**Safeguarding children**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework sets out the measures all providers must undertake in order to safeguard children from harm.

These include:

* safeguarding policies and procedures that are understood and implemented by all staff
* a policy and procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff
* a designated and suitably trained lead for safeguarding
* all staff to undertake up to date child protection training and be able to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect
* only staff or volunteers who have undergone ‘suitable person’ checks to be allowed to work with children
* adult/child ratios specific to the age of the children, qualifications of staff and the type of setting which must be adhered to at all times
* the requirement to undertake risk assessments for activities on the premises as well as outings and adjust adult/child ratios accordingly
* the duty to promote British values and take steps to recognise and prevent radicalisation of children.

This indicates that the arrangements for safeguarding children within two or more Ofsted registered settings should be consistent. Any breaches in safeguarding procedures are taken very seriously by Ofsted and can lead to a judgement of ‘inadequate’ and even closure of the setting.

However, there is still a risk that safeguarding policies may be adhered to or interpreted differently in different settings. Therefore, settings that are planning to operate a mixed model approach should meet together with their policies and training records and discuss their approaches to safeguarding with a view to adopting best practice, for example how they would keep each other informed if they had concerns about a child. This, by implication, requires good information sharing protocols in place.

A particular area of risk is the transfer of children from one setting to another and the safe collection of children. It would be wise to discuss what could go wrong in these circumstances and devise a joint procedure to mitigate the risks which all staff follow.

Some of the mixed model partnerships are considering combining setting based early education with outdoor learning opportunities – in this case a joint risk assessment of the outdoor learning space, activities and access to the area by people who have not been approved should be undertaken initially, and on a regular basis. Procedures should then be put in place to mitigate these risks. See [**Assessing Risk**](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/Assessing%20Risk.docx) for more information on how to complete a risk assessment and some examples of risks and actions to consider.