

Checklist of Documents

Accident Book - this is of importance in most type of claims. The nursery must have an accident book which is kept in a place where all staff can access it. This is an important piece of contemporaneous evidence and staff must be made aware the necessity of completing the form.

Accident Report Form - further evidence of the incident in question and again key contemporaneous documentation. Report may include investigation findings of supervisors/ manager. The report form may contain a section about how future accidents of the same type might be prevented. Care must be taken when completing this section. If changes to practice are required this may prejudice the nursery should a claim for personal injury arise.

Accident Investigation Report - this may form part of the incident report or may be a separate document where a manager has investigated the incident, spoken to witnesses and ascertained the root cause of the incident. It may be necessary for the nursery to take witness statements from those members of staff concerned in an incident.

Maintenance records - records to show that the building and any work equipment has been maintained in good repair. For example records may be required in a outdoor slipping case to show that a flagged area has been treated with chemicals to prevent the build up of moss and algae.

Personnel File of Nursery Nurse/Training records - This will depend on the circumstances but if there are allegations or wrongdoing on the part of a nursery nurse towards a child then it will be of importance. Details of their training and qualifications, when employed, were they competent to deal with the situation in which they faced. What type of training did they receive including course notes, simply a record that they attended a course is not enough. Should a claim arise these are the type of questions that will be asked:

1. What was the recruitment process for that employee?
2. Did the recruitment process follow nursery guidelines/process for recruitment?
3. Were references taken?
4. Was that employee monitored / appraised?
5. Was there a history of complaints against that employee?

Staff List For the Day in Question - was there a sufficient ratio between staff and children? Was there a sufficient ratio of suitably qualified staff? This will be of relevance for example if there is an allegation that a child suffered an accident due to inadequate supervision / staffing levels.

Handover records - were any particular problems with a child flagged up for the incoming shift. For example if a child was unwell staff need to be informed of this so that they can monitor a situation and act if necessary.

External Inspection reports - for example Ofsted- to give background information on the way the nursery is run and if there were any areas of concerns which may be relevant to the incident in question.

Child's Records - this should include background information eg pre-admission details. How was the child referred- was it by an external agency? Was the child assessed before admission to the nursery? This will be of relevance if an allegation arises that it was appropriate for a particular child to attend a nursery as they may have special requirements such as medical or educational needs.

Care plan / risk assessments - In relation to individual children. Did a child have specific needs / requirements and were staff aware of this? For example did a child need a specific type of chair- using the wrong type can lead to an accident. Any such risk assessments / care plans must be updated / assessed as necessary or at regular intervals.

Provisions for medical intervention - is there a protocol for the involvement of the GP? Is there a protocol for referral to hospital in emergency or non-emergency situations.

Risk assessments - risk assessments are required for virtually all types of activity within nursery.

Daily records - are they properly completed? Any incidents of note must be recorded either in the daily records or in a separate incident book. This will help build up a picture of a child's behaviour and flag up any concerns.

It is worth reviewing these documents to ensure that they are maintained within your setting as although they may seem excessive, it is only when a claim occurs that these are requested. The more comprehensive the documents are then the greater chance the insurers will have in defending a claim that is purely an accident.



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