



The Ultimate Guide To Nursery CCTV (2022)



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The Ultimate Guide to Nursery CCTV

With CCTV becoming an integral component of nursery security, we wanted to put together a comprehensive guide on CCTV for nursery managers. We will be addressing factors such as the benefits, GDPR laws and how this affects CCTV operation, types of security camera and their placement and even whether or not your nursery should allow parents to access the footage.



It's important to look at installing CCTV as a form of safety monitoring and not from the lens of 'big brother' monitoring of individuals that move through your premises.

If you are looking to utilise safety monitoring at your nursery, it's important for you to understand what types of options are available to you, and exactly how you should be utilising security cameras to maximise your security and protect your staff, valuable and most importantly the children in your care.

01 What is the benefit of installing CCTV in your nursery?

CCTV greatly benefits nurseries as it improves the overall security of your site by providing irrefutable evidence of events and incidents within and outside of the premises, acting as an additional safety net for everyone on-site. With the added presence of safety monitoring, nurseries will gain the ability to regulate their quality standards.

01. What is the benefit of installing CCTV in your nursery?

By having safety monitoring in place, you are able to protect the children from preventable accidents by encouraging the staff that look after them to follow good practices. An example of this is should a child fall and sustain a bruise whilst they are playing in the nursery, the nursery can rewind the CCTV footage and run the parent through exactly how the child had fallen and hurt themselves.

● Protecting your nursery's reputation

At the same time, staff can also rest assured as they will be protected if they face any unwarranted allegations. One such case at a nursery happened when they were falsely accused of treating children with no respect or compassion during a trip to the farm, throwing cups of water at children and leaving them out in the heat without sunhats whilst wearing jackets.

These are incredibly damaging claims that could have resulted in serious repercussions for staff members. Luckily CCTV footage from the trip and photographs taken by staff on the day were able to confirm that the accusations made were, in fact, false.

Of course, the converse is sometimes sadly true. There have been occasions where nursery footage has proven wrongdoing, or negligence by a staff member. Having CCTV footage quickly ascertains facts rather than supposition, not having clear evidence will always lead to a longer, more damaging investigation. All nursery owners are interested in providing an excellent service and care, it's surely better to be able to discover the facts swiftly. Likewise, if you discover cameras have been turned off or sabotaged, it could be a clear indication that a member of the team doesn't want to be observed.

● Improve nursery safety

With safety monitoring in place, your nursery will be able to stop preventable hazards from occurring. You can also utilise safety monitoring as a review tool to help encourage best practices in your nursery.

For example, if a piece of equipment in an outside play area has been placed too close to another item, it could potentially cause a safety hazard. In this case, observing footage of a child tumbling from the first piece of equipment into the second could help you to identify the opportunity to move the equipment further apart, therefore reducing risk in the future.

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In another case, if two children bump heads, or one child is aggressive towards another, having footage of the incident helps the management team decide whether it was a lack of resource, a lapse in process, a simple, unavoidable accident or a behavioural issue that needs addressing. Parents can be informed and reassured that the nursery are on top of all incidents.

The installation of safety monitoring in your nursery is an excellent first step but combining it with the power of biometric access control can help to create a powerful safety net of security. For example, if a securely locked door had been propped open by a parent or contractor, with biometric access control in place integrated with CCTV, you will be able to see exactly who propped it open and ensure that no child escaped in the interim because the two events are flagged and linked in the software.

In combination with CCTV footage, you will be able to review the events that led up to the door being propped open and can therefore use this as a training tool to help educate parents on the dangers of leaving doors open unattended for a nursery's overall security.

● Protecting your Site

An obvious benefit of CCTV is that it protects your site from intruders and vandals. CCTV is proven to act as a deterrent to opportunist thieves. While you may think that a nursery is an unlikely target for burglars, IT equipment is always a target, and outside play areas can be utilised by revellers, or more sinisterly, drug users, out of hours.

Vandalism and break ins cause not only expensive damage, but also disruption. New CCTV camera systems have active deterrent features built in, which can stop an intrusion as it starts, and provides evidence to show exactly where an intruder has been and what they did. This means business continuity can quickly be restored.

02 How do GDPR Laws Impact Nurseries?



The general data protection regulation (GDPR) which came into law on the 24th of May 2018 helps with the control and management of personal data. This refers to any information that can be linked to an individual to identify them, such as a name, address, email address, bank accounts or images. Since the UK left the EU, the UK GDPR replaced the GDPR – the requirements are still broadly the same, but if you haven't reviewed your data protection policy in the last year, you should do so immediately.

It is therefore a necessity for any nursery that is looking to operate CCTV cameras on their premises, that they follow the guidance under GDPR regulation as recorded CCTV footage will be able to identify individuals. As a nursery, you will need to notify anyone accessing the nursery or grounds that CCTV is operating in the area and that images are being taken of them.

- **Conduct a privacy impact assessment (PIA)**

Under the GDPR law, there is a legal obligation of the 'Controller' to conduct a privacy impact assessment and document it before the personal data is being processed by the 'Processor'. In this case, these terms can be defined as:

- **Controller** – The legal entity that defines the purpose and the means of processing the personal data. Their responsibility is to be accountable for the information and the responsibility will usually fall on the nursery owner.

02. How do GDPR Laws Impact Nurseries?

- **Processor** – This is an individual or legal entity that processes the personal data on behalf of the controller. They ensure that conditions in the Data Processing Agreement are met and also any obligations which have been mentioned in the GDPR are being complied with.

It should be noted that as a nursery, you will be both the controller and processor of the personal information you collect.

As part of your assessment process for a new CCTV system, you should inform your staff and users as to why you will use the system. The ‘why’ is likely to be for the purposes of improving safety and security. You’ll also need to detail the ‘how’ in your PIA – this will include how long footage is kept for and how you will control access to this. Your CCTV installer should be able to advise and provide templates that will prompt you to cover all the necessary points to consider in your PIA.

- **Registration with ICO**

Also, under the Data Protection Regulations set out in 2018, any individuals or organisations that will be processing personal data will need to pay a data protection fee to the Information Commissioners office (ICO) unless exempt. There is a great online quiz which will help you to decide if you should be registered which you can access [here](#).

As a nursery looking to install CCTV safety monitoring, it will be important to register yourself with the ICO and pay the necessary fee.

- **How do GDPR laws affect CCTV signage?**

You must inform anyone that will be captured on camera, that you are recording images, and why. One of the most effective ways in which you can make people aware of CCTV is through signage. Clearly placed signs in areas that an individual would first enter the field of view where a camera is placed, is the most effective.

If you want to stay on the right side of GDPR laws, it is important that you take a few things into consideration. There are 3 major considerations that must be met:

- **Clear and visible signs** – Any person walking past in a public space must be able to easily read on the sign which company is operating the CCTV in the area, why it is being used and also how they can get in touch with the organisation, preferably by either phone or email.

02. How do GDPR Laws Impact Nurseries?

- **Big and bold** – It is also important that the signs are visible and are large enough in relation to the context that they are placed in. This means that if the sign is in a small shop, it should be small and if it is meant to be seen by a car, then you should ensure that it is bigger.

Note: A good guide size is A3 if it is being placed outdoors and A4 if it will be placed internally.

- **Public enquiries** – All employees should know exactly what needs to be done and who needs to be contacted should any member of the public enquire about the CCTV system.

03 Security Camera Placement



When you are deciding where your cameras will need to be placed, it is important that you take into consideration whether or not they will be able to unknowingly capture images of people in public areas or in other people's private property or land without their consent. (Hint – they shouldn't.)

Even if your cameras are inside the building, extra care must be taken to ensure that if they are still able to capture images of the public walking by, signage must still be used. Without this, you will be breaking the law.

03. Security Camera Placement

● Privacy masking

A way to ensure that you are covering all relevant areas, but not beyond, is utilising the privacy masking features available on most recent DVRs and NVRs. This gives you the ability to blur or completely block certain areas that can be seen on a camera's field of vision.

The mask will then continue to cover any sensitive areas revealed on the image whenever you are able to view the footage.

● Where should you place the cameras then?

With so many rules regarding what you are allowed to record, it might be difficult to know where to actually place your cameras. Here are the most important places that we would recommend that nursery owners place their cameras:

- **Main indoor areas** – Such as the reception or common space
- **Entrance** – To monitor visitors accessing and exiting the nursery
- **Outdoor spaces** – Gates that access grounds and play areas specifically. Anywhere that children could be, or that could be used to access the site, should be covered.

● Where shouldn't you place cameras in a nursery?

There are some contentious points on this matter. Some nurseries have cameras in changing areas or children's bathrooms. This is not something Almas Industries advocate. If determined to do so, then we would recommend that any areas that could have children in a state of undress, are masked. With cameras not being in the changing room, any staff changing nappies should ensure that they are within sight of another practitioner as a sensible precaution.

If a nursery owner has concerns that there may be unacceptable conduct occurring, then we would advise they speak to their local police station and ask about the best course of action. Police may recommend the installation of covert cameras (concealed cameras that may look like a smoke detector), this would be updated in the privacy impact assessment. Any footage would only be viewed and kept for the purposes of investigation into that concern.

03. Security Camera Placement

● Audio Recording

Most modern CCTV cameras have the capacity for sound recording. Again, you must ask yourself as to why you would want to record sound. For example, in a staff room, staff on their break have a reasonable right to expect privacy – they may grumble about the manager! To be recorded for doing so and held to account as a result would likely be seen as an unreasonable invasion of privacy.

However, if you had an allegation about a member of staff repeatedly swearing in front of the children by a parent, then you would want to investigate. By updating this in your PIA, then you could turn the sound recording on for a period of time to verify or dispel the claims. This would be very much driven by the need to gather evidence in a specific situation, not as a general condition.

Almas Industries, as a rule, don't advise that sound recording is activated – if a nursery owner is determined that this should be the case, then CCTV signage should reflect that those images AND sounds are being recorded.

04 Which type of CCTV system is right for your nursery?



CCTV safety monitoring can come in many different forms and each of them come with their own strengths. Your CCTV installer should recommend the right camera for the position and situation.

Here are some of the types of camera that you can have installed:

04. Which type of security system is right for your nursery?

- **Dome-shaped** – These circular CCTV systems are great because of the way that they are designed. It is difficult to correctly tell which way the camera is pointing which therefore acts as a deterrent. Some dome cameras also come with a vandal-proof casing and are excellent for external areas that may be at risk of tampering.
- **Bullet CCTV systems** – Bullet cameras have an iconic design that is designed to be highly visible to deter any criminals. The cylindrical shape allows these cameras to view from long distances.

The differences between these two types of cameras are usually marginal degrees of viewing width and distance range.

- **Camera megapixels** – Cameras come in various megapixels (MP). As with your camera's phone, a megapixel means one million pixels. (a pixel is a small square which are put together like a mosaic to form a digital image). Megapixels are counted per inch. Effectively, the higher the megapixel, the higher the quality (but colour array, light sensitivity, and detail optimisation all factors in). Also, the more megapixels the more expensive the camera is likely to be. You don't always need the highest quality – you need one that allows you to see in detail what is going on within the field of view.

A 4-megapixel (4MP) camera contains a pixel resolution of 2688 x 1520 pixels, which is 4,085,760 pixels in total. On the other hand, an 8-megapixel (8MP) camera has a resolution of 3840 x 2160 pixels. Which are 8,294,400 pixels in total.

In simpler terms, a 4MP camera can be referred to as a 2K camera and an 8MP camera can be referred to as 4K. Here's a quick guide:

- 1MP = 720P
- 2MP = 1080P
- 4MP = 2K
- 8MP = 4K
- **PTZ Pan Tilt & Zoom Cameras** – These cameras allow an individual to have complete control over the direction and the elements that are being recorded. With only a touch of a button, the camera can be tilted left, right, up, or down and even zoomed in and out. These are best used if there is a security guard monitoring the feed. It must be noted that this will generally overkill for a nursery and is highly unlikely that you will have a security guard and therefore is not generally recommended.

04. Which type of security system is right for your nursery?

- **TIOC cameras** – These next generation cameras are so named because they are ‘Three in One’. They have full day/ night colour capability, and they act as a deterrent because you can create automated alerts for out of hours incursion which will set off an audible alarm and a blue/ red flashing light. Think of them like a CCTV camera and intruder alarm in one! They can be set up to cover the perimeter of your site, so that if someone enters out of hours, they will set off the ‘virtual tripwire’. An alert to your smart phone or monitoring centre means you can react swiftly to limit any damage or loss. You can see TIOC cameras in action here.
- **Network/IP CCTV Cameras** – These modern cameras can allow live footage to easily be shared and accessed from any location. To make the feed more reliable, the bandwidth of the video is compressed, and archived footage gets stored on a secure software or a network video recorder (NVR) for future access.
- **Wireless CCTV cameras** – Wireless CCTV systems are great because they allow for a decreased installation time, but there is always the risk that the connection may drop, which decreases reliability.
- **4K CCTV systems** – The major difference between a 4K CCTV camera and a full HD security camera is the difference in display resolution. A Full HD display has 1920 horizontal pixels and 1080 vertical pixels, whereas a 4K display has 3840 horizontal pixels and 2160 vertical pixels allowing it to support more formats and deliver images at a much higher standard.

● **Should you get IP or analogue cameras?**

You might hear these terms get bandied around when talking about CCTV cameras but what do they really mean?

Analogue cameras are CCTV systems that transfer video signals through analogue methods such as cabling and then recorded on a digital video recorder (DVR) unit. Each of the cameras is hooked up directly to the unit. On the other hand, IP video cameras broadcast their video using a digital stream over a network and then recorded it onto the hard drive.

04. Which type of security system is right for your nursery?

In the case of IP cameras, instead of recording the video on a DVR, it is recorded on a network video recorder (NVR).

If you'd like to know more about the difference between IP and analogue, please do get in touch and we will be happy to talk you through it!

Rather than thinking in terms of which is better, we would rather think about which version is right for your nursery and most cost-effective for your site. Both types of cameras have their own benefits and it is better to have an expert analyse your nursery and advise you as to the best CCTV option to improve your site's security.

● Storing CCTV footage

As you might have guessed already, the higher the quality you record in and the more cameras your system has, the more storage capacity you are going to need to store the video footage. You will need to choose the right storage for the number of cameras you have, based on the frame rate and camera megapixels.

According to the IPVM, 80% of surveillance cameras use between 60GB to 600GB of storage. Additionally, the most common number of cameras used is 8, 16 and 32 (with 4 being used on small sites).

This would mean that if you choose 16 cameras at a middling resolution, ballparking at roughly 60GB per camera, you should budget 1TB needed for storage. If however, you decide to use 8 cameras at a much higher quality, ballparking at roughly 600GB per camera, you should budget at least 5TB for storage.

An additional factor you would need to take into consideration is the amount of time you will be holding the footage for. Generally, we recommend that CCTV footage should generally be kept for 30 days. If an incident occurs then you can download that footage specifically onto a removable disk and keep it for longer, until the incident is investigated and resolved. Once the storage capacity is used up, most systems start overwriting the previous footage.

Do not forget that with the storage of CCTV footage, you are also storing images of people and therefore will need the correct policies and protocols in place when it comes to how the data from the storage will be accessed and downloaded, who will be seeing the data and who will be held responsible should the information be leaked. This should be detailed in your Privacy Impact Assessment.

04. Which type of security system is right for your nursery?

As you can see, there are many options when it comes to the different types of CCTV cameras that all vary on usage, range of motion and features and each require different amounts of storage. To find the right camera for your nursery, it is important to have professional advice to ensure that you are getting the right camera for your needs and that they are covering the full area that they need to.

- **Should parents be allowed to view CCTV?**

Providing parents with access to footage is something that each nursery needs to think about.

Parents are often anxious when their children start nursery and many feel more confident if they can observe their children when they first attend. There are certain nurseries that give parents access or an allocated timed slot when they can log in and see the nursery.

On the other hand, Almas Industries actually advises against allowing parents access to nursery footage when we provide security installations. The reasoning behind this is that whilst passwords can be set, credentials are not always deleted when children leave and more importantly, footage could be recorded online and shared outside a secure network.

Having a rolling feed that multiple people access to reduces overall security and also allows for the risk of abuse, footage downloading and potential distribution of the video. The nursery management team is responsible for where images end up.

05 Choosing a CCTV installer for your nursery



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If you are thinking of investing in the security of your nursery and installing a safety monitoring system, you need to make sure that you are abiding by the laws and are protecting all vulnerable parties. You also need to ensure that you have the right number of cameras, coverage, signage, and policies in place, installed by an accredited company.

It may sound like a lot to consider, and may be even too much hassle, but good quality CCTV will protect your building, your team, your reputation, and the children in your care.

When selecting CCTV installer for your company, you should only ever consider accredited companies. A company that has all of their staff vetted to BS7858 level means that each member has been vetted to ensure that they are working to strict guidelines outlined by the BSI (British Standards Institution) when it comes to best practices in a security environment. It means that the staff have had a CRB check and a credit check to ensure they aren't at risk of bribery or corruption.

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As BS7858 accredited installers of high-quality CCTV security camera systems. Almas Industries are experts in helping you identify risks within your nursery and can keep you on the right side of GDPR and privacy considerations.

We can advise and help you with all aspects of GDPR in relation to security, CCTV, monitoring, access control and anti-intrusion solutions. We also offer our customers information, site security audits, privacy impact assessment templates and advice on the steps needed to comply with GDPR.

You can arrange your free, no-obligation security survey and audit by calling us on 0333 567 77 99 (UK) or 01 68 333 68 opt 2 (IRE) If you prefer, you can always send a confidential email via enquiries@almas-industries.com.