

# Maintaining communication in nursery management



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In this unit I will be looking at how to maintain effective communication through a nursery setting with staff, parents and children. I will be going through the importance of staff appraisals and how records of staff should be logged and the reason for this. Disciplinary and grievance issues will be discussed as it is crucial to know the procedure of these in the unfortunate circumstances that they may occur. Finally, I will evaluate the appropriate employment policies that are put in to place for the recruitment and management of the staff in a nursery organisation.

### Task 1. 1

*“ Explain the process for maintaining effective communication within the setting team”*

We know that communication is the transfer of information between people. It can be verbal or non verbal. In a nursery we utilize constant communication between a practitioner and child, management and staff, staff and parents and many others. In a larger setting it may be a complicated process however there are many different ways of easing this process. It is essential that we know what the key factors should be in the communication process, how to improve our skills and the potential problems that exist with errors in communication and how to overcome this to have minimal faults.

In order to have successful communication there are normally three major components; a sender, a receiver and a message. For example in a nursery setting the practitioner may be teaching there key child a certain colour/number and in order to do this they set an activity. In this example we

have a sender (practitioner), a receiver (child) and a message (activity). For staff we frequently have a great deal of information to send within a short period of time. To do this effectively, it is important for management to know that there are factors which could influence how our message is interpreted. Breakdown of important information can help give receiver a better understanding of what is expected from them.

In situations where this does not occur and important information is not conveyed, allergy advice, medicine or parents preferences for their child may be missed. For example, in one situation, there was a member of staff from preschool that had come to cover for the toddler room leader. Unaware that one child is allergic to wheat she incorporated play doh in her activity. This error could have been prevented if the communication between staff had been complete.

In my current place of employment we have a 'communication book' kept in each room. This book contains ALL messages from managers, staff and parents. Every member of staff should check this every time they enter the room and sign once they have read any new message. Staffs are all told verbally any messages and it is also written down in the communication book to make sure everyone has understood the message.

I understand from my experience that the trust of our parents and families of children that attend nursery is an extremely important part of providing effective childcare. If they don't trust us, any communication that we attempt to send to them may be disregarded.

The first step to effective communication is honesty. It is important not to promise staff and children that we are going to do something unless it can be followed through.

It has been said as much as 80% of our communication is non verbal. We need to pay attention to our body language, eye contact and tone of voice when addressing staff, parents and children. Conflict among co workers can impact the setting we work in and can prevent important communication. Also, cultural awareness can be an important part of knowledge base that we need to have when communicating as practitioners/managing staff. For example, we may want to pat the arm of an unhappy member of staff, but we need to make sure that this behaviour is acceptable and not seen as inappropriate.

Regardless of how busy the day to day running of the nursery we need to ensure that each room and management has “ protected” time. This allows staff to communicate about important issues such as, child protection issue, staffing levels and medical advice given by parents for a particular child. In order to have effective communication it is essential to have an active listener. To show you are an active listener it is important to pay attention, respond appropriately and provide feedback.

In business there are 4C's of communication which are; comprehension, credibility, connection and contagiousness. Starting with comprehension, it is important to see whether our message can be comprehended by staff/parents/children. If they don't understand or it has to be repeated it is likely to be a fault in our communication. Secondly, credibility is an

extremely important factor. This must be perceived in the correct way to parents what you are trying to convey as if they don't understand they will have lost interest from the very start. Thirdly, we have connection. It is important to have a connection with everyone whether it is the staff, children or parents. It makes communicating with one another a much easier process when we have the confidence and connection to discuss openly any matters. Finally, contagiousness; this is what motivates staff. It is important for staff and managers to portray an enthusiastic working environment and to keep each other motivated. This action should be a result of what has been communicated.

We know what needs to be done to have effective communication however 60% of business failures are because of poor communication. The 2 main types of communication we use are verbal and non verbal. Within these 2 categories we have many barriers which may affect staffs understanding or unwillingness to communicate and be active listeners. Verbal communication coexists alongside non verbal communication, which can affect people's perceptions and exchanges in subtle but significant ways. Non verbal communication means how people read our body language such as gestures, facial expressions, eye contact and posture. The sound of our voice, including pitch, tone and volume are also forms of non verbal communication. In order to make staff comfortable and to help them understand what is being expected from them it is important to express non verbal communication in the correct manner. We use verbal communication to inform, whether it is to inform others of our needs or to impart knowledge. Verbal communication helps to clarify misunderstandings and provides

missing information. The environment we are in may make communication difficult. If we are in a large nursery setting it may be harder to convey a message to all staff straight away as they may be located in different areas. It is important to be clear when giving instructions as the way some staff perceives messages may differ. There are also many other ways verbal messages can be misread. If staff are stressed, or have personal issues it can affect the way they choose to communicate. However, this should be dealt with at a separate time and should be resolved when the member of staff or manager are a lot calmer.

### Task 1. 2

*“ Understand the importance of the appraisal process and how records for staff can be logged”*

A formal appraisal is important for professional development, to meet a goals or objectives. Other benefits that can be gained from an appraisal include enhanced communications, an opportunity to effectively address performance problems, and improved employee morale.

The appraisal form should be completed during annual appraisals by both the manager and employee. It is good practice for employees to complete a self-appraisal form prior to the interview. This could identify areas where they feel they have excelled, areas they feel they need more support on, any training they have completed and any they would benefit from.

The appraisal process looks at what the employer has learned over the last 6 months and they can discuss goals and targets they have achieved. The

appraisal process gives a chance to employees and managers to discuss any further training they feel is necessary. When the employee is completing the appraisal form, it is important to complete this with the previous year's appraisal to ensure that any targets which have been set in order to gain the pay rise have been reached. If they have not been reached, it gives the employee an opportunity to complete them (if this is possible) before the appraisal takes place. At my previous nursery all staff were asked to make a personal development plan at the beginning of the year so every year we were able to see what skills we had developed, what new skills we are looking to develop and what we need to improve. With this plan we used SMART targets in order to have effective goals and so that our progress can be measured. The appraisal process is very effective if carried out in the correct process.

### Task 1. 3

*" Identify the correct procedures to follow with regards to disciplinary and grievance issues"*

Disciplinary and grievance procedures are frameworks which provide clear and transparent structures for dealing with difficulties which may arise as part of the working relationship from either the employer's or employees' perspective. They are necessary to ensure that everybody is treated in the same way in similar circumstances, to ensure issues are dealt with fairly and reasonably, and that employers are compliant with current legislation and follow the ACAS code of practice for handling disciplinary and grievance issues.

Disciplinary procedures are important as they help resolve any issues that have come up in the setting without needing to go to an employment tribunal. A disciplinary procedure normally consists of three stages. The first stage is a letter which tells the employee why the meeting is going to be taking place and has to be given to the employee at least 72 hours prior to the second stage. Following the letter, the employee is invited for a meeting and is able to bring along a companion to be present at the meeting. Prior to the meeting it is important for management to ensure all the facts are investigated in advance (including consulting the individual's personal file for relevant information) and plan how the meeting is to be approached. It is also important for another member of the management committee or management team to be there to take notes and help conduct the interview. Finally management come to a decision of whether the employee should be dismissed or kept on. If the employee feels they should not be dismissed they are able to appeal.

After the disciplinary meeting there are three possible outcomes. The first one is where the manager decides not to take any actions. They may just decide to refer the employee for counselling or training. Secondly, management may decide to give the employee a formal warning. There are three different types of warnings that can be given. They can either be a written warning, or made as a general rule or employee may find they are given their final written warning. The third possible outcome is of course dismissal. However, if a manager decided to dismiss a member of staff it is important the ACAS code is followed.



It is essential that grievances from employees are treated in the same fair manner and all levels of management are familiar with their organisation's grievance procedure. Staff should be encouraged to discuss ordinary, day to day issues informally with their relevant manager. This helps concerns to be heard and responded to as soon as possible instead of turning to employment tribunal. The grievance and disciplinary issues can also be used to tackle problems such as persistent lateness, bullying, inappropriate use of the nursery resources and fighting.

#### Task 1. 4

*“ Evaluate relevant employment policies required for the recruitment and management of staff in the organisation”*

Many businesses, especially Childcare feel the staffs are the company's greatest asset. This is because it is down to the staff on how well the children and parents are being cared for.

*“ Employees are a company's greatest asset - they're your competitive advantage. You want to attract and retain the best; provide them with encouragement, stimulus, and make them feel that they are an integral part of the company's mission.”* [Anna M Mulcahy. (2001). *Assets*. Available: [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/annemmulc424886.html?src=t\\_asset](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/annemmulc424886.html?src=t_asset). Last accessed 6 February 2015]

Employing a new member of staff is a lengthy process. The company starts off by advertising the vacancy. The company should make sure that the vacancy is advertised in a variety of places and locations so that all

applicants are given an equal opportunity. The advertisement should be circulated to underrepresented groups in the community both externally and internally. Which means the job role should be advertised in local job centres, colleges, schools and community notice boards.

The next stage is the recruitment and selection stage. All the completed application forms are given to the nursery and the management team then score each application and select candidates that fit the job description. The manager then chooses however many candidates they feel should be invited for an interview. When the recruitment and selection process takes place two staff from management should be involved in the process, making sure they are also trained for equal opportunities to insure there is no discrimination against any candidates. After the interview process the successful candidate should be notified by telephone. However, a formal letter is then sent to the candidate containing the job offer.

The three important policies when recruiting staff are induction of staff, staff development and the promotion policy. The induction of staff policy is normally carried out on the first day of the job to allow the employee to see the day to day running of the nursery. The new staff member is handed the book containing all the policies and is asked to make sure they familiarize themselves with them. At my current work place I was allocated to an existing member of staff who showed me what responsibilities I would have in the nursery. It is important to familiarize the employee about the health and safety policy, fire safety, child protection issues, arrival and departures policy, children's medical information, and allergies children may have and how to complete sickness/injury forms, sleep and nappy charts which are <https://assignbuster.com/maintaining-communication-in-nursery-management/>

required to be completed regularly. This should be done at least within the first week of employment.

The second policy which is staff development is put in to place so that parents are guaranteed excellent childcare. If staffs are being trained frequently and ensuring they are stretching their personal targets and knowledge they will be able to provide a higher level of care for the children of the nursery and this can be done with management looking in to how they are able to develop staff learning. Employees can look at their personal development plans and then suggest appropriate training they would like to have.

Finally the promotion policy is put in to place in order for staff to work towards personal targets so they can continue to receive professional development. It is important management carry out the appraisal process in order for staff to receive this opportunity. If the management feel there is an appropriate candidate they refer back to the selection and recruitment policy.

In conclusion I feel all policies and procedures are extremely relevant as it helps the setting meet all the correct statutory requirements and have regard to the statutory guidance laid out in the EYFS. It also gives staff and parents a clear understanding of the services the nursery has to offer. It sets out rules and guidelines so everyone has equal opportunities. As a manager it is important to make sure that the company's vision is seen through all the staff and they work according to the policies and procedures that have been set when running the day to day activities in the nursery.