



Quality and performance management for committees

Early Years and Childcare Service

Suffolk County Council

Your role in ensuring high quality childcare and education



Early years committee trustees must understand their strategic role in driving forward quality improvement. As the committee you have a responsibility to provide quality childcare that meets the needs of all children and their families. Therefore, as trustees you must have an understanding of how to gather and analyse a wide range of performance information to identify strengths and areas for development.



An important part of this process includes regular visits to the setting. This document contains helpful hints and resources to prepare for conducting learning walks, peer observations, talking to staff and parents plus feeding back to both staff and committee on what's working well and areas for development.



The information and resources can be used to hold leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation. There are a variety of tools and resources available to support committee members in this area of it's work.



Additionally, providers have a named Early Years and Childcare Quality and Access Advisor/ Worker linked to the setting. They are able to visit and provide bespoke committee support focused on quality and performance. To find out who your advisor/ worker is ask your setting manager or contact suffolkfis@suffolk.gov.uk

Support from the Early Years and Childcare Service

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- Below are some of the key areas we can support you with:
- Vision, culture, ethos clear strategic direction
- Curriculum
- Children's Progress
- Inclusive Practice
- Parent Partnership
- Monitoring the quality of teaching
- Staff management and supervision
- Staff professional development
- Holding leaders to account

The requirements of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS)

'The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) sets out the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the right foundation for good future progress through school and life'.

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/eyfswf-2017.pdf)

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Below are key requirements set out in the EYFS which relate to managing the quality of provision provided by staff in early years settings

- 3.33 What practitioners know, plan for, and do matters for children's learning, development, safety, and happiness in settings. 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.
- 3.34 Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching, and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.
- 3.35 Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:
 - Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being, including child protection concerns.
 - Identify solutions to address issues as they arise.
 - Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

Understanding how Ofsted carry out inspections

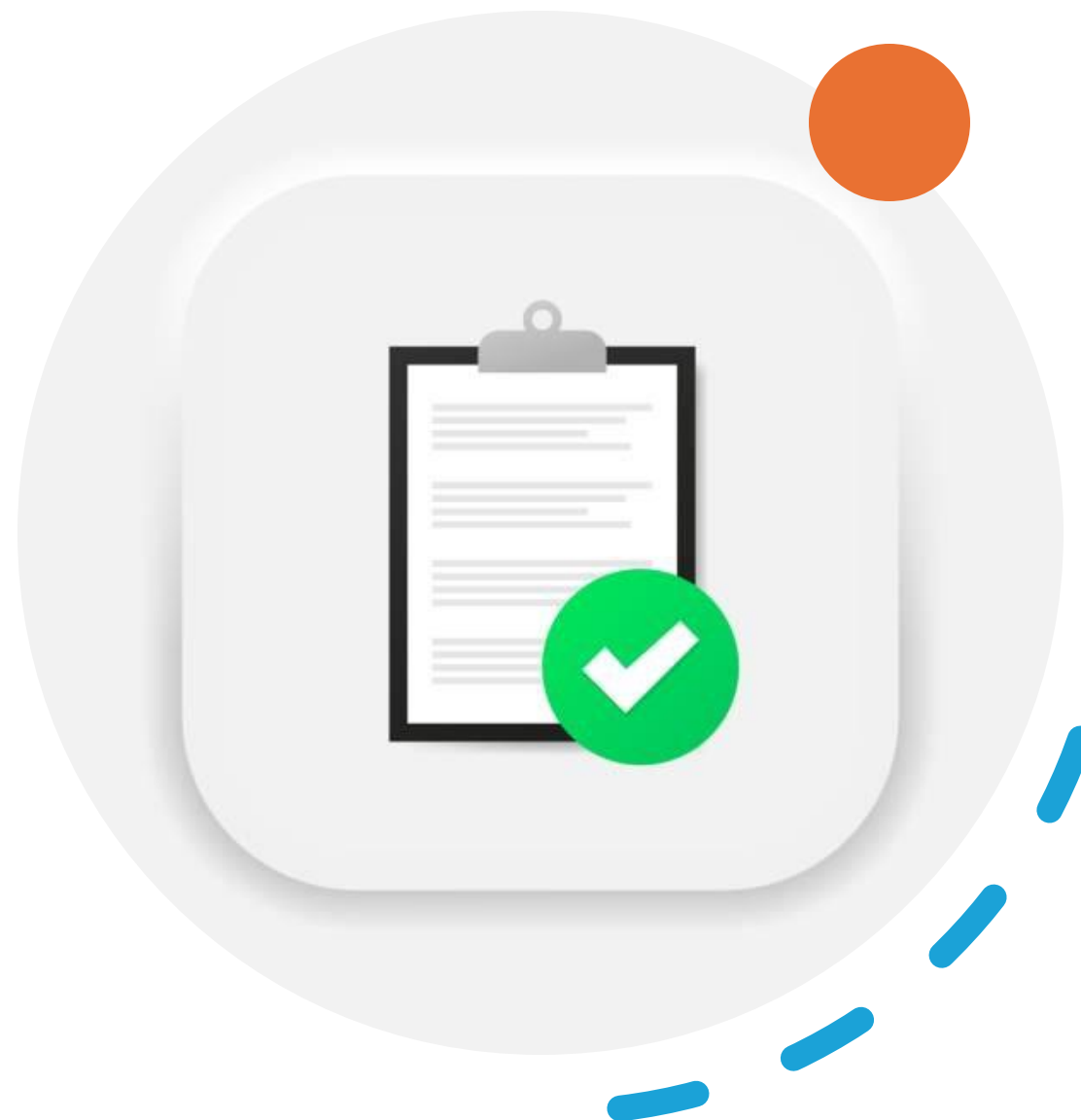
The [Early years inspection: toolkit, operating guide and information](#) sets out the main activities that inspectors undertake when they carry out inspections of early years providers in England.

In line with the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), inspectors will grade each evaluation area:

- Safeguarding
- Inclusion
- Curriculum and teaching
- Achievement
- Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines
- Children's welfare and well-being
- Leadership and governance

Inspectors will use the judgements below to grade each evaluation area:

- Urgent improvement
- Needs attention
- Expected standard
- Strong standard
- Exceptional



Useful support for Ofsted inspections



[What do I need to do to prepare for my early years inspection?' - Ofsted: early years \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)



[Early years FAQs for providers and practitioners - YouTube](#)



Ofsted inspections can impact on the well-being of leaders/managers and staff. Therefore as a committee it is essential you support staff if needed during or after the inspection.

Vision, ethos and a clear strategic direction

The leadership and governance evaluation area within the Early years inspection toolkit states those responsible for leadership:

“...are knowledgeable about their statutory duties and carries them out effectively...”

“...establish and sustain the setting’s ethos and strategic direction...”

“...have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high quality education...”

As a
committee
and a staff
team
consider the
following:

- **What would you like to be special about your setting?**
- **What would you love a family to say about your setting?**
- **What are you determined a child will take with them when they leave you?**
- **What feedback would you most like to hear from staff about their work?**



Vision

A statement that clearly defines what the organisation aspires to achieve or become in the future.

For example: A provider's vision could be to create a community where every child feels loved, respected, and encouraged to reach their full potential.



Ethos

The guiding beliefs, shared values, and overall cultural character of an organisation.

For example: A provider's ethos might be a culture of high expectations, where intellectual curiosity and personal responsibility are deeply valued.

Curriculum

There are four themes that underpin the EYFS curriculum. The image below (taken from the Development Matters materials produced by Early Education) shows how these themes and the principles that inform them work together for children in the EYFS.

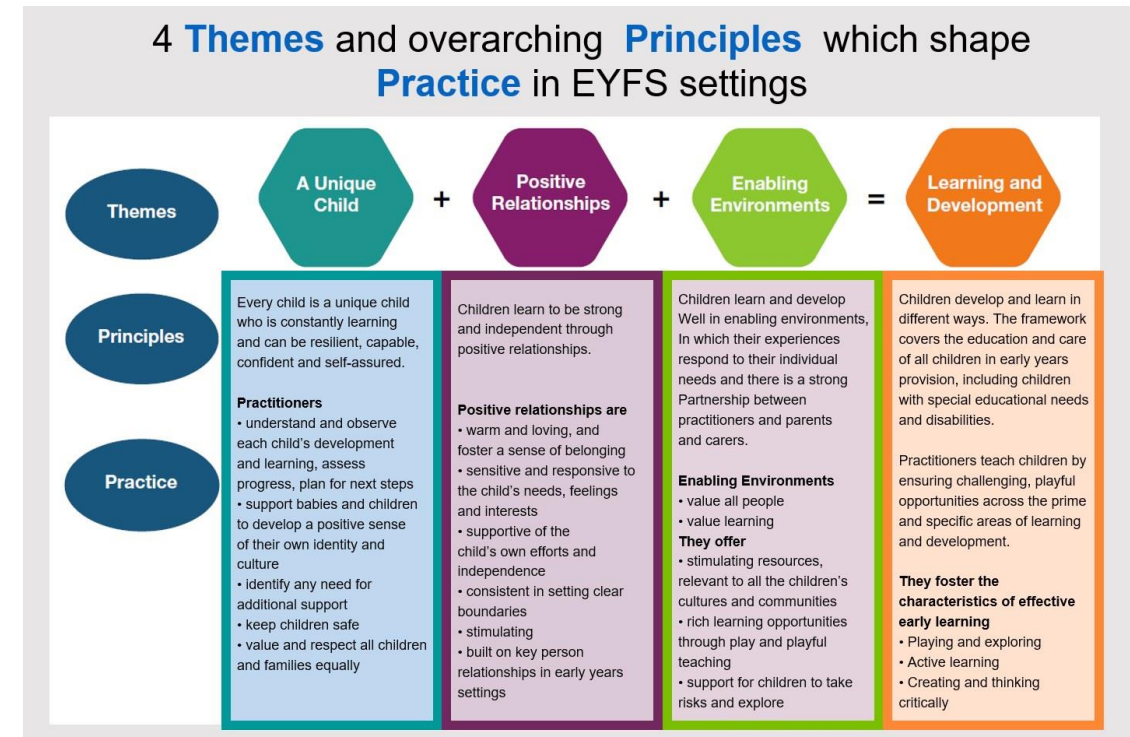
There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

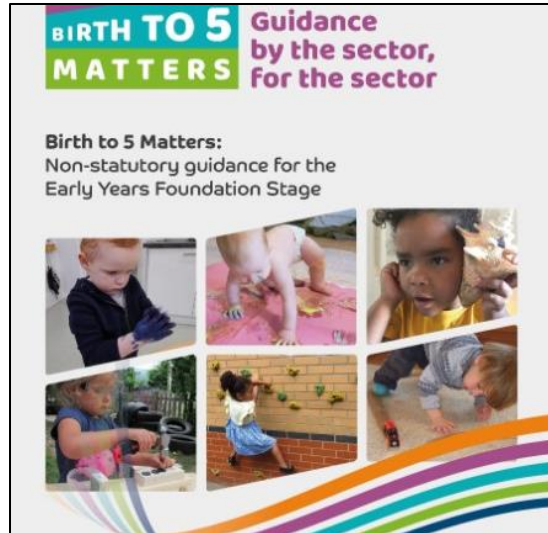
These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematic
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design





There are non-statutory documents that early years providers can use to help them deliver the EYFS. These are shown in the images and can be accessed from the link below:

[Development Matters](#)
[Birth to 5 matters](#)
[What to expect when](#)

Further information and guidance about the EYFS can be found at the link below. These offer reflective provocations for curriculum leaders and practitioners to use to deepen their understanding and enhance their provision.

[The Department of Education - Help for providers](#)



Your curriculum should be ambitious for all children

To achieve this, staff must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care. They must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

When designing the curriculum for your setting it is important you consider the three elements below:

- **INTENT** - what is it staff want children to learn?
- **IMPLEMENTATION** – this is about staff knowing how they want to deliver that learning.
- **IMPACT** - defines what children have achieved and measures how effective this has been.



Children's Progress



What do the learning and development requirements say?

- Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.
- Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork.
- Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professional.
- There are two types of assessment, statutory assessment which must be completed to meet the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. Non statutory assessment constitutes observations and activities that practitioners can use to inform their practice and to support children to make progress with their learning and development.

Non-Statutory Assessment

- Observation over the first few weeks of a child starting will give a gauge by which to assess future progress
- On-going informal assessment through observing children's play (and discussing with colleagues)
- Meetings with parents to discuss a child's development
- Talking with children about their learning



Statutory Summative Assessment

Progress check at age 2

A short-written summary for parents or carers completed when a child is aged between two and three which highlights:

- achievements in the prime areas
- areas in which extra support might be needed and describes how these will be addressed

[Progress check at age two – Non-statutory guidance for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424222/Progress-check-at-age-two-non-statutory-guidance-for-the-early-years-foundation-stage.pdf)

Foundation Stage Profile

At the end of Reception teachers/practitioners assess children and report to parents, their next teacher and their Local Authority on if children are meeting expected levels of development in relation to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as set out in the Statutory Guidance.

Further information about assessment and supporting children's progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage can be found at the link below:

[‘Thinking again about assessment’ – EYCS assessment guidance](#)

Parent Partnership

Paragraph 3.41 within the [Early years foundation stage statutory framework](#) states 'each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate'

As stated within the [Early years inspection operating guide I](#), Ofsted inspectors will talk with parents to find out:

- how well they are kept informed about the setting's curriculum, activities and routines
- the quality of support for any children who are disadvantaged, have SEND, are known (or were previously known) to children's social care or face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being
- what children are learning to keep themselves safe and healthy and how parents are supported to continue this learning at home
- how the setting gathers children's views and considers them in planning curriculum activities and routines
- to what extent their children are included and engaged in the setting's community
- any other information that is relevant to the areas of inspection focus



Considering the effectiveness of parent partnership in your setting – helpful hints:

- How do you involve parents in their children's learning?
- Do they know who their child's key person is?
- How do you share progress?
- How do you share two-year-old checks with parents?
- How do you encourage parents to support learning at home?
- How are parents involved in the settling in process and transitions?
- How do you work with parents when you have concerns?
- How do you work with parents to decide how additional funding will be spent to support their child/ren's learning?
- How do you work with separated families?
- What information do you send out to parents about the setting and the activities their children access?
- How do you share your funding offer with parents?





Further information about the importance of parent partnership can be found within:

- [birth to five matters](#)
- the seven key features of effective practice referred to in [Development Matters](#)
- the Department of Education's Help for providers article [Working in partnership with parents and carers](#)

Inclusive Practice

"Early years settings have a vital role to play in explicitly addressing all forms of discrimination and prejudice. In doing so, we will meet the Equality Act 2010 requirement that no child or family is discriminated against in terms of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership". (Birth to 5 matters)

Paragraph 3.76 of the [Statutory Framework for the EYFS states](#)

- Early years providers must have arrangements in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Maintained schools, academies and maintained nursery schools are required to identify a member of staff to act as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other providers (in group provision) are expected to identify a SENCO.
- Maintained schools, academies and maintained nursery schools and all providers who are funded by the local authority to deliver early education places are required to have regard to the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice. Other providers may find it helpful to familiarise themselves with the early years section of the [0-25 SEND Code of Practice](#)
- The SENCo's role is a leadership/management role within the childcare setting and should be recognised as such by the committee.
- In addition, the **Equality Act 2010** legally requires early years providers to promote all forms of equality and to help fostering an understanding and respect between individuals, groups and diverse communities.



Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities

January 2015

Useful information about inclusion in the early years

- The Ordinarily Available Provision resource is an overview of expected SEND provision and contains links to all the information available to practitioners and committees on Suffolk Learning [Ordinarily Available Provision](#)

Further useful information and resources are available below:

- [Suffolk SEND Local Offer](#)
- [Inclusive practice and equalities Article – Birth To 5 Matters](#)
- [Creating Inclusive Environments Audit Tool](#)
- [The Department of Education Help for providers - Meeting the needs of all children](#)
- [Supporting children with EAL](#)

Monitoring the quality of teaching

Further guidance on monitoring the quality of teaching including peer observations and conducting your own learning walks can be found on Suffolk Learning within the [Quality Improvement Tools](#)



As a committee member it is vital that you have a good understanding of completing management observations. Below are suggested areas of good practice to look for:

- Interactions with children
- Appropriate language
- Appropriate body language
- Processing information and acting on it in a timely manner
- Spontaneous scaffolding based on child's interests
- Allowing the child to take the initiative and lead learning
- Using open-ended questions
- Allowing the child time to answer
- Responding to individual child needs
- Introducing new vocabulary
- Praising and reinforcing children
- Adapting to each child's ability
- Providing challenges to all children

Staff professional development

- Professional development is effective when there is a clear focus on developing practice resulting in a greater impact on children's learning and development.
- Leaders and managers need to understand their settings 'vision and culture' in other words, 'where you're going and how you will get there'. Once you have clear aims, you're ready to plan a professional development programme. This should be based on the best available evidence and clearly focused on improving children's experiences.
- The next few slides share opportunities childcare providers in Suffolk can access to support practice and professional development.



Early Years

Welcome to the Early Years and Childcare Service

This section provides resources and guidance for Childcare Providers in Suffolk

How to register/update your childcare record on Suffolk InfoLink:

[Updating your childcare record](#)

Search ...	Search
Broadcast Messages 2025	▼
Childminder Information	▼
Contact us & secure email	▼
Early Education Funding	▼
Early Years and Childcare Committee Information	
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)	▼
Health & Infectious diseases	▼
Health Visiting Information	
Inclusion – SEND in Suffolk	▼
Inclusion – Children in Care, PEP, EAL & EYPP	▼
Leaflets	▼
List of Providers	▼
Managing your Business and Understanding Governance	▼
Professional Referrer Information	▼
Recruitment, Retention and Employment	▼
Safeguarding and Health Information	▼
Schools-Early Years Information	▼
Suffolk Childcare Premises / Site Expression of Interest (EOI)	
Tax Free Childcare	
Training & Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	▼
Wraparound Childcare	▼

Suffolk Learning

[Suffolk Learning](#) is an online site full of resources and guidance for Childcare Providers in Suffolk.

As well as a vast amount of information and resources the Early Years and Childcare Service offer a wide variety of training and qualifications. To find out more please follow the link below:

[Training, qualifications and how to book](#)

To support you to make the most of these resources and access training we have produced these video guides at the link below:

[Video guides to Suffolk Learning's Early Years pages and accessing training](#)

Learning Wall

The [Learning Wall](#) shares some interesting items, stimulating ideas and reflections about aspects of early years practice from practitioners around the county.

For more information about how to use the Learning wall to develop practice follow the link below:

[Using the Learning Wall to develop quality in your setting](#)



Staff management and supervision

The overall management of staff is the responsibility of the governing body/committee. Although providers have managers that take on the day-to-day responsibilities, the committee must have oversight to ensure the requirements of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage are met. Committees have a duty of care to ensure adults caring for children are suitable to do so and that staffing arrangements ensure the children are effectively supervised, kept safe and have their learning and care needs met.

Committees should also have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of your early years provision. They ensure that resources are managed sustainably, effectively and efficiently.

Tasks may include:

- Recruitment and vetting of new staff
- Staff induction
- Staff deployment
- Workload and well-being of staff
- Supervision
- Professional Development

Supervisions

- Usual practice would be for those responsible for the governance of the setting to have regular supervisions with the manager of the setting. The manager would be responsible for conducting regular supervisions with the staff team. Further information about holding managers to account can be found later in this document.
- Supervision is a regular, planned and accountable 1:1 meeting between a staff member and their supervisor/manager. The purpose is to provide a two-way reflective conversation in which professional practice can be monitored and individuals supported to develop the quality of the work they do. This in turn will improve outcomes for the children who attend the setting and their families. It also provides an opportunity for any concerns to be raised and the discussion of sensitive issues, including the safeguarding of children.
- Employees should receive sensitive, constructive feedback about their work and successes should be celebrated ensuring they feel valued and included. Supervision ensures that staff are clear about their responsibilities, about policies and procedures and that they know what to do when they have concerns about either their own or others' practice.



At a supervision meeting, staff and supervisors should:

-
- Celebrate good practice
 - Review work and workload
 - Discuss issues – particularly concerning children's development, safety or wellbeing
 - Identify possible solutions to these concerns
 - Seek advice, challenge and be challenged
 - Explore personal feelings and the possible emotional impact of their role
 - Discuss feedback and reflections from peer observations
 - Receive/provide coaching to provide personal effectiveness
 - Create and monitor action plans for developing practice, including possible training needs.



Further information and guidance relating to staff management and supervision can be found at the links below:

[Staff recruitment and retention roadmap](#)

[Supervision template](#)

Holding leaders to account

Leadership and governance section within the Early years inspection toolkit states:

When gathering evidence about governance, inspectors consider the extent the committee:

- is knowledgeable about the statutory duties and carries them out effectively.
- has an accurate knowledge and understanding of the quality and impact of the setting's work, and ensures that leaders have a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well, including for children receiving statutory funding/ support.
- ensures that leaders remain suitable to their roles and providers effective support and challenge.

As a committee is therefore important that you use the information provided and the knowledge of your setting to provide challenge to managers and leaders during their supervision and appraisals. Together identify areas of improvement and identify actions and success criteria to ensure actions are achieved.

Template action plans can be found within the [Quality Improvement tab – Suffolk Learning](#)

