

Managing your Childcare Business - Mini Guide

Business Planning	<p>Business planning is essential to any successful business. Producing a business plan does not have to be time consuming. Once it has been developed it can be used to manage the business effectively.</p> <p>Business plans should be reviewed regularly to ensure the business is progressing as planned. It should be used alongside any improvement/Ofsted action plans and cover the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the business • Business aims and objectives • Premises and location • Market research • Equal opportunities • SWOT analysis • Risk analysis • Marketing plan • Services • Staffing • Financial planning and management • Action plan • Policy review <p>Further information on business plans and templates can be found via the links below.</p>
Business Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the local market • Understand and manage occupancy rates • Understand the costs • Monthly accounts • Cash flow forecasting • Clear and transparent charging policy/funded offer • Plan for the future
Reviewing Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the expenditure gone up? • Have there been any changes to funding? • What has occupancy looked like across this past year? • How much does it cost per hour to deliver the service? • What does the breakeven look like this year compared to last year? • Is the fee structure right? • What does occupancy for September look like?
Market Research	<p>Settings should be aware of any changes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National early years policies, funding entitlements and quality standards • Local Authority Childcare Sufficiency Assessment • Changes in local population, where families live or work and the economy • Surrounding employers and their operating hours • New housing developments and schools in the area • Travel and transport patterns • Other childcare business nearby • The needs of local families
Model of Delivery	<p>Using the feedback from market research, where possible, providers should try to offer a model of delivery that meets parental needs. Providers should be clear and transparent with their model of delivery and maintain a clear and fair policy on late payments, late pickups etc. so parents understand any additional charges that may apply.</p>

	<p>Providers can support parents with their childcare costs by informing them of extra funding which is available for eligible parents such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax free childcare • Childcare element of Tax Credits • Childcare element of Universal Credit • Childcare vouchers <p>Please see the link below to the Childcare Choices website which has further details on support with childcare costs for families.</p>
<p>Marketing</p>	<p>Marketing is an integral part of business growth. Marketing can be the weak link in business plans, so it is worth spending time on ensuring the marketing strategy is strong. Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the settings unique selling point? • Why did parents choose the setting? • What do parents value the most? • Share the story and vision of the setting • Know the competition and what they offer – stand out! • What methods of advertising could be used? • First impressions count! • Keep online information up to date <p>A key part of ensuring that marketing continues to benefit the setting is to track all enquiries, how did customers hear about the setting? Follow up on all enquiries, why did/didn't they take up a place? What did/didn't they like about the setting?</p> <p>Ensure that your setting details are up to date online. Many settings are listed on google, social media, websites and early years specific directories. Always make sure your contact details are correct, it is better to have no online presence rather than incorrect details as this does not give a good impression to prospective families.</p> <p>Google my business is a free tool that allows you to promote your business on google - https://www.google.com/intl/en_uk/business/</p>
<p>Fundraising & Sources of Funds</p>	<p>Fundraising can be a great way to involve families and the local community in your setting. It is usually easier to raise money for one-offs such as start-up costs or equipment e.g. ICT resources or upgrading the outdoor area. Many local supermarkets / large businesses will offer funding to local community activities. Have a look in your local area to see what is available. Many funding streams will only be available for registered charities or community run groups. Settings will need to check the eligibility criteria for any grants prior to submitting an application.</p> <p>Things to consider when applying for grants or funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your organisation – be clear on the legal structure of your organisation and understand its structure • Have copies of your governing document to hand and ensure they are up to date • Keep applications to the point, be specific about what the application is for, include any match funding or other contributions • Registered charities – information relating to your charity is available for all to view on the Charity Commission website – know your group's history, submit returns on time and keep trustee information up to date • Send ALL the documents requested with the application • Ensure your application is neat, well presented, spell checked with clear and understandable text

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEEP LOOKING AND APPLYING <p>Useful websites for funding / grant information and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warwickshire County Council – Grants and local funding information - https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/grants • Warwickshire Community & Voluntary Action (WCAVA) - https://www.wcava.org.uk/ there is a wide range of information on their website with regards to current funding streams and support on how to apply • Grantfinder – leading grant and funding information provider – www.grantfinder.co.uk • Sustainability West Midlands – grant and funding to support businesses to become more environmentally sustainable - https://www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/sustainable-business-support/coventry-warwickshire-lep/ • The National Lottery – find funding for your project - https://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/funding • Children & Young People Now have information available on funding and how to access them - https://www.cypnow.co.uk/funding • Heart of England Community Foundation – a charity that raises money to fund and develop local community activity across the West Midlands & Warwickshire - https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/ <p>Recommended reading – Charity fundraising: a guide to trustees duties https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-fundraising-cc20#e3</p> <p>Further information on funding grants and where to find them can be accessed via the Early Years Team – earlyyears@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>COVID-19 Business Support</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely challenging for all early years and childcare providers. It is more important than ever that settings ensure they are carrying out cash flow forecasting and business planning to ensure they can remain viable.</p> <p>Warwickshire County Council has continued to pay all eligible early education funding entitlements. Further guidance on the early education entitlements can be found here and via WCC Termly Information letters - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-coronavirus-covid-19</p> <p>The Government have issued guidance on financial support for early years and childcare settings (Coronavirus: financial support for education, early years and children's social care) which includes information on but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme • Coronavirus Self-Employment Income Support Scheme • Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Schemes • Small Business Grant Scheme <p>Other useful government information / tools can be found here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support finder - https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder • Coronavirus Business Support - https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support • Coronavirus Bounce Back Loans - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-coronavirus-bounce-back-loan <p>Nursery and early years sector: COVID-19 restrictions and consumer law Advice to help nurseries and early years providers understand how consumer law applies to arrangements they make with parents during the coronavirus pandemic.</p>

	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nursery-and-early-years-sector-covid-19-restrictions-and-consumer-law
	<p>WCC COVID-19 Risk Assessment Prompts for Early Years Providers and Childminders</p> <p>Includes further information on financial and business considerations that settings will need to take during the pandemic, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Financial Planning • Early Education Funding • Sustainability <p>This document was emailed with the briefing on 07.07.20, please let us know if you do not have a copy of this and we can issue you with another one.</p>
	<p>Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures</p>
	<p>Additional Coronavirus Business Support tools & Information</p> <p>Early Years Alliance - https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/coronavirus-early-years PACEY - https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/coronavirus/sources-of-support-coronavirus/ NDNA - https://www.ndna.org.uk/NDNA/Knowledge_Hub/Coronavirus_for_nurseries_early_years.aspx Famly - https://famly.co/early-years-coronavirus-covid-19-hub/ Parenta - https://www.parenta.com/covid-19-information-point/ Out of School Alliance - https://www.outofschoolalliance.co.uk/coronavirus-update</p>
Tools & Resources	<p>Starting up a childcare business</p> <p>Information and tips on setting up and running your own business https://www.gov.uk/browse/business</p>
	<p>Charity Commission</p> <p>Useful information on setting up and running a charity https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission</p>
	<p>Companies House</p> <p>Information on starting up and running a company https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house</p>
	<p>Staff Employment – ACAS</p> <p>Advice and information on staff employment matters https://www.acas.org.uk/</p>
	<p>The Pensions Regulator</p> <p>Information and guidance on staff pensions and the responsibility of the employer https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/</p>
	<p>Group setting cost calculator co-produced with Merton and PACEY through DSF funding</p> <p>https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/nurseries/group-setting-cost-calculator/ https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/nurseries/group-setting-occupancy-tool/</p>
	<p>NDNA – Business Zone NDNA Business Zone</p> <p>http://www.ndna.org.uk/NDNA/News/Early_Years_Business_Zone.aspx</p>

	<p>Early Years Alliance – Business and Management https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/business-and-management https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/cost-delivery-calculator</p>
	<p>PACEY - Business Smart https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/business-smart/about-business-smart/</p>
	<p>Foundation Years – Business Planning https://foundationyears.org.uk/2019/08/business-planning/</p>
	<p>Find useful briefings, DfE guidance and slides from events and training https://app-t1.pr-seycp.azurewebsites.net/resources.htm</p>
	<p>Coram Family and Childcare's resources are designed to help professionals working in childcare and early years https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/resources-professionals</p>
	<p>Government help with childcare costs for parents https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/</p>
	<p>Early years business sustainability Advice, examples and resources to help early years providers run a sustainable business https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/early-years-business-sustainability</p>
	<p>Support and advice for your early years business https://www.earlyyearsbusinesszone.org.uk/</p>
	<p>Warwickshire County Council – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-644-581</p>
	<p>Warwickshire County Council – Warwickshire Insights Warwickshire Insights provides statistical information about local areas in Warwickshire https://data.warwickshire.gov.uk/</p>

Warwickshire County Council - Useful Contacts	
<p>Early Years Sufficiency & Business Support – for all enquiries with regards to starting up a childcare business, childcare sufficiency and auditing of early education funding requirements.</p>	<p>earlyyears@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Early Years Funding – for all enquiries with regards to early education funding including 30 hours eligibility, the funding process and the Synergy provider portal.</p>	<p>eyfunding@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Early Years Advisors – for all enquiries with regards to the EYFS, quality and safeguarding.</p>	<p>earlyyearsadvisors@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>