

**Warwickshire Early Years Quality Standards and Safeguarding Team**

# A Guide to Effective Induction



This guide has been developed to support all Early Years providers working with children aged from birth to five years, with a focus on good practice in relation to Staff Induction



Induction is the process an employer follows when a new employee or volunteer joins the team, or an existing employee returns to work or changes roles. The induction should provide employees with all the information they need to become integrated into the setting.

The recruitment of a new member of staff or assistant is only the beginning of the employment relationship, and the future of that relationship depends to a considerable extent on how the new employee is settled into the job.

Induction should give the new starter a good feel for the setting and reassure them that they have made the right decision joining the team. A poor induction for new employees, can lead to under-performance and low job satisfaction, as well as high absence and staff turnover. A quality induction programme over a six-month period or longer, makes good business sense whatever the size of the organisation.

An induction into a new workplace means that new or returning staff can integrate into the new setting with ease. Staff induction programmes also benefit employers too as when they are well-run, they increase employee job satisfaction and commitment and reduce absenteeism and turnover.

*The EYFS states:*

*Providers must ensure that all staff receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Induction training must include information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety issues. Providers must support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.*

*Section 3.25 EYFS 2024*

*Childminders must ensure that assistants receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Induction training must include information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety issues. Childminders must support assistants to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for children that continually improves.*

*Section 3.25 EYFS 2024 Childminders*

## **Who needs a staff induction?**

Every new starter, or new assistant regardless of their position, benefits from a well-structured induction. This ensures they understand the settings culture, policies, and their specific role within the organisation. It is good practise to have a clear policy for the induction of staff or assistants which outlines the settings policies and procedures for induction. This may be supported by an induction plan, or induction checklist and a training plan. A framework for developing an induction policy and induction plan / checklist is included within the induction toolkit.

## Tailoring induction

In some cases, the induction programme may need to be adapted to cater for employees with diverse needs, for example practitioners returning to work after a break i.e. maternity leave would benefit from an update of the latest changes to early years legislation and practice, for example reading the revised EYFS framework.

New Managers or Deputy managers will require a thorough induction to support them in developing the skills and knowledge to become effective leaders.

New Directors or Committee Members or Senior Leaders, may require an induction that helps them to understand the setting strategic goals, culture, and leadership expectations alongside understanding the day to day running of the setting.

New employees including assistants beginning work for the first time may need extra mentoring to settle into the workplace, employees with disabilities may require equipment and adjustments to safety arrangements and new employees from ethnic minorities may be sensitive to the culture of the workplace and may benefit from tailored support and mentoring.

Parents may also benefit from a tailored version of an induction covering setting introduction, facilities, daily routines and rules, policies, and expectations.

It can be useful to create a welcome pack as part of an induction for all new or returning staff and for parents detailing relevant information such as procedures, organisations, staffing, absence etc.

## When would a staff induction take place?

An induction programme might take place over several days or even weeks. Depending on the employee's current commitments, there may be some form of induction before beginning the new role. Typically, though, a staff induction will take place during the first days and weeks of employment.

It is important that this the induction is planned carefully so that new or returning staff do not become overloaded with information on their first morning and be put off.

## How to plan for an effective induction

There are lots of different areas that need to be considered when planning an induction; some items will need to be covered immediately while others introduced gradually over the induction period. The example induction plan / checklist included as part of Warwickshire Early Years Induction Toolkit and provides an outline of a way in which you might structure and pace your induction programme. However, it is important to note that this induction plan/ checklist should not be used in its entirety instead each individual setting should reflect upon their own policies and procedures and adapt the plan / checklist based upon these.

It is also good practise to adapt your induction plan to suit the needs of the new staff or assistants you are employing and the role they are taking on and ensure the plan is reviewed regularly so it remains current and up to date.



## **Before employment**

For all employees it is important that certain areas of induction are covered before they are asked to start working these may include:

- Fire and emergency evacuation procedures explained, and Fire drill completed.
- Tour of building – toilets, staff room, office etc.
- How the provision operates and their role within it.
- Roles and responsibilities outlined including safeguarding responsibilities.
- Security procedures for the building explained.
- Check that all relevant personal information has been established e.g. person to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Codes of conduct and dress code.
- Health and safety: including arrangements for first aid.

All employers also have a legal duty to ensure that all employees understand the policies and procedures covering:

- Terms and conditions of employment and salary details.
- Discipline and Dismissal.
- Grievances
- Whistleblowing
- Bullying and Harassment.

In addition, the EYFS Statutory Framework 2024 requires that the following need to be included in the induction process as a minimum for all staff in a childcare setting and assistants:

- The safeguarding policy and procedure.
- The need to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Food hygiene if staff are to be involved in handling food.
- Smoking and vaping.
- Behaviour management policy.
- Alcohol and medication.
- Mobile phone and acceptable use of ICT.

Where members of staff/ assistants will be working directly with children, they also need to be familiar with the following policies and procedures that are required by the EYFS Welfare Requirements:

- Complaints
- Uncollected child
- Missing child
- Arrivals and departures
- Outings
- Equality of opportunities

- Administering medicines
- Illnesses, injuries, and infection control

## **During employment**

Once a new member of staff/ assistant has undergone the initial induction process, it is important for leaders/ managers/ childminders to consider any ongoing support needed in the first few weeks and months of employment. Setting up a mentoring or 'buddy' system is an effective way of giving new employees a place to go for support.

## **How to conduct a staff induction?**

As well as things you should include in a staff induction, there are also things that need to be avoided. For example, it is important not to provide too much information too soon. It is extremely easy to be overwhelmed by too much information, especially when it is your first day!

Another thing to bear in mind is pitching to the right level. All information shared needs to be tailored to the staff you are inducting. If you are employing someone who is experienced and has moved from a similar role in another setting, you should not pitch at the same level as you would if you were taking to member of staff who is completely new to their role.

In group-based provision the process of inducting new staff should be a shared one and all staff including Deputies, Room Leaders Practitioners, SENDCO's, DSLs should play a role, as should the new employee's Manager. Whereas in a childminding provision the childminder will take the lead, however they may involve other assistants they employ in supporting the process of induction too.

It is important to also hold realistic expectations and remember that induction is a gradual process that takes place over time. For an induction programme to be effective, it needs be well structures, engaging. and supportive so that the new employee feels reassured that joining the organisation was the right decision.

## **Progress Review Meeting**

Regardless of whether new staff have been appointed based on a formal probation period, regular progress review meetings should be scheduled into the induction of all staff, to check how the staff are settling in and to help, support and guide them so they can succeed in their new role.

The type of aspects that may be considered and reviewed include the following:

- **Progress within the induction plan**- are key activities/ task being completed, are policies read and understood?
- **Work quality and output** – is the employee developing in their role? Are they displaying the required competencies? Is more training or support needed?



- **Attitude** – is the employee displaying enthusiasm and interest in the job? Or are they showing signs of boredom and carelessness? And if so, why? And how can this be improved?
- **Relationships** – how well is the new employee fitting into the team? Do they interact well with parents and children? If there are any problems, what is the cause? And how can they be resolved?
- **Conduct** – is the employee's conduct and behaviour consistent with what is required and expected? If not, what will be done to address this?
- **Attendance** – what is the employee's daily time keeping like? What is their absence record like? If unsatisfactory, what are the reasons? And what should be done to improve attendance?
- **Potential** – is the employee showing potential for more advanced or different work? Do they show potential for a supervisory role? If so, this should be noted for consideration by management.

Notes should be taken at each review meeting and kept securely and confidentially in accordance with the GDPR ensuring employees have access to their own records when required.

These meetings and notes together with the induction checklist can then be used to inform discussions at following review meetings and inform the content of first performance management meeting once induction/probation is complete.

## Evaluating induction

Induction programmes cannot stay static and is good practise to ensure they are regularly evaluated in case there are changes needed. As employees complete their induction it is good practise to involve them in evaluating the process, they may be able to provide valuable insights and suggest improvements which could be made. It is also good practise to hold exit interviews with staff that leave within a year of starting to gain their views on the induction process.

## In Summary

Induction should be a positive learning experience for all those involved. A comprehensive induction can help create an inclusive, supportive working environment for everyone ensuring all new employees have shared knowledge and skills and ensure a flawless transition to effective performance management practice.