

Factsheet - Creating your operational plan

This is a step by step guide to creating an individual operational plan for your early years childcare setting containing all the essential information needed to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This document does not constitute an operational plan but provides guidance to enable you to create your own.

1. Introduction

An operational plan is a portfolio or collection of all your policies and information on how your setting runs. It provides information for your staff, parents/carers and Ofsted. Your operational plan should, as a minimum, include the points highlighted in this guidance.

You can be creative by using photos, flowcharts, diagrams, charts etc.

This is a working document and needs to reflect your individual group.

- ▶ Review the operational plan at least termly to ensure all information is current. This can be carried out at the same time as your self-evaluation form
- ▶ Report all significant changes to Ofsted at the earliest opportunity
- ▶ To help Ofsted make judgements about the overall quality of your care (and where applicable nursery education) inspectors will ask the important question 'what is it like for a child here?' To do this they will judge how well you meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

2. Designing your operational plan

Clearly write the name and any logos for your setting on the front cover of your operational plan. By making your operational plan appealing, interesting and up to date, this document can serve the purpose of informing parents.

If the operational plan doubles as information for parents you may choose not to include all the policies and procedures. You will then need to mark clearly from where these documents can be obtained.

3. Background Information

This information is useful to those within the community who are considering attending your group. It is also invaluable when applying for external funding for your group.

This should include:

- ▶ History of the group (how it started, when, where etc)
- ▶ Any developments
- ▶ Location
- ▶ Mention of any previous funding
- ▶ Integrated working

4. Aims and Objectives

Include a short statement outlining the goals and future plans of your group. Give details of any changes you may be planning for the future.

This could include:

- ▶ The purpose of your group
- ▶ Any plans for expansion
- ▶ Future training plans
- ▶ Any plans for quality assurance
- ▶ How you are meeting local needs
- ▶ How your setting follows the EYFS
- ▶ How your practice is fully inclusive

5. Staff

a. Recruitment, selection and retention

In this section you will need to make reference to how you manage your staff team. You can also refer to your staff policies

Also include details about:

- ▶ Staff meetings
- ▶ Staff appraisals
- ▶ Supervision.

b. Structure

The staff structure explains to parents the different roles of staff and their names within your group.

- ▶ Include the committee/employer/registered person, along with all staff and volunteers by name
- ▶ The staff structure can be shown in many ways (flow chart, photos, lists).

The following is an example of a flow chart



c. Qualifications

This section will contain useful information for parents. List further training and any plans you have. Ofsted will want to know about qualifications held by the staff along with the ratios of staff and the qualifications held.

d. Roles

It would be useful to explain the role of each member of staff.

Special emphasis should be given to the following roles:

- ▶ SENCO
- ▶ Child protection
- ▶ First aid
- ▶ Fire marshals

e. Volunteers, students parent helpers

This can be used to explain the expectations of staff concerning parental help.

Ensure reference is made to the recruitment and retention policies and procedures that will need to be undertaken by volunteers, students and parent helpers.

Explain the checks that are carried out on individuals (including the CRB checks). Remember that Ofsted now only check the registered person (committee or owner) and manager. It is vital that your recruitment policy ensures that robust procedures are in place in order that all new members of staff are thoroughly checked.

6. Visitors

You need to consider:

- ▶ Policies concerning students and volunteers
- ▶ Supervision of unvetted staff
- ▶ A daily record must be kept of all volunteers, students and parent helpers. This can be included in the visitors book.

Before allowing your visitors into your setting, you will need to think about:

- ▶ What is your policy on visitors?
- ▶ Where is this policy displayed?

Ensure that the policy covers:

- ▶ What safety measures are in place to prevent visitors walking directly into the children's area?
- ▶ What protocol is followed during their visit?
- ▶ All official visitors should carry a form of identification. If you are unsure of the validity of their visit, telephone their department to double check.
- ▶ It is better to be safe and sure than to be at risk.

Visitors book

You must have a visitors book, which should include the following:

- ▶ Time of arrival and departure
- ▶ Purpose of visit/organisation
- ▶ Vehicle registration
- ▶ Signature in/out.

7. What is it like for a child here?

Children

This will provide information for parents on what your group offers and what they need to be aware of. This could be part of the parents handbook or prospectus for your group.

Include the following details:

- ▶ Files that will be kept on the children and how parents can access them
- ▶ How long these files will be kept for
- ▶ Systems that are used to care for the children, ie keyworker systems
- ▶ How parents can arrange a time to talk to the carers in the setting - mutually convenient times rather than ad hoc meetings
- ▶ Consent forms that may be required in relation to outings, photos displayed, transport, first aid procedures, medical observations and the general terms and conditions
- ▶ All policies
- ▶ Guidance on integrated working and CAF.

Activities

Provide information for parents and Ofsted on the activities that are offered by your setting.

Include outings, general activities, planned topics etc. Where appropriate to your group include reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage, play opportunities and daily routines.

If there is more than one group operating from the same premises list them all separately.

8. Working in partnership, parents and carers

a. Hours of operation

Give details of the hours of operation for your setting. If you have more than one setting operating from the premises list all separately (e.g. breakfast club, after school club) with their opening times.

Consider your policies and procedures for late collection and uncollected children and any charges.

b. Information for parents

- ▶ Consider how information is made accessible to parents (newsletter, e-bulletin, notice board, different languages, Braille etc.)
- ▶ Consider how to share confidential child information with parents on a daily basis using the key worker system.
- ▶ Ensure parents are aware of all your policies and procedures and where they can find them.
- ▶ You may consider the use of suggestions, compliments and comments box/questionnaires/open days, evenings, newsletters and posters.

9. Policies and Procedures

Policies need to be accessible to parents, members of staff and Ofsted at all times and reviewed regularly. The revision should be carried out at least once a term, which can be within the revision of your Ofsted self-evaluation form.

Make sure that all your staff have read and signed that they have read the policies and procedures as Ofsted may ask your staff questions.

You may wish to include other policies and procedures that are not directly linked to the EYFS and provide details of your procedures when carrying out risk assessments.

a. Organisation

- ▶ An operational plan
- ▶ Procedures for lost or uncollected children
- ▶ Staff/volunteer/committee member information
- ▶ Registration system for children and staff
- ▶ Planning of activities and opportunities for children
- ▶ Organisation of opportunities (incl. risk assessment)
- ▶ Meeting the needs of all ages and abilities surrounding care and education

c. Protecting children from harm and neglect and helping them stay safe

- ▶ Risk assessment
- ▶ Record of visitors
- ▶ Fire safety procedures/fire safety records and certificates
- ▶ Operational procedures for outings
- ▶ Vehicle records including insurance
- ▶ List of named drivers
- ▶ Child protection statement

d. Helping children to be healthy

- ▶ Administration of medicines policy
- ▶ Prior parental consent to administer medicines
- ▶ Record of medicines administered
- ▶ Prior parental consent for emergency treatment
- ▶ Accident record
- ▶ Sick children policy
- ▶ No smoking policy
- ▶ Individual children's dietary needs records

e. General

- ▶ Equal opportunities policy
- ▶ Inclusion policy
- ▶ Written statement about special needs
- ▶ Behaviour management policy
- ▶ Incident record

- ▶ Admissions policy
- ▶ Complaints procedure
- ▶ Record of complaints
- ▶ Activities provided for children

10. Conclusion

- ▶ Keeping your operational plan up to date will assist with the preparation for your Ofsted inspection.
- ▶ It will help to demonstrate how you are meeting the EYFS safeguarding and welfare and requirements.
- ▶ The operational plan should be available to Ofsted as soon as they arrive, this will allow staff to continue their duties.
- ▶ A good operational plan will tell the inspector everything they need to know, including where to find it.
- ▶ Above all this will demonstrate to your staff and parents your professional approach to the care of their children and how you keep the development, safety and quality of care of children as your highest priority at all times.

11. Relevant documents

- ▶ Special Educational Needs toolkit – ref. ISBN 184 185 5316
- ▶ Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage – ref: ISBN 978-1-84478-921-4

Contact: DfES publication orderline: tel. 0845 60 222 60

Are you ready for your inspection? – ref. HMI 2447BB

This is not exhaustive – add your own documentation to meet the needs of your setting.