All Wales Induction Framework for Early Years and Childcare: Workbook 3

# Professional practice as an early years and childcare worker

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# Introduction

This section will help you explore your roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as an early years and childcare worker. These will be set out in a range of legislative frameworks, standards, and if you are already employed, your job description and any relevant codes of conduct and professional practice.

You will learn more about these when you complete the other workbooks in the induction framework, such as safeguarding or health and safety. But it will be helpful to think about these now in the context of your professional practice.

If you have already completed your ‘core’ qualification, you will have covered some of the knowledge and understanding in this workbook. Your manager will let you know which parts they want you to complete.

If you have not completed your ‘core’ qualification, this workbook will help you prepare for your assessment.

# Contents

[3.1 Roles and responsibilities of the early years and childcare worker](#_3.1_Roles_and)

[3.2 Partnership working](#_3.2_Partnership_working)

[3.3 Team working](#_3.3_Team_working)

[3.4 Handling information](#_3.4_Handling_information)

[3.5 Personal conduct of early years and childcare workers](#_3.5_Personal_conduct)

[3.6 Continuing professional development](#_3.6_Continuing_professional)

[3.7 Policies and procedures](#_3.7_Policies_and)

[3.8 Practice placement reflection](#_3.8_Practice_placement)

# 3.1 Roles and responsibilities of the early years and childcare worker

**Learning activity**

If you are employed, you will be provided with a job description that sets out how you should do your work. As you start in your new job, it is important you have a clear understanding of the purpose of the workplace/setting, its ethos and its **policies and procedures**.

Talk to your manager about these and make some notes in the space below.

1. How you think the job description helps you understand what is expected of you
2. Areas that you are not clear about
3. Parts where you feel you need to receive training or additional support
4. What you would do if you were asked to do something that was in your job description, but you did not feel you had the training you needed yet
5. The different types of early years, childcare and play provision, what its purpose is and how your role contributes to this.

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| Workbook notes |

If you are self-employed, it is still important to have a clear understanding of your workplace/setting and your role within this.

Look at your job description and answer the questions below.

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| Workbook notes1. How does your job description help you know what you should be doing in your role?
2. What additional support or training do you think you would need?
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**Learning activity**

In your role, you will be expected to follow your workplace/setting’s policies and procedures. These are usually developed to reflect or meet legislation or regulatory requirements.

* What is your workplace/setting’s policy and/or procedure that relates to the areas set out below?
* Give an example of how you have followed policy or procedure in your work.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **What is your workplace/setting’s policy and/or procedure that relates to this area**  | **Example of how policy and/or procedure puts this into practice** |
| Food hygiene |  |  |
| Infection prevention and control |  |  |
| Safeguarding |  |  |
| Welsh language  |  |  |
| Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice |  |  |
| Additional learning needs |  |  |

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| Workbook notes1. Reflecting on your own practice, how do you find out about and follow policies and procedures?
 |

**Learning activity**

Read the case study below and answer the questions

Daniel has been an early years and childcare worker for six years. Daniel thoroughly enjoys his work and is passionate about doing his job well. Daniel is experiencing some difficulties in his personal life. Daniel’s wife has been diagnosed with cancer. The pressure of looking after her has resulted in Daniel being late for work several times. He has become forgetful and is having difficulties concentrating as he is so tired.

Daniel has confided in one of his colleagues, Julie, but hasn’t told his manager as he is afraid of losing his job. Julie has noticed that on occasion, the information in the children’s daily handover has been inaccurate.

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| Workbook notes1. What actions could Julie take and why?
2. Why it is important to report practices that are unsafe or conflict with standards or policies and procedures?
3. There may be times when there is conflict or a dilemma between a duty of care and the rights of **individuals**. Give two examples when this might happen.
4. Who is accountable for the quality of Daniel’s practice?
5. How can Daniel and Julie use reflection to improve their practice?
 |

**Learning activity**

Confidentiality is an important right. It is a vital part of a person’s right to privacy. Early years and childcare workers need to respect, protect and keep this right, but there are times when confidential information must be passed on. You will explore this more in the safeguarding workbook, but thinking about how important this is, answer the questions below.

Ellie is five years old and attends your setting. Ellie’s father confided in you that Ellie’s mum is very poorly and has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. This is having a huge effect on them as a family, especially Ellie. Her father has told you this and has asked you not to share this information with anyone.

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| --- |
| Workbook notes1. What is meant by the term “confidentiality” and what does your setting do to ensure confidentiality?
2. Give three examples of how confidentiality can be maintained by early years and childcare workers.
3. How could you best support Ellie and her family while maintaining their confidentiality?
4. Give an example of when you may need to break confidentiality
 |

# 3.2 Partnership working

**Learning activity**

In your role as an early years and childcare worker, you will need to work in partnership with a range of different workers and professionals to provide effective care and support.

The early years and childcare workforce is made up of lots of people from a range of sectors who have different roles. Despite all these variations, they are all working to provide the best outcomes for children.

Children and their families/carers are an integral part of partnership working, so it is essential you consult the children about their views and consider them.

|  |
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| Workbook notes 1. What are the principles of partnership working and why is partnership and multi-agency working important when caring for children?
2. What is meant by the following and can you provide an example of how this can be demonstrated in practice for each:
* Anti-discriminatory practice
* Anti-racism practice
 |

In the table below, outline what other workers/professionals your setting may work with and why.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who might you work with?** | **Why?** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Building good relationships and trust, while respecting diversity and recognising cultural, religious, ethnic and language differences is an important part of working in partnership. In the table below, explain why this is important and how to work in ways that help build and support relationships.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How can you work in ways to build and support relationships and trust? |  |
| Why is it important to work in ways that help build and support relationships? |  |

# 3.3 Team working

**Please note, if you are a childminder this section may not be relevant to you.**

Whatever your role is in the early years and childcare sector, it will involve working as part of a team. There are many different types of teams and the way in which they all work will be different. An example of a team is a Flying Start team. These can be made up of health workers, support workers, speech, language and communication workers, and childcare workers.

**Learning activity**

Answer the following questions:

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. Outline the types of team working and how teams may differ in structure, purpose and composition.
2. What are the core principles that underpin effective team working?
3. Outline ways in which effective team working contributes to the well-being of children and their families/carers.
 |

**Learning activity**

If you are in an employed role, describe your own team, and reflect on how you work together and how you contribute to its work. Discuss this with your manager and ask them to give you some feedback on your practice as a team member. Make some notes in the space below.

If you are not yet employed, leave this space blank and come back to it later.

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| Workbook notes |

# 3.4 Handling information

In your role as an early years and childcare worker you will deal with a lot of personal information about the children and families/carers you work with. You need to know how to handle this information, so you work in line with legislation and your organisation’s policies and procedures.

**Learning activity**

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| Workbook notes1. Explain what is meant by the term “data protection” and “handling information”. How do they link to relevant legislation?
2. What is meant by “secure systems used for recording and storing information”, and why is it important to have secure systems for recording and storing information in early years and childcare settings?
 |

From the list below, fill in the table to show whether they are a feature of an electronic or manual information storage system.

**Secure networks**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Encryption Secure password Filing cabinet A back-up copy must be keptLocked cupboards Secure networks Finding information easily if it is organised Writing records clearly so that others can understand them The ability to print copies if requiredKeep the office tidy Keeping data relevant according to categories  | Keeping data clean and secureSave space Security checks The ability to update information quickly Quick access on the screen The use of keys No/fewer paper copies Organisation of informationLots of equipment needed Increase in paper dataRegular change of password  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The features of electronic information storage systems** | **The features of manual information storage systems** |
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**Learning activity**

It is important that the records you complete in your everyday work are done to a high standard. They need to be accurate, clear and kept up-to-date to support good communication in the settings, and with families/carers and other professionals that may access their records.

In the table below, highlight whether the information needs to be recorded, reported and stored. Mark the boxes that apply to the scenarios provided. The first one has been completed for you as an example.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Example** | **Recorded** | **Reported** | **Stored** |
| Child falls and bangs head | x | x | x |
| Food and drink taken within a session |  |  |  |
| Medicine is administered |  |  |  |
| Attendance record |  |  |  |
| Fire drill record |  |  |  |
| Supervision record |  |  |  |
| Child allergies |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. What is the difference between fact, opinion and judgement?
2. Why do you think children and their families/carers should be able to see the information recorded about them?
3. When would you not be able to share recorded information with individuals?
 |

**Learning activity**

Answer the questions below about recorded information:

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. What are the important things to remember when recording information in your day-to-day work?
2. When would you not be able to share recorded information with individuals?
 |

# 3.5 Personal conduct of early years and childcare workers

You have a responsibility as an early years and childcare worker to ensure that your conduct does not fall below the standards expected of you. It is important you uphold public trust and confidence in the early years and childcare profession.

**Learning activity**

Read the case study below and answer the questions:

Sharon identifies as a female and works at Cherry Lane nursery where they have had a few new children who have started in the setting. One of the parents, a mum named Tracy, has sent Sharon a friend request on her personal Facebook account. Sharon accepts this. Sharon is on a night out with her friends, and she bumps into Tracy and her friends. Sharon and Tracy end up having a few drinks together. During their conversation, Tracy tells Sharon her daughter Harriet is constantly being bitten. Tracy confides that it is a child in her room called Ben who has bitten her and that he is displaying unwanted behaviour as Ben’s parents have just split up. They continue their evening taking several photos, which Tracy later uploads to Facebook, tagging both Sharon and Cherry Lane nursery.

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. Why it is important for Sharon to behave as a positive role model and to behave professionally, both in work and outside the workplace/setting?
2. How could Sharon’s behaviour called into question her suitability to work in the early years and childcare profession?
3. How does this case study show why it is important not to form inappropriate relationships with children, their families/carers, colleagues and others?
4. What could be considered misuse of social media and what are the implications of this on practice?
5. Sharon tells Tracy who has bitten Harriet. Why it is important for Sharon to recognise and use sensitively the power that comes from her role in working with children and their families/carers, and not act in any way that abuses this power?
 |

# 3.6 Continuing professional development

The national minimum standards for regulated childcare require that you continually develop your knowledge and skills to improve your practice. Social Care Wales has a [continuing professional development (CPD) toolkit for social care](https://socialcare.wales/learning-and-development/continuing-professional-development-cpd), early years and childcare managers and workers that you may find useful to read.

**Learning activity**

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| --- |
| Workbook notes1. Describe what continuing professional development is.
2. Explain why continuing professional development is important in the role of an early years and childcare worker.
3. What are the legislative requirements and standards that relate to continuing professional development?
4. What are the responsibilities of:
* an employer for making sure that early years and childcare workers develop and learn in their role?
* early years and childcare workers for developing and learning in their role?
 |

**Learning activity**

There are a range of different learning opportunities to support you to develop your knowledge and skills, such as going on a training course or reading. List some of the others in the space below.

While it is important that you know how to access information and support to learn and develop, you need to be able to transfer that knowledge and understanding into practice.

Give three examples of how you have done this to improve your personal or professional development.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning and development activity** | **What I have learnt** | **How I put it into practice** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Learning activity**

Feedback is important for your learning and development. During your induction, you should receive regular feedback from your manager. This will help you develop awareness of your strengths, as well as areas of improvement. Constructive feedback helps develop your confidence and plan for future development. Apart from your manager, who else could give you feedback about your practice?

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| Workbook notes |

**Learning activity**

Supervision and appraisal provide opportunities for you to have feedback about your work, to set goals and objectives for your personal and professional development, and to discuss your progress and/or concerns. While appraisals usually take place once a year, supervision is held more regularly.

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| --- |
| Workbook notes1. What is an employer’s responsibility for supervision and appraisal?
2. What is an early and childcare worker’s responsibility for supervision and appraisal?
 |

**Learning activity**

Reflection is an essential part of learning to improve your practice. Simply put, reflective practice is thinking about or reflecting on what you do. It involves thinking about what happened, what you did and what you would do differently next time. Answer the questions below.

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. Why is reflective practice important?
2. How might you use reflection in your supervision and appraisal?
 |

**Learning activity**

Whatever your role in early years and childcare, it is important you have the right level of literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills to support your professional practice. In the space below, outline how you will need to use these skills in your job.

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes1. I will need to use my literacy skills when I….
2. I will need to use my numeracy skills when I ……
3. I will need to use my communication skills when I ……
4. I will need to use my digital competency skills when I …….
 |

**Learning activity**

Supporting children and their families/carers’ language of choice is an important part of working in an early years and childcare setting. You may already have some Welsh language skills or be developing them.

In the box below, write down ways to develop your Welsh language skills to support children within early years and childcare settings and their families/carers.

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notes |

# 3.7 Policies and procedures

If you are already working for an organisation, your employer will have some policies and procedures that are relevant to this section. Make a list of these in the space below.

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| --- |
| Workbook notes |

# 3.8 Practice placement reflection

Talk to a manager in your work placement about how you have put professional practice as an early years and childcare worker into practice. Write a short reflective account and ask the manager to record a summary in the space below.

|  |
| --- |
| Workbook notesManager feedback |

If evidence from the workbook is being used towards the qualification, use the space below to record any discussions between you and your qualifications assessor.

|  |
| --- |
| Qualification assessor discussion notes |

**If evidence from the workbook is being used towards the qualification, the assessor must complete the declaration below.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Worker declaration**I confirm that the evidence listed for the workbook is authentic and a true representation of my own work.Worker signatureDate**Manager declaration**I confirm that the worker has achieved all the requirements of the workbook with the evidence submitted.Manager signatureDate**Qualification assessor declaration**I confirm that the learner has achieved all the requirements of the workbook with the evidence submitted. Assessment was conducted under the specified conditions and is valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.Qualification assessor signatureDate |