



Nursery Management: Early Childhood Centre Operations, Safeguarding and Quality



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Introduction:

Nursery management often breaks down in the gaps between care, learning and business: rooms run below safe staffing levels, safeguarding concerns go unrecorded, play sessions lack observation-based planning, parents hear about problems too late and occupancy falls without anyone tracing why. This Core Concept course gives nursery owners, managers and senior early-years staff a working system for running an early-childhood centre: staffing and supervision, child protection routines, health and nutrition, a play-based curriculum, family partnership, quality self-evaluation and centre finances. Each participant builds a Centre Operating and Quality Improvement Plan for their own setting.

Course Objectives:

- Assess a nursery or early-childhood centre against its operating model, licensing conditions and written policy set, and identify the gaps to close first
- Plan room staffing, rotas and key-person allocation, and recruit, induct and supervise carers against clear role profiles
- Apply safeguarding and child protection procedures, including recording concerns, safer recruitment checks and the reporting route to the designated lead
- Organise daily health, hygiene, nutrition, sleep and safety routines with the records and checks that prove they happen
- Lead a play-based early-years curriculum using observation, documentation and next-step planning across the developmental domains
- Build a quality self-evaluation, a family partnership plan and a fees and occupancy budget into one improvement cycle

Target Audience:

- Owners and operators who hold the licence and business responsibility for a nursery or day-care centre
 - Centre managers and heads of setting who run daily operations, staffing and quality across several rooms
 - Deputy managers and room supervisors who lead a team of carers and plan daily routines and activities
 - Senior early-years practitioners preparing to step into a management or designated safeguarding role
 - Operations and quality staff in groups that run several early-childhood centres or workplace creches
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Course Outline:

Day 1: The Early-Years Sector, Centre Models and Licensing Foundations

- Early-Childhood Centre Models: Day Nursery, Preschool, Workplace Creche and Home-Based Care
- Five Developmental Domains: Physical, Social, Emotional, Language and Cognitive Growth From Birth to School Entry
- Licensing Conditions Checklist: Premises, Staff Vetting, First Aid Cover and Record Keeping
- Centre Policy Set Map: Admissions, Behaviour, Complaints, Medication and Emergency Evacuation
- Current-State Audit Template for an Existing or Planned Nursery

Day 2: Staffing Ratios, Recruitment, Supervision and Safeguarding

- Staff-to-Child Ratio Planning by Age Band With a Weekly Room Rota Tool
- Safer Recruitment Workflow: Role Profiles, Reference Checks, Background Checks and Probation
- Key-Person System and One-to-One Supervision Meeting Structure for Carers
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy: Signs of Concern, Recording Forms and Designated Lead Role
- Reporting Duties Flowchart: Internal Escalation, Referral to the Competent Authority and Allegations Against Staff

Day 3: Health, Nutrition, Safety Routines and the Play-Based Curriculum

- Hygiene and Infection Control Routines: Handwashing, Nappy Changing, Cleaning Schedules and Exclusion Periods
- Nutrition and Mealtime Planning: Menu Cycles, Allergy Registers and Safe Food Handling
- Daily Safety Checks, Accident and Incident Log and Sleep Monitoring Record
- Montessori, Reggio Emilia and HighScope Approaches Compared for Centre Curriculum Choice
- Observation, Learning Documentation and Next-Step Planning Cycle for Each Child

Day 4: Learning Environments, Inclusion, Families and Quality Evaluation

- Environment as Third Teacher: Room Layout, Continuous Provision and Outdoor Play Areas
 - Inclusion Overview: Early Identification, Individual Support Plans and Referral to Specialists
 - Parent Partnership Toolkit: Settling-In Plan, Daily Handover, Progress Meetings and Complaint Handling
 - Quality Self-Evaluation Framework: Indicators, Evidence Portfolio and Room Observation Walkthrough
 - Common Failure Cases: Ratio Breaches, Missed Safeguarding Signals, Medication Errors and Staff Turnover
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Day 5: Centre Finances and the Operating and Quality Improvement Plan

- Centre Budget Model: Staff Cost Share, Fee Structure, Occupancy Rate and Break-Even Point
- Occupancy and Waiting List Management With Enrolment Funnel Tracking
- Case Study Review: Mid-Sized Nursery With Falling Occupancy and a Critical Quality Report
- Centre Operating and Quality Improvement Plan Drafting: Priorities, Owners, Milestones and Measures
- Improvement Plan Presentation and Peer Challenge Panel

Skills You Will Gain:

- Early-Years Centre Operations
- Ratio and Rota Planning
- Safer Recruitment
- Child Protection Procedures
- Health and Nutrition Routines
- Observation-Based Curriculum Planning
- Family Partnership Communication
- Nursery Budget and Occupancy Analysis

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Centre Operating and Quality Improvement Plan built around the real gaps of your own setting
- Know exactly who records, escalates and reports a child protection concern in your centre and how fast
- Link staffing, fees and occupancy figures so that decisions on rooms and enrolment rest on numbers rather than guesswork
- Compare practice with owners, managers and supervisors from private, workplace and community early-childhood centres

Conclusion:

A well-run early-childhood centre depends on joined-up decisions about staffing, child protection, daily care, learning and money. The week moves from centre models, developmental domains and licensing foundations, through ratios, safer recruitment and safeguarding, to health, nutrition and a play-based curriculum, then to learning environments, inclusion, family partnership and quality evaluation. The final day turns budgets, occupancy and a case nursery into practice, and each participant presents a Centre Operating and Quality Improvement Plan for peer challenge.
