

Leadership and Management

Appraisals (1)



Using appraisals in your early years settings, specifically a clearly structured and well-run appraisal system, is a great tool for improving your setting. Not only will it help you to support and develop your staff and track how well they are working towards the targets you set together, but it will also help you to evaluate what your setting does well and plan for future improvements. A formal appraisal process will support managers in facilitating reflective discussion with practitioners. It allows opportunities to look back over challenges, achievements and to look forward into the year ahead, establishing long term goals and objectives.

This is time that managers can dedicate to unpicking the strengths and development needs of individuals, offering support and guidance and creating a respectful dialogue with practitioners. It is important that these 'reviews' are considered to be of value to all participants, to ensure that the meetings do not lack meaning or impact.

TASK 1

It may be useful to spend some time reflecting on how you view and use your appraisal and supervision processes. Consider how the two differ and how staff are made aware of expectation.

- An appraisal is an annual meeting between manager and employee, where roles and responsibilities, individual development objectives etc., are set and reviewed. These can be monitored through the supervision process throughout the year and additional targets can be set.
- Supervisions are the regular contact between supervisor and their supervisee. This will provide an opportunity to; check up on how this member of staff is feeling from a well-being point of view, to chat about key children, check progress and prioritise individual tasks, to provide and seek guidance and support and identify areas of work that need improving. (See Supervision Q card)

TASK 2

Ask each practitioner to reflect on their experience with the existing appraisal process. Provide practitioners with a postcard for them to share their feedback – anonymously if desired. Encourage practitioners to be honest in their feedback to allow leaders and managers to shape appraisals to be of benefit to all. (If practitioners have not yet engaged in an appraisal, ask them to consider what they would need to be a part of the process, to make them feel supported.)

Complete a postcard as manager. Do you feel the process enables you to support practitioners effectively? See the looking back and looking forward list to prompt your thinking.

Looking back:

- Celebrating achievements
- Reflecting on lessons learned
- Reviewing how successfully roles and responsibilities have been met.
- Were previous goals achieved?
- What learning has been embedded?

Looking forward:

- Planning how best to apply strengths identified.
- Setting long term goals and objectives
- Establishing training and development needs both statutory and other.
- Review of personal wellbeing