



Ofsted Inspection 22 January 2016 Lessons Learned

Dave Sheppard's Reflections and Top Tips for the next inspection!

1. ALWAYS STAY PERFECTLY CALM AND BE RELAXED. This will ensure you are at your most natural and able to confidently demonstrate your interactions with the children. Being worried, stressed or uncomfortable, because an inspector is present, will only make your task ten times harder. Just be yourself, enjoy your day, focus on the children and show just how amazing you really are.
2. If you think it is tough for you, try to consider the inspector's task. They have to formulate an opinion of you, in a strange, unknown environment, and in a very short time. They have to capture all the evidence they require to support their assessment during a hectic, busy and probably noisy setting. Make their life as easy as possible by being totally prepared and ready to respond quickly and calmly to any request, question or requirement.
3. As an ongoing ethos and in preparation for an inspection:
 - a. Thoroughly read the Ofsted Inspectors Guide to inspections several times ([Early years inspection handbook from September 2015](#)). This document, although currently 45 pages long, is invaluable for providing an insight to the inspection process and requirements.
 - b. Keep up to date with childcare development by reading periodicals like PACEY's excellent 'Childcare Professional' magazine and browsing internet sites like [Foundation Years](#)
 - c. Complete your Ofsted SEF annually to indicate reflective practice.
 - d. Ensure you have displayed at least the following:
 - i. Ofsted's latest [Parent's Poster](#)
 - ii. Your local authority's Safeguarding Children's information
 - iii. Your own Emergency Evacuation Procedure
4. Before the Inspector's arrival, ensure you have informed all your parents you are expecting to be inspected and that the inspector may want to talk to them.

5. Be prepared to alter your usual daily routine to accommodate the inspector's requirements.
For us, this meant the children did not go out on their usual outing in our 'i800' bus.
6. On the Inspector's arrival:
 - a. Ask to see the Inspector's ID.
 - b. Introduce yourself.
 - c. Sign her/him into the visitor's book.
 - d. Display a sign indicating that YOU ARE BEING INSPECTED BY OFSTED TODAY.
 - e. Ask for the Inspector's Mobile Phone / Camera to be left in their car or in an inaccessible place on entry. (Alternatively, if more than one childminder works together, then verbally allow the inspector to keep it but DO NOT leave the inspector alone with any child during the inspection!)
 - f. Briefly explain any housekeeping necessities like your Emergency Evacuation Procedure, where the toilet is, that they cannot have a hot drink anywhere near your children, that there is a no-smoking policy in place and where they are permitted to smoke if required, and where they can safely park their car.
 - g. Introduce each child and encourage the children to speak to the Inspector independently, like saying how old they are. Explain why the Inspector is visiting like 'she has come to watch you play today'.
7. Listen to the Inspector, happily accept any criticism / suggestions for improved practice and take that information as a constructive process for reflection. Acknowledge it verbally to prove to the inspector you are reflective, adaptable and ready to learn. Make a note of any suggestions and ensure they are followed up.
8. Have each child's age in MONTHS currently and on starting in the setting. The inspector needs this information for their records and trying to work the answer out (in months) is a pain if you haven't prepared for it! Also, calculate now how many MONTHS each child has been in the setting.
9. Have your daily register of attendance, completed with actual arrival and departure times, at hand. Be prepared to discuss and prove:
 - a. How many children are currently on your role in each age band?
 - b. How many children do you have in the setting on each day of the week?
 - c. Are you ever over your registered numbers?
 - d. Do you have any school age children on the role?
10. What other persons, over the age of 16, are resident or working in your setting. This may include your own family members like spouse or children, lodgers, and any assistants, cleaners, helpers that may work for you.

11. Ensure your setting policies are immediately accessible and available. (Obviously that should be up to date, you should have read them, and you need to be able to talk confidently about any the inspector may want to discuss.)
12. Ensure your setting risk assessments are immediately accessible and available (and up to date!)
13. Ensure your accident and injuries logs are up to date, signed and shared with parents. Ensure you can identify and explain the last occurrence.
14. Do you have a Physical Intervention Log and setting policy? If not, you need to have one.
15. Ensure your children's Learning and Development Records are immediately accessible and available (and up to date!) Be prepared to explain:
 - a. How you complete 2-year-old assessments?
 - b. What you are recording?
 - c. How you are assessing?
 - d. When you are updating?
 - e. What 'Next Steps' you are planning?
 - f. Where the individual child sits within the EYFS guidance?
 - g. How you are treating that child as an individual?
 - h. How you are leading each child towards school readiness.
16. Have your Continuous Professional Development [CPD] records available. Especially:
 - a. Safeguarding Training in date.
 - b. Paediatric First Aid Training in date.
 - c. Disclosure and Barring in date.
 - d. Examples of most recent training completed.
 - e. Highest level of training.
17. How do you work in partnership with your parents? Be prepared to offer examples of successful partnerships.
18. Be prepared to answer specific questions on Safeguarding like:
 - a. How do you ensure your children are safe?
 - b. What does it mean?
 - c. What are the types?
 - d. What are the signs and symptoms?
 - e. What actions would you take?
 - f. Who would you contact?
 - g. What are the reporting procedures and processes?

19. Ensure your Complaints log is available. Be prepared to answer any specific questions on any complaints or concerns that have been raised against you since the last inspection. Have evidence at hand to support your actions and opinions.
20. If previously inspected (i.e. this is not your first inspection) then have a list of actions and reflections, you have considered since the last inspection, to improve and enhance your knowledge and understanding of childcare development and provision.
21. Have a file available of any testimonials / thank you letters or cards / recommendations your parents may have provided. These are invaluable evidence of your previous practice.