

Off-the-job training is a crucial element of professional development in early years settings. It ensures that practitioners not only meet the Early Years Educator occupational standards but also maintain high-quality practice aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). However, when off-the-job training sessions keep getting cancelled, nurseries face real challenges that can affect workplace learning, safeguarding, wellbeing, and overall staff confidence.

In this blog post, we'll explore what steps a nursery should take in response to continual training delivery problems, with practical advice on how to escalate to the training provider effectively. We'll also highlight how tools like **progress reviews** and **development coaching** can support learning continuity, even when formal training faces disruption. Throughout, we'll naturally reference trusted resources and companies such as *Teach Early Years*, *Teachwire*, and *The Childcare Company*.

The Impact of Cancelled Off-the-Job Training in Nurseries

Off-the-job training, as mandated by apprenticeship standards and professional development frameworks, involves learning outside of normal direct work duties. This time provides staff with focused opportunities to consolidate their knowledge, practice new skills, and reflect on their development. When training sessions are repeatedly cancelled, several issues can arise, including:

- **Disrupted learning pathways:** Staff lose continuity in acquiring and applying new childcare knowledge, from child development to safeguarding principles.
- **Inconsistent workplace practice:** Without up-to-date training, teams may find it challenging to embed EYFS principles and professional standards consistently.
- **Reduced staff morale and motivation:** Delays in training can lead to frustration and feelings of being undervalued.
- **Compromised safeguarding and risk management:** Key updates on health and safety or safeguarding might be missed, impacting children's wellbeing.
- **Challenges meeting regulatory expectations:** Ofsted and other bodies expect evidence of ongoing, high-quality professional development.

Step 1: Assess the Root Cause of Training Delivery Problems

When off-the-job training keeps getting cancelled, the first step is to understand why. Sometimes issues derive from the training provider, other times from logistical problems within the nursery itself. Common reasons for training delivery issues include:

- Trainer illness or availability problems
- Insufficient enrolments leading to session cancellations
- Lack of clarity about session scheduling
- Communication breakdowns between provider and nursery
- Technical difficulties for online or hybrid training formats

Nurseries should open a dialogue with their apprenticeship or training provider to clarify these issues. For instance, *The Childcare Company* is known for responsive communication in such cases, and reaching out promptly can help clarify scheduling and rescheduling policies.

Step 2: Use Progress Reviews and Development Coaching to Maintain Momentum

Even when formal training gets delayed or cancelled, learning must continue, especially given the vital nature of safeguarding and risk management in early years environments. This is where **progress reviews** and **development coaching** come into play.

Progress Reviews

Progress reviews are regular, structured meetings between apprentices, mentors, and nursery leads. They focus on:

- Monitoring the apprentice's development toward occupational standards
- Setting short-term goals and identifying skills gaps
- Reflecting on how daily practice aligns with EYFS principles and safeguarding requirements
- Keeping apprentices engaged, especially when training sessions have been postponed

Regular progress reviews ensure that apprentices continue to apply child development knowledge in the rooms effectively, even in the absence of formal off-the-job training.

Development Coaching

Development coaching involves more personalised support sessions, focusing on individual strengths, challenges, and professional growth. Coaches can help staff:

- Apply learning directly to their workplace practice
- Stay motivated and reassured during periods of disruption
- Embed safeguarding, health, and safety principles into daily operations
- Prepare reflective logs or assignments that keep them aligned with their apprenticeship standards

Utilising coaching sessions effectively can support the effective transfer of knowledge gained, mitigating some of the negative impacts of training delays. Organisations like *Teach Early Years* offer useful resources on integrating coaching strategies alongside apprenticeships and training.



Step 3: Escalate to the Provider if Training Issues Persist

If cancellations persist despite communication and support measures, nurseries should escalate the issue formally with their training provider. Here are recommended steps:

1. **Document all communication:** Record dates, correspondence, and the impact on staff learning for reference.
2. **Schedule a formal meeting:** Involve the provider's apprenticeship coordinator or quality lead.
3. **Clarify expectations:** Discuss how cancellations affect competency achievement, EYFS compliance, and safeguarding updates.
4. **Request a written action plan:** Ensure clear commitments for rescheduling and alternative learning offers.
5. **Explore alternative providers:** If issues remain unresolved, consider switching to more reliable training organisations such as *Teachwire*, known for consistent delivery.
6. **Inform regulatory bodies cautiously:** As a last resort, inform apprenticeship funding agencies to seek help in resolving delivery problems.

Step 4: Embed Learning Directly into Daily Practice

While off-the-job training is essential, learning in early years settings must be deeply tied to daily practice for maximum effectiveness. Nurseries should:

- Encourage staff to keep reflective journals on child development, wellbeing, and safeguarding observed in the room
- Use team meetings to share updates on EYFS principles, such as the prime and specific areas of learning
- Regularly review risk management and health and safety procedures as part of everyday routines
- Integrate safeguarding case studies or scenarios to reinforce understanding during staff briefings
- Celebrate small achievements and progress made despite training interruptions

These workplace learning strategies ensure that theory and practice remain connected, helping staff uphold professional standards even when off-the-job training faces setbacks.

Conclusion: Proactive Management is Key to Overcoming Off-the-Job Issues

Cancelled off-the-job training sessions present clear challenges for nurseries striving to maintain high standards of early years education and [teachearlyyears](#) care. Through careful diagnosis of training delivery problems, regular use of progress reviews and development coaching, and prompt escalation to providers, nurseries can mitigate the impact and keep professional development on track.

Remember, safeguarding and wellbeing remain at the heart of early years practice, so embedding these principles into everyday learning and practice is essential. Trusted partners like *Teach Early Years*, *Teachwire*, and *The Childcare Company* can help nurseries access consistent, high-quality training and resources.

By proactively managing off-the-job issues, nurseries not only support their teams' growth but also ensure that children receive the safe, nurturing, and expertly informed care they deserve.

