

## Observation – Assessment - Planning

‘EYFS requires those who plan and deliver early years provision to put children first; to listen to them and their parents; to observe what they can do; and to make them the most important influence on planning, observational assessment, routines and staffing.’

‘ It is important that practitioners ensure that they observe closely what children can do, and use those observations as the basis of assessment and planning of the next stages of children’s development (there must be no tests for children at any stage of the EYFS)’

‘ Play underpins delivery of all of EYFS and must be planned for children in both indoor and outdoor space. Practitioners should enable all children to participate, enjoy and achieve in a rich, play based curriculum which fosters their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.’

Early Years Foundation Stage 2006

The Dorset Early Years Team has produced some documentation and planning formats which may support your provision.

### Observation comes first

If you have set up an indoor and outdoor environment in which children can have independent access to resources as well as adult led play sessions then it is easy to observe the learning that is occurring.

Time is then needed to assess the learning from these observations and to decide on next steps for the children.

How the children will have opportunities to make the next steps is then planned for.

The planning is implemented and then the children are observed and the cycle continues.

There are different types of observations –

#### **Informal**

Focus for a week such as a social interaction or a skill – write down when this is observed at any time in the week – on stick its/ notepads etc

#### **Spontaneous**

Notes taken while playing with a child

#### **‘On the Spot’**

Noting anything significant – write on plans/ on a celebration board/ on speech bubbles

**Area observation**

Board/ paper in a specific learning area – may be noting a skill or how the children use the space

**Daily Timed**

Specific focus on a time of day – perhaps transition times.

**Group Session**

Notes on specific learning objectives for a particular group of children

**Tracking**

Target a child for a period of time. Maybe tracking where they play/ who they play with.

**Time Sampling**

Track a child at fixed time intervals. Usually if a child has a specific learning need.

Although children are observed in adult led group sessions the majority of observations need to take place when the children are playing something they have initiated themselves.

It is only when observing the children in their play that you can assess whether they are using the skills and knowledge that has been shared with them in adult led sessions.

It is important to keep observations short, positive and clear with a context for the learning.

Ensure that the observations are '**significant achievements**' –

- Attempting something s/he has not previously tried
- Doing something s/he has not been able to do before
- Applying new understanding, knowledge or a skill in a different situation or context
- Explaining something in a new way or put into words something s/he has not previously been able to express
- Explaining how to do something to another child or an adult
- Co operating and collaborating with others in a new way or for a longer period of time
- Persevering for longer at an activity, either self initiated or led by an adult.



Name Observation	Date
Name Observation	Date
Name Observation	Date



Group Observation				
Date		Area of learning focus		
Task				
Resources				
Key Vocabulary				
Key learning objectives				
1				
2				
3				
Name	Obj	Can do	With help	Comments
	1			
	2			
	3			
	1			
	2			
	3			
	1			
	2			
	3			
	1			
	2			
	3			
	1			
	2			
	3			
Implications for planning/ Next Steps				

## Analysing the observations

You need

- Time
- A good understanding of how children learn
- An understanding of child development
- A good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Somewhere to collate the observations and track the learning progress for each child
- A process for passing on the assessment information to parents and colleagues.
- A process for using the assessments to inform planning

Some observations and assessments can be made easily and will feed the planning process by staff writing comments on the daily or weekly plans. Recording assessments needs to occur at least every half term. The more often it is done the quicker and easier it is to do.

The Early Years team have devised assessment recording sheets and booklets for groups of children and individual children. You can request these if you are a registered setting in Dorset, but these sheets will need adapting for the new framework for 2008.

## Planning next learning steps

‘Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive’

‘Practitioner must develop long - term and short - term plans. These plans must, however, be flexible and practitioners must be able to adapt them in response to children's actions and events.’

EYFS 2006

‘A **long – term** plan provides an overview of what practitioners intend the children to learn. It should be a guide.’

The plan may be topic based for a half term. It may include visits, visitors, events, celebrations etc as well as a general idea of the areas of learning the children are going to have opportunities to learn. Some topics will provide more opportunities for a specific area of learning while others will be more cross curricular. It is good practise to think about what the children need to learn, what they are interested in and then what topic will capture their imagination and develop their learning.

It is good practise to involve all the staff in the planning.  
Here is a sheet that can be used by all staff – perhaps with their key children in mind.

Topic	
Ideas for Independent Activities	Resources
Ideas for Adult led activities	Resources

'It may use the areas of learning, the five outcomes, or other aspects of development and learning as headings, but it is very important to think of these as related and contributing to a picture of the whole child. Children do not compartmentalise their learning.'

**'Short – term** plans are informed by ongoing observations and informal assessment, and by discussion with colleagues, parents and – as appropriate – external agency colleagues and providers at other settings. They can be for individuals and groups and may be for a week or the next day. They should be based on previous observation and assessment and should indicate possible next steps for individuals and / or groups.'

The Early Years team have devised some weekly planning sheets and adult led planning sheets for more detailed planning. There are blanks and filled in examples.

**Adult Directed Tasks  
AM/PM**

**Indoor/Outdoor**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Staff	
Area of learning (circle one only)	Personal, Social & Emotional Communication, Language, Literacy Mathematics Knowledge & Understanding Physical Creative
Learning Intentions/Stepping Stones (What do we want the children to learn)	
Opportunities for Assessment	
Targeted Children	
Activity (adult introduction - what will the children do)	
Resources	
Adult input (language to be used and questions to be asked)	
Additonal provision (indoors/outdoors to support learning intention)	
Evaluation to inform future planning/NEXT STEP	

**Adult Directed Tasks****Indoor/Outdoor****AM/PM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Staff	
Area of learning (circle one only)	Personal, Social & Emotional Mathematics Physical Communication, Language, Literacy <b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b> Creative
Learning Intentions/Stepping Stones (What do we want the children to learn)	SS : Show curiosity and interest Y1 Describe simple features of objects B2
Opportunities for Assessment	Are the children involved in looking at their hand and are some of them able to describe and name parts of the hand.
Targeted Children	AP, MM, RS, KL
Activity (adult introduction - what will the children do)	Children look carefully at their own hands – adult focussing children to observe veins, skin, lines, fingers, finger nails. Children then paint hands with chosen colour and make a hand print.
Resources	Magnifying glasses, choice of paint, a range of sizes of paper.
Adult input (language to be used and questions to be asked)	Vocabulary: palm, fingers, nails, veins, lines/wrinkles. What can you see through the magnifying glass? Why have we got veins below our skin? Why are they underneath the skin? What do you think nails are for?
Additional provision (indoors/outdoors to support learning intention)	A selection of magnifying glasses outside with a tape recorder to report what they have found. Digital thermometers in hospital area. Tubing with different coloured water.(veins)
Evaluation to inform future planning/NEXT STEP	All the targeted children showed an interest in the activity and all except R took on board new vocabulary. M was able to give a reason for veins and went on to extend his learning using the tubes and coloured water. See individual child observations Repeat on Friday afternoon with BR, CP, DV

Italic writing was hand-written on during week

Topic - Pets

Areas	Activities/ Focus					In door	Out Door	Adult Led Tasks (What we want the Children to Learn)
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday			
<b>Role Play</b>	CLL – Y4 B5 Vets MA model vet role		CD Y9 B11 Make props for area			+		1.The vet needs cages for the animals, can the children build some. Assess their use of construction materials. Extend with open-ended questions and encourage children to think about size and comfort.
<b>Small World</b>	PSED Y6 B1 Free choice of house, farm and zoo		BD model play	(O)		+		
<b>Water</b>	MD Y9 B3 Different size bottles		Add jugs and funnels			(O)	+	
<b>Listening/Music</b>	CD Y4 B5 Animal song tape/ CD		PD Y2 B2 Add animal print material and masks -	→ <i>Not do – add in next week</i>		+		2. Make posters about pet care. Look at poster from vets. Look in books, cut out pictures etc from magazines. Encourage the children to have a go at writing.
<b>Construction</b>	KUW Y4 B5 Adult led task 1 SD	BD	MA	JS	Leave for children to develop unaided. (O)		+	
<b>Computer/ICT</b>	KUW Y6 B7 Free choice of discs			BD with Sam, Amy, Lucas – using camera outside	BD with Nat, Peter, Jack and Susie – using camera outside	+	+	
<b>Art &amp; Craft</b>	PD Y11 B1 Dough, feathers, sticks, eyes, beads	<i>Brilliant models-took photos – could be used next week?</i>				+		3. ICT – use of camera outside with specific children. Take photos of what they like outside, put onto computer to show others at story time. Children to show others how to use the camera next week.
<b>Mark Making</b>	CLL Y14 B22 Adult led task 2 MA	SD	JS	BD	Leave for children to develop unaided. (O)	+		
<b>Physical</b>	PD Y6 B9 – outside play See Art and Craft		See Music			+	+	
<b>Maths</b>	MD Y2 B 2 &3 Free choice in area			(O)		+	+	<b>Birth To Three Focus</b> <b>A Skilful Communicator</b> – Being together Adults to support friendly behaviour Link to Golden Rule – We Share.
<b>Investigation</b>	PD Y3 B2 Soil tray, stones, shells, plastic bugs, tweezers, magnifiers	Adult support if needed		CLL Y14 B22 Add pencils, paper and bug books				

**Additional Support/Extension:**

Encourage 2 new children to explore the room.

**Assessment Opportunities:**

Adult led tasks 1 and 2.  
Observations of independent use in Maths, small world, Water and investigation areas

**Evaluation/Next Steps:**

*Water v. pop. Keep for next week – add colour*  
*No one going in maths area – I brought in skittles from outside when it rained – 6 played with them, counting and 'scoring' on a board.*

Areas	Activities/ Focus					In door	Out Door	Adult Led Tasks (What we want the Children to Learn)
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday			
Role Play								
Small World								
Sand/Water								
Listening/Music								
Construction								
Computer/ICT								
Art & Craft								
Mark Making								
Physical								
Maths								Birth To Three Focus

**Additional Support/Extension:**

**Assessment Opportunities:**

**Evaluation/Next Steps:**

Week Beginning:.....

**Independent Learning Opportunities**

Areas/Days	Monday	Tuesday	Weds	Thursday	Friday
Mark Making CLL	Make signs for the hospital	_____ →	_____ →	Write prescriptions	_____ →
Role Play CLL/CD	Hospital AD (model use)	Child initiated props added to hospital	_____ →	_____ →	Adult focus on hospital vocab (AD)
Book CLL	Selection of fiction and non-fiction books about hospitals			_____ →	_____ →
Listening/Music CLL/CD	Child's free choice	Hospital radio station AD	_____ →	_____ →	_____ →
Physical PD	See Art and craft	See Water	Fitness checks - counting heartbeats/jumps to a timer AD	Timers	_____ →
Table top PD/PSED(puzzles)	Independent access to a range of table top activities				_____ →
Malleable PD	Cornflour, water, newspaper strips and tubes to make splints - children investigate independently				
Small World CD PSED	Hospital/Dolls House	_____ →	_____ →	_____ →	_____ →
Art/Craft CD	Weaving using ribbons	_____ →	_____ →	Hand printing - use magnifying glass look at veins (display) AD	_____ →
Construction KUW	Independent access to a range of construction materials			_____ →	_____ →
Sand/Water KUW/CD	Cars and hospital scenario Syringes	Pumps	Medical gloves and sand Colour and syringes and pumps	Tubing	_____ →
Computer/ICT KUW	Registering patients in role play area Hospital CDRom	Hospital radio link	Hospital fitness timers	_____ →	_____ →
Observations	Initials of member of staff observations and area to observe				
Evaluation	A lot of children wanted to use cornflour - repeat tomorrow and add combs	Creative area well used. Lots of older children involved, younger children watching, adult support for younger ones tomorrow.	2 new children started today, parents stayed, will need to stay tomorrow	Book area not so well used today. Display books and leave teddy in book corner with a bandage on to stimulate language	New children and younger children enjoyed the book area. Repeat prop idea next week.

**Additional Support**

To provide a glove for JD to access malleable area.  
Encourage girls to access the construction area

**Next Steps**

Develop water activity for those children who need  
manipulative practice, add wider variety of  
pumps/syringes.  
Physical: Continue with timers next week by extending  
activity and vocabulary opportunities

**Assessment Focus**

Use of hospital language - Monday AD to Friday AD

Week Beginning:.....

**Independent Learning Opportunities**

Areas/Days	Monday	Tuesday	Weds	Thursday	Friday
Mark Making CLL					
Role Play CLL/CD					
Book CLL					
Listening/Music CLL/CD					
Physical PD					
Table top PD/PSED(puzzles)					
Malleable PD					
Small World CD PSED					
Art/Craft CD					
Construction KUW					
Sand/Water KUW/CD					
Computer/I CT KUW					
Observations					
Evaluation					

<b>Additional Support</b>
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<b>Next Steps</b>
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<b>Assessment Focus</b>
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