasonable adjustments to ensure every child receives the support they need. This requires careful planning and resource management (Magloire, 2023). However, financial constraints make this harder, especially for smaller nurseries or those in lower-funded areas (Foley, 2024) like ours.

Upon reflecting on our Health and safety Policy, after the choking incident, I spoke to Javaria, Bernie and Saira and the team decided that all staff will attend paediatric first aid training on our next inset day. This decision follows Health and Safety regulations ensuring we're prepared for emergencies like choking, allergic reactions, any accidents or incidents (Adam, 2024).

This commitment reassures parents that their children are in a safe environment, something we heard positive feedback about at the last parent evening.

In accordance with Section 2.3 of the EYFS Statutory Framework, practitioners are responsible for keeping parents and carers informed of their child's progress and development, working collaboratively to address any learning and developmental needs alongside relevant professionals. In alignment with this requirement, parents' evenings have now been introduced on a half-termly basis to strengthen communication and partnership between practitioners and families.

After receiving feedback from parents regarding the need for improved communication from the nursery, and in alignment with the EYFS Statutory Framework, Section 2.3, which emphasizes the importance of keeping parents and carers informed about their child's progress and development, it has been agreed, following discussions with Janna, that we will now implement Dojo as a communication tool. This system provides valuable insight into a child's daily activities while also facilitating direct communication between parents and their child's key worker. In instances where handover periods are busy or a staff member is not on duty, this platform ensures that parents can relay important messages efficiently, thereby enhancing continuity of care and fostering stronger partnerships between practitioners and families. To ensure alignment with the EYFS guidelines, children are grouped based on ability, allowing for appropriately tailored activities. Additionally, differentiated pedagogical approaches are implemented to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). For example, a child with a particular interest in letters is provided with a jar of letters during activity times to maintain engagement while facilitating the learning of others. This approach fosters a calm learning environment and minimizes disruptions, ensuring that all children can benefit from high-quality education in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which upholds every child's right to education. Furthermore, this practice aligns with the EYFS Statutory Framework (Section 3.2), which states that "children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual

needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them." Section 3a of the Statutory Guidance for Early Education and Childcare (Department for Education) states that "evidence shows that higher quality provision has greater developmental benefits for children, particularly for the most disadvantaged children, leading to better outcomes." In alignment with this principle, structured learning opportunities are embedded within the daily routine to support children's cognitive and social development. During both morning and afternoon registration, children are seated in their groups and engage in structured activities designed to enhance their understanding of time, weather, and literacy. This includes identifying the day of the week using visual cue cards, recognising and describing the weather through corresponding picture cards, and participating in a letter recognition activity, where they match letters with associated words. Additionally, children practice name recognition through individualised name cards before transitioning to free play. To further support children's learning and development, a daily timetable is displayed within the classroom, allowing both children and parents to identify the planned activities for the day. The classroom environment is designed to offer a range of engaging play experiences that support different areas of development. The home corner, equipped with dressing-up materials, fosters imaginative and role-playing skills, while the sand table and a rotating sensory table—filled with various materials such as rice or shaving foam—provide opportunities for sensory exploration. Playdough and an art table are readily available to encourage creativity, fine motor development, and self-expression. Additionally, a climbing frame with a slide promotes physical activity and gross motor skill development. A quiet book area, furnished with cushions, provides a calm and reflective space for children. Further, children have access to large building blocks, crates, and themed toy boxes containing dolls and cars, as well as an extensive selection of LEGO and other construction materials. A designated area for sensory objects and natural materials is also available, ensuring that children can engage in a variety of play experiences tailored to their individual interests and developmental needs.

I would like to add that by obtaining feedback from parents through an online questionnaire, they have welcomed the use of the digital platform – ClassDojo, which

facilitates real time communication between staff and parents (ClassDojo, 2019). Sharing children's achievements and addressing concerns promptly ensures a cohesive approach to behaviour management, reinforcing positive behaviours both at the setting and home. The EYFS highlights the significance of working in partnership with parents to support children's learning and development (Department for Education, 2024).

The Department for Education (2024) highlights the importance of working closely with parents to better understand each child's interests and needs. Strong partnerships and open communication help create personalised support, ensuring children receive the best start in their early years.

Enabling environment

After the last inspection, we were advised to offer more structured outdoor learning. The EYFS framework stresses the importance of daily outdoor play for physical health, well-being, and exploration (DfE, 2023).

Children grow best in environments that match their interests and needs. Places that encourage play and exploration help them learn and develop. Giving children choices, time, and support lets them explore on their own, connect with others, and enjoy freedom within a caring and supportive setting. (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021)

To improve this, we've created spaces like a sensory garden, mud kitchen, and nature exploration area. We've also introduced forest school-style sessions with activities like den building, bug hunting, and vegetable planting. such environments foster children's growth by providing security and opportunities for exploration and learning (Institute of Early Years Education, 2024).

This supports Article 31 of the UNCRC, which gives children the right to play and engage in recreational activities (UNCRC, 1989).

Safety is a priority, so we conduct weekly risk assessments to ensure both indoor and outdoor areas are safe and suitable, following the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance (DfE, 2024b).

To ensure children are meeting their developmental milestones, staff conduct regular observations to assess their abilities and interests. In accordance with Section 2.5 of the EYFS Statutory Framework, ongoing formative assessment is integral to the learning and development process, enabling practitioners to shape teaching and learning experiences based on children's progress. This includes both professional observations and insights shared by parents and carers, fostering a comprehensive approach to each child's development. Forming the basis of a positive child practitioner relationship in addition to positive parent practitioner relationship all of which are positive tools to ensure the best quality of education for children. To ensure a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment, all staff are required to adhere to health and safety policies, with first aid qualifications being a mandatory requirement upon employment. Additionally, staff participate in annual training to stay updated on current legislation, policies, and procedures. Regular monthly staff meetings are conducted to provide a structured forum for open communication, during which room staff are encouraged to share any concerns, feedback, or suggestions for improving practice. These meetings also serve as an opportunity for staff to discuss any personal or mental health challenges they may be facing, allowing for appropriate support to be provided. This initiative complements the existing open-door policy, reinforcing a culture of transparency and well-being. Additionally, to foster a positive and motivating work environment, daily inspirational quotes are displayed in the staffroom, and snacks are periodically provided for staff. A suggestion box has been implemented at the entrance of the preschool room, allowing staff, parents, and carers to submit feedback anonymously. Furthermore, a dedicated email address has been established to facilitate anonymous feedback from all stakeholders, including staff, ensuring continuous opportunities for communication and improvement. Strict visitor protocols are in place, requiring all visitors to sign in and out, wear visible lanyards, and remain supervised at all times. An open-door policy is maintained, allowing staff, parents, carers, and children to discuss any concerns confidentially.

Closing remarks by the manager

Future Steps & Continuous Improvement

- Monitor Effectiveness: Regularly review staff and parent feedback.
- Expand Training: Ensure continued professional development for staff.
- Advocate for Better Community Support Services: Work to address service availability issues.

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