BEACON HELP · GUIDE

Nina, the AI assistant

What Nina drafts, her desk, and how Beacon uses AI



BEACON VERSION
2026.11

PUBLISHED
25 November 2026

FOR
Everyone who uses Beacon

ONLINE
help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk

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Screenshots show a fictional nursery group and people.

Contents

Nina, the AI assistant: what nina drafts, her desk, and how beacon uses ai. These steps match Beacon 2026.11; for another version, see help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk. Beacon runs at your organisation's own address.

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Reading the screenshots. The orange numbers 1 on a picture match the numbers in the step text, and an orange box marks the part of the screen a step is about. Every guide is also online, with search, at help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk.

NINA, THE AI ASSISTANT

Nina, the AI assistant

Nina is the AI assistant in Beacon. She drafts and suggests; people decide. Nina only drafts when Beacon or a reviewer asks her to, a reviewer edits every draft before the report is signed off, and the nursery sees nothing until then. Everywhere else she only proposes changes, and nothing happens until a person selects **Apply**.

What Nina helps with

Where	What Nina does	Guide
Reviewing an inspection	Drafts the narrative, suggests Ofsted-style grades, drafts the safeguarding commentary, and suggests SMART wording and evidence for actions	What Nina drafts
Maintenance	Suggests likely duplicate jobs before you merge	What Nina drafts
Nina's desk	Keeps suggestions she has made for you to apply or dismiss, and your email choices	Nina's desk and emails
Everywhere	Explains how AI is used in Beacon	How Beacon uses AI

What Nina never does

- **Sign off a report.** Only an area support manager can, in Beacon itself.
- **Change anything by herself.** She proposes; you select **Apply** (or edit the draft and save it).
- **See more than you can.** When she helps you, she has your access, your nurseries and your permissions.
- **Judge a safeguarding concern.** If something she reads looks like one, she passes it to your safeguarding inbox for a person to review. Always follow your safeguarding procedure.

Is Nina switched on for us?

Your organisation decides, and there are two switches:

1. **AI drafting**, the **Ask Nina** buttons on the review page. They appear once Early Tree has connected your Beacon to its AI service.
2. **Nina's other help**: her desk, photo suggestions during an inspection, the risk radar on the dashboard, **@Nina** replies on maintenance jobs and team chat, and her emails. This is a separate switch, off unless your organisation asks for it.

If a feature in these guides isn't on your screen, it's switched off for your organisation. Ask your area support manager. In the public Beacon demo, Nina is switched off.

NINA, THE AI ASSISTANT

What Nina drafts for you

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME	YOU NEED
Area support manager Area support lead Maintenance manager	**Inspections › an inspection in review › Narrative, Ofsted Grades or Action Plan**	Seconds to a few minutes per draft	AI drafting switched on for your organisation

Purpose

Writing up an inspection takes time. Nina gives you a first draft to work from, using what was recorded on the visit: the checklist answers and fail notes, readings, maintenance notes, interviews and the previous visit. You stay the author. Read every draft, correct it, and only keep what's true and fair. The reviewer and the area support manager who signs off are responsible for the report, not Nina.

Before you start

- AI drafting is switched on for your organisation. If it isn't, there are no **Ask Nina** buttons: write the text yourself.
- You're reviewing an inspection that has been submitted and not yet signed off. Once a report is signed off, the drafting buttons disappear.
- See Review and sign-off for the review itself.

What's drafted when an inspection is submitted

When an inspector selects submit, Beacon creates the draft report straight away:

- a short summary to start the narrative;
- an action for every failed item, with a title, a description, SMART wording ("what needs to happen") and the evidence needed to close it, an owner and a due date set by how serious the result was.

With AI drafting on, Nina then carries on in the background for a minute or two and adds:

- a fuller narrative, section by section;
- suggested grades for each Ofsted-style evaluation area, and a suggested internal grade;
- a first draft of the safeguarding commentary.

While she's working, the review page shows what she's drafting (for example **Drafting the operational section...**). If something can't be drafted, the rest is kept and you can ask again with the buttons below.

Ask Nina for the narrative

1. Open the inspection's review and go to the **Narrative** tab.
2. If you want Nina to take something into account, open **Additional context for Nina** and write it, for example "The nursery is newly refurbished. Focus on the kitchen improvements since the last visit."
3. Select **Ask Nina** at the top of the narrative.
4. If the narrative already has text, choose ✨ **Improve existing text** (Nina tidies your wording and keeps your points), 🔄 **Replace with Nina's draft**, or **Cancel**.
5. Read the result in the editor and change anything that isn't right. It saves as you go.

Ask Nina for grades and the safeguarding commentary

On the **Ofsted Grades** tab:

- **Ask Nina** next to **Evaluation Area Grades** suggests a grade for every area you haven't graded yet. It doesn't change grades you've already set. Check each one against the evidence and the guidance shown with it.
- In the safeguarding section, **Ask Nina to draft** writes a commentary for the judgement you've made (or **Ask Nina** to refine what you've written). Nina never makes the safeguarding judgement: you do.

Ask Nina for an action's wording

On the **Action Plan** tab, open an action. Next to **What needs to happen (SMART)**, select **Ask Nina** to draft SMART wording and the evidence needed to close it.

> CAUTION
>
> Nina's wording **replaces** whatever is in the SMART and evidence boxes for that action, and is saved straight away. If you've already written something you want to keep, copy it first. Then read Nina's version and correct it.

To fill every action that has no SMART wording yet, select **Ask Nina to fill all (N blank)** at the top of the plan. It only touches blank actions, and tells you how many it filled (**Nina filled N of M blank action items**).

Suggested duplicates in maintenance

When a maintenance manager merges jobs, the merge window lists **AI suggestions**: jobs that look like the same problem. When AI isn't available, Beacon still lists likely matches (**Suggestions**) by comparing the wording. You choose which, if any, to merge. See Maintenance.

What you should see

> The draft appears in the box it was asked for, for you to edit. A message tells you when suggestions have been applied, for example **Nina's suggestions applied**. Nothing is signed off, sent or shared to the nursery because Nina drafted it: the nursery only sees the report once it's signed off.

Check before you keep it

- **Is it true?** Every statement should match what was seen on the visit. Delete anything Nina has guessed.
- **Is it fair and specific?** Use the nursery's real strengths and weaknesses, not general phrases.
- **Is anyone identifiable?** Don't name children. Name staff only where your organisation's reports do.
- **Safeguarding**: never rely on an AI draft for a safeguarding decision. Follow your safeguarding procedure.

Common problems

There's no Ask Nina button.

AI drafting isn't switched on for your organisation, or the report is signed off. Write the text yourself, and ask your area support manager whether AI drafting is available. (In the public Beacon demo it's off.)

"Nina couldn't fill these just now — you can write them by hand".

The AI service is busy or unavailable. Try again later, or write the actions yourself.

"Draft generated but could not save automatically — click into the box and click away to save."

Do exactly that: click into the box, then click outside it, and the draft saves.

The narrative only has a short summary.

Nina's fuller draft is still being written, or couldn't be. Wait a minute, or select Ask Nina.

"Nina had nothing to add for this action" or "Nina couldn't make a suggestion".

There wasn't enough recorded to draft from. Add detail to the action yourself.

The drafting buttons have gone.

The report has been signed off, so it can't be changed.

Related guides

- How Beacon uses AI
- Nina's desk and emails
- Review and sign-off

NINA, THE AI ASSISTANT

Nina's desk and emails

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME	YOU NEED
Area support manager Area support lead Maintenance manager Nursery manager	**Nina's desk**	A few minutes	Nina switched on for your organisation

Purpose

When Nina's wider help is switched on for your organisation, she works alongside you outside the review page too: she replies when you mention **@Nina** on a maintenance job or in an inspection's team chat, looks at checklist photos for maintenance problems, takes a first look at new maintenance jobs, and sends emails such as visit briefings and weekly summaries. Any change she suggests is left on **Nina's desk** for you to apply or dismiss.

This guide doesn't apply if Nina is switched off for your organisation: then there's no desk, no photo suggestions and no emails from her.

Before you start

- Nina is switched on for your organisation (ask your area support manager). In the public Beacon demo she's off.
- When Nina is on, **Nina's desk** is in the menu, under **Calendar** and **Tablet mode**.

Deal with Nina's suggestions

1. Open **Nina's desk**. Each suggestion shows what it's about, where it came from (for example **from an @Nina reply** or **from Nina's own review**) and when, with **open item** to see the job or action it's about.
2. Read the suggestion card. It shows exactly what would change.
3. To make the change, select **Apply** on the card. Beacon makes it as you, with your permissions, so you can only apply what you could do yourself.
4. Select **Done** to clear a suggestion you've dealt with, or **Dismiss** if you don't want it.

What you should see

> The suggestion leaves the list. If you applied it, the change is on the item and recorded as made by you. When the desk is empty it says **Nothing waiting — Nina will leave suggestions here when it has something for you.**

Other places Nina may appear

- **Risk radar** on the dashboard, for area support: the nurseries most in need of attention, each with plain reasons (for example "3 overdue action(s)" or "No inspection for 140 days"). It's a simple score to help you prioritise, not a judgement of the nursery.
- **Nina noticed...** under checklist photos during an inspection: a possible maintenance problem, marked **AI suggestion, please check**. You decide whether to raise a maintenance note, or dismiss it.
- **Nina's triage** comment on a new maintenance job: likely duplicates, the contractor used for similar jobs and suggested priority, with any changes left on the maintenance managers' desks.
- **Readiness check** before sign-off, and suggested ratings on staff interviews: advice only; the reviewer decides.

Stop Nina's regular emails

1. Open **Nina's desk** and scroll to **Email with Nina**.
2. Untick **Send me Nina's regular emails (weekly summaries, visit briefings, friendly reminders).**

You'll see **Nina won't send you regular emails**. Tick it again to turn them back on. Replies to emails you send Nina always come through. Every email from Nina is marked as written by an AI assistant.

Common problems

There's no Nina's desk in the menu.
Nina is switched off for your organisation.

"This suggestion is in a format the desk can't show — dismiss it."
Select Dismiss. If you still need the change, make it yourself.

Apply fails.
The item has changed since Nina suggested it, or the change needs a permission you don't have. Open the item and make the change yourself, or ask someone who can.

The desk mentions a Nina button for chatting with her.
There's no chat button at the moment. Mention @Nina on a maintenance job or in team chat instead.

Related guides

- What Nina drafts for you
- How Beacon uses AI
- Maintenance

NINA, THE AI ASSISTANT

How Beacon uses AI (AI transparency statement)

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME
Everyone · Owners and administrators	**Nina's desk** › **or this page**	5 minutes to read

Purpose

This statement explains, in plain English, how Beacon uses artificial intelligence, so that everyone who uses Beacon, and everyone whose work is described in it, knows what Nina does and doesn't do. It supports the transparency and human-oversight expectations of the EU AI Act and UK data protection good practice.

Each organisation that uses Beacon also keeps its own **AI use register**, a record of how it uses Nina. Early Tree provides the template; your organisation completes it and reviews it at least once a year. Ask your Beacon administrator for your organisation's copy.

Before you start

- Nina may be switched off for your organisation. If so, none of the AI features below run. See Nina, the AI assistant.

What Nina is for

Nina supports staff in running safe, high-quality nurseries: she drafts reports and actions, spots risks and patterns, and helps people keep on top of actions, maintenance and compliance. **Nina supports decisions. She doesn't make them.** She doesn't take decisions about children, admissions, staff employment or inspection outcomes.

We treat Nina as a limited-risk system with transparency obligations, because a person always makes the decision.

People stay in control

- **Drafts are edited by people.** A reviewer reads and corrects every draft before an area support manager signs the report off. Only signed-off reports reach the nursery.
- **Proposals need a person.** Outside the review, Nina can only suggest a change. It happens only when a person selects **Apply**, and it's made with that person's own permissions.
- **No sign-off by AI.** No AI, including connected AI apps, can sign off an inspection.
- **Same access as you.** When Nina helps you, she can only see the nurseries and records you can see.

- **Safeguarding is never judged by AI.** If something Nina reads looks like a safeguarding concern, she escalates it to your organisation's safeguarding inbox for a person to review. Always follow your safeguarding procedure.

How it's labelled

- AI suggestions in Beacon are marked as Nina's or as AI suggestions (for example **AI suggestion, please check**).
- Every email from Nina carries a banner and a footer saying it was written by an AI assistant, may not be correct, and should be checked before acting.
- Nina never presents herself as a person.

What data is used

What Nina reads	The records needed for the task: checklist answers and notes, photos from inspections, action items, maintenance jobs, staff interview answers, staff certificate records, and emails people send her.
Children	Nina is told never to identify or describe children in photos, and never to record details that could identify a child. Don't write children's names in notes.
Where it goes	Beacon doesn't send data to an AI company directly. Requests go through Early Tree's AI gateway to the model provider named in your organisation's AI use register. Early Tree's standard set-up uses Anthropic's Claude models, under commercial terms where your data isn't used to train them.
Where it's kept	Drafts and suggestions are stored in your Beacon, like the rest of your data, under your organisation's retention policy. Usage records hold counts, not content.

Records and accountability

- Beacon's audit log records Nina-related actions, including safeguarding alerts, email preference changes and actions by connected AI apps.
- Every email Nina sends or receives is recorded.

Known limits

- AI can be wrong or out of date. Check everything before you rely on it.
- Photo suggestions can miss problems or misjudge how serious they are.
- Nina has no staff rota information, so she can't confirm ratios for a shift.

Switching it off, and opting out

- **Your organisation** chooses whether Nina is switched on, and whether AI drafting is available. To switch either off, your administrator asks Early Tree.

- **You** can stop Nina's regular emails at any time from **Nina's desk** (see Nina's desk and emails). Replies to emails you send her still come through.
- If you'd rather not use AI drafting, simply don't select **Ask Nina**: you can write everything yourself.

Common problems

I think Nina has got something wrong.

Correct it, and tell your area support manager so it can be raised with Early Tree.

I'm worried about how AI is used with my data.

Speak to your organisation's data protection lead, who holds the AI use register and the data protection impact assessment.

Related guides

- Nina, the AI assistant
- What Nina drafts for you
- Nina's desk and emails
- The audit log