

Assessment Policy

PRINCIPLES

“ To put curriculum into action, we need to understand the nature, purpose and practice of assessment.” (Dubiel, 2023, p.121)

The purpose of assessment is to provide meaningful information to understand, support and extend children's learning and development.

Assessment can have different uses; it can be **formative** or **summative**.

Observation, assessment and planning work together as a continuous process- see diagram

The main purpose of assessment is to provide meaningful information to understand, support and extend children's learning and development. It is about knowing and understanding each unique child. The process of assessment should be supportive and framed positively, celebrating children's strengths and identifying their next steps.

There are two main types of assessment:

Formative assessment refers to the ongoing observations and assessments that practitioners make on a day-to-day basis through their interactions with children. It is an integral part of early years practice. For example, a practitioner may observe a child counting objects to ten during their play and make an assessment on their understanding of number.

Summative assessment refers to assessing children at a certain point in time, for example, at the end of a term or at a certain age. It should provide a holistic overview of the child's development and progress. There are three statutory assessment points in the early years, these are the '**Progress check at age two**', the 'Reception Baseline Assessment' (RBA) on entry to reception and the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile' (EYFSP) at the end of the reception year. At Sunnysdale Nursery, we complete the 2 year progress check with the Toddler Room Leader, Parents and Key person.

. At Sunnysdale Nursery, we use a system called EY Log to track and monitor children's development, which is based on the Development Matters document.

. Staff are asked questions about their Key Children in Supervisions to check their knowledge of the achievements, needs and next steps of individual children

. Information and evidence is gathered on children's development involving the child's voice, parents and carers through them adding WOW moments and observations of the children at home.

. When assessing children, staff start with '**why**'; understanding the purpose of the observation or assessment and **how it will be used**.

Our observations are meaningful, supporting our understanding of the child and building on their strengths, needs and interests.

“The [...] cycle most naturally starts at observation. It is the bedrock upon which all else is built. Without knowing your children, understanding their interests and existing knowledge, you cannot plan meaningful, challenging and exciting activities for them.” (Brodie, 2013, pp.17-18)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Start with why: clarify the purpose of assessment, ensuring that it informs a meaningful curriculum and provision for all children.



- **Child-centred:** when carrying out assessments, draw on a secure understanding of the unique child and their developmental milestones.
- **Draw on others:** collaborate with parents, colleagues and external professionals to build a holistic understanding of the child's needs, strengths and overall development.
- **Respond to findings:** use information gathered through assessment to support and extend children's learning and development.
- **Make it efficient:** provide support by managing workload and expectations related to assessment.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

1. Baseline assessments are carried out at a child's home visit with a Manager and the Room Leader. This information is then shared with the team.
2. Children are continually observed by ALL staff working within the room through high quality interactions
3. Staff record observations that are purposeful and meaningful, authentic and accurate
4. Assessments are monitored by Room Leaders to ensure there are a variety of assessments being carried out on each child.

Purposeful "Clarity of purpose is a hallmark of effective assessment." (EEF, 2021, p.20). Before recording an observation, practitioners need to be clear on the reason, or purpose, for doing so. Do they already know this information about the child? Have they seen this multiple times in a child's play? Or is this something significant, that demonstrates the child's progression in an area of learning? Taking a moment to question why an observation should be recorded, or an assessment should take place, can help practitioners to determine the information they might want to document, the method of doing so and most importantly, how they will use this information to support the child (Dubiel, 2023).

Meaningful Observations should also be meaningful. Practitioners do not need to record things that they are confident a child can do. For example, if a child regularly manages their own self-care needs, such as fastening the buttons on their coat or going to the toilet independently, there is no need to 'document' this. A practitioner who knows the child well is likely to be able to discuss their ability in this area without the need for paperwork or documentation.

Authentic Observations are most effective when they are authentic; they should "truly represent the information collected about the child. Invalid information (or data) is at best valueless and, at worst, misleading." (Dubiel, 2023, p.124).

Accurate The information that practitioners collect through observations is important and informs next steps for both the adult and the child.

4. Children at aged 2 years have a 2 year progress check carried out by their parents, Toddler Room Leader and Key Person. This meeting is carried out in the setting, away from the children.
5. Number of observations are monitored by Room Leaders
6. Planning is adapted based on observations as per planning cycle



Adapted from 'Birth to 5 matters', 2021.

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