BIRTH TO 5 MATTERS

Guidance by the sector, for the sector

Birth to 5 Matters:
Non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage

From the Early Years Coalition

www.birthto5matters.org.uk

From the Early Years Coalition:

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BIRTH TO 5 MATTERS

The Early Years Coalition

British Early Childhood Education Research Association (BECERA)
www.becera.org.uk

Early Childhood Forum (ECF)
earlychildhoodforum.org

Early Childhood Studies Degrees Network (ECSDN)
www.ecsdn.org

Early Education (The British Association for Early Childhood Education)
www.early-education.org.uk

Early Years Alliance
www.eyalliance.org.uk

The Froebel Trust
www.froebel.org.uk

Keeping Early Years Unique (KEYU)
www.keyu.co.uk

LGBTQIA Early Years
lgbtqearlyyears.org

Montessori St Nicholas
montessori-group.com

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
www.ndna.org.uk

National Education Union (NEU)
neu.org.uk

OMEP UK
www.omep.org.uk

Sector Endorsed Foundation Degrees in Early Years Professional Association (SEFDEY)
www.sefdey.com

Sightlines Initiative
www.sightlines-initiative.com

Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship
www.steinerwaldorf.org

TACTYC: The Association for Professional Development in Early Years
tactyc.org.uk

What do you like about your early years setting?

He just smiles but when he realises we're going to nursery he often signs "friends".

Idris, 2 and a bit

Preface

Birth to 5 Matters has been developed by the Early Years Coalition, composed of the 16 early years sector organisations whose logos appear on the inside cover of this document.

We came together because we wanted to create a resource which pooled our members' considerable expertise and experience and kept alive multiple possibilities for the future of early childhood education. The document is intended to work with members' many values, principles and aspirations.

As a coalition we encompass a range of early years traditions and approaches and reflect the diversity of experiences and views of our members. We hope this guidance does justice to the collaborations and rich discussions that took place as part of its development. We have sought to reach points of consensus and support diversity of practice and interpretation. This guidance is a reference point for practitioners developing their practice, not a "how to" manual or a tick-list. We want Birth to 5 Matters to support practitioners to implement the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a pedagogically sound, principled and evidence-based way. Practitioners can then use their professional judgement based on their knowledge of the children in their setting and their wider context including family, community and the setting itself to construct an appropriate curriculum.

We also want to support practitioners to develop their curriculum and pedagogy to reflect contemporary issues such as the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, Black Lives Matter, ensuring sustainable development and growing up in a digital age. We believe equity, citizenship and rights education should be clearly reflected in the implementation of the EYFS curriculum and its pedagogic approach to listen to children's voices on these and other issues from as early an age as possible. Children entering the early years now will need the much discussed "twenty-first century skills" and will grow up in the context of the "fourth industrial revolution" where digital skills are central. They may live to see further changes we cannot yet imagine. Practitioners need to take account of this wider, ever-changing context in early childhood education.

One of the challenges has been creating a document which will be of value to a diverse audience. The early years workforce in England ranges from unqualified staff and volunteers to experienced professionals with qualifications up to and including doctorates. Our aim has been to provide a resource which is accessible across the range of staff to build an understanding of how children typically develop and learn from birth up to the end of the Reception year (aged anywhere up to 71 months), thus ensuring high standards of care and education are achieved. The guidance looks at the unique child in a range of situations and contexts and seeks to provide examples of how the adults and the environment can support and enhance development and learning. These are examples, not a prescriptive list. The trajectories and suggestions for practice may be most useful to trainees and less experienced staff. More experienced colleagues may wish to engage more in depth with the resources and research evidence which underpins the guidance (these are accessible via the online version at **www.birthto5matters.org.uk**). We hope the mixture of the two provides an accessible starting point as well as opportunities for extending knowledge and understanding for all.

In creating this guidance, we were to some extent constrained by the format of the EYFS and the need for practitioners to be able to map from one to the other. In our preliminary sector consultation, we had a majority favouring a cautious evolution whilst still wanting to maintain the framework of Development Matters (2012). Therefore, this document builds on, and links to, what has come before.

It was co-constructed with the sector through sector surveys and working groups including a wide representation of practitioners, setting types, sector organisations and sources of expertise (see Acknowledgements), and feedback was shared with the sector as we progressed. We also sought out and considered the views of young children, through a survey and literature review. We thank all those who contributed to these processes. We look forward to future dialogues within the sector that build on this guidance as part of continuing professional development and professional reflection, and the continued sharing of professional knowledge and experience.

Early Years Coalition, March 2021

Introduction

Birth to 5 Matters provides comprehensive guidance, drawing on previous guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which has been updated in order to reflect recent research, to meet the needs of practitioners, to respond to current issues in society, to meet the needs of children today and to lay a strong foundation for their futures.

The purpose of the guidance includes reaffirming core principles which recognise

- the child at the centre of practice
- the child's connections within family, communities, cultures and the natural world
- the need to consider the whole child: physical, social and emotional wellbeing, health, and learning
- the child's rights as members the child's rights as members of society under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), including:
    - Non-discrimination (article 2)
    - Best interest of the child (article 3)
    - Goals of education (article 29)
    - Right to be heard (article 12)
    - Right to play (article 31)
    - Right to freedom of expression (article 13)
    - Right to freedom of thought, belief and religion (article 14)
    - Right for children with a disability to live a full and decent life (article 23)
    - Right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family (article 30)
- the sector's responsibilities under the United Nations Sustainability Goals and UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development
- the statutory requirements of the SEND Code of Practice.

Birth to Five Matters will support practitioners in all their statutory responsibilities within the EYFS areas of learning and development and educational programmes, and to help children make progress toward the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

While there is a statutory duty "that providers must help children work toward" the ELGs, the government has stated that the ELGs themselves are not the curriculum. Settings can determine for themselves what, when, and how to offer experiences and support to help children make progress in their learning and development from birth onward. In some cases, the organisation of strands within Birth to Five Matters does not match the structure of the ELGs, where a more logical arrangement aligning with child development has been used. This will help support practitioners' understanding of child development and how they might support children's progress throughout the EYFS.

The "Characteristics of Effective Learning" does not include the word "Teaching" because these refer to behaviours and dispositions of the child, not the adult. We have rephrased "Creating and thinking critically" to "Thinking creatively and critically", to place a stronger emphasis on the thinking skills that are central to the creative process.

Birth to 5 Matters guidance supports children's progress toward all of the statutory EYFS Early Learning goals

EYFS Early Learning Goals		Support in Birth to 5 Matters	
CL	Listening, Attention and Understanding	**CL:**	Listening and Attention
	Speaking	**CL:**	Speaking
PSED	Self-Regulation	**Characteristics of Effective Learning**	
		PSED:	Understanding Emotions
		CL:	Listening and Attention
	Managing Self	**Characteristics of Effective Learning**	
		PSED:	Understanding Emotions: Sense of Self
		PD:	Health and Self-care
	Building Relationships	**PSED:**	Making Relationships
PD	Gross Motor Skills	**PD:**	Moving and Handling
	Fine Motor Skills		
L	Comprehension	**CL:**	Understanding
	Word Reading	**L:**	Reading
	Writing	**L:**	Writing
M	Number	**M:**	Mathematics
	Numerical Patterns		
UW	Past and Present	**UW:**	People and Communities
	People, Culture and Communities		
	The Natural World	**UW:**	The World
	(No ELG)	**UW:**	Technology
EAD	Creating with Materials	**EAD:**	Creating with Materials Being Imaginative and Expressive
	Being Imaginative and Expressive		

A note on terminology used in Birth to 5 Matters

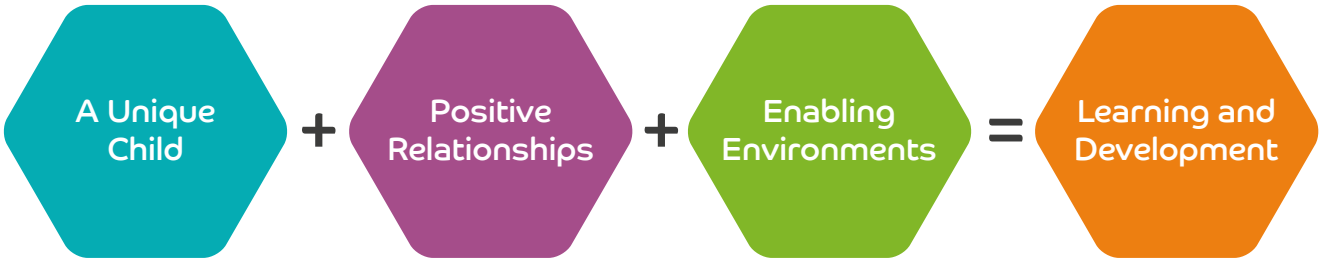
- **Children** refers to all babies, toddlers, and young children from birth to the end of the EYFS, up to 71 months.
- **Parents** refers to all carers of children in the EYFS.
- **Setting** refers to all types of provision delivering the EYFS.
- **Practitioner** refers to all early years professionals who work directly with children in EYFS settings.

Foundations of highest quality provision

Principles of the EYFS

The four principles of the EYFS underpin all the guidance in Birth to 5 Matters, which is designed to show how these principles work together for children in the EYFS.

All children develop in different ways and development is not a linear or automatic process. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments that encourage their engagement and recognise their strengths. All children have agency and curiosity to learn, and will interact with other people and the world around them in different ways. Understanding these different ways of knowing about the world is central to understanding who children are and how best to support their development.



Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Practitioners

- observe and understand each child's development and learning, assess progress, plan for and act on next steps
- support babies and children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture
- identify any need for additional support
- keep children safe
- value and respect all children and families equally

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Positive relationships are

- warm and loving, and foster a sense of belonging
- sensitive and responsive to the child's individual needs, feelings and interests
- supportive of the child's own efforts and independence
- consistent in setting clear boundaries
- stimulating
- built on key person relationships in early years settings

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Enabling Environments

- value all people
- value development and learning

They offer

- stimulating resources and spaces, inside and outside, relevant to all the children's cultures and communities
- rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching
- support for children to take risks and explore

(Recognise the) importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Learning and Development

Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the Prime and Specific areas of development and learning.

They foster the characteristics of effective early learning

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Thinking creatively and critically

Promoting voice and inclusion

Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. Inclusive early years practice is about anticipating, paying attention, responding to and reflecting on the needs and interests of all children. A commitment to inclusion should permeate all aspects of the design of educational programmes and the structuring of environments, as well as shaping every interaction with children, parents and other professionals.

Inclusive principles for practice are relevant for all contexts and settings and place a focus on **what** features and practices enable children to feel and be included, rather than **where** this takes place. Different kinds of settings may be best placed to effectively support different children to be included, and so maintaining a range of provision is important.

Listening to children's voices and recognising these are expressed in a range of ways, including non-verbally, is central to inclusive practice. Children's right to be heard and have their views taken seriously was established via Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) and is embedded in the statutory provisions in England of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE/DoH, 2015). Through the Code of Practice, local authorities are mandated to ensure that children's and families views are sought and contribute to educational decision-making.

Identifying what each unique child "knows and can do" is the foundation of inclusive early years practice. Some children will benefit from extra support and expert advice in order to get the most out of the opportunities for learning and belonging that their early years setting affords. Practitioners learn how to offer appropriate support through observation, consultation and careful listening, in inclusive provision which:

- places an emphasis on the changes that can be made to the environment to encourage play and active learning on the child's own terms
- understands the starting points of every child, regardless of their chronological age
- accepts and understands children for who they are, including their capabilities to sense, feel, and their agency to choose the things they like and enjoy doing, as well as identifying the things that they do not like or enjoy
- takes a positive approach to observation that is child-centred, strengths-based and holistic
- promotes opportunities in practice to follow each child's lead and listen to their voice, recognising that this will be expressed in a range of different ways, including non-verbally
- uses the EYFS framework and Birth to 5 Matters or other guidance to support understanding of typical development, and to enable practitioners to have confidence to observe, question and consider why a child may be developing differently
- bases practice on awareness that development is not a linear progression and does not move at a standard rate, in order to promote insight into the appropriateness of the provision and resources for specific children
- placing an emphasis on the changes that can be made to the environment to encourage play and active learning on the child's own terms
- develops good relationships with children and families through clear and open dialogue.

Understanding children as unique includes considering them in relation to others. Finding out about what each child enjoys doing with the support of others is an important aspect of understanding children's development and supporting their learning.

Making sure that early years practice meets the needs of all children means thinking about children in context. As well as making sure that the environment reflects the range of developmental stages of all children, it also means recognising the connections with children's homes, localities and communities, weaving these into practice, and listening to families including parents and carers, siblings, grandparents and others who may be important in the child's life. It also means seeking out and incorporating the views and expertise of other professionals as needed, within and beyond the settings and working respectfully with each other to appreciate a range of views.

Key points

Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging.

Listening to children's voices and recognising these are expressed in a range of ways, including non-verbally, is central to inclusive practice.

Identifying what each unique child "knows and can do" is the foundation of inclusive early years practice.

Understanding children as unique includes considering them in relation to others.

Making sure that early years practice meets the needs of all children means thinking about children in context.

Play

Children have a right to play. Children's right to play is recognised as so vital to their wellbeing and development that it is included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (1989). Play both indoors and outdoors is also a fundamental commitment to children throughout the EYFS.

Play, both indoors and outdoors, makes a powerful contribution to children's wellbeing, development and learning. Children play, not least because it is often fun and offers a joyful opportunity for engaging in many different activities and being with others. As they play children immerse themselves in what most interests them, and in the process find out about themselves, other people, and the world around them. Because play is open-ended and flexible, children can explore and experiment with confidence, take risks and challenge themselves at the limits of their capabilities, without fear of failure.

In play children can become deeply involved as they take things they already know and combine them in new ways so that their understanding deepens. They may build on existing learning, through interaction with a quality environment and open-ended resources, or alongside a playful adult. In transforming their stock of knowledge into new connections and applications, children develop mastery of concepts. They embed skills and knowledge, explore and experiment with ideas and new ways of thinking, support their own creativity and develop their individual dispositions.

In an enabling environment, children choose to play, and are in charge of their play – what to do, what to use, what it is about, whether to play alone or with someone else, how long to play. They experience autonomy and can develop confidence in their own agency through their ability to make choices and take responsibility.

Having freedom and time to play in an appropriately stimulating and resourced environment which is finely tuned for babies, toddlers and young children supports development and learning across all areas. Outdoor spaces particularly provide rich opportunities for sharing ideas and feelings with peers. Playing with others, such as an interested adult who participates without directing the play or with other children, is likely to foster and extend learning. Playing together often introduces new elements of play, as well as bringing the challenge of communicating ideas to each other.

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, EYFS reforms early adopter version 2020

Adults must have a deep understanding of how play of different types supports children to develop and learn, and be able to discuss this with parents.
Research has identified many different types of play, enabling practitioners to understand the choices children are making and how best to support their thinking. Children may be pursuing different purposes in sensory play, exploratory play with objects, schematic play, symbolic play, pretend play (alone, in role or with small world objects), cooperative role play with others, fantasy and superhero play, physical play, rough and tumble play, risky play, or digital play. As each of these supports children's development and learning in different ways, early years provision should ensure that opportunities are available for all types of play. Through observing and reflecting on children's play, adults can gain insights into the child's purposes and how best to support them.

Because play is spontaneous, flexible, and unique to each child, settings can find it challenging to support play and advocate for play. It is essential for practitioners to gain insights from play's unique ability to show children's dispositions to learn. Settings must also know and understand each family's individual, cultural approaches to play in order to support meaningful experiences which are inclusive of all.

Play, while central, is not the only way in which children develop and learn in the early years. Children also have opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences of all sorts, alongside being shown how to do things, having conversations, and taking part in activities which are planned by adults to introduce or practise particular skills. Such adult-led activities are not play but they are most effective when they use some of the features of play to engage and motivate children, by ensuring that they are **playful** – with elements of choice, hands-on experience, connections to children's interests, and enjoyment.

Key points

Children have a right to play.

Play, both indoors and outdoors, makes a powerful contribution to children's wellbeing, development and learning.

In play children can become deeply involved as they take things they already know and combine them in new ways so that their understanding deepens.

Children choose to play, and are in charge of their play.

Having freedom and time to play in an appropriately stimulating and resourced environment which is finely tuned for babies, toddlers and young children supports development and learning across all areas.

Adults must have a deep understanding of how play of different types supports children to develop and learn, and be able to discuss this with parents.

Care

Being an early years practitioner means being part of a caring profession, at the core of which is **caring for** and **about** babies and young children from birth to 5 and beyond. This involves having feelings of concern, responsibility and love for children, and also engaging in nurturing behaviours - being watchful, protective and acting with care, affection and regard for children and their rights to ethical treatment. This concept of care requires that all early years professionals give careful attention to what they do, and do what is in the best interests of each child.

Effective early years provision pays as much attention to children's care as it does to play and learning as these are intertwined and impact equally on children's development and overall well-being.

Care includes emotional aspects, relationships, and also physical interactions. How practitioners touch and physically interact with children and how they organise to meet children's physical care needs are therefore central to early years pedagogy. Although this may apply most directly to practitioners working with our youngest children, practitioners working with older children, including those with special needs, also need to ensure that all physical interactions impart kindness and respect.

Babies and young children first come to understand themselves through their bodies and understand much of what others think of them and how much they are loved and valued through touch and physical interactions. Non-verbal communications are internalised into children's developing sense of self and shape their behaviours, actions and attitudes towards others. Practitioners must pay attention to their own physical gestures and facial expressions to ensure that they hold, touch and handle babies and young children gently, sensitively and with respect. This will give children a sense of being recognised, understood and valued.

Effective provision includes reflecting on and planning for physical care events such as dressing, washing, feeding, sleeping, changing and toileting, as well as children's play and learning. Settings should ensure physical caregiving is given sufficient time and thought to create situations that are valuable and enjoyable for both child and practitioner.

Physical care events are precious times when the practitioner is one-to-one with a child, with many opportunities for supporting a child's positive sense of self and wellbeing through focused interaction and attentive care, building secure, trusting, relationships which help babies and young children to feel confident to explore and play. These are also times for learning, with rich opportunities for focused attention, sustained conversations and for repeating and recalling experiences, which are essential elements for practising cognitive processes that support learning overall.

Respectful caregiving requires thoughtful organisation. For consistency and continuity, the key person should undertake the physical care of their key children, and for times when the primary key person is away a secondary key person or "buddy" system should be implemented.

- Organise for predictability and flexibility: prioritising physical caregiving means planning for a balance between having familiar, predictable times of day and the flexibility to be responsive to children as they require.
- Organise for individualised care within a group routine: a balance needs to be struck between caring for the whole group and caring for individual children. Practices that treat children as if they have identical needs do not support children's positive self-concept or sense of autonomy. For our youngest children, individual routine and care sequences that reflect their home experiences should be followed where possible and advisable, to provide continuity and connect with the home.
- Organise the environment and resources: a care environment should contribute to the practical effectiveness of the practitioner through its layout and resourcing, and enable the child to feel safe, comfortable and capable, and able to influence what happens.

Respectful caregiving requires respectful interactions. In a respectful caregiving approach, the practitioner recognises the child as a free and equal human being, with whom they are working in co-operative partnership. The adult does everything with the child rather than to the child, so care events become co-operative dialogues in which the child feels competent, recognised and valued as an individual. Practitioners should keep in mind that this is time for building trusting relationships with a child and for positively supporting their developing self-concept.

This can be achieved by:

- paying attention to body language, voice tone, touch and gesture, remembering the messages that each of these will convey to the child and how they will make the child feel
- giving full attention to the child, observing and responding to all their communications and following their cues
- slowing down: if care is going to be truly participatory and respectful, it needs to be unhurried
- inviting and suggesting: offering explanations and reassurance; being patient and giving the child time to respond and participate
- adapting your approach, actions and gestures according to the individual child's responses, needs and preferences
- encouraging co-operation and participation through inviting the child to take part, asking permission and letting them know what is intended before taking action, creating opportunities for the child to do things for themselves, giving the child manageable choice and allowing for autonomy of movement.

Key points

Effective early years provision encompasses and pays as much attention to children's care as it does to play and learning.

Effective provision includes planning for and reflecting on physical care events such as dressing, washing, feeding sleeping, changing and toileting.

Respectful caregiving requires thoughtful organisation.

Respectful caregiving requires respectful interactions.

Quality improvement and leadership

Research shows that effective high-quality experiences in the early years will have a significant positive impact on children's development, their progress through school and on into adult life. The importance of quality improvement and effective leadership sits alongside the four basic principles of practice within the EYFS, acting as a golden thread throughout Birth to 5 Matters. Recognising and valuing the role of the leader results in a more reflective and analytical approach to practice that in turn supports a culture of continuing improvement.

Leadership and quality improvement run through the EYFS Principles. The four principles of the EYFS underpin effective practice in the care, development and learning of young people. Each of these principles can be applied to leadership and quality improvement, just as they apply to young children.

A unique setting Every setting is different in terms of location, finances, resources, practitioners, children, families, and leadership. Every aspect of a setting is equally important, and should be given due attention, as the setting finds its own way of doing what is best for children.

Positive relationships There are many stakeholders within each setting including children, families, practitioners, the leadership team and the wider community. Respectful and effective communication is key to supporting active and confident membership of the group, with the aim of creating trusting and collaborative working relationships.

Enabling environments The environment supports not only the children and families but also the practitioners and leadership team. The adults working in every setting need to feel healthy and safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and to experience economic wellbeing, as do the children and their families.

Learning and development Quality improvement and effective leadership rests upon commitment to collaboration and reflective practice where practitioners do not simply settle for what is, but are open to possibility thinking about what might be. The adults in any setting need opportunities to develop their thinking and their practice through training and development activities, and an opportunity to share their ideas with others.

Quality improvement is a continuous process. At a basic level, high quality early years provision can be defined as a provision which:

- improves outcomes for every child through high aspiration and effective pedagogy
- provides personalised learning, development and support – tailored to the needs of individual children
- builds the foundations for future success, wellbeing and lifelong learning
- involves parents/families in their children's development and learning.

A continuously improving setting needs continuing professional development for all practitioners. In a continuously improving setting the leaders will:

- always have the child at the heart of everything
- have energy, enthusiasm and a principled care and educational vision
- employ a whole setting approach, support collaborative working and the collective identification and clear expression of research-informed pedagogical objectives related to the EYFS framework that promote wellbeing and achievement for all children
- recognise the value of continuous quality improvement and how it impacts on children's wellbeing and achievement
- be open to change and see value in supporting staff to voice and trial their own ideas
- engage in self-evaluation and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing internal review – assessing what the setting offers against robust and challenging quality criteria
- draw on the wide range of quality improvement tools available, ensuring the tools are fit for purpose
- lead a collaborative learning culture – providing time and space for sharing knowledge and support for continuous professional development for all staff

What do you like about your early years setting?

"I love O, M, and E (the practitioners in her room). I love the babies. Not real babies, pretend babies."

Matilda, 2 years 10 months

- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development
- gather observational evidence rather than just data
- look beyond the setting for advice and support
- seek and act upon the views of all stakeholders (families, children, staff, outside professionals)
- pay attention to the health and wellbeing of practitioners.

A continuously improving setting will have well-qualified and experienced staff who:

- are appropriately trained, with up-to-date skills and qualifications
- are motivated and supported to continuously raise their skills and qualification level to level 3 and beyond
- are open to ongoing professional dialogue, reflective practice, and collaborative work to continuously improve practice to help improve outcomes for every child
- are committed to embedding inclusive practice which values diversity and celebrates differences in children
- engage in regular cycles of planning and review, informed by accurate observation and record-keeping focusing on children's development and learning progress, and any statutory assessments
- engage in supervision, respond to guidance and advice, and know when to seek support and extra help
- are keen to share best practice with other practitioners through local, regional and national networking
- are committed to the development of sustained shared thinking by offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions which support and extend children's thinking and help children make connections in learning – while ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities
- work in close, supportive partnership with families – sharing information to nurture the child's wellbeing, and involving them in their child's continuous development and learning
- work together with other practitioners and parents to support transition, within and between settings and between early years settings and primary school.

Key points

Leadership and quality improvement run through the EYFS Principles.

Quality improvement is a continuous process.

A continuously improving setting needs continuing development for all staff.

Transitions

High quality transitions recognise the importance of feeling "known". Key to a high-quality experience for all children in the early years is ensuring continuity between home, key people and all the settings that make up children's individual learning journeys. In today's society children may have many out-of-home experiences, through childcare, toddler groups, family day care and more than one nursery, and they may appear to straddle change with ease. But while transitions may occur with great frequency, not all children navigate these comfortably or happily.

Some children are particularly vulnerable at times of transition. Moving from a place or situation in which children feel "known" into one in which they feel "unknown" can raise insecurities about having their entitlements and needs met. While some children have the resilience to cope with change, others are more vulnerable to uncertainty.

Children who lack confidence or have low self-esteem, those who are summer-born or born prematurely, babies separated from parents for the first time, some children with disabilities or complex health needs, those for whom English is not their first language and those who have simply had to cope with too much change or loss in their young lives may be particularly vulnerable at times of transition.

Many children become particularly anxious about making new relationships, whether those are with other children or with the adults with whom they will spend their time. The support of their friends and friendship groups can help protect children from the potentially negative impact of transitions.

Transition for children who are more vulnerable is effectively supported when they are given additional times and opportunities to make the necessary readjustments to the changes ahead, and when their emotional development and wellbeing is prioritised. Practitioners help by being warm, responsive and by recognising challenging behaviour as a manifestation of feelings.

Transitions are opportunities for professional dialogue both within and between settings, as well as with the home. It is the responsibility of all early years practitioners to ensure that children feel welcomed, gain a sense of belonging and are helped to settle happily.

At points of transition it is valuable to gather the perspectives of all those who have worked with the child such as other practitioners, speech therapists, health visitors, bilingual teaching assistants and educational psychologists. These perspectives enable all those involved with the child to plan for their individual needs more effectively.

Conversations between teachers in Reception classes and Key Stage 1 are particularly valuable in order for the environment, the pedagogy and the practices in Year 1 not to be developmentally different from those in Reception. Reception teachers will have knowledge of children that can support teachers to bridge the transition into primary school effectively.

Effective transition is a process rather than an event, and should be planned as such. Practitioners demonstrate this by enabling children and their families to become as familiar as possible with where children are going and with whom they will be building relationships, before any move actually takes place.

Expectations can be formed over an extensive period of time in the lead-up to transitions. Children's expectations are formed largely by what their families say and how they act, so practitioners need to work in partnership with children, families and communities in a planned and proactive way to make transitions as smooth and seamless as possible.

Practitioners can make transitions more seamless by first visiting children in the setting in which they are known, confident and comfortable. Ideally, this would be the home as the place where children feel most secure and where children can see their parents and practitioners developing warm and positive relationships. Practitioners can also visit the setting that children are currently attending so children meet new adults in a familiar place. During these times practitioners can learn about the child from the parents as well as give information, in order to be fully aware of and responsive to the needs and concerns of each child and their family. It is important that families' concerns are listened to, but are voiced away from the child.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"The toys, the garden, my friends. That mummy's waiting for me."

Harvey, 4

Children then need to visit their new setting with a parent and/or key person so their first experience of any new setting is with a familiar and trusted adult. For all children – and parents - at every transition in the early years and beyond, repeated opportunities for relaxed contact with and visits to the new setting over a sustained period of time can support a positive move. Transition processes that are tailored to meet the needs of each unique child are more effective than a "one size fits all" process.

The key person makes essential connections. When children enter their new setting the task of providing continuity is made easier by a warm welcome from responsive and available practitioners. A child's key person is the essential link between home and the new setting, and is vital in providing reassurance and creating close, supportive, ongoing relationships with families.

It is valuable to consult both children and their parents on how they feel about any forthcoming transition and whether they need support. Parents often have a different perspective on their child than the key person, which can help enrich a setting or school's understanding of the child. In turn, parents and carers can learn much from the setting or school to support their child's development at home.

Connections that are maintained, where possible, with previous Key Persons can be reassuring and offer continuity for children and their families.

Transition includes moving from EYFS to KS1. As children move from the EYFS into KS1 they need continuity of experience, with the ways in which they learn successfully in their Reception class continued into Year 1. This does not mean that **what** they will learn will be the same, but **how** they learn should be very similar and familiar.

In KS1 children's learning experiences can remain a balance between learning led by the teacher and learning led by the children. Play is a vital way in which KS1 children continue to learn skills, strategies and attitudes that adult-led learning does not teach.

Key points

Transition is a process, not an event.

High quality transitions recognise the importance of feeling "known".

Some children are particularly vulnerable to at times of transition.

Transitions are opportunities for professional dialogue.

The key person makes essential connections.

Transition includes moving from EYFS to KS1.

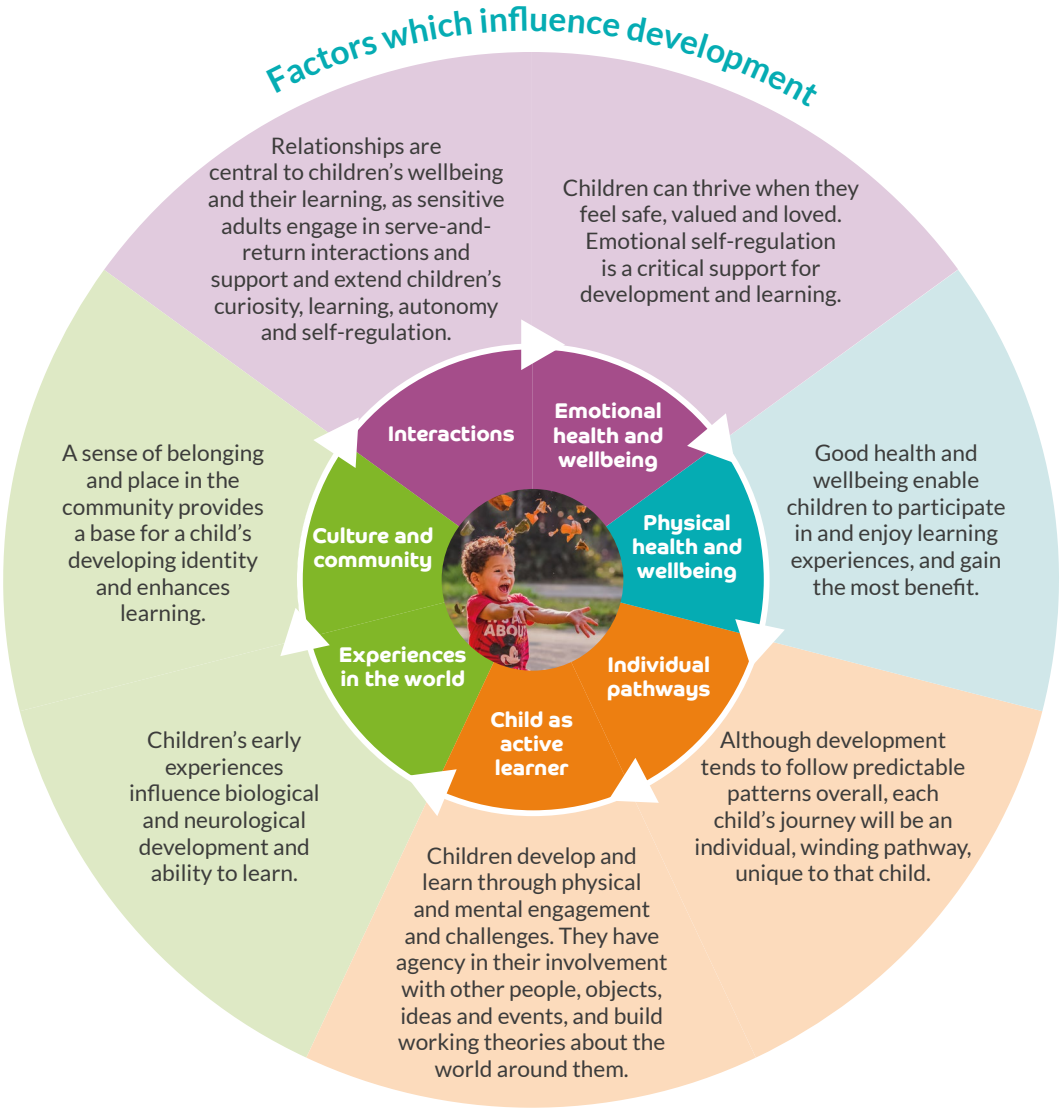
A Unique Child

Child development

Each child is unique, and while we can be guided by an understanding of some general patterns of development from pre-birth into early childhood, progression is uneven and unfolds differently for each individual child. The complex differences for each child mean the pathways toward maturity should be seen more as dancing around a ballroom than climbing a ladder. A child's growth, development and learning are interrelated in complex ways from the moment of conception all the way through infancy to early childhood and beyond. Experiences during the early years strongly influence a child's future development, as development and learning build on what has already been acquired.

Development is a continuous process which is influenced by many factors. Development refers to the processes through which the body, brain, abilities and behaviour of the infant, child and adult become more complex and continue to mature throughout life. Development involves cognition, memory, attention, language and communication as well as feelings, relationships and sensory-motor skills. Although development is often considered in terms of different aspects, it cannot really be compartmentalised since one domain very often influences the development of other domains. It is important to consider the whole child at the centre of the many influences on development.

The baby's brain is not simply a fixed structure which develops in a genetically pre-determined way. It depends on external stimulation from experience to form neurological connections. Babies and children are not passive in the process of development, but are actively stretching their own capacities as they observe and interact with other people, objects and events in the world.



Emotional health and wellbeing

Early relationships strongly influence how children develop, and having close, secure attachment to their carers is important for children's healthy development. Positive relationships support wellbeing and the gradual development of self-regulation. When adults tune in to children's signals and respond sensitively and consistently to meet their needs, children can feel safe, relaxed, and loved. Regular patterns of activities which create routine and help children to know what to expect next also foster a sense of security and self-confidence.

Physical health and wellbeing

Being physically healthy includes having nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, appropriate clothes; healthcare; mental stimulation; movement and activity; rest and sleep; access to the outdoors and loving relationships. Focus on the health and wellbeing of children should be in the "here and now" and not exclusively on longer-term outcomes. It is important to provide opportunities for children to develop sensory integration, balance and coordination, and gross and fine motor skills, through their play indoors and outdoors. Accessibility of all environments for children with complex health conditions or disability should be ensured. Poverty and inequality have an impact on health, wellbeing and life chances.

Individual pathways

Children develop in different ways and rates of development vary from child to child, and from time to time. Each child's unique history, including their experiences and opportunities, is important as the starting point for supporting their development and learning. Many factors, such as low birth weight, child temperament, a recent move or their family being under stress, can also affect a child's development. Emphasis must be on enhancing children's sense of self and on supporting what children can do, rather than focussing on what they cannot yet do.

Child as an active learner

Children are innately driven to become more competent, and they find and embrace the next stages in their development and learning, meeting challenges and practising to develop their skills and independence. The emotional and physical environment should enable and encourage children's agency as they make decisions, take risks and try things out, build their competence and confidence through repetition, and feel satisfaction at their own achievements, as well as accepting what does not work.

Interactions

The adult's role as co-regulator is critical in a child's development of self-regulation (children's ability to regulate their thoughts, feelings and behaviour). As they observe and interact with their peers and adults, children gradually move from the experience of being supported in managing their feelings, thoughts and behaviour, to developing the ability to regulate these more independently. Sensitive and skillful adults play a key role in supporting development and learning, through observing children and deciding when to step back and when to offer support, encouragement and stimulation for children's own efforts. Children's language is enriched and enhanced by back-and-forth exchanges with practitioners who respect and respond to children's conversation.

Experiences in the world

Children build on their experiences; the wider and deeper their exposure, the greater potential they have for secure development. Children need opportunities to practise what they know, to consolidate and apply learning from one context to another, and to develop new knowledge and skills. Children will build on experiences in the natural, built and virtual worlds.

Culture and community

Development and learning are enhanced when there are connections and relationships between early childhood settings, home and other places and spaces in children's lives. Connections across environments support children to bring their interests and "funds of knowledge" that may provide an anchor for them and an impetus for their learning. Children and families need to feel secure, accepted and that they belong – both within and beyond a setting. Diversity of communities must be respected and celebrated, widening each child's sense of belonging and sense of place in the community, while the uniqueness of each family, regardless of differences, is acknowledged and honoured.

Self-regulation

Developing self-regulation, like many elements of development and learning, is not something children do by themselves. It is a process that grows out of attuned relationships where the caregiver and baby or child are closely attentive to each other and engage in sensitive, responsive exchanges.

There is no single definition of self-regulation, with aspects of it being referred to in many different ways – including impulse control, behavioural control, emotional competence, self-direction, and executive function. While there are other domains such as biological self-regulation (e.g. babies building their ability to regulate body temperature and recognising body sensations such as hunger), it can be most helpful to focus on the interlinked aspects of emotional self-regulation and cognitive self-regulation, and how these work together to enable children to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Self-regulation involves children's developing ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviour to enable them to act in positive ways toward a goal. The rapid brain development which takes place in early childhood paves the way for the growth of self-regulation, which develops both through the maturing of the brain's neural systems and through opportunities to practice. It continually develops through to adulthood, with further development of self-regulation taking place in adolescence. Self-regulation is now recognised as crucially important in young children's development, strongly predicting children's later success in relating to others and in their learning, while supporting lifelong mental and physical health.

Self-regulation depends on and grows out of co-regulation, where adults and children work together toward a common purpose, including finding ways to resolve upsets from stress in any domain, and return to balance. Over time and with consistent practice, the process shifts from co-regulation between adult and child to the child's self-regulation. The flexibility of brain cells and pathways in the early years means that the brain's architecture is altered in response to the quality and consistency of co-regulation experiences, building the capacity for self-regulation.

In its earliest stages, co-regulation involves a carer helping a baby who is overwhelmed by feelings – perhaps from being hungry, uncomfortable, or unhappy for any reason – to return to a state of calm. Through voice, sensitive handling, and tuning in to respond promptly to a baby's signals, the adult helps the baby experience returning to balance after being in a state of emotional arousal. Each experience of co-regulation helps to build the neural pathways that regulate emotion.

Cognition interacts with emotions, as the baby learns to recognise and interpret situations which then results in a different emotional response. For instance, a fretful baby who needs attention and can wait when hearing the carer's voice, rather than wailing in deep distress, has learned from the adult's prompt responses to their cues that help will be provided and it is possible to wait. Gradually an adult's soothing a baby toward sleep at bedtime can be transferred to the baby who learns to self-soothe when waking in the night.

For young children, co-regulation also has both emotional and cognitive aspects. It includes the adult modelling calming strategies and naming and talking about feelings and ways to manage. This helps children learn to recognise their feelings and builds their cognitive awareness of strategies to reduce or manage extremes of emotion. At the same time, adults scaffold cognitive self-regulation by talking with children about thinking and learning.

The foundations of emotional and cognitive self-regulation in the early years are integrally tied together, and both are necessary for behavioural self-regulation. Emotions running very high get in the way of cognitive aspects of self-regulation, as a child who is experiencing very strong emotions will have difficulty in holding back impulses, focusing attention, or thinking in flexible ways to solve problems. Over-arousal of the emotional part of the brain constrains the thinking part, so a child who is very upset will first

need help through emotional co-regulation before they can begin to think about the situation.

Cognitive self-regulation includes focusing attention, executive function (usually defined as including mental flexibility, inhibitory control, and working memory), goal-setting, self-monitoring, problem-solving, taking different perspectives (such as being aware of others' thinking and picturing the future), and decision-making. When feelings are in balance, a child is able to use developing cognitive skills to make decisions about their goals and what behaviour is needed, such as choosing to apply the executive function of resisting impulses or concentrating. At the same time, children can begin to use cognitive self-regulation to support emotional self-regulation, by monitoring their emotional state and deciding on strategies to calm themselves if necessary. A child managing their behaviour, then, depends on emotional and cognitive self-regulation working together with both aspects in balance.

Self-regulation is not the same thing as compliance, such as sitting still and listening when expected to. A child who is stressed and struggling to resist the impulse to move or speak is very different from a child who is calm and alert, in a balanced state of feeling, thinking, and behaviour. Children can fluctuate in their capacity to self-regulate just as adults can. It is not a fixed state. However, noticeably large regressions may indicate high levels of distress or be in response to a traumatic experience.

A pedagogy which includes co-regulation strategies will help children develop self-regulatory skills.
Researchers have identified three basic strategies for co-regulation:

- **Positive Relationships** – Provide a warm, responsive relationship where children feel respected, comforted and supported in times of stress, and confident that they are cared for at all times.
- **Enabling Environments** – Create an environment that makes self-regulation manageable, structured in a predictable way that is physically and emotionally safe for children to explore and take risks without unnecessary stressors.
- **Learning and Development** – Teach self-regulation skills through modelling, suggesting strategies, providing frequent opportunities to practice, and scaffolding to support children to use self-regulation skills.

Key points

Self-regulation involves children's developing ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviour to enable them to act in positive ways toward a goal.

Self-regulation grows out of co-regulation, where adults and children work together toward a common purpose, including finding ways to resolve upsets from stress in any domain and return to balance.

The foundations of emotional and cognitive self-regulation in the early years are integrally tied together, and both are necessary for behavioural self-regulation.

A pedagogy which includes co-regulation strategies will help children develop self-regulatory skills.

Learners for life: Characteristics of Effective Learning

Education for children's futures requires supporting children's ability to learn and think for themselves. We cannot predict what challenges children will face in their unknown futures in a complex and rapidly changing world. The best preparation we can give them in their early years is to promote positive dispositions by providing living experiences of making choices, innovating, taking responsibility, facing challenge, thinking flexibly and critically, and learning how to learn so that they will be able to respond to their unfolding futures. Supporting children in the Characteristics of Effective Learning, a statutory element of the EYFS, is a central responsibility in early years provision. The three aspects are Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Thinking Creatively and Critically.

Each unique child is an active agent of their own development. From birth children are primed to reach out to interact with other people and the world around them, and early development and learning are rapid and powerful. The Characteristics of Effective Learning represent the active role children adopt as they follow their curiosity and push themselves to become more competent and to understand more, and are rewarded by the inner satisfaction of mastering new skills and feeling their independence grow.

While the Areas of Learning and Development outline different elements of **what** children may learn during their first years, the Characteristics of Effective Learning describe **how** children learn. These learning dispositions, behaviours and habits of mind are particularly important in the EYFS because they build the foundations needed to support children to become strong lifelong learners and independent thinkers.

Children's emotional wellbeing is the first necessity for effective learning. Children need to feel safe within warm, loving and caring relationships. When children's primary need for emotional safety is met, they can then relax and move into exploring, taking risks, making discoveries, and experiences of the deep involvement through which they learn. Adults can help children to feel confident and at ease by providing environments that meet children's need for tenderness and affection, relaxation, inner peace, enjoyment, openness, safety, and belonging.

Through co-regulation, over time effective learners develop **self-regulation**, the ability to regulate their feelings, thoughts, and actions toward a goal. Self-regulation includes both emotional self-regulation developed through emotionally supportive relationships, and cognitive self-regulation described in the Characteristics of Effective Learning. When there is support for children's sense of **agency** – knowing they have control of their own decisions, goals and actions rather than simply being passive in their experiences – children are likely to be effective in their learning. Experiences which endorse children's agency and autonomy reinforce and develop their learning powers.

Play and self-initiated activities are ideal opportunities to build Characteristics of Effective Learning. In play, children can follow their own innate curiosity and drives to find things out, to relate to others, and to be in charge of their own actions. Adults provide an enabling environment for **Playing and Exploring** through experiences and interactions that respect children's ideas, autonomy and interests. In play, children decide what they will do – often in collaboration with others - what their play is about, who they will play with and for how long. They follow their own curiosity and find their own challenges, using their senses and movement to explore the world and their imaginations to act out what they know and how they feel. They are free to take a risk with new experiences, in open-ended activity. Exploratory play, where babies and young children use movement, their bodies and their senses, is fundamental to each child's understanding and sense of agency.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"Playing in the writing area, playing with my friends, the climbing frame and the digging area and looking after bugs."

Olivia, 5

Imaginative play is powerful in helping children to make sense of their ideas and feelings, their identity, their experiences of the world, and their place in it. It is also highly supportive of children developing self-regulation and executive function. As children engage in pretend play, they regulate their own thinking and behaviour. They need to be flexible as the direction of play changes, remember what they are doing and the point of their activity, and follow the rules they set for themselves either alone (If I'm pretending to be a cat, I don't say *"Woof, woof"*), or with others (*You be the shopkeeper and I'll be the customer*).

In play children also have opportunities to engage in **Active Learning**, as they are intrinsically motivated toward their own goals. By tuning in to the children and providing time, space and resources for children to manage, adults can foster children's growing powers to concentrate with deep involvement. Sensitive adults can support resilience by helping children to develop a view that not getting the result they (or others) wanted or were expecting is not a failure, but an opportunity to try again, learn and develop, and that they can keep on trying and persisting even in the face of challenge or difficulties.

As they play, children have rich opportunities for **Thinking Creatively and Critically.** Children think of their own ideas, imagine possibilities, and creatively combine ideas in spontaneous ways. They make meaning as they notice patterns and build their own working theories to make sense of their experiences, then make predictions and test them to refine their understanding. Problems are identified, possible solutions invented, and with support children become increasingly able to monitor their efforts, to alter their approach flexibly when needed, and to review how well it went and what they have learned. This critical thinking becomes more conscious and under children's control especially through talking with others about their thoughts, sharing and developing ideas together.

Adult-planned activities can offer scope for children to reinforce and develop their self-regulation and learning powers, when they are organised to include opportunities for children to explore, follow their interests and think for themselves – building on children's engagement, motivation, and both creative and critical thinking.

Key points

Education for children's futures requires supporting children's ability to learn and think for themselves.

Each unique child is an active agent of their own development.

Children's emotional wellbeing is the first necessity for effective learning.

Play and self-initiated activities are ideal opportunities to build Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Inclusive practice and equalities

A commitment to valuing and respecting the diversity of individuals, families and communities must sit at the heart of early years practice. Inequalities persist in society, with far-reaching effects on children's education, health and life chances. Early years settings have a vital role to play in explicitly addressing all forms of discrimination and prejudice. In doing so, we will meet the Equality Act 2010 requirement that no child or family is discriminated against in terms of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.

Inclusion and equalities apply to all children and families. These characteristics of identity apply to all people, not just those in minoritised groups, so equality means considering practices in relation to all individuals and groups. Each child and family bring their own identity, values and their unique funds of knowledge that are built over time by taking part in the practices of their community.

No matter how well-meaning, human beings are subject to bias. We are all influenced by ideas from the society we live in which affect our attitudes, beliefs and the way we see others and how they may live their lives. By becoming aware of and challenging any bias or misconceptions, practitioners can work with families in an equal partnership that requires actively listening to the realities, experiences and perspectives of each individual. Creating an ethos of equality involves being aware of how all the practices and environments in an early years setting appear through the lens of each unique child. Managers should ensure that time is given for individuals and staff teams to engage in reflective practice, thinking through issues of inclusion and equalities including their own views and prejudices, and to think through future concerns as they arise including possible conflicts with views that children may encounter at home.

Practitioners should share their willingness to challenge stereotypes and misunderstandings as they arise in play, conversation, books or other contexts – whether about communities, families, languages, gender, special educational needs, disabilities, race, ethnicity, faith or cultures. Settings can value the diversity they hold. Practitioners themselves carry a wealth of knowledge from their own diverse backgrounds that should be celebrated.

As well as legally protected characteristics, diversity in the setting may include children living in temporary accommodation, refugees and asylum seekers, or children and families that have very different lives or family structures. When families engage with services, it is important to bear in mind that in some families' protected characteristics or identity markers may overlap. Such combinations are known as intersectionality, and may make some children and families more prone to discrimination or privilege than others.

Equity and inclusion require more than treating everyone the same. There is an important difference between equity and equality. Equality aims to provide fairness through treating everyone the same regardless of need, while equity achieves this through treating people differently dependent on need. While it is vital for all children and their families to be included and for difference to be celebrated, it is also important that early years practitioners are aware of the significant physical, emotional and cognitive barriers many children encounter in accessing early education. Low socio-economic status, mistrust of the establishment, lack of access to play experiences, overcrowded living conditions, parental illiteracy, etc. all take a toll. Practitioners should acknowledge the unique situations that families find themselves in, and plan to lessen the effects of these barriers by offering additional opportunities, for example increased time on balance bikes for those children living with no access to outside space.

Practitioners should also be aware that within any organisation there are often "taken for granted" norms which are unspoken and implicit, for example: we wear coats when we go outside, we go outside even if it's cold or raining, boys and girls play together, it's great to get messy, food play is good, we eat with our knives and forks. Practitioners need to understand that these are not universal values, and their assumptions may need to change. Sometimes children and their families may require extra support, such as provision of wellies, and sensitive conversations to develop trust.

Talking about race is a first step in countering racism. It is a mistaken assumption that treating all people in the same way and ignoring differences in race is a sufficient response to racism. This approach simply allows the continuation of bias in society which disadvantages people from black and minoritised groups. Instead of a colour-blind approach to race, more proactive anti-racism is needed.

Practitioner training is an important step toward opening dialogue and developing understanding about white privilege, systemic racism, and how racism affects children and families in early years settings. It is also time to challenge the widespread notion that "children do not see race" and are colour blind to difference. When adults are silent about race, children's racial prejudice and misconceptions can be maintained or reinforced. Encouraging dialogue and conversation about difference can evoke children's strong sense of fairness and break down false assumptions about everyone being able to succeed on their merits, so that children recognise racist behaviours and develop anti-racist views.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"My friends. My friends playing with me. Best of all my friends joining in and having lunch with me and having a hug when it's time to go home. My friends are most important to me."

Avi, 4

Attitudes toward gender and sexual orientation can limit children and create inequality. During the early years a child's attitudes and dispositions are continually being shaped. Children are influenced by their environments and the adults around them in ways which often affect children's own ideas about themselves. In terms of gender and sexual orientation, young children can develop stereotypical ideas about how they should be and who they should become which can limit their potential. It is important that practitioners do not shy away from these conversations and instead challenge the effects of prejudice and discrimination. Children's resources and books should avoid stereotypical depictions of people on the basis of gender and sexual orientation.

A child may also be part of a family which is LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, plus other variations). Early years settings have an opportunity to prevent prejudices from occurring by ensuring that these children and their families feel welcome and valued. In practice, this means that settings should ensure that their environments are welcoming and supportive and actively celebrate the value of diversity. Ultimately, supporting children to embrace and celebrate differences between them, their families and others is a crucial part of doing equalities work and fostering inclusive practice.

Building awareness through first-hand experiences has lasting impact. In order to promote and value diversity, settings should consider ways of sharing and celebrating children's lived experiences, being sensitive to the children's differing circumstances and ensuring that practices are inclusive of all. Parents may be happy to be involved in sharing aspects of their everyday life and community. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is clear that every child has a right to an identity and part of the goals of education is to foster respect for their own and other cultures. While it is important for children to see their own identity reflected in positive ways in the setting, it is equally important for children in settings where there is little diversity to become aware of and to appreciate difference. Visits to places where children can be involved with different cultures and see ways people live and worship can be memorable – children can taste food they are unfamiliar with, and explore artefacts, enjoy clothing, music, dance and languages from different cultures.

Ensure children can see themselves and their families in the environment. Sometimes the environment, both physical and emotional, speaks more loudly than the policies, so it is important to consider how the environment in the setting enables the children and their families to view diversity positively. Children need to see representation of someone who "looks like me", or "has a family structure like mine", or "lives somewhere like where I live", etc. Children absorb and develop ideas of what is possible for themselves from the images and materials around them, such as:

- photographs of the children themselves (where acceptable to the families)
- books, posters, small world play materials that depict and enable acting out a range of identities which actively challenge stereotypical representations and avoid tokenism
- representation of different races, disabilities, ages, types of families including single parents, same-sex parents, grandparents raising children
- role-play clothing that allows children to play in gender-flexible ways and reflects diverse cultures, and household items reflecting various cultures and communities
- areas where children can relax and "just be", perhaps with pictures and cultural mementos
- practitioners who have some of the same identity features as children and families – race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language.

Focus on the child at the centre. All children are unique. There is a recognition that every child brings with them a rich heritage when they arrive in an early education setting. Their homes, families, life experiences and beliefs provide the bedrock to their identity. The differences between children offer wonderful opportunities to learn about and celebrate these differences.

Practitioners should also understand that children have their own feelings about their lives and their identity. Their voice should be central and their funds of knowledge respected. Actively encouraging home stories and valuing family ways of being supports children to develop a positive self-identity.

Practitioners working with children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) acknowledge and value each child, emphasising what they can do through a strengths-based perspective on disability. Offering all children opportunities to explore, discover and take risks in early years provision helps them to become competent, capable and resilient learners. This position also endorses the

UNCRC article 28 that every child has a right to an education and article 29 which states that education should develop a child's personalities, fascinations and abilities to the full.

In order to dispel issues of "ableism" all children need to grow up to recognise that they are not all the same and different tools or strategies might be needed to make sure they thrive. It is vital that all children are encouraged to notice the many aspects of diversity and difference across society. A positive approach to inclusion in the early years will support all children's development and learning across their lifetime and will have an impact on society as a whole.

The statutory SEND Code of Practice explains the action early years providers should take to meet their duties in identifying and supporting all children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Identifying and assessing special education needs for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early years practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's development and learning to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN.

Developing a sense of belonging is an important part of inclusive practice. Feeling different or being marginalised can lead to feelings of social isolation. When children and their families are able to develop a sense of belonging to a wider community this can reduce these feelings and provide children with a more secure base from which they can learn, develop and flourish. Early years settings are well placed to promote feelings of belonging which are an important part of inclusive practice. Practitioners should actively plan to help children develop positive peer relationships, for example having focused small group times, celebrating difference and diversity in all its guises and creating a culture of "we" rather than "us and them".

Key points

Equalities and inclusion apply to all children and families.

Equity requires more than treating everyone the same.

Talking about race is a first step in countering racism.

Building awareness through first-hand experiences has lasting impact.

Ensure children can see themselves and their families reflected in the environment.

Focus on the child at the centre.

Practitioners working with children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) acknowledge and value each child, emphasising what they can do through a strengths-based perspective on disability.

Positive Relationships

Parents as partners

Parents and carers make a crucial difference to children's outcomes. It is vital that early years practitioners recognise parents' commitment to their children's early development and education and give priority to working with parents. Research tells us that regardless of the quality of settings, the most important predictor of children's future outcomes is the quality of the home learning environment, so involving parents in their children's learning is the most significant factor in enabling children to do well despite disadvantage. The benefits are greatest when practitioners and families work in respectful partnership to develop ways to support children both at home and in the setting. Working together ensures a good understanding of a child's needs, leading to appropriate provision within the setting and the possibility of supporting learning in the home.

Parents are their children's lifelong promoters of development and learning. Most families come to early childhood settings with many months and years of fine-grained observations of their children and the most effective ways to support them. When practitioners consider how to harness parents' voices and deep appreciation and understanding of their children, parents' knowledge of their children can be knitted into the fabric of daily practice. Parents and carers have a rich knowledge of their children's personalities, preferences, interests and skills. Programmes that share how children learn can provide opportunities for parents to deepen their understanding.

Partnerships with parents can be truly effective only when parents and practitioners work together to enable children to create meaningful connections to their wider world and to foster a love of learning. No parent or family should be excluded from this process. Parents must feel included, listened to and trusted within their own role supporting their child's wellbeing, development and learning.

Each unique family must be welcomed and listened to. A welcoming atmosphere in the setting should be evident from the moment an enquiry is made to a setting regarding their child, and it is essential that all families feel that they belong. This is expressed through the attitude of the practitioners and methods of communication and language used, as well as the resources and environment of the setting. The key person's role includes establishing relationships with families as soon as the setting has been chosen and confirmed. Working with families will often entail developing relationships with the extended family as well as the child's parents. This is not only a responsibility but also a great privilege. Each child and family is unique and this needs to be respected and celebrated, as each brings aspects of their own personal and cultural knowledge and values which enrich the whole setting.

We need to make time to listen to parents' concerns and value what they say about the way in which children learn and behave at home. Only through listening attentively to parents can practitioners build the trusting and respectful relationships needed to achieve the best outcomes for children. Practitioners who show they are listening, understanding and valuing what parents say empower them to make effective choices for their children and wider family. Listening helps practitioners become aware of parents' beliefs, their aspirations and their concerns. When practitioners look at situations from a parent's unique perspective, they gain new insights and avoid preconceptions which can lead to misunderstandings. These insights can be used to improve practice.

Listening attentively involves listening to what parents say but also recognising non-verbal messages and actions communicated by parents, as they can be even more powerful than words, particularly where English may not be the home language. Parents may wish to share information:

- about significant events in the lives of their child and family; adding to the picture practitioners have of the child
- that is key to the individual care of their child, such as the way they like to be held, changed or soothed
- about how they could contribute to the setting with offers of time, skills, knowledge or resources for example.

Parents may also seek reassurance and support about child-rearing practices, or about their child's wellbeing and development.

Parents differ in the frequency and ways they prefer to communicate with practitioners. Creative management of the environment and practitioners' work schedules is needed to provide sufficient time and opportunity for parents to feel comfortable about sharing information and for practitioners to listen attentively without compromising the needs

of the children in their care. Home visits help to develop relationships and build trust in a more relaxed environment. The use of the telephone or online platforms can be useful additions to daily face-to-face opportunities.

Consider levels of engagement to make the most of relating to parents. A setting's policies may outline an aim to work alongside parents, and describe a range of opportunities such as everyday conversations at the start or end of sessions, parent meetings or workshops. Just offering opportunities, however, does not necessarily mean that those opportunities will be taken up by all parents equally. Sometimes there is a perceived imbalance of power between practitioners and parents, so it is up to practitioners to take responsibility for developing those relationships.

Thinking about levels of engagement with parents means reflecting on the quantity and quality of that engagement:

- Which parents do we have a relationship with … and who do we need to continue reaching out to?
- Which parents do we not have strong relationships with, why might that be, and what could we do differently to encourage involvement?
- For each unique parent/family, what do you communicate about? Is it simply about organisational issues, such as reminders to parents about setting events or parents letting you know about pick-up arrangements? Or do some of your conversations include discussions about children's wellbeing and their learning? Are those discussions two-way, so that you are learning from parents rather than just informing them about their child's learning? If parents are not engaging, what do practitioners or settings need to do to facilitate this?

Practitioners have a responsibility to work with all families. Practitioners work closely with many different types of families who continually support and encourage their children in what they do at home, within partnerships based on reciprocal engagements. In order to overcome barriers to developing these partnerships, any factors which may cause disengagement from education must be identified. Identified factors might include:

- social attitudes towards religious groups, cultures, classes or sexual orientation
- physical barriers, due to disability, illness or location
- communication barriers, including EAL, deafness or lack of access to digital information
- parents' own previous experiences of education and relationships with authority.

To support parental engagement, practitioners should develop a shared language with parents and a joint understanding about how children develop and learn, both at home and in the setting. Sensitive communication, where practitioners understand parents' own theories about the development of their child, requires skill and continuous professional reflection and dialogue. It takes time to develop reciprocal ways of working. Practitioners need to get to know the families and understand the challenges that they face, and then be prepared to adapt the way they work in order to accommodate diverse families' needs. Working in this way has the potential to transform children's life chances.

Clear leadership regarding partnership with parents will provide the right foundation. Leaders should show commitment to developing a genuine interest in each family. Regularly reviewing the experience of families is essential for settings to develop their vision and practice. This should extend to parental participation in policy making, and collaboration with parents on practical issues such as the timings of meetings in order to develop a more inclusive environment.

Key points

Parents make a crucial difference to children's outcomes.

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators.

Each unique family must be welcomed and listened to.

Consider levels of engagement to make the most of relating to parents.

Practitioners have a responsibility to work with all families.

Clear leadership regarding partnership with parents will provide the right foundation.

Attachment and the role of the key person

Babies and children become attached to significant adults within reliable, respectful, warm and loving relationships which are essential in order to thrive. Babies and children experience wellbeing and contentment when their physical and emotional needs are met and their feelings are accepted. The key person approach, reflecting relationships within families, helps serve to meet these conditions. Early experiences of love and attachment have lifelong benefits.

The key person helps the child to feel known, understood, cared about, and safe. The key person helps the baby or child feel confident that they are "held in mind", thought about and loved. This experience of being cared for by reliable adults who meet their physical needs and remain attentive and playful, affectionate and thoughtful allows children to form secure attachments. Such a grounding provides a "secure base" from which children feel confident to explore the world and form other relationships.

The key person role involves a "triangle of trust" with the child and family. A key person approach is a way to ensure that all children and families have one or more persons within the setting with whom they have a special, nurturing relationship. The presence of a key person helps the child to feel emotionally secure when away from home and provides a reassuring point of contact for parents. There are different ways to ensure a key person is always available (e.g. shared and paired caring, or support partner or buddy).

A key person has special responsibilities for supporting a specific group of children and building relationships with them and their families. The role will involve close physical and personal care for a baby or young child. It is therefore important that parents feel able to share vital information about their child's intimate care preferences, likes and dislikes, motivations and interests, and how they feel about being away from home. Parents might want to talk about their child's feelings or development. It is most helpful for a key person to attend the home visit with another colleague. This frees up opportunities for parents to talk while the key person makes playful connection with the child. If a home visit is not possible, adults can meet somewhere comfortable, with resources to encourage relaxed and playful introductions.

The key person's role includes, but goes far beyond, administrative and operational activities such as keeping records or communicating about the child with parents or other professionals. It is an emotional, reciprocal relationship. As children grow, the key person may not always be present at the setting.

Despite this, the child should still feel "held in mind" when they are apart. The key person approach is statutory throughout the early years phase, including in Reception. The role may look very different in a large class of children with often only two adults, but the principles remain the same. A teacher can retain overall knowledge of the children in their class and benefit from particular knowledge that other people working with them might have. The stronger the relationships are, the more supported the child (and their family) will feel about subsequent transitions, including to Key Stage 1.

An effective key person approach needs strong leadership and committed practice. Leaders should have a good working knowledge of the key person approach and be able to implement it to maximise consistency and continuity for the child and family, while offering the best possible support and supervision for practitioners. Although there is legally no minimum qualification to be a key person, leaders can support less experienced staff, including careful thought about the pairing (or mentoring) so that all can benefit from wide expertise. Key persons communicate with a wide range of people involved with the child, including those in other settings the child attends, health visitors, paediatricians, Portage, physiotherapists, social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, bilingual support, children's centres, and others such as dinner staff.

The role of the key person involves building a relationship of "professional love", with specific and potentially heavy demands. It is important to have professional support and supervision in order to share the challenges of the role. It is also a joyful and privileged position to share in the care of a baby or young child, so having opportunities to celebrate and share those joys are equally important.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"I like nursery and the thing that Zoey has in her ears that the doctors have (stethoscope). A sofa would make it better. My grownups and my friends."

Eden, 2 years 6 months

Children benefit most when their key person has special qualities and dispositions. Ideally, a key person:

- has passion for their work and sees the value and rewards in being a key person
- is empathic and understands the different ways of creating a family
- appreciates and respects the cultures, identities and diverse backgrounds of the children and families with whom they work
- is able to draw on their own informal knowledge of childcare practice from within their own experience and reflect on how best to use or build on it
- is able to reflect on and understand the influence of their own attachment experiences on their work with children and families, with the confidence to know when to ask for support and further training
- is willing to research and reflect on the concept of "professional love", so that they can see its relevance to their work as a key person
- finds effective ways to connect with families, such as developing digital technologies while continuing with as many opportunities for face-to-face connection as possible
- is not judgemental and has the skills to communicate with other agencies and settings involved with the child and their family
- is well qualified, and/or has wider knowledge and understanding of, for example:
  - child development
  - attachment theory, including social and biological factors that might affect a child"s capacity to form attachments
  - co-regulation and self-regulation
  - neuroscience (brain development and how it links with all the Prime areas as well as self-regulation and executive function)
  - pedagogy of effective, relation-based practice
  - bias and prejudice, how it affects the children and families they work with as well as themselves, and strategies to challenge this
  - how to identify and support children in a range of circumstances, including those who are vulnerable, looked after, with visible and invisible special educational needs and disabilities
- recognises that it is a personal as well as a professional relationship which brings with it much joy, as well as challenge.
- works collaboratively with other practitioners, to ensure consistency for the child, and supports transition as an ongoing process, not just an event.

Key points

The key person helps the child to feel known, understood, cared about, and safe.

The key person role involves a triangle of trust with the child and family.

An effective key person approach needs strong leadership and committed practice.

Children benefit most when their key person has special qualities and dispositions.

Supporting development and learning

Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources. We are all social beings, and babies and children who feel secure and listened to will turn to their trusted adults to share their experiences. Emotional wellbeing is the first necessity for successful learning, and adults who respect children's feelings, show empathy, and support children to manage their feelings are helping to lay the foundations for development and learning. The quality of adults' interactions with children has an immense impact on whether their experiences result in making the most of the learning opportunities. Children learn from adults both supporting their current development and learning, allowing time for this to deepen and be consolidated, and from adults introducing new possibilities.

Follow the child's lead to the meeting of minds. It is necessary to establish rapport in an interaction, so that children are ready to include the adult in their activities. This means being careful not to impose the adult agenda on a child, but finding a meeting point within an experience where attention and interest can be shared. Adults are able to put themselves in others' shoes to understand what might be in someone else's mind, and can direct their mature attention at will. These abilities are at early stages of development for young children, who cannot necessarily be expected to understand, find interesting, and be able to pay attention to what an adult proposes. It is up to the adult to meet the child at their point of interest.

As children gradually develop the ability to focus on an adult agenda, brief and lively adult-led sessions can be opportunities for thinking and learning. Within group sessions which are planned in response to children's interests and current levels of development and learning, the adult can still interact with individual children according to their own needs and differentiate through tailored responses to each child.

Tuning in, observing and wondering come first. By being a sensitive observer, tuning into the child's actions and communications whether through gesture, facial expression, or words, the adult can begin to focus on the central question that characterises an effective teacher: What might the child be thinking about, and learning about right now?

Knowing the child well helps in understanding what might be in the child's mind – the links they are making, and whether they are exploring new ideas or gaining more information about existing thinking, as in schema play, for example. A sensitive observer can show interest in what the child is doing, but will also wait to be invited with a word or a look before joining the child's point of interest. The adult may wonder aloud about what is happening so as not to impose their ideas or to demand a response. Respect for the child's autonomy matters, and even very young babies can indicate whether or not they welcome an interaction.

A sensitive and knowledgeable practitioner can decide when to stand back, when to interact, and how to respond to the child. Sometimes a child is deeply engrossed in what they are doing, and the adult can stand back to **observe** and gain understanding about how they might later build on this experience. At other times, the adult may decide to offer support for the learning. A to-and-fro conversation, or helping to keep the child's attention on the activity, for example, might **support** the child to consolidate ideas and refine skills. Or it may be the moment to **extend** the learning through introducing a new idea or resource, new information or a new challenge, scaffolding the child's engagement, and finding opportunities for sustained shared thinking.

Learning together with adults and with other children is important across all contexts. Carefully tuned interaction with skilful adults makes a difference all the time – when supporting children engaged in their play or other child-initiated activities, and also in adult-led activities. When adults plan experiences with particular learning objectives in mind, it is important to remember that learning occurs when a child makes sense of information and links ideas to existing understanding. Direct instruction of material with no meaningful link in the mind of the child is likely to result at best in shallow recall, without the child being able to use the knowledge. Instead, adults can support the way a young child learns. Starting with information from physical, real-world experiences, a child then shapes and sharpens their thinking as they represent ideas through playing, talking, drawing or other graphics, and finally forms a clear mental image that makes sense to the child.

Through tuning in to the child's thinking and working together to find the links to what is already known, the skilful adult can provide a bridge as the child steps into new ideas. It is the way that the learning opportunities are tailored in the moment to meet the needs of each child.

Children are not just learning in collaboration with adults. Playing and interacting with other children in all types of activities are opportunities to find themselves stretched, and sometimes pushed out of their comfort zones, by other children's ways of thinking, communicating and behaving. Adults can ensure children have opportunities to engage together, to collaborate, or just to play alongside each other and learn from each other's support and stimulation. Adults also support learning by planning for opportunities for children to learn by themselves, as they engage with the world around them in a well-resourced environment.

Key points

Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources.

Follow the child's lead to the meeting of minds.

Tuning in, observing and wondering come first.

A knowledgeable practitioner can decide when to stand back, when to interact, and what to offer the child.

Learning together with adults and with other children is important across all contexts.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"Playing with the dragons, the teachers' puppets, being with friends, stories and being outside."

Leo, 5

Enabling environments

Learning environments

Children are unique and holistic learners, thriving within environments that support their individual and diverse motivations, interests and needs. They require a wealth of possibilities within varied contexts, and this is best supported within stimulating and challenging environments that value exploration and play. The outdoors offers unique possibilities, and daily opportunities should be made available for children to immerse themselves in outdoor spaces, offered through regular visits to suitable local places if the setting has no outside space. Within environments that offer engaging activities with real choice, autonomy and time, children can engage and wallow in independent exploration and enquiry, connecting with other children, adults and the natural world as they benefit from what Froebel calls "freedom with guidance" – freedom of movement and activity, within a framework of supportive adult guidance.

Enabling environments offer children security, comfort, engagement and opportunity. Children benefit from the opportunity to choose their own learning and enquiries through play when settings embrace free flow and choice as children move between activities and experiences, not simply from inside to outside. Given access to natural resources and first-hand experiences, children will independently explore, discover and investigate, choosing the items and the environment that best suit their own interests and their development and learning needs. Such an environment will support a child's creativity and critical thinking, building the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Provision is needed for:

- diverse forms of active play, both indoors and outdoors
- experiencing the real physical and natural world, as well as the social world
- the space and time for children to fully discover, test and revisit their ideas and theories
- cosy and quiet space for sleeping, resting, sitting quietly and sensory engagement
- experiences in familiar and predictable spaces, and in those that are unfamiliar, complex and exciting
- routines and adult involvement which offer support for development and learning that may be planned or may arise informally, for example when a surprise event or spontaneous opportunity presents itself
- opportunities for children to explore things that they would not otherwise have access to
- exposure to things where specific skills need to be taught, which would only happen if an adult initiated it, e.g. woodwork, cooking, sewing.

Children's learning is best supported when they have opportunities which allow for movement and action, creativity and imagination, independence and collaboration. An enabling environment offers:

- opportunities for negotiation and collaboration with other children, as their communication, language and social skills are employed and developed
- open-ended play opportunities allowing imagination and creativity to flourish, with children exploring their own ideas and theories as all areas of learning are unlocked rather than specific intended learning outcomes
- opportunities to challenge their own emotional, social, physical and cognitive abilities and to take risks
- time simply to be within the environments, to develop a sense of self as children explore their capabilities
- a balance of relevant, interactive and celebratory displays at the child's level, as well as natural, calm and neutral backdrops that invite children's own ideas.

Time outdoors benefits children by offering unique opportunities. Being outdoors offers children unique possibilities to see longer distances, observe the horizon, experience the natural world as they feel weather, hear sounds in nature or experience changes in natural light. There is also greater scope to manipulate loose parts and other versatile resources, and to engage in appropriately energetic, risky and adventurous play. Time outdoors benefits children's health and wellbeing and all areas of development and learning. First-hand experience outdoors helps children to make sense of the world, and to learn to care for their environment. Through a sense of belonging and understanding the impact of their

actions on their environment, children can become confident caretakers and problem-solvers of the future.

Natural environments support children's imaginative play and the development of peer relationships, encouraging collaboration with others. The relative freedom from rules outdoors can lead to more relaxed interactions between adults and children. The outdoors also offers the chance to experiment with the larger scales of space, shape and measure.

Open-ended resources enable children to access and combine processes of development and learning. Easily accessible, well organised and appealing resources inside and outside allow children to make choices and transform their environments. In the process, they can develop flexible thinking as they may be surprised by what happens, and they are challenged as they learn across the curriculum to develop their own working theories, their thinking and problem-solving skills.

Inclusive spaces are nurturing and supportive of all children. Spaces should be planned to both nurture and inspire children, recognising their interests and curiosities, encouraging questioning, awe and wonder, and sustained shared thinking. The environment should allow free movement, with support if needed, including easy access to the outdoors. Spaces both indoors and out should be safe and supportive, and able to be adapted responsively to children's emotions, interests, and needs through an array of engaging opportunities which take account of cultural diversity. Stimulating environments allow children to engage with all their senses, but should not become overwhelming through too much colour, noise or artificial textures.

Within an enabling environment, knowledgeable practitioners optimise the development and learning potential of every child. Knowledgeable practitioners:

- consider the environment from a child's perspective, supporting a broader understanding of the real world around them and their own community
- consider all locations available to children with equal priority - indoors, outside and beyond the setting - and value the time that is spent on journeying
- understand that their role includes facilitating an enabling environment, rather than prioritising specific activities
- consider the messages conveyed within the environment, questioning what the space is inviting children to do
- support children's autonomy, explorations and risk-taking, confident that much is within the children's capabilities, with assistance if necessary.

Key points

Children thrive within environments that support their individual and diverse development needs.

Enabling environments offer children security, comfort, choice, engagement and opportunity.

Children's learning is best supported when they have opportunities which allow for movement and action, creativity and imagination, independence and collaboration.

Time outdoors benefits children by offering unique opportunities.

Open-ended resources enable children to access and combine processes of development and learning.

Inclusive spaces are nurturing and supportive of all children.

Within an enabling environment, knowledgeable practitioners optimise the development and learning potential of every child.

The wider context

Children, families and practitioners are affected by wider contexts. The term "context" includes much more than the physical environment and reaches far beyond immediate surroundings. It encompasses the beliefs and values that give meaning and purpose to children's experiences in communities and settings. Beyond that, the contexts that enfold children's lives also operate at larger scales, as is only too evident in the huge changes and challenges today, such as public health emergencies, climate change, sustainability, extremes of economic hardship or prosperity, movements such as Black Lives Matter, migration, and the (unequal) impact of digital technologies on young children's lives. These larger-scale influences filter into the daily lives of children, families and practitioners, and mingle with more local contexts. Contexts are dynamic, multiple and constantly changing.

Communities are not static groups but develop from living practices that give people's lives shared meaning and value. Communities are dynamic, changing as their contexts evolve, through politics, demography, technology and other circumstances.

Every early years setting is a community in itself, with its own values and living practices. But it also connects and communicates with multiple other communities, including:

- communities of other children (siblings, cousins, friends, out-of-setting gatherings)
- trans-local communities (e.g. local communities that keep in touch with members who are dispersed in other locations and countries)
- digital communities (the online networks and social media that settings, families and children use)
- inter-agency/multi-professional communities, and other early childhood education communities
- communities of all non-human things and beings that children are attached to, such as animals, insects, imaginary friends, special objects, sounds, images.

The contact between settings and communities needs to be a two-way, reciprocal effort at mutual understanding and joint action. Community relations can be seen as a kind of tuning in to one another's hopes, fears, priorities and beliefs concerning children and childhood, and learning from them.

Children are active community-makers. They participate in and contribute to multiple communities as they move between home, extended family, settings and play areas. They often act as cultural brokers, helping families and settings understand one another.

Place, space, and histories are important. Communities and settings are embedded in particular places with their own geographies, neighbourhoods and local knowledge. They have local histories, group cultures and collective memories that shape the way spaces are created and used. These shared memories are often a source of comfort and solidarity, but they can also shadow the present by memories of injustice and hardship in the past.

Communities often take responsibility for caring for and maintaining the spaces of the setting, the local area, and environments further afield. The communities' local environment, the geography of the locality and community buildings, are valued by families as safe and supportive spaces for families to meet. But communities may also be constrained by poor environmental conditions such as lack of access to green space; air pollution; contaminated water or ground; high volumes of traffic; derelict buildings; poor maintenance of public spaces; crimes against persons or properties.

The physical and historical contexts in which a community lives shape its ways of learning, its view of what counts as relevant knowledge, and its strategies for survival.

What do you like about your early years setting?

“I like playing. My nursery bag and my friends.”

Wilfred, 3

Early years settings can be communities for social justice and sustainability. By bringing together diverse communities, early years settings lie at the heart of social change. The settings themselves can create a sense of community through the relationships and environments which pull diverse elements together. They are safe spaces for families and generate social and community participation. As early years practitioners and families engage in the care of these environments, they can experience social justice and sustainability in action.

Early years settings have an important role to play in challenging unconscious bias and contributing to equity by understanding how race, gender, sexual orientation, poverty, faith, prejudice, and disability affect learning and life chances. To address unconscious bias, early years practitioners can learn more about what families like about the places they live in and support those who want to improve, and exert more ownership of, the spaces they would like to change.

Sustainability is also addressed through shared respect and care for the material environment. This means collectively coming up with ways to reduce consumption, to repair, recycle and to reuse.

Wider contexts that involve principles of common worlds, shared living spaces, and climate change can inspire settings to become actively involved in local as well as broader groups and networks focused on sustainability and environmental restoration. Such involvement can help challenge unhelpful distinctions that keep communities of human, non-human and other entities apart.

Key points

Children, families and practitioners are affected by wider contexts.

Communities are living practices that bring meaning and value.

Place, space, and histories are important.

Early years settings can be communities for social justice and sustainability.

Learning and Development

Observation, assessment and planning

Formative assessment is an integral part of teaching young children.

Children's development and learning is best supported by starting from the child, and then matching interactions and experiences to meet the child's needs. The observation, assessment and planning (OAP) cycle describes what is frequently called assessment for learning, or formative assessment. On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice. It involves observation of children as a part of all activity, which is most often held in the mind of the practitioner but may sometimes be documented, using this rich information to understand how a child is developing, learning and growing, and then planning the next steps for the adults in supporting and extending the learning.

Planning

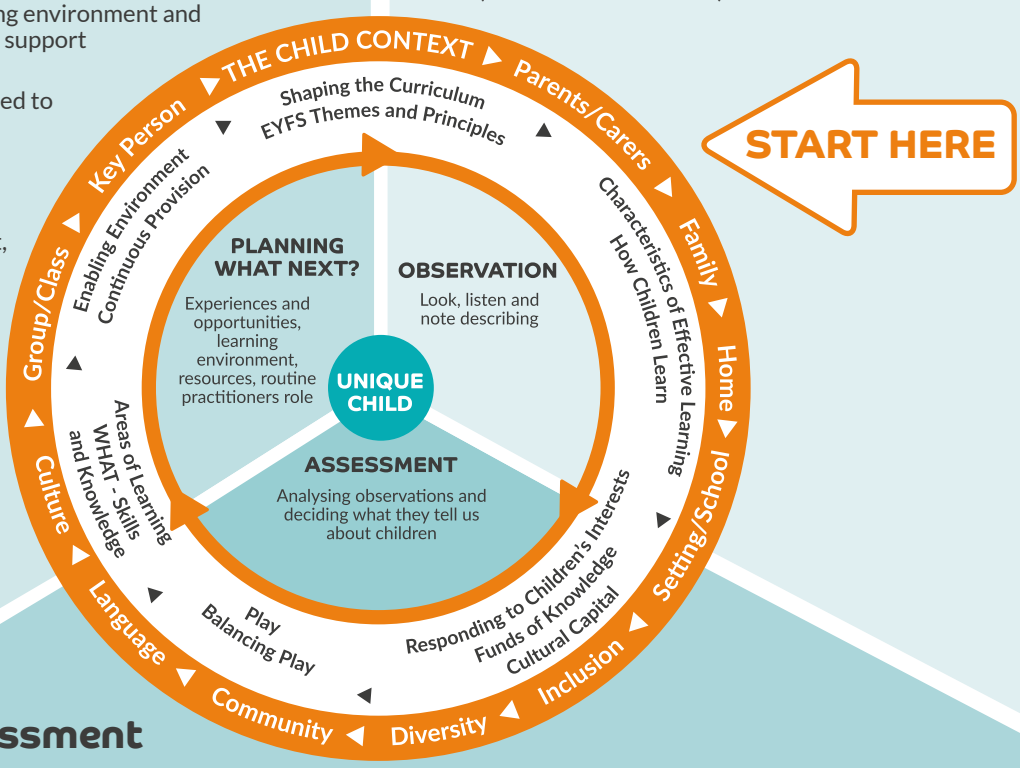
Decide how best to support, extend and teach children. Based on your observations and assessments, consider the following questions:

- Have you engaged with me/us to co-construct our next steps together?
- Have you considered my/our interests in the planning? (child-led)
- Have you planned a specific experience or activity to teach a skill or knowledge? (adult-led)?
- How does the enabling environment and continuous provision support my/our next steps?
- What have you planned to support meaningful interactions and back-and-forth conversations?
- How will you support, extend and deepen play, interactions and learning in partnership with me/us? (Planning-in-action)

Observation

Observe children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities and planned activities, and learn from parents about what the child does at home.

- How do you see me?
- Are you observing carefully when I am on my own and when I am with others?
- Am I involved in continuous provision?
- Have you observed while engaging with me/us? (Observation-in-action)



Assessment

Reflect on what you have noticed to help you understand the child/children.

Consider the following questions:

- How do you understand me?
- Do you understand how I feel? What I am interested in? What question may be in my mind?
- How am I approaching my learning? (Characteristics of Effective Learning)
- What have I learned and understood? (Areas of Learning and Development)
- What do you think is happening as you listen and engage with me/us? (Assessment-in-action)

Practice starts with the child, and grows in partnership. Effective practice begins with observation, tuning into the child and then building a relationship. Professionally informed knowledge of child development then supports understanding children's interests, development and learning, and planning for next steps. This process should involve the child, parents and carers, and other professionals.

- From the earliest age children should be involved in choices about their own learning. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 12 states the right of the child to express their views and have their views taken seriously.
- Parents are essential partners, sharing their views and observations about the child's development and being involved in planning what opportunities and experiences to offer the child next.
- Working in partnership with other professionals, community and support groups connects everyone who is involved with the child and family, bringing a clearer picture of the child's needs and rights.

Each child's own unique pathway of development and learning involves many elements woven together in a holistic form. Observation, assessment and planning (OAP) makes this holistic development visible, so children's thinking and understanding can be shared with parents and carers, other professionals, and with children themselves.

Responsive pedagogy is needed to recognise what children know, understand, and can do. In a supportive and challenging enabling environment children demonstrate their learning and understanding in a wide range of contexts that have meaning to them. Responsive adults tune into their play, interactions and thinking, identifying how best to support their ideas, interests and priorities. Sensitive interactions involve listening, guiding, explaining, asking appropriate questions and helping children to reflect on their learning in a playful, co-constructive partnership. The process of OAP is central to being attuned to children and to understanding what they can do with support, as well as what they know and can do without adult direction. When children apply the skills and concepts they have mastered in a variety of different ways in their independent play and activities, their understanding is clearly embedded.

Children and adults construct the curriculum together. Keeping the OAP cycle at the heart of our practice enables practitioners to build on children's motivations and interests to support and extend their development and learning. The curriculum is co-constructed between children, practitioners and families through this process. Children bring funds of knowledge-based interests to the setting, and they are motivated to learn through connecting new experiences to what they already know and can do. Practitioners can support these interests while also keeping in mind that they need to introduce children to new ideas and knowledge and sensitively support and guide their learning in all areas, including the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The curriculum will include attention to the Areas of Learning and Development which summarise some of **what** children learn. The curriculum must, however, be more than a list of skills and knowledge to be achieved. The EYFS principle says every unique child is "constantly learning". Children learn from all their experiences, not just those that have been planned or intended. The curriculum needs to take account of children's learning not just in the Areas of Learning and Development, but also in how they see themselves as learners and how they are building the strong foundations for lifelong learning described in the Characteristics of Effective Learning. How children learn, and how they learn about their own learning, should also be an integral part of the curriculum. Observing **how** children learn often helps practitioners to see **what** children understand.

Observation, assessment and planning is part of professional practice. Throughout the OAP cycle and summative assessment, informed decisions about the child's development, learning and progress need to be as objective as possible, calling on the variety of information about the child to make a "best-fit" decision. The OAP cycle is a reflective and ongoing process which enables consideration of children's development and how to support individual children through effective practice. It supports quality improvement as practitioners use their knowledge, skills and evidence gathered from OAP to reflect on the quality of education and care the children receive, and think about how to improve practice

Summative assessment involves stepping back to gain an overview of children's development and progress.

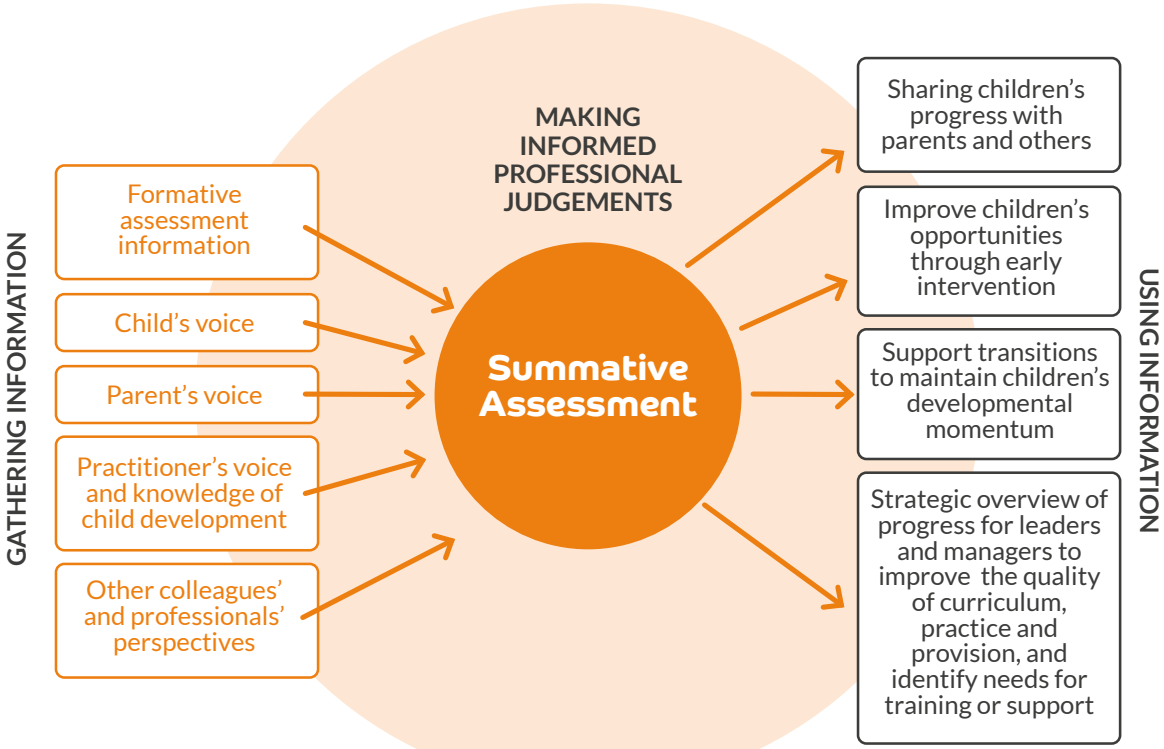
When daily interactions involve observing, reflecting and deciding how best to support a child, practitioners hold in their mind many details of each child's development and learning. At certain times it is important to step back, to pause and reflect, and create a summative assessment which takes a holistic overview of the child's development, learning and progress. Summative assessments are made to provide a summary of a child's development and learning across all areas. There are two statutory summative assessment points in the EYFS – the 2-year-old progress check, and the EYFS Profile at the end of the EYFS. Settings may decide on further summative assessment points.

Reliable summative assessment grows out of formative assessment. Summative assessment should not be a time-consuming process. It should be a straightforward summary, pulling together insights from formative assessment and then making a professionally informed decision about the child's development and learning. It requires a pause to think about what is known about the child, together with reviewing any notes, photographs or other records that may be held, alongside what is known from the child, parents, colleagues and other professionals. This process is an excellent opportunity for professional reflection and discussions with colleagues to moderate decisions about progress and build a stronger understanding of children's development in all aspects of learning.

An informed professional decision is based on a holistic view of a child's development and learning. Young children's development does not follow a predictable step-by-step sequence, and each child will have their own unique pathway, progression and momentum. There are, however, some aspects of development which enable you to describe the child's progress in terms of whether it is typical for their age, for example learning to talk. Practitioners need to consider overall development within these aspects and not rely on matching every element in a list of statements to judge children's progress. It is important to take a holistic, professionally informed view to determine whether a child is roughly on track or developing more slowly or more quickly in particular areas. A holistic summary will give attention not just to areas of knowledge and skills, but also to the child's emotional wellbeing and connections, and development of attitudes and dispositions for learning (Characteristics of Effective Learning).

Summative assessment informs improvements to provision and practice, to enhance children's development and learning.

- Leaders and managers can use the information strategically to improve provision and practice. For example:
  - Are some children not as far along or significantly ahead in their development and learning compared to most children? How are we further supporting these children?
  - Should opportunities, resources or support within some areas of the curriculum be improved?
  - Is there a professional development need for individual staff members, or the setting as a whole?
- Information can be communicated clearly in a summary form to inform discussions with parents, other agencies, or professionals involved with the child and family.
- Transitions can be supported so that children's journeys of development and learning continue smoothly.



Key points

Formative assessment is an integral part of teaching young children.

Practice starts with the child, and grows in partnership.

Responsive pedagogy is needed to recognise what children know, understand, and can do.

Children and adults construct the curriculum together.

Observation, assessment and planning is part of professional practice.

Summative assessment involves stepping back to gain an overview of children's development and progress.

Reliable summative assessment grows out of formative assessment.

An informed professional decision is based on a holistic view of a child's development and learning.

Summative assessment serves several purposes that can enhance development and learning opportunities for children, including by informing improvements to provision and practice in the setting.

Overview – Characteristics of Effective Learning, and Areas of Learning and Development

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all inter-connected.

Different elements of learning are identified in the EYFS, to make the complex picture of learning clearer. But children's learning is not compartmentalised and many or all of these elements are in action at the same time as children interact with people and things.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn.

To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

The Areas of Learning and Development affect each other. For example, developing communication and language will support children to understand and explain mathematical ideas. Developing physical skills will allow children to be more active explorers and so enhance their progress in Understanding the World. The more concepts they develop within Understanding the World, the more they will be able to relate to what they find in books and so support their development in Literacy. Experiences and activities that relate to Areas of Learning and Development, when they offer children opportunities to have autonomy and develop their own ideas, can also provide the contexts for children to practise their learning behaviours, and so reinforce the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring

ENGAGEMENT
Finding out and exploring
Playing with what they know
Being willing to 'have a go'

Active Learning

MOTIVATION
Being involved and concentrating
Keep trying
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creative and Critical Thinking

THINKING
Having their own ideas
Making links
Working with ideas

Areas of Learning and Development	Birth to 5 Matters Aspects
Prime Areas	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Making Relationships
	Sense of Self
	Understanding Feelings
Physical Development	Moving and handling
	Health and Self-care
Communication and Language	Listening and Attention
	Understanding
	Speaking
Specific Areas	
Literacy	Reading
	Writing
Mathematics	Mathematics
Understanding the World	People and Communities
	The World
	Technology
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials
	Being Imaginative and Expressive

Prime areas of development and learning lay vital foundations in the early years.

The three Prime areas, **Personal, social and emotional development (PSED), Communication and language (CL), and Physical development (PD),** describe universal core aspects of early child development. They are time-sensitive because of biological factors that enable rapid brain connections, particularly in the first three years of life but continuing throughout early childhood. Developmental steps missed at this early crucial stage are much harder to address later on, so it is crucial that children's interactions and experiences in the first few years support development in these fundamental areas.

All three Prime areas are always in action for a young child. In every activity, the child is experiencing feelings and developing a sense of self and others, is physically engaged through their senses and movements, and is learning to understand and communicate with others. It is through these aspects that a child accesses the world around them and relationships with other people, which in turn opens the door to learning in all areas. The Prime areas therefore strongly influence learning in the Specific areas of learning and development.

Development in each of the Prime areas affect the others: as babies and children develop their sensory abilities and movement, they can perceive and engage with others, and so develop in PSED. Engaging with others spurs more physical activity, and is the beginning of communication and language, which in turn helps build relationships, understanding of feelings and learning about health and physical wellbeing.

While the Prime areas are especially crucial to early years provision during the first three years, they remain centrally important for children's development and learning throughout the EYFS and beyond, and should receive priority attention to ensure strong foundations in development and learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Who we are (personal), how we get along with others (social) and how we feel (emotional) are foundations that form the bedrock of our lives. As we move through life, we are continually developing our sense of self as we weave a web of relationships with self, others and with the world.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is fundamental to all other aspects of lifelong development and learning, and is key to children's wellbeing and resilience. For babies and young children to flourish, we need to pay attention to how they understand and feel about themselves, and how secure they feel in close relationships: in so doing they develop their capacities to make sense of how they and other people experience the world. Children's self-image, their emotional understanding and the quality of their relationships affect their self-confidence, their potential to experience joy, to be curious, to wonder, and to face problems, and their ability to think and learn.

A holistic, relational approach creates an environment that enables trusting relationships, so that children can do things independently and with others, forming friendships. Early years practitioners meet the emotional needs of children by drawing on their own emotional insight, and by working in partnership with families to form mutually respectful, warm, accepting relationships with each of their key children.

Physical Development

Intricately interwoven with emotional, social, cognitive and language development, physical development underpins all other areas of a child's learning and development. Extensive physical experience in early childhood puts in place the neurological, sensory and motor foundations necessary for feeling good in your body and comfortable in the world. The intimate connection between brain, body and mind must be understood; when they are viewed as one system, the impacts of active physical play, health and self-care are observed and the effects on a child's early brain development and mental health of adverse childhood experience, including malnutrition, illness or neglect, is recognised. Health, wellbeing and self-care are integral to physical development. Prioritising care opportunities and a collaborative approach with young children supports development of lifelong positive attitudes to self-care and healthy decision-making.

Each child's journey relies on whole-body physical experiences. While biologically programmed, the unfolding of this complex, interconnected system requires repeated movement experiences that are self-initiated and wide-ranging. Fine and gross motor control must develop together in an integrated way, so that the child can achieve what they set out to do. We must ensure that children have movement-rich lives indoors and outdoors from birth. This includes the role of the adult's body as an enabling environment itself, embedding movement into everything, and encouraging each child's own motivations for being active and interactive with others.

Communication and Language

Experiences in the womb lay the foundation for communication, and a baby's voice is evident from the beginning. Babies use their bodies, facial expressions, gestures, sounds and movements to seek connections and respond to those around them. Young children depend on back-and-forth interactions with responsive others to develop confidence as effective communicators and language users. Communication and language development are closely intertwined with physical, social and emotional experiences. Communication and language lay a foundation for learning and development, guiding and supporting children's thinking while underpinning their emerging literacy.

Language is more than words. As children grow, they begin to be aware of and explore different sounds, symbols and words in their everyday worlds; a language-rich environment is crucial. A child's first language provides the roots to learn additional languages, and parents should be encouraged to continue to use their home languages to strengthen and support their children's language proficiency as they join new environments.

Children's skills develop through a series of identifiable stages which can be looked at in three aspects – Listening and Attention, Understanding, and Speaking. While not all children will follow the exact same sequence or progress at the same rate, it is important to identify children at risk of language delay or disorder as these can have an ongoing impact on wellbeing and learning across the curriculum.

Specific areas of learning and development provide children with knowledge and skills to flourish in society.

The Specific areas, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design, are not time-sensitive in terms of the brain's biological responsiveness to experiences. The Specific areas represent crucial shared cultural tools and knowledge, which babies and children engage in as members of the society in which they live.

Many aspects of these areas arise naturally for young children as they make sense of their experiences, such as an awareness of quantity, enjoyment of telling and hearing stories, finding out how things work, rhythm, and movement. Children often begin to represent what they understand with their own actions, marks or words. There are also ways of representing understanding with more formal symbol systems such as numbers, writing and other cultural tools and methods for sharing and recording ideas, as well as large bodies of knowledge to be shared with children.

As adults gradually support children to know about and use these Specific areas, either informally as part of daily life or in planned activities, they give children access to the wide scope of shared cultural and intellectual life in modern society, and skills and knowledge to support them in their future learning.

Understanding the World

Understanding the World provides a powerful, meaningful context for learning across the curriculum. It supports children to make sense of their expanding world and their place within it through nurturing their wonder, curiosity, agency and exploratory drive.

This development requires regular and direct contact with the natural, built and virtual environments around the child and engaging children in collaborative activities which promote inquiry, problem-solving, shared decision making and scientific approaches to understanding the world. Active involvement in local community life helps children to develop a sense of civic responsibility, a duty to care, a respect for diversity and the need to work for peaceful co-existence.

In addition, first-hand involvement in caring for wildlife and the natural world provides children with an appreciation of ecological balance, environmental care and the need to live sustainable lives. Rich play, virtual and real world experiences support learning about our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world and how to stay safe within it. They also cultivate shared meanings and lay the foundation for equitable understandings of our interconnectedness and interdependence.

Expressive Arts and Design

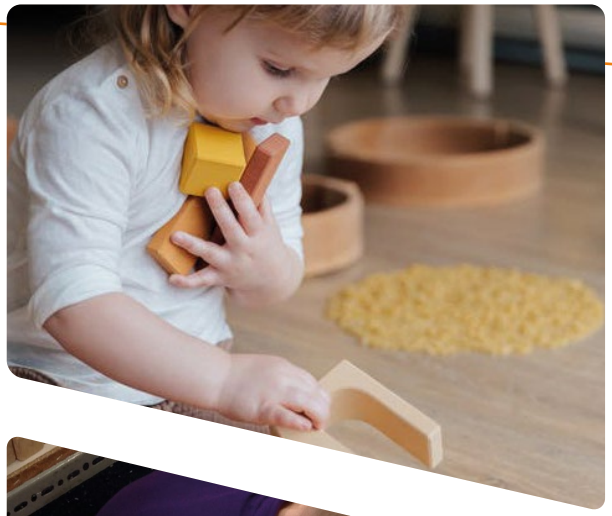
Children and adults have the right to participate in arts and culture. Expression conveys both thinking (ideas) and feeling (emotion). Children use a variety of ways to express and communicate, through music, movement and a wide range of materials. Creative thinking involves original responses, not just copying or imitating existing artworks.

Expressive Arts and Design fosters imagination, curiosity, creativity, cognition, critical thinking and experimentation and provides opportunities to improvise, collaborate, interact and engage in sustained shared thinking. It requires time, space and opportunities to re-visit and reflect on experiences. Multi-sensory, first-hand experiences help children to connect and enquire about the world. Appreciating diversity and multiple perspectives enriches ways of thinking, being, and understanding. Skills are learned in the process of meaning-making, not in isolation.

Mathematics

Mathematics for young children involves developing their own understanding of number, quantity, shape and space. Babies and young children have a natural interest in quantities and spatial relations – they are problem-solvers, pattern-spotters and sense-makers from birth. This curiosity and enjoyment should be nurtured through their interactions with people and the world around them, drawing on their personal and cultural knowledge. Every young child is entitled to a strong mathematical foundation which is built through playful exploration, apprenticeship and meaning-making. Children should freely explore how they represent their mathematical thinking through gesture, talk, manipulation of objects and their graphical signs and representations, supported by access to graphic tools in their pretend play.

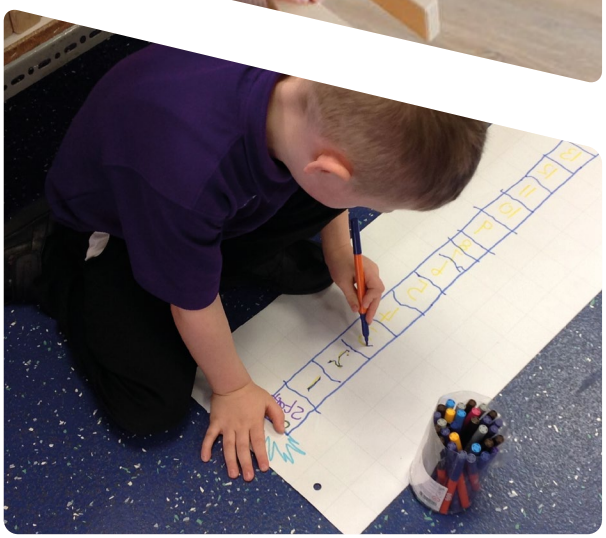
Effective early mathematics experiences involve seeking patterns, creating and solving mathematical problems and engaging with stories, songs, games, practical activities and imaginative play. Plenty of time is required for children to revisit, develop and make sense for themselves. This is supported by sensitive interactions with adults who observe, listen to and value children's mathematical ideas and build upon children's interests, including those developed with their families. It is crucial to maintain children's enthusiasm so they develop positive self-esteem as learners of mathematics and feel confident to express their ideas.



Literacy

Literacy is about understanding and being understood. Early literacy skills are rooted in children's enjoyable experiences from birth of gesturing, talking, singing, playing, reading and writing. Learning about literacy means developing the ability to interpret, create and communicate meaning through writing and reading in different media, such as picture books, logos, environmental print and digital technologies. It involves observing and joining in the diverse ways that different people and communities use literacy for different purposes. Most importantly, literacy is engaging, purposeful and creative.

Developing literacy competence and skills is a complex, challenging yet rewarding journey that requires high-quality pedagogical activities to enhance learning. Young children need to be listened to by attentive adults who recognise and value children's choices. They need enjoyable, playful opportunities of being included and involved in the literacy practices of their home, early years setting, and community environments. They need experiences of creating and sharing a range of texts in a variety of ways, with different media and materials, with adults and peers, both indoors and outdoors, as well as learning about using different signs and symbols, exploring sound and developing alphabetic and phonetic skills.



Holistic development and learning

"Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning." says the EYFS principle, emphasising that each everyday experience is an occasion for holistic development and learning, as seen in this example of a toddler enjoying his snack.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The child is building a relationship as he engages with a familiar carer, sharing the experience in a relaxed and mutually enjoyable way. He is aware that his actions affect others, and of the reactions of others.

Communication and Language

Through eye contact, gesture, and sound the child can share his thoughts and intentions, and the adult may use words related to the present moment: *Mmm, yummy apple. You want more?*

Physical Development

The child is using both hands independently to hold the apple and feed himself. This multi-sensory experience links up what he sees and feels as he handles the apple with sensations of taste, smell, mouthing and chewing. Associating healthy eating with pleasurable experience supports future food decision-making

Literacy

The experience of snack time may help him to engage with and understand stories which include apples, eating, etc. He may be hearing and using language which he can later translate into symbols for the language he knows.

Mathematics

The child is noticing the size, shape and weight of the apple slices. He may be aware of "twoness" through using his hands, as well as noticing the larger set of pieces. He may understand more.

Understanding the World

The familiar routine of snack time helps the child to feel part of the culture at home. He is also learning about the properties of an apple, and may make links to apples growing on trees in the natural world.

Expressive Arts and Design

The child is expressing himself through his actions and sounds. He is experiencing the colour, form, texture, sound and nature of an apple, making connections with previous experiences and building a memory of apples to draw on in his own representations and understanding those of others.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Eating is an opportunity to "have a go" with new tastes and sensations. The child is making choices and showing autonomy as he eats independently. He is keeping his focus on what he is doing, and is making mental links between this experience and what he already knows.

Holistic development and learning

Enabling environments foster holistic approaches to early development and learning, recognising that different aspects are constantly connected in a child's experiences. In the EYFS, areas are described separately in order to break down the complexity of development and learning, but it is important to keep the whole child in mind. As a child encounters objects, events and other people, all spheres of development and learning are in action at the same time, as in the example below of two children who are experimenting with water and a construction using tubing and plastic sheets

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In their activity together the children can cooperate, asserting their own ideas and taking account of each other's viewpoints. They are confident to engage with others and to access resources independently.

Communication and Language

Using words and gestures, the children can express their own ideas and understand the other's suggestions. They use words related to what they are doing, and they can also refer to connections in other times and places.

Physical Development

In carrying out their shared activity, each child has combined a range of sensory information and gross and fine motor movements to hold, tape, tie and arrange the tubing, to pour, and to use space to physically collaborate with each other.

Literacy

The language and experiences involved in this activity will support the children's comprehension of stories and other written accounts. They may recognise symbols or letters on their clothing.

Mathematics

The activity gives the children a chance to investigate volume, the weight of full and empty cups, and the height and shapes of the tubing. They may count cups of water, and understand the pattern of taking turns.

Understanding the World

Playing together within the customs of the setting helps the children to feel part of a community. They are finding out about the behaviour of water and the tubing materials, and can talk about what is happening.

Expressive Arts and Design

The children have used resources to develop their own ideas, transforming the resources into a new structure. In their play, they can use flexible thinking to try out and evaluate possibilities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The children are finding out what works through trial and error. They are involved and focused as they work toward their goals, and show satisfaction with how it is going. They have thought creatively about what to do, and can evaluate and change their plans if they decide to.

Using Birth to 5 Matters to support development and learning

The guidance on the following pages can support understanding of development and learning and the adult's contribution to the process, but this should be seen as a set of possibilities and not a prescription for either children or adults.

For children:

Overall, children will work their individual way from the development and learning typical of babies onward to what older children know, can do, and understand. The grids illustrate samples of what children may do along that journey. While these present some examples, children will do countless things that do not appear in the grids but are equally valuable for their learning. And as each child winds their individual path through the different areas, they will not necessarily show signs of each of the descriptors, nor in the same order presented.

Learning does not move forward in a straight, predictable and linear way. It can stall or even backtrack in one area, while strides and bursts are made in another area. Development should not be expected to be even across all areas, and the balance is likely to shift from one time to another.

The guidance should not be used as a checklist to steer each unique child through a prescribed path with required "next steps". Rather, it should be a support to help adults to recognise and interpret what a child is showing at the present moment, give the child time to rehearse those skills, be ready to help enrich their experience and deepen and extend their learning.

For adults:

Examples of what adults might do or provide should be seen as suggestions or prompts for thinking, suggesting "next steps" adults might take to support children's development and learning. Adults should use their creative and critical thinking to develop their own ideas, decide what to try, and evaluate its effectiveness. Whether using the grids to reflect on suggestions for moment-to-moment interactions, resourcing and organising the environment, offering opportunities or planning specific activities, practitioners who know children well will adapt and invent the most appropriate ways to support and extend their learning.

Many examples of how adults might support children in earlier ranges are equally applicable to later ranges, and practitioners are encouraged to keep incorporating these in their practice.

What do you like about your early years setting?

"Play outside and friends and Beth."

Owen, 3

Teaching should not be taken to imply a “top down” or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language; showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas; encouraging, questioning, recalling; providing a narrative for what they are doing; facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do, as well as taking account of their interests and dispositions to learn (characteristics of effective learning), and how practitioners use this information to plan children’s next steps in learning and monitor their progress.

Ofsted Early Years Inspection Handbook

A Unique Child

When referring to the guidance for the Areas of Learning and Development, it is important to start with what is observed and understood about the individual child.

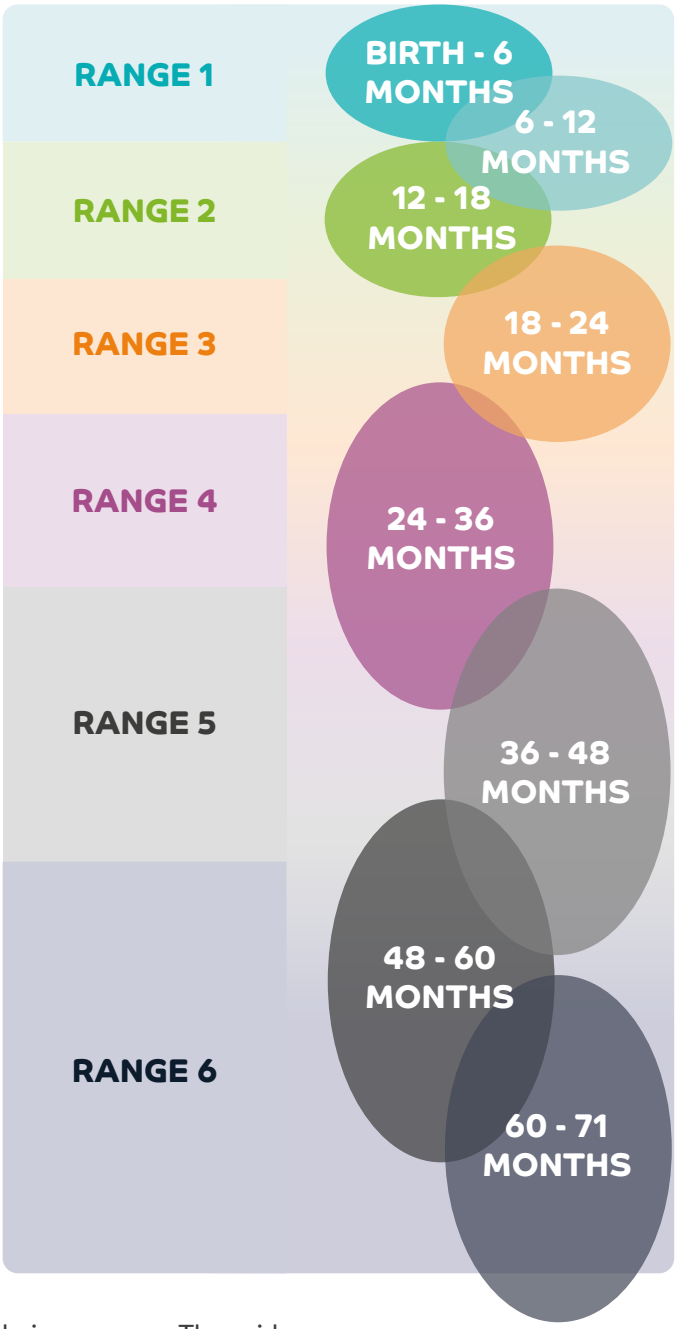
A typical progression in development and learning has been grouped into broad ranges in the column for A Unique Child. This is intended to support knowledge of a general pattern of child development.

Practitioners can identify a range that most closely describes the child's development and learning, and then consider the suggestions for adults within that range (or earlier ranges) to plan to support continued progress.

The guidance can also help to identify when children may need additional support, by referring to the key provided here which links the ranges to typical age spans.

In summative assessments, comparing best-fit judgements of ranges with typical age spans can help identify whether children are roughly on track, or are progressing more slowly or quickly. This information can be useful for leaders and managers in planning for the continual improvement of practice and provision in the setting.

Key to understanding the age ranges:



Children develop and learn at their own rates, and in their own ways. The guidance on possible development trajectories should not be taken as necessary steps, nor assumed to be in a particular order, for individual children. The guidance should not be used as a checklist. The age links overlap Ranges because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.

Please note: This key is also available for quick view on page 126

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Children are powerful learners from birth. They can develop strong habits of mind and behaviours that will continue to support them to discover, think, create, solve problems and self-regulate their learning. Children need consistent lived experiences of autonomy alongside support for their growing awareness and control of the processes of thinking and learning. Play, time, space and freedom to follow their intentions, sustained shared thinking, and experiencing the satisfaction of meeting their own challenges and goals all contribute to development as curious, creative, resourceful and resilient learners.

Playing and Exploring: Engagement

A Unique Child: how a child is learning

Finding out and exploring

- Showing curiosity about objects, events and people
- Using senses to explore the world around them
- Engaging in open-ended activity
- Showing particular interests

Playing with what they know

- Pretending objects are things from their experience
- Representing their experiences in play
- Taking on a role in their play
- Acting out experiences with other people

Being willing to "have a go"

- Initiating activities
- Seeking challenge
- Showing a "can do" attitude
- Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Play with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.
- Help children as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over or directing.
- Encourage children to make decisions and choose their activities – what they want to do and how they will do it.
- Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children's ideas.
- Model pretending an object is something else, and help develop roles and stories.
- Encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves. Be sure to support children's confidence with words and body language, and by introducing tools so that children can think about how to use them safely.
- Pay attention to how children engage in activities – the challenges faced, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk more about the process than products.
- Modelling responding positively when things go wrong, and talk about learning from failure.
- Always respect children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea and feel comfortable with mistakes.
- Encourage laughter and have fun. Happiness deepens learning.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.
- Make sure resources are relevant to children's interests and abilities.
- Arrange flexible indoor and outdoor space and resources where children can explore, transform, build, move and role play.
- Help children concentrate by considering levels of noise, and visual distraction.
- Plan first-hand experiences and challenges appropriate to the development of the children.
- Ensure children have uninterrupted time to play and explore.
- Setting leaders give staff time to reflect on how they support children to play and explore through their interactions, and planning of the environment.

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Active Learning: Motivation

A Unique Child: how a child is learning

Being involved and concentrating

- Showing a deep drive to know more about people and their world
- Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time
- Showing high levels of involvement, energy, fascination
- Not easily distracted
- Paying attention to details

Keeping on trying

- Persisting with an activity or toward their goal when challenges occur
- Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off, and that their skills can grow and develop (growth mindset)
- Bouncing back after difficulties

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

- Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals *(I can!)*
- Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result
- Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise (intrinsic motivation)

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Support children to look into what they are curious about and what fascinates them.
- Make time for quality interactions. Watch and listen carefully to try to understand what the child wants to know or achieve.
- Help focus young children's interest through shared attention. At times sensitively introduce a new element if young children's interest is waning.
- Help children to notice details.
- Model a growth mindset. Help children to see mistakes or failures as stepping stones for learning. Help children see there is more than one answer to a problem. Demonstrate openly how adults do not get everything right.
- Be specific when you praise, especially noting effort such as how the child concentrates, tries different approaches, persists, solves problems, and has new ideas.
- Supporting emotional resilience in the face of challenge, e.g. *That must have been frustrating after you worked so hard. I wonder how else you could try it.*
- Children develop their own motivations when you involve them. Give reasons for what you are doing and talk about learning, rather than just directing.
- Step back and watch what children are doing. Be sensitive to when to join in sensitively, following children's lead, and when to leave them to it. Be careful not to disrupt their play and train of thought.
- Be aware that younger children may want to watch rather than take part in some activities.
- Look out for signs that young children show satisfaction in something they have done.
- Encourage children to listen to each other's ideas as they play, have fun and think and learn together. Provide opportunities for children to celebrate with their peers what they are doing and learning – not just focus on the end result.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- A familiar environment and predictable routine gives children confidence to take charge of their own activities.
- Teach children how to use the areas of provision and tools within them appropriate to their age and stage, so they can use them independently for their own goals.
- Children will become more deeply involved when you provide something that is new and unusual for them to explore, especially when it is linked to their interests.
- Notice what arouses children's curiosity, looking for signs of deep involvement to identify learning that is intrinsically motivated.
- Ensure children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in activities.
- Provide calm and reduce stimuli if children become over-stimulated.
- Children can maintain focus on things that interest them over a period of time. Help them to keep ideas in mind by talking over photographs of their previous activities.
- Make space and time for all children to contribute.
- Setting leaders should provide opportunities for staff to actively engage in their own learning to better support children's activity.

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge

Statutory ELG: Self Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Thinking creatively and critically: Thinking

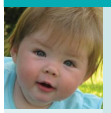
A Unique Child: how a child is learning	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
Having their own ideas (creative thinking) • Thinking of ideas that are new and meaningful to the child • Playing with possibilities *(what if? what else?)* • Visualising and imagining options • Finding new ways to do things	• Use the language of thinking and learning: *think, know, remember, forget, idea, makes sense, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do.* • Model being a thinker, showing that you do not always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out. *I wonder?* • Give children time to talk and think. Make time to actively listen to children's ideas. • Encourage open-ended thinking, generating more alternative ideas or solutions, by not settling on the first suggestions: *What else* is possible? • Always respect children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea and feel comfortable with mistakes. • Encourage children to question and challenge assumptions. • Help children to make links to what they already know.	• In planning activities, ask yourself: *Is this an opportunity for children to find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas?* Avoid children just reproducing someone else's ideas. • Build in opportunities for children to play with materials before using them in planned tasks. • Play is a key opportunity for children to think creatively and flexibly, solve problems and link ideas. Establish the enabling conditions for rich play: space, time, flexible resources, choice, control, warm and supportive relationships.
Making links (building theories) • Making links and noticing patterns in their experience • Making predictions • Testing their ideas • Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect	• Support children's interests over time, reminding them of previous approaches and encouraging them to make connections between their experiences. • Help children to become aware of their own goals, make plans, and to review their own progress and successes. Describe what you see them trying to do, and encourage children to talk about what they are doing, how they plan to do it, what worked well and what they would change next time. • Talking aloud helps children to think and control what they do. Model self-talk, describing your actions in play. • Value questions, talk, and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly. • Sustained shared thinking helps children to explore ideas and make links. Follow children's lead in conversation, and think about things together.	• Recognisable and predictable routines help children to predict and make connections in their experiences. • Routines can be flexible, while still basically orderly. • Provide extended periods of uninterrupted time so that children can develop their activities. • Keep significant activities out instead of routinely tidying them away, so that there are opportunities to revisit what they have been doing to explore possible further lines of enquiry.
Working with ideas (critical thinking) • Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal • Checking how well their activities are going • Flexibly changing strategy as needed • Reviewing how well the approach worked	• Encourage children to choose personally meaningful ways to represent and clarify their thinking through graphics. • Take an interest in what the children say about their marks and signs, talk to them about their meanings and value what they do and say. • Encourage children to describe problems they encounter, and to suggest ways to solve the problem. • Show and talk about strategies – how to do things – including problem-solving, thinking and learning. • Encourage children to reflect and evaluate their work and review their own progress and learning. • Model the plan-do-review process yourself.	• Plan linked experiences that follow the ideas children are really thinking about. • Represent thinking visually, such as mind-maps to represent thinking together, finding out what children know and want to know. • Develop a learning community which focuses on **how** and not just what we are learning. • Setting leaders should give staff time to think about children's needs, to make links between their knowledge and practice.

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

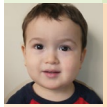
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships

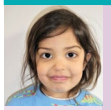
A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 1  • Enjoys the company of others and seeks contact with others from birth. • Shows their readiness to be social through using their sensory abilities; following movement and gazing at faces intently. • Moves body, arms and legs and changes facial expression in response to others, e.g. sticking out tongue, opening mouth and widening eyes. • Responds to what carer is paying attention to, e.g. following their gaze. • Distinguishes between people, recognising the look, sound and smell of their close carer. • They will usually calm, smile or reduce crying when they hear their carers'/parent's voice, or smell their clothing, for example. • Holds up arms to be picked up and cuddled and is soothed by physical touch such as being held, cuddled and stroked. • Begins to display attachment behaviours such as wanting to stay near and becoming upset when left with an unfamiliar person. • Becomes wary of unfamiliar people or people they have not seen for a while.	• Offer warm, loving and consistent care in your interactions with babies and young children, making good eye contact and handling children gently and respectfully. • Respond sensitively and quickly to babies and young children's needs, holding and comforting each child as they need • Learn from parents regarding caring practices at home so you can establish predictable and familiar patterns within your own interactions allowing the child to feel safe with you. • Tune in to the meaning of babies and young children's communications of crying, babbling, pointing or pulling and respond with interest, watching and understanding the cues they offer so they feel acknowledged and known by you • Notice and respect babies and young children's signals that they no longer want to play or engage; pause and be quiet when they turn away. • Spend plenty of time with your key children playing interactive games, finger plays and singing familiar songs that engage you both in mirroring movement and sounds, follow the child's lead. • Take primary responsibility for your key children's physical care whenever you are both are present. • Use care events to build a close relationship with babies and young children through respectful interactions and taking it slowly. Always explain what is going to happen and invite their participation. • Be physically and emotionally available to babies and young children to provide a secure base for them to feel secure and supported in their play and independent explorations • Accept babies' and young children's need for security, allowing them to stay close by when feeling insecure or anxious. Caregivers may have to focus on regaining the baby or young child's trust by remaining available to them constantly until they feel secure again. • Get to know each babies' and young child's separation rituals and support them by being available when they are separating from and reuniting with their parents/carers	• The setting offers a welcoming, calm, caring environment that is inviting and will make the babies feel they want to come and play. • Implement a Key Person Approach, so that each child and their family have a special person to relate to and rely on. • Continuing professional development and supervision to support attachment relationships between key persons and children in the setting • Develop close partnerships with parents/carers, learning from their knowledge and expertise about their baby • Admissions are phased so that only one new child starts at a time to allow them to settle in gradually. • Ensure the Key Person Approach underpins all provision for babies including personal care events, play and daily interactions with parents/carers. • Arrange for staff absence to be covered by practitioners who are already familiar to the children • Allocate a secondary key person who takes responsibility for the care of babies when their key person is absent. • The number of changes children make between groups and key person is reduced to as few as possible during their time in the setting. • Organise working patterns and activities to allow the key person or secondary key person to be available to support babies and toddlers and their parents separating and reuniting at the beginning and end of the day. • The day is predictable enough to give babies a sense of security but is flexible enough to respond to individual children's patterns. • Offer continuity and consistency for babies by the key person undertaking all their key children's care needs; moving through each part of the bathroom, lunch and sleep routine together, rather than children moving from one adult to the next.
RANGE 2 • Draws others into social interaction through calling, crying and babbling, smiling, laughing and moving their bodies and limbs • Shares interest and attention by looking to where the adult is looking, pointing and using their gaze to direct the adult's attention to something • Engages another person to help achieve a goal, e.g. to get an object out of reach • Cooperates with caregiving experiences, such as dressing • Builds relationships with special people		

In some cases, suggestions for similar support for children's development and learning apply across two ranges. In these cases the Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments columns are shown in the colour of the first range, but apply to both adjacent ranges.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships

	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 2 (cont..)	• Displays attachment behaviours such as wanting to stay near to their close carers, checking where they are and protesting when separated • Is wary of unfamiliar people • Explores confidently when they feel secure in the presence of a familiar adult and is more likely to engage in new or challenging situations • Closely watches others' body language to begin to understand their intentions and meaning • Is fascinated by other children, watching them and interacting with them through offering toys, food etc, and by reaching for objects that another has	• Let your key children know where you are going, what you are doing and who they will be with, when leaving the group during the day or planning leave. • Support babies and young children's need to hold on to their special comfort object while playing or getting changed. • Key persons adopt a process of inviting, suggesting and then engaging with a child in interactions and care events to enable a cooperative relationship to develop.	• The environment is designed so that the number of times the key person has to leave the room is limited. It helps for example, if the bathroom and feed preparation areas are en-suite. • Group rooms are as home-like as possible and are decorated with photographs of the children's families and other significant people, animals and places. • There are low adult chairs that support practitioners when they are bottle-feeding babies and which also allow children to climb up onto their laps. • Develop play opportunities centred on objects babies bring from home, as these help them to make transitions and experience continuity. • Plan to have one-to-one time to interact with young babies when they are in an alert and responsive state and willing to engage. • Create opportunities to sing to and with babies and young children.
 RANGE 3	• Explores the environment, interacts with others and plays confidently while their parent/carer or key person is close by; using them as a secure base to return to for reassurance if anxious or in unfamiliar situations • Shows empathy by offering comfort that they themselves would find soothing, i.e. their dummy • Enjoys playing alone and alongside others and is also interested in being together and playing with other children • Will often watch, follow and imitate each other in their play and will experiment with influencing others, co-operating together and also resisting coercion in their interactions • Asserts their own ideas and preferences and takes notice of other people's responses • Will sometimes experience long periods of social engagement as overwhelming and may withdraw or collapse with frustration	• Enable children to explore by being a secure base for them; sitting close by and at their level to show that you are physically and emotionally available. • Support a toddler's explorations by drawing their attention to interesting things and smiling and nodding as they explore • Support children who are new to a group by working closely with parents/carers to gradually settle them in over time, and allowing the child to stay close to you as much as they need. • Give your full attention when young children look to you for a response. • Be on hand to support social interactions between children. • Model gentleness and kindness in your interactions with children and each other. • Help toddlers to understand each other's thoughts and needs by suggesting useful phrases, commenting on what might be going on in their minds and modelling respectful and considerate responses during play. • Cultivate a sense of belonging by involving all children in welcoming and caring for one another and in the shared organisational tasks of the group.	• Display photographs of practitioners, so that when children arrive, their parents can show them who will be there to take care of them. • Support children who are new to a group by gradually settling them in over time so they can get to know the people, the environment and the routines. • Plan times for children to be with their key person, individually and in their key group. • Plan routine care events to support the development of close relationships between the key person and child and to support children's friendships • Ensure that group times for toddlers are small, short and active and are in a familiar space with a familiar adult. • Create areas in which children can sit and chat with friends, such as a snug den and cosy spaces. • Provide opportunities for toddlers to play alone, alongside and with others.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4 	• Builds relationships with special people but may show anxiety in the presence of strangers • Is becoming more able to separate from their close carers and explore new situations with support and encouragement from another familiar adult • Shows some understanding that other people have perspectives, ideas and needs that are different to theirs, e.g. may turn a book to face you so you can see it • Shows empathy and concern for people who are special to them by partially matching others' feelings with their own, e.g. may offer a child a toy they know they like • Is beginning to be able to cooperate in favourable situations, such as with familiar people and environments and when free from anxiety. • Seeks out others to share experiences with and may choose to play with a familiar friend or a child who has similar interest	• Use mealtimes as ideal occasions for children to practice social skills by sitting together in small groups with their key person. • Play name games to welcome children to the setting and help them get to know each other and the staff • Get to know each of your key children's likes and dislikes and ways of eating. • Soothe each of your key children to sleep in the way agreed with their parent and respect their individual "coming to" time. • Allow enough time in the bathroom, at lunch and when getting ready to sleep, to support toddlers to be as autonomous as they can. • Do not allow your own attitudes to food, bodily waste or dirt to make a caring time negative for a child.	• Provide duplicates of favourite items to reduce competition and conflict. • Provide matching items for children and adults to mirror each other in play, e.g. two identical musical instruments. • Provide resources that promote cooperative play between two children such as a double sized easel or a truck two children can ride. • Ensure many opportunities for outdoor play where toddlers can be together without competing for space.
RANGE 5 	• Seeks out companionship with adults and other children, sharing experiences and play ideas • Uses their experiences of adult behaviours to guide their social relationships and interactions • Shows increasing consideration of other people's needs and gradually more impulse control in favourable conditions, e.g. giving up a toy to another who wants it • Practices skills of assertion, negotiation and compromise and looks to a supportive adult for help in resolving conflict with peers • Enjoys playing alone, alongside and with others, inviting others to play and attempting to join others' play	• Continue to provide children with a secure base for them to return to and to explore from by being available if needed. • Offer a warm and consistent presence, spending time playing and being with children in 1:1 and small groups as well as in the whole group. • Show that you keep children "in mind" by referring to things you have noticed in their play or something that reminded you of them in some way. • Model key skills of empathy, negotiation, compromise and positive assertion when playing with children and in your everyday interactions. • Provide positive feedback during play, noticing and acknowledging children's thoughtfulness towards each other.	• Provide stability in staffing, key person relationships and in grouping of the children. • Plan opportunities for children to spend time with their key person, individually and in small groups. • Create opportunities for children to get to know everyone in the group. • Plan the environment to create spaces for children to play alone, alongside or with others as they choose. • Provide time, space and open-ended materials for children to collaborate with one another in different ways, for example, in block play.

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Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

RANGE 6

- Represents and recreates what they have learnt about social interactions from their relationships with close adults, in their play and relationships with others
- Develops particular friendships with other children, which help them to understand different points of view and to challenge their own and others' thinking
- Is increasingly flexible and cooperative as they are more able to understand other people's needs, wants and behaviours
- Is increasingly socially skilled and will take steps to resolve conflicts with other children by negotiating and finding a compromise; sometimes by themselves, sometimes with support
- Returns to the secure base of a familiar adult to recharge and gain emotional support and practical help in difficult situations
- Is proactive in seeking adult support and able to articulate their wants and needs
- Some children may have had to make many different relationships in their life. This may have impacted on their understanding of what makes a consistent and stable relationship

Positive Relationships: what adults could do

RANGE 5 & 6 (cont)

- Support young children's efforts to join in with others' play and inviting others into their play.
- Use different resources such as social stories and Persona Dolls to help children to develop strategies for building and maintaining relationships.
- Offer calm and considered support for children as they experiences conflict with their peers. Use a problem-solving approach; *You are fighting because you both want the blue bike, what can we do about this?*
- Pause before intervening in children's arguments to allow children time resolve issues if they can.
- Recognise and respect children's particular friendships.
- Notice and celebrate young children's valuable contributions to their relationships with others, e.g. to younger children, new children or new practitioners.
- Shy children or some with social and emotional difficulties may be anxious when interacting with peers. One-to-one or smaller group encounters in a familiar, cosy space can help a child to build confidence.

Enabling Environments: what adults could provide

- Provide play activities that encourage cooperation and collaboration, such as parachute activities and ring games.
- Choose books, puppets, and dolls and small world play that help children explore their ideas about friends and friendship and to talk about feelings, e.g. someone saying, *You can't play.*
- For young children who are finding it hard to make relationships in the group, develop other situations such as a forest school activity or a creative arts project that may be more encouraging.

Statutory ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

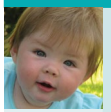
- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Sense of self

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults could do	Enabling Environments: what adults could provide
RANGE 1  • Learns about their physical self through exploratory play with their hands and feet and movement • Is becoming aware of self as they imitate sounds and expressions that are mirrored back to them by close adults: laughing and gurgling during physical interactions • Shows awareness of being a separate individual through initiating contact with others using voice, gesture, eye contact and facial expression and through secure-base behaviours • Expresses awareness of their physical self through their own movements, gestures and expressions and by touching their own and other's faces, eyes, and mouth in play and care events • Shows growing confidence that their needs will be met by freely expressing their need for comfort, nourishment or company	• Engage in attentive, uninterrupted play with babies when they are alert and ready. • Provide many opportunities for babies to explore how their bodies move by giving them free play time on the firm surface of the floor. • To support their sense of agency and autonomy, only put babies into positions that they can get into and out of themselves. For example, do not put them on their tummies until they can roll over independently. • Listen, respond to and build on babies' expressions, actions, and gestures, engaging in conversation with them. • Play interactive games that help babies recognise themselves, such as finger plays and action rhymes. • Spend one-to-one time playing, talking and looking at books that are of personal relevance together. • Talk with babies about people and things that are special to them, such as their family members or pets. • Offer commentary to babies about what is happening around them and what they are doing. • Notice and acknowledge babies' independently chosen activities and tasks, valuing their efforts as well as celebrating their achievements. • Use care events to support a positive sense of self through respectful interactions. • Support a baby's confidence by being close by as they explore. • Offer manageable choice between two things, e.g. *Would you like the blue t-shirt or the one with spots on?* • Use familiar greetings, in relevant languages, with children, parents and each other. • Learn from parents the baby's usual experience of feeding, changing, sleeping and comforting before taking on these tasks yourself. • Ensure a baby feels safe and secure whilst preparing their food, preparing to change their nappy or to go out for a walk by talking to them and providing suitable toys and/or comforters for them while they wait.	• Allow for flexibility within practice so that the routines you follow offer continuity between home and setting. • Learn from parents/carers about each baby's family culture, traditions and languages. • Share knowledge about each child's language(s) by making a poster or book of greetings and key phrases to use • Provide comfortable areas where parents, practitioners and young babies can be together. • Create time at the beginning and end of each day to talk and reflect with parents about their baby's daily needs, progress and development, with communication support for different language speakers and users. • If appropriate, plan to have times when babies and older siblings or friends can be together. • Place mirrors where babies can see their own reflection. Talk with them about what they see. • Create sufficient safe space for babies to move, roll, stretch and explore. • Provide objects and images that reflect the baby and their home. • Provide types of food and styles of serving and eating that are familiar to each child. • Display photos of family and other special people. • Provide toys and open- ended play experiences that match the play interests and styles of individual babies. • Provide play resources that reflect each baby's home culture and that help them to make links with the smells and sounds of home.
RANGE 2 • Responds to their own name and enjoys finding own nose, eyes or tummy as part of interactive games • Shows an interest in their reflection in a mirror, although may not yet realise that the reflection is them • Shows separation anxiety as they become more aware of themselves as separate individuals • Shows an emerging autonomy through asserting choices and preferences such as different tastes and rejects things they do not want, for example by pushing them away • Understands that their own voice and actions causes an effect on others, e.g. clapping hands starts a game • Shows growing self-confidence through playing freely and with involvement		

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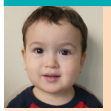
Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Sense of self

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

RANGE 3



- Is aware of and interested in their own and others' physical characteristics, pointing to and naming features such as noses, hair and eyes
- Experiments with what their bodies can do through setting themselves physical challenges, e.g. pulling a large truck upstairs
- Begins to use *me*, *you* and *I* in their talk and to show awareness of their social identity of gender, ethnicity and ability
- Shows their growing sense of self through asserting their likes and dislikes, choices, decisions, and ideas. These may be different to those of the adult or their peers; often saying *no*, *me do it* or *mine*

RANGE 4

- Knows their own name, their preferences and interests and is becoming aware of their unique abilities
- Is developing an understanding of and interest in differences of gender, ethnicity and ability
- Shows a sense of autonomy through asserting their ideas and preferences and making choices and decisions
- Experiments with their own and other people's views of who they are through their play, through trying out different behaviours, and the way they talk about themselves
- Is gradually learning that actions have consequences but not always the consequences the child hopes for

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Use play and stories to positively support toddlers' understanding of their physical selves and social identities.
- Share toddlers' pleasure when they do something for themselves and celebrate by sharing with others such as parents, other children or practitioners.
- Recognise a child's growing sense of agency and respect their attempts to gain independence by giving time for doing things for themselves in routines.
- Making choices is important for all children. Consider, with parents/carers and other professionals, ways in which you provide for children with disabilities to make choices.
- Provide toddlers with opportunities to practise making choices and decisions such as when serving themselves from dishes on the lunch table.
- Support toddlers' autonomy by involving them in the daily organisation of the home or group by setting the table, for example.
- Be close by and available to provide encouragement and support when a toddler needs it but show trust in their capabilities.
- Be aware of and alert to possible dangers, while recognising the importance of encouraging young children's sense of exploration and risk-taking.
- Offer extra support to children in new situations where they may not understand the expectations or have confidence in their abilities.
- Recognise and value toddlers unique interests and abilities by following and building on what they show you about their play interests and preferences.
- Be sensitive to differences in attitudes and expectations amongst families and maintain a two-way communication about their values and approach.
- Recognise each child's social and cultural context by talking about the places children go to, celebrations they enjoy and the people they love.
- Notice your interactions with children of different genders, ethnicities or abilities; are you conveying any unconscious bias? Are you actively challenging stereotypes and assumptions?

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Create displays and albums of photographs of the children and the activities they have participated in.
- Encourage children to take their own photographs within the setting.
- Displays, equipment and resources are reflective of the children's linguistic social and cultural backgrounds and those of the wider community, so there are items that are familiar to each child.
- Share observations and consult with parents on each child's interests, dispositions, wellbeing and achievements, whatever they may be.
- Adapt the environment to support the needs of children with mobility, visual or hearing impairment.
- Plan the environment so that storage for coats, nappies, shoes and comforters are labelled with individual children's photographs and names so children can access them independently.
- Provide an environment that is stable and familiar so children can find what they need, feel secure and be autonomous in their play
- Plan personalised play that follows each child's interests and possible lines of development
- Ensure materials are easily accessible so all children have access to them and can make choices in their play.
- Provide mark making and collage materials that allow children to accurately represent their skin colour and hair type.
- Offer play experiences that are equally attractive to girls and boys and can be accessed by children with a disability in the best way they can.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Sense of self

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 • Is becoming more aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others in more detailed ways and identifies themself in relation to social groups and to their peers • Is sensitive to others' messages of appreciation or criticism • Enjoys a sense of belonging through being involved in daily tasks • Is aware of being evaluated by others and begin to develop ideas about themselves according to the messages they hear from others • Shows their confidence and self-esteem through being outgoing towards people, taking risks and trying new things or new social situations and being able to express their needs and ask adults for help	• Celebrate each child's uniqueness by openly talking with them about their individual characteristics and their similarities and differences with others in a positive way. • Value difference through showing genuine interest in and valuing all children's contributions through listening carefully and providing opportunities for children to be fully themselves. • Offer extra support to children in new situations or when they are feeling anxious or insecure. • Talk to children about choices they make and help them understand that this may mean that they cannot do something else. • Show trust in young children's abilities by showing them how to use and care for materials, letting them try and noticing when they need help; offering but not taking over. • Be aware of and respond to the particular needs of children who are learning English as an additional language. • Engage with children in exploring and talking about what they are doing, valuing their ideas and ways of doing things. • Offer help with activities when asked but not before and see struggle and mistakes as important parts of learning. • Intervene when children need help and validation of feelings in difficult situations, such as prejudice or unkindness. • Use books, stories and Persona Dolls to engage children in thinking about difference, unfairness, prejudice and discrimination. • Notice and appreciate young children's efforts not just their achievements, encouraging their inner motivation rather than working just for your approval or a sticker. • Listen carefully to young children. Take their ideas and opinions into account and involve them in making decisions about daily events. • Young children with disabilities or learning difficulties may need additional support in making choices and decisions and being autonomous.	• Involve parents in their children's learning and learn about each child's home culture from them. • Plan regular opportunities for children to talk to their small group about something they are interested in or have done. • Include mirrors and photographs of the children and their families and friends in the environment. • Reflect children's socio-cultural and ethnic backgrounds and those of the wider community in the environment, play opportunities and resources. • Give time for children to pursue their play and learning without interruption, to complete activities such as role play, construction, building dens and painting to their satisfaction, and to return to their activities if they wish. • Provide experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable. • Provide a role-play area resourced with materials reflecting children's family lives and communities. Consider including resources reflecting lives that are unfamiliar, to broaden children's knowledge and reflect an inclusive ethos. • Involve children in drawing or taking photographs of favourite activities or places, to help them describe their individual preferences and opinions. • Provide books, stories, songs, music and other cultural artefacts that are drawn from a wide range of traditions and styles. • Provide and engage with CPD to extend practitioner's awareness of anti-bias practice.
RANGE 6 • Recognises that they belong to different communities and social groups and communicates freely about own home and community • Is more aware of their relationships to particular social groups and sensitive to prejudice and discrimination • Shows confidence in speaking to others about their own needs, wants, interests and opinions in familiar group • Can describe their competencies, what they can do well and are getting better at; describing themselves in positive but realistic terms • Has a clear idea about what they want to do in their play and how they want to go about it • Shows confidence in choosing resources and perseverance in carrying out a chosen activity		

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge

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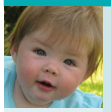
Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Understanding emotions

RANGE 1



A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Communicates a range of emotions (e.g. pleasure, interest, fear, surprise, anger and excitement) through making sounds, facial expressions, and moving their bodies
- Expresses feelings strongly through crying in order to make sure that their needs will be met
- May whimper, scream and cry if hurt or neglected. If their needs are not responded to, they may become withdrawn and passive
- Seeks physical and emotional comfort by snuggling in to trusted adults
- Is affirmed and comforted by familiar carers through voice, physical presence and touch, for example singing, cuddles, smiles or rocking
- Reacts emotionally to other people's emotions; smiling when smiled at and becoming distressed if they hear another child crying or see a blank unresponsive face

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Learn from parents about how their baby expresses their emotions and what they do to soothe them
- Support babies who are distressed on separating from their parents by acknowledging their feelings and reassuring them.
- Be responsive to all communication such as crying, babbling and physical movements to acknowledge a baby's emotional expressions.
- Be emotionally and physically available, providing a secure presence and a refuge at times when a baby may be feeling anxious.
- "Tune in" to a baby's emotions and respond calmly, gently and sensitively in a way that follows their needs
- Use calming processes such as rocking or calmly singing in response to emotional expression and note what helps to sooth and support the baby
- Learn lullabies and other songs that babies know from home and sing them to the babies for comfort.
- Make sure that babies, toddlers and young children have access to their comfort object whenever they need it.
- Show babies they are safe and loved by comforting them when experiencing frustration and anxiety.
- Share in babies' happy and joyful experiences, joining in with their excitement without overwhelming them with your responses.
- Be consistent in your responses so that babies gradually become aware of reasonable boundaries
- Support babies and young children in their play with others modelling caring and respectful behaviours and affirming their pro-social behaviours.
- Be alert to unexplained changes in behaviour or unusual injuries a child has and take action within safeguarding guidelines.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

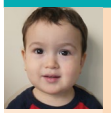
- Observe babies' emotional responses and plan the routines, the environment and play experiences to support them.
- Encourage parents to bring their baby's comforter/ transitional object to ease the change from home to setting.
- Create a cosy, quiet place for babies to be calm.
- Provide comfortable seating such as a sofa or cushions for baby and key person to be together.
- Create spaces and experiences in which babies feel secure enough to explore and play.
- Provide resources including picture books and stories that focus on a range of emotions.
- Store babies' toys and comforters where they can find and reach them.
- Communicate with parents/carers daily to ensure continuity of care between home and setting.
- Communicate with sensitivity when interacting with parents who do not speak or understand English and draw on the language skills available where possible.
- Develop close partnerships with parents to discuss and agree boundaries of behaviour
- Maintain an awareness and understanding that children who have had adverse experiences may require additional all-round support.
- Ensure practitioners have regular opportunities to reflect on their emotional responses to the children and to their work as well as thinking about the children's progress and planning play experiences.

RANGE 2

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Shows a wider variety of feelings, using crying, gestures and vocalisations freely to express their needs
- Begins to become aware of their emotions as the connections in the brain that make feelings conscious grow and develop
- Uses familiar adult to share feelings such as excitement and for "emotional refuelling" when feeling tired or anxious
- Uses a comfort object, familiar others, routines or spaces to soothe themselves, particularly when separated from their close carer
- Becomes more able to adapt their behaviour and increase their participation and co-operation as they become familiar with and anticipate routine
- Explores the boundaries of behaviours that are accepted by adults and become aware of basic rules as they use their emerging agency and autonomy

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Understanding emotions

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 3  • Expresses positive feelings such as joy and affection and negative feelings such as anger, frustration and distress, through actions, behaviours and a few words • Experiences a wide range of feelings with great intensity, such as anger and frustration, which can be overwhelming and result in losing control of feelings, body and thinking • Is aware of others' feelings and is beginning to show empathy by offering a comfort object to another child or sharing in another child's excitement • Asserts their own agenda strongly and may display frustration with having to comply with others' agendas and with change and boundaries	• Be a secure base for toddlers to return to for "emotional refuelling" when encountering novel situations or social conflict and challenges. • Create regular opportunities to be in very small groups or 1:1 times with the key person. • Reduce frustration and conflict by keeping routines flexible so that young children can pursue their interests. • Understand that "emotional storms" are a sign of a child being overwhelmed by strong emotions such as anger, frustration, fear, anxiety and sadness. • Show empathy and stay close by to offer support and reassurance as the child calms after an emotional collapse. • Use real life experiences to help children to understand a wide range of emotions in others and themselves by talking about different emotions as they occur during play. • Model empathy and talk about others' feelings. For example, *Amaya is feeling sad today because she is missing her mummy.* • Understand that young children communicate their feelings through their behaviours and respond by showing empathy for their underlying feelings • Demonstrate clear and consistent boundaries without being rigid and unreasonable • Take children seriously and understand their motivations and underlying reasons for their actions. • Show you are supportive by empathising when toddlers' attempts at assertion and negotiation go wrong and helping them to find more effective ways. • Show fairness; apply rules consistently but reasonably and flexibly when necessary. • Support young children's rights to be kept safe by others by helping them to assert themselves positively and by respecting their bodily integrity	• Maintain consistency of key person relationships in the organisation of staffing • Keep changes in group and routine to a minimum • Ensure that observation and planning for children's emotional needs is a central focus. • Provide books, stories and puppets that can be used to model responding to others' feelings and being helpful and supportive. • Provide sufficient materials and duplicates of popular items to reduce conflict, e.g. ride on toys, construction toys, and several copies of the same book • Create enough space and organise resources so that toddlers can play without becoming frustrated. • Create calm spaces inside and out, for retreat and relaxation • Offer play opportunities with open-ended materials. • Provide for vigorous physical play.
RANGE 4 • Expresses the self-aware emotions of pride and embarrassment as well as a wide range of other feeling • Can feel overwhelmed by intense emotions, resulting in an emotional collapse when frightened, frustrated, angry, anxious or over-stimulated • Is becoming able to think about their feelings as their brain starts to develop the connections that help them manage their emotions • Seeks comfort from familiar adults when needed and distracts themselves with a comfort object when upset • Responds to the feelings of others, showing concern and offering comfort • May recognise that some actions can hurt or harm others and begins to stop themselves from doing something they should not do, in favourable conditions • Participates more in collective cooperation as their experience of routines and understanding of some boundaries grows		

In some cases, suggestions for similar support for children's development and learning apply across two ranges. In these cases the Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments columns are shown in the colour of the first range, but apply to both adjacent ranges.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Understanding emotions

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 • Expresses a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others and through their behaviour and play, including excitement and anxiety, guilt and self-doubt • May exhibit increased fearfulness of things like the dark or monsters etc and possibly have nightmares • Talks about how others might be feeling and responds according to their understanding of the other person's needs and wants • Is more able to recognise the impact of their choices and behaviours/actions on others and knows that some actions and words can hurt others' feelings • Understands that expectations vary depending on different events, social situations and changes in routine, and becomes more able to adapt their behaviour in favourable conditions	• Create a listening culture and atmosphere which is calm and caring, where young children feel able to express their emotions • Model caring responses and comforting or helping behaviours in your interactions with all children. • Name and talk about a wide range of feelings and make it clear that all feelings are understandable and acceptable. Put children's feelings into words for them: *It looks like you're cross about that.* • Model how you manage your own feelings, e.g. *I'm feeling a bit angry and I need to calm down, so I'm going to…* • Help children to recognise when their actions hurt others. Do not expect children to say *sorry* before they have a real understanding of what this means. Instead help them to suggest solutions to a conflict when they are emotionally ready. • Be emotionally available to young children when they need to "emotionally refuel" to help them to cope with difficult situations, conflict and difficult emotions. • Ask children for their ideas on what might make people feel better when they are sad or cross. • Children with developmental differences such as Autism Spectrum Disorders may need additional support in developing empathy. Using role play opportunities, social stories and providing feedback can help a child to recognise their feelings of empathy . • Provide clear boundaries without being inflexible. • Discuss rules and fairness with young children and show positive appreciation of young children's pro-social behaviours of kindness and helpfulness for example.	• Plan small group circle times when children can explore feelings, e.g. through stories. • Create familiar, predictable routines, including opportunities to help in appropriate tasks, e.g. setting the table or putting away toys. • Display a sequence of photographs to show the routines in the setting to support younger or new children and children with additional needs. • Provide photographs and books where emotions are being expressed to look at and talk about with children. • Use Persona Dolls to help children consider feelings, ways to help others feel better, and ways to manage conflicting opinions, be fair and get on with each other. • Provide a range of music, stories, open ended materials and play opportunities, play props and resources to support young children in exploring and making sense of feelings such as fear, anxiety and anger. • Offer environments that include stimulating and challenging spaces but also calm and comfortable spaces. • Set, explain and maintain clear, reasonable and consistent boundaries so that children can feel safe and secure in their play and other activities.
RANGE 6 • Understands their own and other people's feelings, offering empathy and comfort • Talks about their own and others' feelings and behaviour and its consequences • Attempts to repair a relationship or situation where they have caused upset and understands how their actions impact other people • Is more able to manage their feelings and tolerate situations in which their wishes cannot be met		

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Understanding emotions

	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 6 (cont.)	• Seeks support, "emotional refuelling" and practical help in new or challenging situations. • Is aware of behavioural expectations and sensitive to ideas of justice and fairness • Seeks ways to manage conflict, for example through holding back, sharing, negotiation and compromise	• Support children in recognising the consequences of behaviours and responses that make other children or adults feel upset and help them to repair this by finding new responses or behaviours. • Actively listen to children's talk, play, body language and behaviours and think about what the child is telling you. • Make opportunities for children and adults to listen to each other and explain their thinking, feelings and actions as far as they are able. • Collaborate with children in creating rules and expectations within a group such as mutual respect, compromise, caring behaviours towards themselves, others and the environment. • Adopt a partnership approach with parents when discussing boundaries and expectations to maintain continuity for children.	• Use pictures, shared gestures or sign language to show young children and those with additional needs the expected behaviours. • Involve children in agreeing codes of behaviour and taking responsibility for implementing them. • Provide books with stories about characters that follow or break rules, and the effects of their behaviour on others. • Carefully prepare all children for any changes to their routine, particularly those with a SEN such as autism. • Have agreed procedures outlining how to respond to unexpected or unusual changes in children's behaviour. • Share policies and practice on safeguarding procedure with parents/carers from the outset. • Provide and engage in CPD that supports practitioners understanding and response to children's emotional difficulties and safeguarding concerns.

Statutory ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly

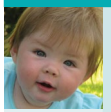
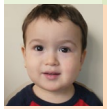
Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly

In some cases, suggestions for similar support for children's development and learning apply across two ranges. In these cases the Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments columns are shown in the colour of the first range, but apply to both adjacent ranges.

Communication and Language: Listening and attention

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 1 	• Turns toward a familiar sound then locates range of sounds with accuracy • Listens to, distinguishes and responds to intonations and sounds of voices • Reacts in interaction with others by smiling, looking and moving • Quietens or alerts to the sound of speech • Looks intently at a person talking, but stops responding if speaker turns away • Listens to familiar sounds, words, or finger plays • Fleeting attention – not under child's control, new stimuli takes whole attention	• Get physically close making sure the baby can see your face. Make sure the baby is looking at you and wants to interact. This will help the baby to observe faces and notice communications. • Show that you are present and tuned in by using eye contact and touch to create shared moments of interaction. • Be attentive and leave space for the baby to start a "serve and return" conversation. • Use a range of animated facial expressions to show babies you are interested in them. • Use a lively voice with ups and downs to help babies tune in. • Say the baby's name to draw their attention. • Imitate the baby's responses to show you notice and value their contributions. • Encourage playfulness, laughter, turn-taking and responses, using "peek-a-boo" and action rhymes. • Sing songs and rhymes during everyday routines. • Use repeated sounds, and words and phrases so babies can begin to recognise particular sounds. • Pay attention to babies' teasing and emergence of humour. They may use inanimate objects to tease and provoke your reaction. • Follow the baby's focus and pay joint attention to what they are interested in.	• Share stories, songs and rhymes from all cultures and in babies' home languages and other languages common in communities. • Share favourite stories, songs, rhymes or music as babies are settling to sleep, or at other quiet times. • Sing frequently with young babies, encouraging them to join in. • Create an environment which invites responses from babies and adults, for example, touching, smiling, smelling, feeling, listening, exploring, describing and sharing. • Establish a familiar pattern by spending prolonged moments of time each day interacting with the baby, or a small group of babies. • Consider what it feels like to use your voice in your environment – what kinds of soundscape and sensory atmosphere do children experience? Is the invitation to "join in" with this environment, using voices, bodies and objects to make noise, irresistible?
RANGE 2 	• Moves whole body to sounds they enjoy, such as music or a regular beat • Concentrates intently on an object or activity of own choosing for short periods • Pays attention to dominant stimulus – easily distracted by noises or other people talking. • Enjoys laughing and being playful with others		
RANGE 3 	• Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories, trying to join in with actions or vocalisations • Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations • Pays attention to own choice of activity, may move quickly from activity to activity	• Use natural gestures and/or signing e.g. waving "bye-bye". • Let the child choose the activity and follow their interest . • Use percussion instruments to take turns. • Sing songs and encourage repetitive action rhymes. • Play alongside the child and talk together. • Encourage young children to explore and imitate sound. • Talk about the different sounds they hear, such as a tractor's *chug chug* while sharing a book.	• Collect resources that children can listen to and learn to distinguish between. These may include games that involve guessing which object makes a particular sound • Encourage listening in its widest sense; this could include opportunities to listen to human noises, non-human noises, objects that make interesting noise, weather and other outdoor sounds. • Provide opportunities to listen to the sounds of the local area, the home and the natural world. • Listen to sounds that are easily identifiable and mysterious noises that are not. Model and encourage playful imaginative responses.

Communication and Language: Listening and attention

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4 • Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories • Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds, e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door • Shows interest in play with sounds, songs and rhymes • Single channelled attention; can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus	• Model being a listener by listening to children and taking account of what they say in your responses to them. • Have conversations with children as part of everyday activities • Play alongside children and talk with them as part of playful encounters • Model and encourage language for thinking by using phrase such as *I wonder..., What if..., I have an idea.* • Encourage repetition, rhythm and rhyme by using tone and intonation as you tell, recite or sing stories, poems and rhymes from books. • Be aware of and actively support the needs of children learning English as an additional language from a variety of cultures and ask parents to share their favourite stories, rhymes and songs in their home languages.	• Use puppets and other props to encourage listening and responding when singing a familiar song or reading from a story book. • Encourage children to learn one another's names and to pronounce them correctly. • Ensure all practitioners can pronounce the names of children, parents and other practitioners. • Find out parents' preferred names for themselves and their children. • Where possible minimise background noise and visual distractions in the environment, and ensure spaces are separated enough for children to listen to each other. • Encourage talk in all spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
RANGE 5 • Listens to others in one-to-one or small groups, when conversation interests them • Listens to familiar stories with increasing attention and recall • Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories • Focusing attention – can still listen **or** do, but can change their own focus of attention • Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused)	• Engage in role play and imaginary play scenarios and model listening behaviours. • Encourage children to listen to their friends and take turns in play and activities. • Make mistakes when telling stories/singing songs so the children correct you. • Cue children, particularly those with communication difficulties, to listen by first using their name, and signal a change of conversation, e.g. *Now we are going to talk about…* • Share rhymes, books and stories from many cultures, sometimes using languages other than English, particularly where children are learning English as an additional language. • Invite parents and members of wider communities to story-telling opportunities, so children can use their full language repertoire. Children then hear a range of languages, and the value of home languages as well as English. • Introduce "rhyme time" bags containing books that are relevant to the communities of your setting. Encourage taking these home, and involve parents in rhymes and singing games. • Ask parents to record and share songs and rhymes that have meaning to them, their family and community.	• When making up alliterative jingles, draw attention to the similarities in sounds at the beginning of words and emphasise the initial sound, e.g. *mmmmummy, shshshshadow, K-K-K-KKaty.* • Plan activities listening carefully to different speech sounds, e.g. a sound chain copying the voice sound around the circle, or identifying other children's voices on tape. • When singing or saying rhymes, talk about the similarities in the rhyming words. Make up alternative endings and encourage children to supply the last word of the second line, e.g. *Hickory Dickory bee, The mouse ran down the...* • Set up a listening area or other opportunities where children can enjoy rhymes and stories. either independently or with an adult. • Provide instruments for musical play. • Provide opportunities to listen in different kinds of environments, e.g. outdoor spaces, dens, large and small rooms and buildings. • Explore different kinds of surfaces and how noise bounces off them.
RANGE 6 • Shows variability in listening behaviour; may move around and fiddle but still be listening or sit still but not absorbed by activity • May indicate two-channelled attention, e.g. paying attention to something of interest for short or long periods; can both listen and do for short span		

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Communication and Language: Listening and attention

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
	RANGE 5 & 6 (cont)	
	• Choose stories with repeated refrains, dances and action songs involving looking and pointing, and songs that require replies and turn-taking. • Plan regular short periods when individuals listen to others, such as singing a short song, sharing an experience or describing something they have seen or done. • Play games which involve listening for a signal, such as Simon Says, and use *Ready, steady…go!* • Use opportunities to stop and listen carefully for environmental sounds, and talk about sounds you can hear using words such as *long, short, high, low.* • Play with sand timers to help extend concentration for children who find it difficult to focus their attention on a task. • Explain why it is important to pay attention by looking and listening when others are speaking. • Give children opportunities both to speak and to listen, ensuring that the needs of children learning English as an additional language are met, so that they can participate fully starting with simple actions and gestures, progressing to single words and phrases, and then to using more complex sentences.	• Talk with children about how we listen differently to different things, for example animals and types of music.

Statutory ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

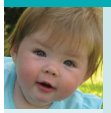
- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Statutory ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Communication and Language: Understanding

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 1  • Turns when hears own name • Starts to understand contextual clues, e.g. familiar gestures, words and sounds	• Look at the baby and say their name. Make eye contact and wait for them to react. • Interpret and give meaning to the things young babies show interest in, e.g. when babies point to an object tell them what it is. • Use an animated, enthusiastic face when interacting with children. • Observe children as they watch their environment. • Look out for strategies babies use to attract your attention, such as seeking eye contact, gestures such as pointing, facial expressions and intentional physical movement. • Talk to babies about what you are doing and what is happening, so they will link words with actions, e.g. preparing lunch. • Use actions including hands and finger plays to support your words, e.g. waving when you say *bye bye*. • Speak clearly. Babies respond well to a higher pitched, sing-song voice. • Use and repeat single words while you share attention to an object or event, so the baby can gradually link the word to its meaning.	• Let babies see and hear the sequence of actions you go through as you carry out familiar routines. • Provide resources and spaces that stimulate babies' interests such as a shiny bell, a book or a mirror on the floor or on your lap. • Find out from parents how babies make themselves understood at home. • Confirm which is their home language. • Display lists of words from different home languages, and invite parents and other adults to contribute. Include all languages in the community since seeing their languages reflected in the setting will encourage all parents to feel involved and valued. • When singing rhymes and songs use actions to support children's understanding of words and their relation to wider life.
RANGE 2 • Is developing the ability to follow others' body language, including pointing and gesture • Responds to simple questions when in a familiar context with a special person (e.g. *Where's Mummy?*, *Where's your nose?)* • Understanding of single words in context is developing, e.g. *cup*, *milk*, *daddy*		
RANGE 3 • Understands different situations - able to follow routine events and activities using nonverbal cues • Selects familiar objects by name and will go and find objects when asked, or identify objects from a group • Understands simple sentences (e.g. *Throw the ball*)	• Use gestures and facial expression to help show your meaning. • Be aware that young children's understanding is much greater than their ability to express their thoughts and ideas. For example, a child may be able to go and hang their coat up when asked but say only *coat up* to explain what they did. • Recognise young children's competence and appreciate their efforts when they show their understanding of new words and phrases (*Yes, that is a little flower*). • Use language appropriate to the child's level of understanding. • Stay with the child while they play, taking time to watch their movements and react to their initiations and adding words to describe what the child is doing.	• Plan play activities and provide resources which encourage young children to engage in symbolic play, e.g. putting a "baby" to bed and talking to it appropriately. • Plan real world shared experiences such as visits, everyday tasks, or preparing activities in the setting. • Use pictures, books, real objects, and signs alongside your words.

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Communication and Language: Understanding

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4 	• Identifies action words by following simple instructions, e.g. *Show me jumping* • Beginning to understand more complex sentences, e.g. *Put your toys away and then sit on the carpet* • Understands who, what, where in simple questions (e.g. *Who's that? Who can? What's that? Where is?*) • Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. *fast/slow, good/bad*)	• Be attentive and respond to children's talk in an appropriate and positive way. • Use talk to describe what children are doing by providing a running commentary, e.g. *Oh, I can see what you are doing. You have to put the milk in the cup first.* • Provide opportunities for children to talk with other children and adults about what they see, hear, think and feel. • Talk slowly enough for the child to understand. • Provide words by labelling objects, actions and abstract things like feelings. • Stay with the child while they play, play alongside the child and show attentive companionship as you share conversations.	• Include things which excite young children's curiosity, such as hats, bubbles, shells, story books, seeds and snails, which reflect their wider living and non-living communities. • Provide activities, such as cooking, where talk is used to anticipate or initiate what children will be doing, e.g. *We need some eggs. Let's see if we can find some in here*
RANGE 5 	• Understands use of objects (e.g. *Which one do we cut with?*) • Shows understanding of prepositions such as *under, on top, behind* by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture • Responds to instructions with more elements, e.g. *Give the big ball to me; collect up all the blocks and put them in the box* • Beginning to understand *why* and *how* questions	• Prompt children's thinking and discussion through involvement in their play. • Talk to children about what they have been doing and help them to reflect upon and explain events, e.g. *You told me this model was going to be a tractor. What's this lever for?* • When you need to give children directions be clear and help them to deal with those involving more than one action, e.g. *Time to come and wash your hands and then we'll set the table for lunch.* • When introducing a new activity, use mime and gesture to support language development. • Showing and talking about a photograph of an activity such as hand washing can help to reinforce understanding. • Make playful "silly mistakes" deliberately to prompt reaction and allow children to explore being the "expert". • Be aware that some children may watch another child in order to know what to do, rather than understanding what you've said themselves. • Embed sustained shared thinking approaches to extend language and conversational moments to help increase the child's awareness and understanding of speech.	• Set up shared experiences that children can reflect upon, e.g. visits, cooking, or stories that can be re-enacted. • Help children to predict and order events coherently, by providing props and materials that encourage children to re-enact, using talk and action • Find out from parents how children make themselves understood at home; confirm which their preferred language other modes of communication are. • Tune into children's preferred modes of communication – perhaps direct questions feel confronting but shared making or an exchange of funny expressions or gestures creates a connection more effectively. • Provide practical experiences that encourage children to ask and respond to questions, e.g. explaining pulleys or wet and dry sand. • Alongside books, introduce story props, such as pictures, puppets and objects, to encourage children to retell stories and to think about how the characters feel. • Displays can connect experiences across places or provide reminders of previous trips, events or seasons, for example.

Communication and Language: Understanding

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Understands a range of complex sentence structures including negatives, plurals and tense markers
- Beginning to understand humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes
- Able to follow a story without pictures or props
- Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion
- Understands questions such as *who; why; when; where* and *how*

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Ask children to think in advance and predict how they will accomplish a task. Talk through and sequence the stages together.
- Enjoy sharing stories with individual children and small groups. Engage in sustained shared thinking with them to extend their thinking and use of vocabulary.
- Use appropriate vocabulary during play with children to encourage them to think about stories and cultural narratives.
- Use stories from books to focus children's attention on predictions and explanations, e.g. *Why did the boat tip over?*
- Help children to
  - identify patterns, e.g. what generally happens to good and wicked characters at the end of stories
  - draw conclusions: *The sky has gone dark. It must be going to rain*
  - explain effect: *It fell over because it was too tall.*
  - predict: *It might not grow in there if it is too dark.*
  - speculate: *What if the bridge falls down?*

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Set up displays that are interactive so children can touch, pick up etc and talk about/reflect on their experiences
- Provide for, initiate and join in imaginative play and role-play or real life storytelling encouraging children to talk about what is happening and to act out the scenarios in character.

Statutory ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

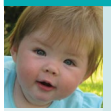
Statutory ELG: Comprehension (Literacy)

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Communication and Language: Speaking

RANGE 1

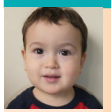


A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
• Communicates needs and feelings in a variety of ways including crying, gurgling, babbling and squealing • Makes own sounds in response when talked to by familiar adults • Lifts arms in anticipation of being picked up • Practises and gradually develops speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like *baba*, *nono*, *gogo* • Points and looks to make requests and to share an interest	• Find out from parents how they like to communicate with their baby, noting especially the chosen language. • Ensure parents understand the importance of talking with babies in their home language. • Pay attention to babies' communications including facial expression, gesture, etc., and respond promptly so they know they have been heard. • Encourage babies' sounds and babbling by copying their sounds in a turn-taking or "serve and return" interaction. • Communicate with parents to exchange and update information about babies' personal words. • Find out from parents how their baby attracts their attention at home. For example, calling or banging from highchair, verbalising if left alone, seeking eye gaze. • Recognise the importance of all sounds and babbling babies share – this is their way of sharing their voice with you.	• Learn and use key words in the home languages of babies in the setting. • Value and learn from families about their communities, languages and cultures. Including influences from other contexts of the baby's life supports wellbeing. • Encourage parents to record familiar, comforting sounds, such as lullabies in home languages. Use these to help babies settle if they are tired or distressed.

RANGE 2

• Uses sounds in play, e.g. *brrrm* for toy car • Uses single words • Frequently imitates words and sounds • Enjoys babbling and increasingly experiments with using sounds • Uses words to communicate for a range of purposes (e.g. *teddy*, *more*, *no*, *bye-bye*) • Uses pointing with eye gaze, and then fingers or hands, to make requests and to share an interest • Creates personal words as they begin to develop language	• Try to "tune in" to the different messages young babies are attempting to convey, and respond. • Look out for patterns of communications they use to invite you into encounters. This might include being playful or physical movements and utterances. Bringing you toys, or holding out objects to you may indicate that they want to "talk". • Share the fun of discovery and value babies' attempts at words, e.g., by picking up a doll in response to *baba*. • When babies try to say a word, repeat it back so they can hear the name of the object clearly. • Find out from parents the greetings they use in English and in languages other than English, and use them in the setting. • Recognise and equally value all languages spoken and written by parents, practitioners and children.	• Find out from parents the words that children use for things which are important to them, such as "bankie" for their comfort blanket, remembering to extend this question to home languages. • Explain that strong foundations in a home language support the development of English. • Tune into what different children enjoy and create environments where babbling and talking feels easy and comfortable and where children can experiment freely with the sounds they can make. • Provide appropriate sensory experiences as well as opportunities for movement and private conversations and sound experiments – possibly in dens and cosy corners.

Communication and Language: Speaking

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 3  • Copies familiar expressions, e.g. *Oh dear, All gone.* • Uses different types of everyday words (nouns, verbs and adjectives, e.g. *banana, go, sleep, hot*) • Beginning to put two words together (e.g. *Want ball, More juice*) • Beginning to ask simple questions • Beginning to talk about people and things that are not present • Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk, e.g. reaches toward toy, saying *Want it*	• Build vocabulary by giving choices, e.g. *apple or satsuma?* • Model building sentences by repeating what the child says and adding another word, e.g. child says "*car*", say *"mummy's car"* or *"blue car."* • Give the child enough time to talk with silences to allow the child to respond or pauses to indicate turn talking. • Show children how to pronounce or use words by responding and repeating what they say in the correct way, rather than saying they are wrong. • Capitalise on the link between movement and the urge to make sounds to encourage children to "find their voice", e.g. when swinging/swaying/jumping/sliding etc. • Accept and respond to words and phrases in home languages. • Encourage parents whose children are learning English as an additional language to continue to encourage use of the first language at home. This helps children learn English as well as being important for cultural and family reasons. • Support children in using a variety of communication strategies, including signing such as with Makaton. • Play with sounds and words children use, such as nonsense language, repeating made-up words or repetitive sounds, linking them to gestures or movement.	• Allow time to follow young children's lead and have fun together while developing vocabulary, e.g. saying *We're jumping up, going down.* • Where appropriate make opportunities to talk through and comment on some activities to highlight specific vocabulary or language structures, e.g. *You've caught the ball. I've caught the ball. Eva's caught the ball.* • Provide stories with repetitive phrases and structures to read aloud to children to support specific vocabulary and language structures.
RANGE 4 • Uses language to share feelings, experiences and thoughts • Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic • Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating • Uses a variety of questions (e.g. *what, where, who*) • Uses longer sentences (e.g. *Mummy gonna work*) • Beginning to use word endings (e.g. *going, cats*)	• Wait and allow the child time to start the conversation. • Follow the child's lead to talk about what they are interested in. • Give children thinking time. Wait for them to think about what they want to say and put their thoughts into words, without jumping in too soon to say something yourself. • In conversations and playful encounters with children, model language a step beyond the child's language use. • Use the child's voicing/speech attempts to lead play and encounters. • For children learning English as an additional language, value non-verbal communications and those offered in home languages. • Without comment, observe and then mirror a child's interesting movement or series of movements. This might lead to a nonverbal "serve and return" movement dialogue, with the child leading the "conversation". This can be very powerful with reluctant speakers or children not yet ready to use English.	• Display pictures and photographs showing engaging, familiar or fantastical events, objects and activities and talk about them with the children. • Provide activities which help children to learn to distinguish differences in sounds, word patterns and rhythms. • Plan to encourage correct use of language by telling repetitive stories, and playing games which involve repetition of words or phrases. • Provide opportunities for children to communicate in their home language. • Help children to build their vocabulary, motivations and opportunities to experiment with talk by extending the range of their experiences. Understand that often when an experience is unfamiliar, children might fall silent at first but choose to talk about it later. • Foster children's enjoyment of spoken and written language by providing interesting and stimulating play opportunities in which there is little pressure to talk but words, songs and rhymes are welcome.

In some cases, suggestions for similar support for children's development and learning apply across two ranges. In these cases the Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments columns are shown in the colour of the first range, but apply to both adjacent ranges.

Communication and Language: Speaking

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4 (cont.)	• Add words to what children say, e.g. child says *Brush dolly hair*, you say *Yes, Lucy is brushing dolly's hair.* • Talk with children to make links between their body language and words, e.g. *Your face does look cross. Has something upset you?* • Introduce new words in the context of play and activities. • Use a lot of statements and comments and fewer questions to build natural conversation. When you do ask a question, use an open question with many possible answers. • Show interest in the words children use to communicate and describe their experiences. • Expand on what children say by repeating it and adding a few more words, helping children use more complex sentences. • Use lively intonation and animated expression when speaking with children and reading texts. • Talk to the child about family life, stories from home. Involve families in this.	• Continue to encourage movement activity to stimulate sound and verbal utterances as well as the opportunity to explore expressive sounds and words to match movement, particularly outdoors. Stimulating the vestibular system through age appropriate swinging, spinning, sliding, swaying etc. may help reluctant speakers to use voice. • Plan regular opportunities for children to speak, e.g. take turns having a toy animal at home, and then telling about the visit. • Set up collaborative tasks, e.g. construction, food activities or story-making through role-play. • Provide small world toys or puppets for children to act out familiar stories in their play.
 RANGE 5 • Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. using *and*, *because*) • Able to use language in recalling past experiences • Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. *went down slide*, *hurt finger*) • Uses talk to explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next • Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. *who*, *what*, *when*, *how* • Beginning to use a range of tenses (e.g. *play*, *playing*, *will play*, *played*) • Continues to make some errors in language (e.g. *runned*) and will absorb and use language they hear around them in their community and culture • Uses intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others • Talks more extensively about things that are of particular importance to them • Builds up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences • Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play, e.g. *This box is my castle*		

Communication and Language: Speaking

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
• Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words • Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations • Links statements and sticks to a main theme or intention • Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events • Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play	• Support children's growing ability to express a wide range of feelings orally, and talk about their own experiences. • Introduce and repeat new words in a range of contexts and encourage children to use them in their own talk • Encourage conversation with others and demonstrate appropriate conventions: turn-taking, waiting until someone else has finished, listening to others and using expressions such as *please*, *thank you* and *can I…?*. At the same time, respond sensitively to social conventions used at home. • Show children how to use language for negotiating, by saying *May I…?*, *Would it be all right…?*, *I think that… and Will you…?* in your interactions with them. • Model language appropriate for different audiences, for example, a visitor. • Encourage children to predict possible endings to stories and events. • Encourage children to experiment with words and sounds, e.g. in nonsense rhymes. • Encourage children to develop narratives in their play, using words such as: *first*, *last*, *next*, *before*, *after*, *all*, *most*, *some*, *each*, *every*. • Value children's contributions and use them to inform and shape the direction of discussions. • Encourage opportunities for conversations between small groups of children. Support these moments and act as a facilitator when appropriate. • Listen to language and conversation that emerge through play, particularly play that is led by the child.	• Give time and make spaces for children to initiate discussions from shared experiences and have conversations with peers and adults. • Give thinking time for children to decide what they want to say and how they will say it. • Encourage language play, e.g. through stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears and action songs that require intonation. • Decide on the key vocabulary linked to activities, and ensure that all practitioners make opportunities to use the words in a range of contexts such as songs, stories, games, activities and natural conversations.. • Plan collaborative activities. Help children to think and talk about how they will begin, what parts each will play and what materials they will need. Review activities with children and encourage them to think about and discuss the strategies they used. • Provide opportunities for talking for a wide range of purposes, e.g. to present ideas to others as descriptions, explanations, instructions or justifications, and to discuss and plan individual or shared activities. • Provide opportunities for children to participate in meaningful speaking and listening activities. For example, children can take models that they have made to show children in another group or class and explain how they were made.

Statutory ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

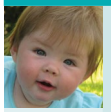
Statutory ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Physical Development: Moving and handling

RANGE 1



A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Gradually develops ability to hold up own head
- Makes movements with arms and legs which gradually become more controlled - moves hands together/legs together
- Follows and tracks a sound or moving object, moving head and eyes
- When lying on back, plays with hands and grasps feet, alternating mouthing hands/feet with focusing gaze on them, and vocalising
- Reaches out for, touches and begins to hold objects, developing later on into being able to release grasp
- Rolls over from back to side, gradually spending longer on side waving upper leg before returning to back
- Develops roll from back right through to front, gradually becoming happy to spend longer on tummy as able to lift head for longer
- Explores objects with mouth, often picking up an object and holding it to the mouth for lips and tongue to explore (mouthing)
- When lying on tummy becomes able to lift first head and then chest, supporting self with forearms and then straight arms
- Starts to creep (belly crawl commando-style) from prone (on tummy) position on the floor, often moving backwards before going forwards
- Becomes increasingly able to communicate, both expressing and responding through body movements, gesture, facial expression and vocalisations

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Ensure that from birth onwards babies have frequent opportunities for moving and being active throughout the time that they are awake.
- Take babies outdoors as much as possible, paying attention to their responses to sensory stimulations such as smells, changing light and moving air.
- Give babies lots of time being touched and held, moving around the environment as well as being still with them.
- Very young babies may enjoy resting on your shoulder or lying on your front looking into your face.
- Before babies are able to roll themselves onto their tummy, put them onto their back for floor time and allow rolling to slowly develop.
- Share with parent/carers the developmental value of ample time spent on the tummy and the ways this can be supported to gradually develop, so that it is always pleasurable for the baby.
- Help babies to become aware of their own bodies through touch and movement.
- While ensuring that babies are warm enough, give them plenty of floor time with non-restricting clothing and bare feet.
- Make the most of each stage in development and support the baby to get all of its developmental benefits: for example, time on the side is an important step in neurological development and needs lots of practice.
- Talk and sing to babies while they are on the floor or ground: they will benefit more from action around them in the room and garden than from a baby gym.
- Tune into how individual babies communicate through movement and body language.
- Play games, such as offering a small toy and taking it again to rattle, or sail through the air.
- Encourage young babies in their efforts to gradually share control of the bottle with you.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- The caregiver's body is the first and foremost enabling environment, and babies need lots of time in contact with attentive and responsive adults.
- From birth onwards, babies need to experience movement in space through being held. Rocking, side-to-side and up-and-down movements are soothing, enjoyable and very developmentally beneficial.
- Provide comfortable seating both indoors and outdoors, so that adults can spend time with babies lying on their laps and upper body. Rocking chairs are especially useful.
- Make the most of the outdoors for providing the tactile and visual stimulation that babies need in their first year.
- Limit the time young babies spend in seats and other "containers" as this prevents physical development through movement and touch.
- Provide a safe space on a warm firm surface, such as blanket on the floor or grass, so that young babies can lie on their backs to move, kick, stretch, find their hands and feet and look into the distance.
- Give plenty of time for babies to discover and play with their hands and feet before offering them things to hold.
- Gradually encourage babies to explore the space near them by putting interesting things beside them so they can reach, stretch, turn and roll towards them.
- Have well-planned areas that allow babies maximum space to move, roll, stretch and explore in safety indoors and outdoors.
- When babies begin to be able to move on their belly, provide a safe smooth and firm surface, such as a wooden floor or carpet.
- Provide objects to be sucked, pulled, squeezed and held, to encourage sensory development along with hand use.

Physical Development: Moving and handling

RANGE 2

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Belly crawling moves into crawling up on hands and knees
- Becomes adept at changing position from crawling to sitting in order to stop, pick up, handle and investigate objects
- Sits unsupported on the floor, leaving hands free to manipulate objects with both hands
- Picks up objects in palmar grip and shakes, waves, bangs, pulls and tugs them between two hands while looking at them
- Enjoys finger and toe rhymes and games.
- Pulls to standing from crawling, holding on to furniture or person for support
- Walks around furniture lifting one foot and stepping sideways (cruising)
- Starts walking independently on firm surfaces and later on uneven surfaces
- Points with first finger, sharing attention with adult.
- Starts to throw and release objects overarm.
- Enjoys the sensory experience of making marks in food, damp sand, water, mud, paste or paint
- Pushes, pulls, lifts and carries objects, moving them around and placing with intent
- Climbs inside, underneath, into corners and between objects
- Manipulates objects using hands singly and together, such as squeezing water out of a sponge

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

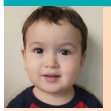
- Enable older babies to have at least three hours a day moving and being active, taken in short periods, across the day and according to the child's interest.
- Develop a shared approach to managing risk that enables babies to explore and develop their abilities.
- Ensure that clothing supports babies' mobility for crawling and is not hindering or restrictive.
- As much as possible, allow babies to put themselves into a sitting position rather than doing this for them.
- Engage babies in varied active physical experiences, such as bouncing, rolling, rocking, swooping and splashing, both indoors and outdoors.
- Encourage babies to use resources they can grasp, squeeze, tug and throw.
- Be aware that babies may have limited awareness of things that might be dangerous for them.
- Show babies different ways to make marks in dough or paint by swirling, poking or patting it.
- Whilst supporting babies' drive to stand and walk, continue to encourage plenty of floor play and crawling.
- Help parents understand the value of waiting until babies are ready to take steps by themselves, rather than providing assistance to speed things along, so as to develop their own balance and control.
- Provide plenty of time for babies to have bare feet during floor play and crawling, so that their feet can develop well.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Alongside the continuing role of adult bodies, the floor is the best enabling environment for babies at this stage.
- Limit the time older babies spend in seats, highchairs, bouncers and other "containers" as this prevents the critical physical development that takes place through crawling.
- Plan space to encourage free movement, while being kept safe by attentive adults.
- Maintain a familiar and nurturing environment that allows babies to feel secure, curious and adventurous, both indoors and outdoors.
- Provide large cushions, tunnels, slopes and low-level steps or platforms to stimulate and challenge toddlers.
- Offer continuous low-level surfaces outdoors as well as indoors, so that babies can pull up to a standing position, cruise sideways and take first steps.
- Provide sturdy push-along carts, wheeled toys and pull-along toys indoors and out for pushing and pulling.
- Use music to encourage and enjoy movements.
- Make play resources easily and simply accessible on shelves and open containers for children to reach and fetch for themselves.
- Provide resources that stimulate babies to handle and manipulate things, e.g. metal and wooden objects or board books.
- Use gloop (cornflour and water) in small trays so that babies can enjoy putting fingers into it and lifting them out.

Physical Development: Moving and handling

RANGE 3



A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Develops security in walking upright using feet alternately and can also run short distances
- Walks upstairs facing forwards holding rail or hand of adult, with both feet onto a single step at a time
- Changes position from standing to squatting and sitting with little effort
- Participates in finger and action rhymes, songs and games, imitating the movements and anticipating actions
- Hands start to operate independently during a task that uses both, with each hand doing something different at the same time (e.g. holding a block in one hand and steadying the other block with the other hand.
- Shows interest, dances and sings to music rhymes and songs, imitating movements of others
- Can walk considerable distance with purpose, stopping, starting and changing direction
- Looks closely at small items and creatures, and can also see items at substantial distance, comfortably changing focus from one to the other
- When holding crayons, chalks etc, makes connections between their movement and the marks they make
- Uses gesture and body language to convey needs and interests and to support emerging verbal language use

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Enable toddlers to have at least three hours a day moving and being active, both indoors and outdoors, across the day and according to the child's interest.
- Develop a shared team culture of managing risk positively so as to enable toddlers to explore and stretch their abilities.
- Continue to provide a visible, attentive "safe base" so that toddlers have the confidence for exploratory movement and self-driven physical activity.
- Encourage independence as young children explore particular patterns of movement, often referred to as schemas.
- Use words and simple phrases to describe the movements the child is making, especially in response to their gestures and body language.
- Play active games with toddlers that involve big movements through space, such as spinning, swooping and swinging.
- Play simple interactive finger games frequently so that the child can begin to anticipate hand movements.
- Treat mealtimes as an opportunity to help children to use fingers, spoon and cup to feed themselves.
- Involve toddlers in the routines for taking care of their environment both indoors and outdoors, such as washing windows and sweeping leaves.
- Find and create opportunities for toddlers to make things happen through their own actions.
- Make the most of water play to safely provide a different medium for babies and young children to experience their body and movements.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Anticipate young children's exuberance and ensure the space is clear and suitable for their rapid and sometimes unpredictable movements.
- Provide opportunities to swing, spin and bounce.
- Provide different arrangements of toys and soft play materials to encourage crawling, tumbling, rolling and climbing.
- Use music to stimulate exploration with rhythmic movements.
- Ensure that toddlers spend lots of time outdoors experiencing uneven ground and changing gradients.
- Provide a daily walk (out of pushchairs) in the immediate locality: the same walk every day is most valuable at this age.
- Provide a range of wheeled toys indoors and outdoors, such as trundle trikes, buggies for dolls, push carts and wheelbarrows.
- Offer "heuristic" (exploratory) play with sets of simple natural and household objects for toddlers to manipulate, investigate and find out what they can make them do.
- Provide items for filling, emptying and carrying, and a variety of materials to put into them.
- Provide materials that enable children to help with care-taking tasks such as sweeping, washing, pouring and digging.
- Provide sticks, rollers and moulds for young children to use in dough, clay, mud or sand.

Physical Development: Moving and handling

RANGE 4

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Sits up from lying down, stands up from sitting and squats with steadiness to rest or play with object on the ground, and rises to feet without using hands
- Sits comfortably on a chair with both feet on the ground
- Runs safely on whole foot
- Moves in response to music, or rhythms played on instruments such as drums or shakers
- Jumps up into the air with both feet leaving the floor and can jump forward a small distance
- Begins to walk, run and climb on different levels and surfaces
- Begins to understand and choose different ways of moving
- Kicks a stationary ball with either foot, throws a ball with increasing force and accuracy and starts to catch a large ball by using two hands and their chest to trap it
- Climbs up and down stairs by placing both feet on each step while holding a handrail for support
- Uses wheeled toys with increasing skill such as pedalling, balancing, holding handlebars and sitting astride
- May be beginning to show preference for dominant hand and/or leg/foot
- Turns pages in a book, sometimes several at once
- Shows increasing control in holding, using and manipulating a range of tools and objects such as tambourines, jugs, hammers, and mark making tools
- Holds mark-making tools with thumb and all fingers

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Value the ways children choose to move.
- Give as much opportunity as possible for children to move freely between indoors and outdoors.
- Talk to children about their movements and help them to explore new ways of moving, such as squirming, slithering and twisting along the ground like a snake, and moving quickly, slowly or on tiptoe.
- Encourage body tension activities such as stretching, reaching, curling, twisting and turning.
- Be aware that children need to practise walking, climbing and jumping on a range of different surfaces
- Provide a range of wheeled toys to encourage children's balance such as toys to pedal, scooters, toys to sit astride.
- Provide safe spaces where children can explore, challenge themselves and solve problems like how to balance on beams or climb ladders.
- Agree acceptable levels of risk and challenge to enable children to explore and acquire new skills and abilities.
- Encourage children in their efforts, such as to pour a drink from an appropriately sized jug and to manipulate objects in their play: *Can you put the dolly's arm in the coat?*
- Provide an easily accessible range of tools, loose parts and construction equipment to encourage children's emerging manipulative skills.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Plan opportunities for children to tackle a range of levels and surfaces including flat and hilly ground, grass, pebbles, asphalt, smooth floors and carpets.
- Provide a range of large play equipment that can be used in different ways, such as boxes, ladders, A-frames and barrels.
- Plan time for children to experiment with equipment and to practise movements they choose.
- Provide opportunities for children to hang upside down, balance, swing backwards and forwards, roll down slopes, and spin round and round, allowing children to help understand their sense of space and self.
- Explain the importance of being outdoors and providing challenge in a safe environment to parents. Provide real and role-play opportunities for children to create pathways, e.g. road layouts, or going on a picnic.
- Use action rhymes, songs and games like "follow my leader" to encourage all children to be active
- Provide recorded music, scarves, streamers and musical instruments so that children can respond spontaneously to music.
- Plan activities that involve moving and stopping, such as musical bumps.
- Provide "tool boxes" containing things that make marks, so that children can explore their use both indoors and outdoors.

Physical Development: Moving and handling

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 • Climbs stairs, steps and moves across climbing equipment using alternate feet. Maintains balance using hands and body to stabilise • Walks down steps or slopes whilst carrying a small object, maintaining balance and stability • Runs with spatial awareness and negotiates space successfully, adjusting speed or direction to avoid obstacles • Can balance on one foot or in a squat momentarily, shifting body weight to improve stability • Can grasp and release with two hands to throw and catch a large ball, beanbag or an object • Creates lines and circles pivoting from the shoulder and elbow • Manipulates a range of tools and equipment in one hand, tools include paintbrushes, scissors, hairbrushes, toothbrush, scarves or ribbons	• Encourage children to move with controlled effort, and model use of vocabulary in context such as *strong, firm, gentle, heavy, stretch, reach, tense and floppy*. • Use music of different tempo, styles and cultures to create moods and talk about how people move when they are sad, happy or cross. • Motivate children to be active through group games, action songs and singing. • Talk about why children should take care when moving freely. Notice children who frequently bump into obstacles or fall over and talk with parents/carers about how they move at home. • Teach children the skills they need to use equipment safely, e.g. cutting with scissors or using tools. Be aware of children who may not have had these experiences at home and talk with parents/carers about increasing opportunities at home. • Encourage children to use the vocabulary of movement, e.g. *gallop, slither;* of instruction e.g. *follow, lead* and *copy* by modelling and using the vocabulary in context. • Pose challenging questions such as *Can you get all the way round the climbing frame without your knees touching it?* • Talk with children about the need to match their actions to the space they are in. • Show children how to collaborate in throwing, rolling, fetching and receiving games, encouraging children to play with one another once their skills are sufficient. • Introduce and encourage children to use the vocabulary of manipulation, e.g. *squeeze and prod*. • Explain why safety is an important factor in handling tools, equipment and materials, and have sensible rules for everybody to follow. • Value and support children's own judgements of risk, encouraging them to think about what to be aware of and how they can stay safe. • Explain benefits of outdoor learning to parents/carers so that children come dressed appropriately for different weathers and seasons.	• Provide time and space to enjoy energetic play outdoors daily. • Provide large portable equipment that children can move about safely and cooperatively to create their own structures, such as milk crates, tyres, large cardboard tubes. • Practise movement skills through games with beanbags, cones, balls and hoops. • Plan activities where children can practise moving in different ways and at different speeds, balancing, target throwing, rolling, kicking and catching • Provide sufficient equipment for children to share, so that waiting to take turns does not spoil enjoyment. • Mark out boundaries for some activities, such as games involving wheeled toys or balls, so that children can more easily regulate their own activities. • Provide activities that give children the opportunity and motivation to practise manipulative skills, e.g. cooking, painting, clay and playing instruments. • Provide play resources including small-world toys, construction sets, threading and posting toys, dolls' clothes and material for collage. • Teach children skills of how to use tools and materials effectively and safely and give them opportunities to practise them. • Provide a range of left-handed tools, especially left-handed scissors, as needed. • Support children with physical difficulties with nonslip mats, small trays for equipment, and triangular or thicker writing tools. • Provide a range of construction toys of different sizes, made of wood, rubber or plastic, that fix together in a variety of ways, e.g. by twisting, pushing, slotting or magnetism.
RANGE 6 • Chooses to move in a range of ways, moving freely and with confidence making changes to body shape, position and pace of movement such as slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping • Experiments with different ways of moving, testing out ideas and adapting movements to reduce risk • Jumps off an object and lands appropriately using hands, arms and body to stabilise and balance • Negotiates space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles • Travels with confidence and skill around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment • Shows increasing control over an object in pushing, patting, throwing, catching or kicking it		

Physical Development: Moving and handling

RANGE (cont.) 6	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
	• Uses simple tools to effect changes to materials • Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control and intention • Shows a preference for a dominant hand • Begins to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines • Begins to form recognisable letters independently • Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed	• Notice a child who moves repetitively in a particular way e.g. spinning around, flapping hands or using a throwing action. Talk to parents/carers about schemas and find constructive ways for the child to move safely. These kinds of movements may require investigation in the future if they continue. • Notice a child who lacks strength in limbs to push, pull or move safely over climbing equipment. Find out what opportunities the child has at home for outdoor adventure and risk and adapt routines to increase outdoor physical play.	• Provide access to waterproofs, wellington boots and a changing area where children can dress/undress independently. • Provide equipment that supports different kinds of schemas, so that children have an opportunity to build on natural patterns of movement. • Agree acceptable levels of risk and challenge, identify hazards and actions needed to maximise opportunities indoors and outdoors. • Adapt or create spaces to ensure that children with limited physical mobility can move safely and with confidence. • Teach children how to access, use and store resources safely to build independence and autonomy. • Provide materials to create enclosed spaces and dens such as fabric, poles and pegs.

Statutory ELG: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

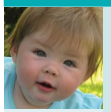
Statutory ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

In some cases, suggestions for similar support for children's development and learning apply across two ranges. In these cases the Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments columns are shown in the colour of the first range, but apply to both adjacent ranges.

Physical Development: Health and self-care

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 1 	• Responds to and thrives on warm, sensitive physical contact and care • Makes needs known through crying and body movements • Responds to being rocked as a means of soothing • Sleeps for 14-16 hours a day, with several short naps. Substantial sleeping is vital for processing sensory information taken in while awake • Responds and turns to sounds, especially voices • Expresses discomfort, hunger or thirst, distress and need for holding or moving • Alert for periods of increasing length, interspersed with naps • Anticipates food routines with interest • Starts to move to solid feeding (current recommendations are at around 6 months) as well as milk • Communicates discomfort or distress with wet or soiled nappy • First teeth usually appear – first two lower incisors and then two upper incisors • Chews on baby toothbrush • Opens mouth for spoon	• Be alert and responsive to when babies have moved out of exploratory mode and enjoying floor play to needing holding, cuddling or meeting care needs. • Talk to young babies as you stroke their cheeks, or pat their backs, reminding them that you are there and they are safe. • Discuss with parents the critical role of sleep in infancy and refer to Health Visitor or NHS guidance on daytime sleeping in infancy. • Find out from parents about the feeding patterns of young babies. • Encourage babies gradually to share control of food and drink, remaining tuned-in and available throughout feeding. • Give bodily care times prominence in your role with babies, making feeding, nappy changing, bathing and dressing times slow and attentive. • Notice individual baby cues when spending special one-to-one time with them to ensure they are ready to engage. • Discuss the cultural needs and expectations for skin and hair care with parents prior to entry to the setting, ensuring that the needs of all children are met appropriately and that parents' wishes are respected. • Be aware of specific health difficulties among the babies in the group. • Share with parents the value of tummy time for developing awareness for later continence and appetite control. • Look after baby teeth as soon as they begin to appear.	• Provide a dedicated place for daytime sleeping outdoors as well as indoors to suit the needs of individual babies. • Enable and allow babies to sleep when they need to and to wake up from naps naturally. • Provide ample seating both indoors and outside so that adults can sit comfortably with distressed, resting and alert babies. Swing seats outdoors work especially well. • Keep the environment quiet and calm, so that babies can attend to the voices and natural sounds around them. • Plan to take account of the individual cultural and feeding needs of young babies in your group. • There may be considerable variation in the way parents feed their children at home. Remember that some parents may need interpreter support. • Plan for feeding times to be slow and pleasurable. A gentle rhythm to feeding times allows babies to anticipate what is coming next and feel relaxed. • Make the nappy changing and dressing area pleasant to be in for both babies and adults, so that changing becomes a time for one-to-one relationship building. • Trained staff can introduce baby massage sessions that make young babies feel nurtured and promote a sense of wellbeing. Involving parents helps them to use this approach at home.
RANGE 2 	• Sleeps for 11-15 hours a day with at least 2 naps • Self-soothes and is able to drop off to sleep when conditions are right for them • Expresses feelings and communicates through gesture, facial expression, movements, body language and vocalisations (such as joy, distress, frustration and fear) • Shows rapid changes in energy levels, from highly active to a sudden need for adult support in order to restore equilibrium	• Find out from parents how their baby communicates needs. Ensure that parents and carers who speak languages other than English are able to share their views. • Be ready to support babies when they experience changes in exploration energy and suddenly need adult attention: this response enables the physiological basis for later self-regulation. • Use feeding, changing and bathing times to share finger and toe plays such as "Round and Round the Garden". • Allow enough time for respectful care, ensuring that babies know what is going to happen next, watching for their cues and allowing them the opportunity to participate in age appropriate ways.	• Provide a comfortable, accessible place where babies can rest or sleep when they want to. • Continue to provide supported sleeping, resting and withdrawal opportunities outdoors as well as inside, to best fit the conditions that individual babies need. • Plan alternative activities for babies who do not need sleep at the same time as others do. • Ensure mealtime seating allows young children to have feet firmly on the floor or foot rest. This aids stability and upper trunk control supporting hand-to-mouth co-ordination.

Physical Development: Health and self-care

	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 2	• Grasps finger foods and brings them to mouth and shares control of spoon and bottle or cup, moving towards independence with support • Attentive to sounds in the environment, even at distance and overhead, often pointing, vocalising and sharing attention with adults • Interested in making and exploring sounds with objects • Generally has up to 12 teeth - willing to allow baby toothbrush to be used on teeth • Can actively cooperate with nappy changing, dressing/undressing • Starts to communicate regarding urination and bowel movement	• Make sure that clothing enables mobility and does not present any hazards, for example, jeans and dresses can prevent crawling and cause trips. • Help babies use their feet in crawling and standing by removing footwear whenever possible. • Explain to parents how supporting self-directed movement provides the basis for motor planning, self-regulation and lifelong wellbeing. • Share toddler's interest in noises in the environment when outside, helping them to locate and understand the sound they have picked out. • Discuss with parents about jointly taking care of teeth as they appear, introducing a cleaning routine that is enjoyable and links with nutrition.	• Help children to enjoy their food and appreciate healthier choices by combining favourites with new tastes and textures. • Provide safe surroundings in which young children have freedom to move as they want, while being kept safe by watchful adults. • Ensure that the environment is calm and not filled with noise or music, so that babies can attune to sounds and notice where they are and what they relate to - the 3D outdoor environment is very good for this. • Avoid introducing hard shoes too early in walking development and limit the time that they are worn each day.
RANGE 3	• Sleeps for 12-14 hours a day with one/two naps Daytime sleeping continues to be important for healthy development • Highly active in short bursts, with frequent and sudden need for rest or withdrawal • Enjoys hugs and cuddles and seeks comfort from attachment figure when they feel the need • Uses physical expression of feelings to release stress. • Generally has up to 16 teeth – helps adult with brushing teeth • Intentionally makes sounds with objects and actively responds to music and singing with whole-body dancing • Develops own likes and dislikes in food and drink, willing to try new food textures and tastes • Shows interest in indoor and outdoor clothing and shoes/wellingtons • Clearly communicates wet or soiled nappy or pants, showing increasing awareness of bladder and bowel urges • Helps with dressing/undressing and care routines, enjoying the rituals established for hand washing and teeth cleaning • Feeds self with increasing need to be in control and holds cup with both hands, drinking without much spilling	• Be ready to provide the kind of recovery method that each child needs, or to support the child in managing recovery for themselves. • Continue discussions with parents about the critical nature of sufficient sleep and how to provide daytime naps. • Be responsive to and encourage each child's drive to become independent in self-care situations. • Be aware of and learn about differences in cultural attitudes to children's developing independence. • Value children's choices and encourage them to try something new and healthy. • Create rituals and rhythms around dressing and hygiene routines, so that they are anticipated, enjoyable and effective. • Help toddlers to select clothing for going outside and make sure there is ample time for changing for going out and coming back inside, so that this becomes a pleasurable part of the overall experience. • Encourage efforts such as when a young child offers their arm to put in a coat sleeve. • Discuss family expectations for toileting, since in some families and cultures young boys may be used to sitting rather than standing at the toilet.	• Set up places, outdoors as well as indoors, for toddlers to take naps during the day: daytime sleep can be much more refreshing and successful when provided outside. • Ensure that there are plenty of different places and ways, indoors and outdoors, that toddlers can find withdrawal, softness and calm in the moment that they need it. • Provide ample seating (such as a sofa inside or swing-seat outside) so that toddlers can snuggle with adults and other children. • Ensure that there is time for young children to complete a self-chosen task, such as putting on their own shoes. • Establish routines that enable children to look after themselves, providing ample time for this. • Create time for discussing options so that young children have choices between healthy options, such as whether they will drink water or milk. • Place water containers where children can find them easily and get a drink when they need one. • Consider providing a sturdy ladder so that toddlers can choose to climb up onto the changing and dressing table by themselves: this will encourage their involvement in care routines.

Physical Development: Health and self-care

RANGE 4

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Very energetic in short bursts and needs time for rest and calm with at least three hours of a day of exercise including moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity, spread throughout the day
- Needs to sleep for 10–13 hours in a 24-hour period which may include a nap, with regular sleep and wake-up times
- Feeds self competently
- Can hold a cup with two hands and drink well without spilling
- Develops some independence in self-care and shows an awareness of routines such as handwashing or teeth cleaning but still often needs adult support
- Develops increasing understanding of and control of the bowel and bladder urges and starts to communicate their need for the preferred choice of potty or toilet
- Able to help with and increasingly independently put on and take off simple clothing items such as hats, unzipped jackets, wellington boots
- Begins to recognise danger and seeks the support and comfort of significant adults
- Can increasingly express their thoughts and emotions through words as well as continuing to use facial expressions

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Provide quiet spaces for children to rest or nap and regular access to the outdoors or other spaces where children can be energetic
- Respond to how child communicates need for food, drinks, toileting and when uncomfortable.
- Support parents' routines with young children's self-care including toileting by having flexible routines and by encouraging children's efforts at independence.
- Support children's growing independence as they do things for themselves, such as pulling up their pants after toileting, handwashing, recognising differing parental expectations.
- Involve young children in preparing food.
- Give children the chance to talk about what they like to eat, while reinforcing messages about healthier choices.
- Remember that children who have limited opportunity to play outdoors may lack a sense of danger.
- Provide clothing or access to clothing and footwear to enable children to be outdoors in all weathers.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Allow children to pour their own drinks, serve their own food, choose a story, hold a puppet or water a plant.
- Provide support and advice for parents on healthy eating, oral hygiene and sleep expectations for their children
- Offer choices for children in terms of potties, trainer seats or steps.
- Create opportunities for moving towards independence, for example by using visual clues for the sequence of routines such as hand-washing.
- Provide pictures or objects representing options to support children in making and expressing choices.
- Choose some stories that highlight the consequences of choices.
- Ensure children's safety, while not unduly inhibiting their risk-taking.
- Talk to children about simple rules for their safety such as holding on to handrails when walking downstairs
- Display a colourful daily menu showing healthy meals and snacks and discuss choices with the children, reminding them, e.g. that they tried something previously and might like to try it again or encouraging them to try something new.
- Be aware of eating habits at home and of the different ways people eat their food, e.g. that eating with clean fingers is as skilled and equally valued as using cutlery.
- Encourage children to select and attempt to put on suitable clothing for outdoor play.

Physical Development: Health and self-care

RANGE 5

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Can tell adults when hungry, full up or tired or when they want to rest, sleep or play
- Observes and can describe in words or actions the effects of physical activity on their bodies.
- Can name and identify different parts of the body
- Takes practical action to reduce risk, showing their understanding that equipment and tools can be used safely
- Can wash and can dry hands effectively and understands why this is important
- Willing to try a range of different textures and tastes and expresses a preference. Can name and identify different parts of the body
- Observes and controls breath, able to take deep breaths, scrunching and releasing the breath
- Can mirror the playful actions or movements of another adult or child
- Working towards a consistent, daily pattern in relation to eating, toileting and sleeping routines and understands why this is important
- Gains more bowel and bladder control and can attend to toileting needs most of the time themselves.
- Dresses with help, e.g. puts arms into open-fronted coat or shirt when held up, pulls up own trousers, and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Talk with children about why you encourage them to rest when they are tired or why they need to wear wellingtons when it is muddy outdoors.
- Encourage children to notice the changes in their bodies after exercise, such as their heart beating faster.
- Talk with children about the importance of hand-washing and infection control.
- Help children who are struggling with self-care by leaving a last small step for them to complete, e.g. pulling up their trousers from just below the waist.
- Do up zips on coats etc. From behind and over child's shoulder so they can view the process from their perspective.
- Use social stories to support a child who is struggling to understand a new routine.
- Notice when a child is always hungry, takes food from others or needs more food than their peers. This may be an indicator of dietary imbalance, an emotional or safeguarding need. Talk with parents/carers to find out eating patterns at home.
- Notice when a child is often tired or sleepy during the day and find out from parents/carers how they are sleeping at night.
- Notice when a child holds their breath to control the reactions of others. Talk with the child and parents/carers to encourage the child to express emotion in other ways.
- Notice children who are unable to mirror the actions of others. Further support may be needed to activate mirror neurons in the brain.
- Maintain an open dialogue with parents/carers about a child's bowel and bladder control. Offer advice, support and reassurance. Make a referral to health and family support if needed.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Provide a cosy place with a cushion and a soft light where a child can rest quietly if they need to.
- Plan so that children can be active in a range of ways, including while using a wheelchair.
- Encourage children to be active and energetic by organising lively games, since physical activity is important in maintaining good health and in guarding against children becoming overweight or obese in later life.
- Remove obstacles and furniture that could restrict mobility. Ensure accessibility especially for children with a physical disability.
- Use visual support to sequence routines such as toileting, handwashing and dressing.
- Establish regular routines for eating, drinking, washing and toileting so that children become familiar with the rhythm of the day
- Consider accessibility of resources and make sure all children are able to make choices about what they can use and what they want to do.
- Use a visual timetable to support children's understanding of routines during the day.
- Consider opportunities to move up, down and through spaces and equipment.
- Use mirrors, reflective materials and a range of multi-sensory materials to stimulate curiosity and active investigation.
- Ensure indoor/outdoor areas are fully accessible to all children, making reasonable adjustments to layout, organisation and resources to meet individual needs safely.

Physical Development: Health and self-care

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Eats a healthy range of foodstuffs and understands need for variety in food
- Describes a range of different food textures and tastes when cooking and notices changes when they are combined or exposed to hot and cold temperatures
- Describes physical changes to the body that can occur when feeling unwell, anxious, tired, angry or sad
- Can initiate and describe playful actions or movements for other children to mirror and follow
- Has established a consistent, daily pattern in relation to eating, toileting and sleeping routines and can explain why this is important
- Usually dry and clean during the day
- Shows some understanding that good practices with regard to exercise, eating, drinking water, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health
- Shows understanding of the need for safety when tackling new challenges, and considers and manages some risks by taking independent action or by giving a verbal warning to others
- Shows understanding of how to transport and store equipment safely
- Practices some appropriate safety measures without direct supervision, considering both benefits and risk of a physical experience

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Be aware that some children may have sensory issues around food texture, taste, smell, or colour. Talk with parents and monitor. Find out what steps might be appropriate to build the child's confidence and broaden their food repertoire, supporting their sensory integration.
- Acknowledge and encourage children's efforts to manage their personal needs, and to use and return resources appropriately.
- Promote health awareness by talking with children about exercise, its effect on their bodies and the positive contribution it can make to their health.
- Be sensitive to varying family expectations and life patterns when encouraging thinking about health.
- Highlight the importance of physical activity and active play within the home setting, and the mutual pleasure and benefits for both adults and children from shared physical games and activities. Emphasising the fun can be more effective than warnings to parents about obesity.
- Discuss with children why they get hot and encourage them to think about the effects of the environment, such as whether opening a window helps everybody to be cooler.
- Understand that regression in self-care can occur as children consolidate development or in response to anxiety or traumatic event. Find ways of supporting the child to return to previous level of development without judgement or disapproval.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

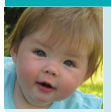
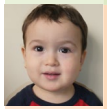
- Plan opportunities, particularly after exercise, for children to talk about how their bodies feel.
- Review enabling environments for adventure and challenge, identifying areas where children are encouraged to take physical risks.
- Develop and make use of a variety of natural landscapes including slopes, woodland and natural dens in the undergrowth.
- Provide outdoor resources which complement indoor provision, with an opportunity for children to play and explore on a larger scale.
- Find ways to involve children so that they are all able to be active inside and outside in ways that interest them and match their stage of development, health and ability.
- Use mobility aids, adapted equipment and clothing to ensure the outdoor area is fully accessible to all children; use portable fencing and zoned areas to change the size of the space to meet children's needs

Statutory ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Literacy: Reading

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
 **RANGE 1** • Notices and engages with sounds and images in the environment • As part of sensory exploration, may touch and handle books and digital reading devices • Enjoys looking at books and other suitable printed or digital material with familiar people, and being read to	• Use finger play, rhymes and familiar songs to support young babies' enjoyment. • Provide enjoyable shared experiences with books and apps in ways that are emotionally secure and supportive. • Plan shared story and book time as a key source of nurture and attachment which will continue throughout the EYFS and beyond.	• Provide mobiles, inviting displays and pictures of familiar characters in the environment, including in physical care areas, to prompt babies' focused gaze, pointing and shared attention. • Collect a diverse range of board books, cloth books, picture books and stories to share with young babies. • Offer books that provide sensory experiences. • Include babies in telephone and video calls with family and close friends.
RANGE 2 • Handles books, printed and digital reading material with interest • Responds to sounds in the environment such as cars, sirens and birds • Is interested in and explores the sounds made by banging and tapping familiar objects and simple instruments • Waves and taps arms, bounces or stamps to simple rhythms in songs and rhymes • Notices pictures and symbols and beginning to recognise what they stand for in their familiar experiences	• Notice and support babies' developing responses, gestures and movements as they learn to anticipate and join in with finger and word play. • Make voice sounds and say words as babies explore print and digital books with adults - leave pauses after words and sounds to encourage babies to begin to repeat them if they choose to. • Sing simple songs and nursery rhymes with children, encouraging them to join in.	• Let children handle books and draw their attention to pictures. • Tell and read stories, looking at and interacting with young babies, and using voice, intonation and gesture to prompt babies' interactions. • Draw on children's home cultures to create meaningful reading experiences. - Make family stories using small photo albums or story apps with photos of family members, significant people in the child's life and familiar everyday objects. - Expand these to include the stories, songs, rhymes and lives of those in local communities and wider histories and cultures. • Provide opportunities for children to explore sound with drums, other instruments, kitchen pans and wooden spoons or upcycled resources.
 **RANGE 3** • Is interested in and anticipates books and rhymes and may have favourites • Begins to join in with actions and sounds in familiar song and book sharing experience	• Encourage and support children's responses to picture books and stories you read with them. • Use different voices to tell stories and encourage young children to join in wherever possible.	• Provide digital recordings of rhymes, stories, sounds and spoken words. • Provide picture books, books with flaps or hidden words, and books with accompanying story apps. • Provide story sacks for children to take home, for parents to read books with their children and talk about stories. • Suggest to parents they might encourage children to take part during telephone and video calls, through smiling, making sounds and words.

Literacy: Reading

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4	• Has some favourite stories, rhymes, songs, poems or jingles • Repeats and uses actions, words or phrases from familiar stories • Fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme, story or game, e.g. *Humpty Dumpty sat on a* • Begins to recognise familiar logos from children's popular culture, commercial print or icons for apps • Enjoys rhythmic and musical activity with percussion instruments, actions, rhymes and songs, clapping along with the beat and joining in with words of familiar songs and nursery rhymes	• Encourage children to use and extend the stories they hear in their play, using props and dressing up clothes as they relive and reinvent stories. • Tune into words from stories that individual children particularly enjoy, e.g. children's favourite words and words that are emotionally important to them. Revisit these words in meaningful interactions. • Read stories that children already know, pausing at intervals to encourage them to "read" the next word. • Encourage children to notice signs and symbols in everyday life, such as familiar logos and icons for apps. • Encourage children to identify the sounds they hear in the environment and to explore making rhythms with musical instruments and upcycled resources.	• Find quality time every day to tell and read stories to children, using puppets, soft toys, or real objects as props. • Provide stories, pictures and puppets which allow children to experience and talk about how characters feel. • Include familiar environmental print in the role play area. • Create frequent opportunities for singing, rhymes and music sessions. • Provide a range of simple musical and percussion instruments, such as tambourines, shakers or xylophones. • Include children in digital screen activity, for example, to recognise screen icons.
RANGE 5	• Listens to and joins in with stories and poems, when reading one-to-one and in small groups • Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories • Begins to be aware of the way stories are structured, and to tell own stories • Talks about events and principal characters in stories and suggests how the story might end • Shows interest in illustrations and words in print and digital books and words in the environment • Recognises familiar words and signs such as own name, advertising logos and screen icons • Looks at and enjoys print and digital books independently	• Discuss with children the characters and events in books being read to them. • Encourage children to predict outcomes, to think of alternative endings and to compare story plots and the feelings of characters with their own experiences. • Focus on meaningful print (such as a child's name, words on a cereal packet or a book title, icons on a weather app) in order to discuss similarities and differences between symbols. • Help children to understand what a word is by using names and labels and by pointing out words in the environment and in print and digital books. • Remember not all languages have written forms and not all families speak English at home, or are literate in their home language. • Include home language and bilingual story sessions by involving qualified bilingual adults, as well as enlisting the help of parents.	• Provide some simple poetry, song, fiction and non-fiction books, both paper copies and digital. • Provide fact and fiction books and possibly ebooks that children can access independently in all areas, e.g. construction area as well as the book area. • Provide books containing photographs that children can share with adults, peers and read on their own. • Add child-made books and adult-scribed children's stories to the book area and share these stories with others. • Provide multimodal texts (that blend alphabetic print, images and symbols) that reflect the literacy practices that children encounter in their home and community spaces, enabling children to connect and draw on different aspects of their emerging literacy experiences.

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 (cont.) • Knows that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom • Knows information can be relayed through signs and symbols in various forms (e.g. printed materials, digital screens and environmental print) • Handles books and touch screen technology carefully and the correct way up with growing competence • Begins to navigate apps and websites on digital media using drop down menu to select websites and icons to select apps • Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness - Shows awareness of rhyme and alliteration - Recognises rhythm in spoken words, songs, poems and rhymes - Claps or taps the syllables in words during sound play - Hears and says the initial sound in words	• Read dual language books (English and another language) with all children, to raise awareness of different scripts. Try to match dual language books to languages spoken by families in the setting. • Remember that established literacy practices in homes might differ from those of the setting.	• Provide a range of reading materials that both enable children to draw on their home and community experiences and introduce children to a new and diverse range of texts, genre and media. • Ensure children can see written text, e.g. use big books, and model the language of print, such as *letter*, *word*, *page*, *beginning*, *end*, *first*, *last*, *middle*. • Provide a range of resources in play areas, such as empty cereal packets, labels and signs that children become familiar with and include in their play. • Introduce children to books and other materials that provide information or instructions. Carry out activities using instructions, such as reading a recipe to make a cake or following safety procedures. • Furnish the setting with diverse resources that reflect children's home cultures and the diversity of cultures in the local community, including dual language books, as well as artefacts that children are attached to, such as special objects, sounds, images, as well as animals and insects. • Take storytelling into local communities as a way to build connections between the setting and children's homes and wider lives in the local community.
 RANGE 6 • Enjoys an increasing range of print and digital books, both fiction and non-fiction • Uses vocabulary and forms of speech that are increasingly influenced by their experiences of reading • Describes main story settings, events and principal characters in increasing detail • Re-enacts and reinvents stories they have heard in their play • Knows that information can be retrieved from books, computers and mobile digital devices • Is able to recall and discuss stories or information that has been read to them, or they have read themselves	• Read aloud to children every day, introducing children to a wide variety of literature, and talking about the print and digital books you share. • Encourage children to tell their own stories in their own way, to take the lead in storytelling so you can listen and learn from children about what they know and are interested in. • Discuss and model ways of finding out information from non-fiction texts in print books, digital resources and online. • Encourage children to add to their first-hand experience of the world by seeking information using print and digital sources of information. • Encourage children to recall words they see frequently, such as their own and friends' names. • Model oral blending of sounds to make words in everyday contexts, e.g. *Can you get your h-a-t hat?*	• Provide a rich range of quality children's literature and dialogic shared reading experiences to involve children in critical engagement with narratives, characters and plots. • Provide a range of everyday signs and written texts in play areas (labels, lists, recipes, instructions, etc.) so children can include these in their play. • Make story books with children in print and/or digital formats to make personalised and meaningful books and ebooks to read with children, and that children can read themselves. • Make a classroom book of children's own stories, scribed by an adult and/or drawn by children. • Ensure children have access to a wide range of literature that represents diversity in the local and global community, ensuring every child has the opportunity to find a character they can relate to.

Literacy: Reading

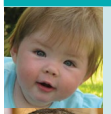
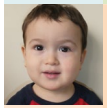
A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 6 (cont.) • Begins to recognise some written names of peers, siblings or "Mummy"/"Daddy" for example • Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness - Continues a rhyming string and identifies alliteration - Hears and says the initial sound in words - Begins to segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together and knows which letters represent some of them - Starts to link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet - Begins to link sounds to some frequently used digraphs, e.g. *sh, th, ee* • Begins to read some high frequency words, and to use developing knowledge of letters and sounds to read simple phonically decodable words and simple sentences • Engages with books and other reading materials at an increasingly deeper level, sometimes drawing on their phonic knowledge to decode words, and their knowledge of language structure, subject knowledge and illustrations to interpret the text • Includes everyday literacy artefacts in play, such as labels, instructions, signs, envelopes, etc.	• Play games to help children make links between letters (graphemes) and speech sounds (phonemes), such as letter bingo and linking actions with sounds. • Model how simple words can be segmented into sounds and blended together to make words • Consider teaching Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) such as British Sign Language. • Support and scaffold individual children's reading as opportunities arise with print and digital texts.	• Introduce children to new words, and explore their meaning together e.g. by acting out words and playing games with words. • Provide story sacks and boxes and make them with the children for use in the setting and at home. • Help children to identify the main events in a story and to enact stories, for example in their imaginative play. • Provide story boards and props which support children to talk about a story's characters and sequences of events. • Include playful, multi-sensory and creative experiences and games that promote children's interest in reading and in developing phonics skills and knowledge. • Demonstrate using phonics as a strategy to decode words while children can see the text, e.g. using big books or an interactive whiteboard. • Provide varied texts, including decodable texts, and encourage children to use all their skills including their phonic knowledge to practise reading with the skills and knowledge they have, so they experience success. • Begin to introduce playful systematic phonics sessions in fun ways that capture children's interest, sustain motivation and reinforce learning and success.

Statutory ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Literacy: Writing

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGES 1 - 2  	*Writing systems are complicated ways to symbolise meaning, and children need to learn many skills and develop a lot of knowledge as they begin to write. Writing skills and understanding start to develop in babies and toddlers. Firstly, children begin to understand that written texts are symbolic and carry meaning. Later they begin to produce and read written marks purposefully (See the roots of Writing in* Communication and Language). *What is often referred to as "early mark-making" is the beginning of writing. It is a sensory and physical, and cognitive experience for babies and toddlers, which enables them to see the connection between their actions and the resulting marks, recognising their own agency. (See roots of mark-making and handwriting in* Playing and exploring and Physical Development).	• Encourage children to use their fingers and implements to explore and trace marks on a surface, e.g. using a spoon in their food, or a finger in the sand. • Make marks together with babies and toddlers using a range of appropriate materials and tools.	• Provide a range of materials: sand, paint, early writing apps etc. for babies and toddlers to make marks with their hands and fingers, feet and bodies. • Give children large sheets of paper, trays of gloop, paint, soil etc. to make marks collaboratively
RANGE 3 	*As toddlers develop, they increase their understanding of how their marks are symbolic and convey meaning. Their marks may not yet resemble letters and words but nonetheless may carry meaning for the child.* • Begins to understand the cause and effect of their actions in mark making • Knows that the marks they make are of value • Enjoys the sensory experience of making marks	• Encourage different mark-making movements – big, small, hard, soft, quick and slow, and different shapes, circles, lines and dots. • Tell children about the marks you are making and encourage them to talk to you about theirs. • Value these early mark making activities by sharing them with others including parents and carers. • Write down (scribe) children's words, and read them back to children.	• Introduce a range of appropriate implements including large brushes, chalk and crayons, sticks and sponges for children to trace patterns and shapes. • Offer children a range of different surfaces to make marks on, inside and out, e.g. chalkboards, light boxes, sand and pathways. • Provide a broad range of opportunities for early writing experiences through sensory and symbolic play.
RANGE 4 	• Distinguishes between the different marks they make • Enjoys drawing and writing on paper, on screen and on different textures, such as in sand or playdough and through using touch-screen technology.	• Listen and support what children tell you about their drawings and early writing. • Write down (scribe) the words that children use and display these words, for example, with photos • Co-create stories orally with individual children and in small groups. Scribe the stories and display them for children to look at independently or with a parent or friend. • Encourage children to make recordings of their own stories (e.g. on a digital tablet) and create opportunities for children to perform their stories to each other.	• Draw attention to marks, signs and symbols in the environment and talk about what they represent. Ensure this involves recognition of English, other languages and scripts. • Provide materials which reflect cultural diversity, so children see symbols and marks with which they are familiar, and learn that there are many different script systems e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Greek and Braille. • Try to have a notepad to hand (e.g. A5 size) in which you can scribe children's stories and special words and share these stories and words with children. • Ensure children see you writing for a purpose, e.g. a shopping list, message for parents, labels in children's play areas or reminders for ourselves.

Literacy: Writing

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 	• Makes up stories, play scenarios, and drawings in response to experiences, such as outings • Sometimes gives meaning to their drawings and paintings • Ascribes meanings to signs, symbols and words that they see in different places, including those they make themselves • Includes mark making and early writing in their play • Imitates adults' writing by making continuous lines of shapes and symbols (early writing) from left to right • Attempts to write their own name, or other names and words, using combinations of lines, circles and curves, or letter-type shapes • Shows interest in letters on a keyboard, identifying the initial letter of their own name and other familiar words • Begins to make letter-type shapes to represent the initial sound of their name and other familiar words	• Notice and encourage children's drawing, painting and early writing and the meanings that they give to them, such as when a child covers a whole piece of paper and says, *"I'm writing"*. • Celebrate and value children's early attempts at graphic representation – focusing on the meaning and content rather than letter formation. • Model and include children in using signs and writing to expand playful experiences such as making signs for a shop or car wash, instructions for a ball game, a list of names for a taking turns. • Support children in recognising and writing their own names. • Make paper and digital books with children of activities they have been doing, using photographs of them as illustrations.	• Write down things children say to support their developing understanding that what they say can be written down, and then read and understood by someone else. Encourage parents to do this as well. • Set up environments of offices, dens in the garden, library, shop, home corner with greetings cards, etc., so that children engage in literacy events in which they spontaneously participate. • Provide a range of accessible materials and tools for writing as part of everyday play activity, including role play, both indoors and outdoors. • Write poems and short stories together with the children, writing down ideas they suggest. • Scribe children's stories and re-read and enact their stories in small group activities. • Involve children when you make lists or write notes and messages. • Think out loud and talk through what you are doing when writing on typing on screen. • Break down your flow of speech into individual words, exemplifying the correspondence between the spoken and written word. • Provide activities during which children can experiment with writing, for example, leaving a message. • Encourage children to use their phonic knowledge when writing, and model this in your own writing.
RANGE 6 	• Enjoys creating texts to communicate meaning for an increasingly wide range of purposes, such as making greetings cards, tickets, lists, invitations and creating their own stories and books with images and sometimes with words, in print and digital formats • Gives meaning to the marks they make as they draw, write, paint and type using a keyboard or touch-screen technology	• Find out about, show interest in and legitimise children's out-of-school writing practices and interests. Remember that not all writing formats go from left to right. • Talk to children about things they might write to support their play inside and outside, e.g. they might make a map for a journey, a job list for a builder, or spells for potion making. • Write stories, poems, jokes, lists, plans, maps etc. together with children on paper and using digital technology so that children they can see authorship and spelling in action.	• Provide word banks, notebooks, clipboards, post-its and other writing resources for both indoor and outdoor play. • Ensure resources enable children to draw on their out-of-school practices and personal interests, such as children's popular culture or sports teams. • Include oral stories and explore ways for both adults and children to develop oral storytelling skills.

RANGE 6 (cont.)	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
	• Begins to break the flow of speech into words, to hear and say the initial sound in words and may start to segment the sounds in words and blend them together • Starts to develop phonic knowledge by linking sounds to letters, naming and sounding some of the letters of the alphabet, identifying letters and writing recognisable letters in sequence, such as in their own name • Uses their developing phonic knowledge to write things such as labels and captions, later progressing to simple sentences	• Talk to children about the letters that represent the sounds they hear at the beginning of their own names and other familiar words. • Model how to segment the sounds (phonemes) in simple words and how the sounds are represented by letters (graphemes). • Encourage children to apply their own grapheme/phoneme knowledge to what they write in meaningful contexts. • Support and scaffold individual children's writing as opportunities arise.	• Provide a range of opportunities to write for different purposes about things that interest children. • Resource role-play areas with listening and writing equipment, and ensure that role-play areas encourage writing of signs with a real purpose, e.g. a pet shop. • Plan enjoyable activities and games that help children create rhyming strings of real and imaginary words, e.g. *Maddie, daddy, baddie, laddie.* • Support children to understand that the letter shapes they write (graphemes) link to units of sound (phonemes). • Provide regular playful multi-sensory systematic phonics activities that help children to represent phonemes in their writing. • When reading stories, talk with children about the author and illustrator, to help children identify with these roles. For example, ask children why they think the author wrote the story, if the author knew the people in the story, or why the illustrator chose to draw a particular moment in the story. Ask children if they would like to be an author and/or illustrator.

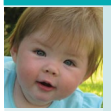
Statutory ELG: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

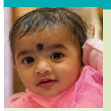
Mathematics

RANGE 1



A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
Number • Reacts to changes of amount when those amounts are significant (more than double)	• Notice and mirror children's reactions to changes in amount. • Add to objects & draw attention to the change in amount, using words like *more*. • When feeding babies comment on whether they would like more after being winded, e.g. *Oh, you want more*. • Use feeding, changing and bathing times for finger-play with young babies	• Provide small groups of the same objects in treasure baskets, as well as single items.
Spatial awareness • Explores space when they are free to move, roll and stretch • Developing an awareness of their own bodies, that their body has different parts and where these are in relation to each other	• Support babies' developing awareness of their own bodies e.g. through baby massage and singing songs • During floor play sometimes place objects that are just in or just out of reach, including small objects on cloths that babies can pull towards themselves.	• Provide opportunities for babies to move freely on carpets, grass etc. Observe and sensitively support babies' play and give them long stretches of uninterrupted time to explore. • Provide low mirrors to support babies to develop a body awareness.
Shape • Explores differently sized and shaped objects • Beginning to put objects of similar shapes inside others and take them out again	• Encourage babies' explorations of the characteristics of objects, e.g. by rolling a ball or sliding a block. • Demonstrate putting items inside others of similar shape	• Provide interestingly shaped objects to explore. • Make towers for children to knock down using objects that stack.
Pattern • Shows interest in patterned songs and rhymes, perhaps with repeated actions • Experiences patterned objects and images • Begins to predict what happens next in predictable situations	• Sing patterned songs and rhymes with predictable movements or actions (including from children's families). • Move with babies to the rhythm patterns in familiar songs, Encourage older babies to join in tapping and clapping along to simple rhythms. • Use repeated noises, movements and activities. • Play simple "to and fro" games, passing and rolling between the adult and child so they begin to predict which comes next.	• Plan for adults to have time to enjoy repetitive activities with babies. • Provide resources with high-contrast patterns.
Measures • Responds to size, reacting to very big or very small items that they see or try to pick up	• Comment on the size and weight of objects when babies grasp objects that are *big* or *heavy*. • During water play and bathing routines, show filling and emptying containers. • At the end of mealtimes show and comment on the empty bowl, cup or bottle: *All gone!*	• Provide a range of objects of various lengths and weights in treasure baskets to excite and encourage babies' interests including larger and smaller items.

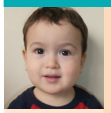
RANGE 2



A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
Number • May be aware of number names through their enjoyment of action rhymes and songs that relate to numbers • Looks for things which have moved out of sight	• Take opportunities during play to sing number rhymes. • During personal care routines make a point of using numbers. • Play peek-a-boo hiding games with toys and people.	• Plan to sing number rhymes with actions. Involve families in sharing number rhymes from home cultures.
Spatial awareness • Explores space around them and engages with position and direction, such as pointing to where they would like to go	• Use spatial words during everyday play and routines. or one-word comments e.g. as you get children *in* and *out* of a highchair. • Take opportunities to play hide and reveal games with objects in boxes and under cups. • Support babies' physical experience of positions and direction, e.g. describing *up* and *down*.	• Play games that involve curling and stretching, popping *up* and bobbing *down*. • Provide boxes, cloths and bags for children to store, hide and transport items. • Provide nested boxes, cups and toys of different sizes that fit inside each other. • Share books that provide opportunities to use spatial language and describe movement
Shape • Stacks objects using flat surfaces • Responds to changes of shape • Attempts, sometimes successfully, to match shapes with spaces on inset puzzles	• When playing with malleable materials draw attention to shapes as they are created and changed.	• Provide blocks and boxes to stack, build and solve problems with. • Provide a range of inset puzzles and support children as they explore matching shapes with spaces.
Pattern • Joins in with repeated actions in songs and stories • Initiates and continues repeated actions	• Talk about patterns in the environment e.g. spots and stripes on clothing or bumps in the pavement. • Spot opportunities to play "back and forth" and repetitive "again" games.	• Sing familiar songs with repeated actions, jig to and tap out simple beats, encouraging children to join in. • Provide items for children to make repetitive sounds.
Measures • Shows an interest in objects of contrasting sizes in meaningful contexts • Gets to know and enjoys daily routine • Shows an interest in emptying containers	• During play and everyday contexts, comment on the sizes and weights of objects using a range of language such as *big, huge, enormous, long, tall, heavy*. • Talk about what is going to happen and what has happened during the day using *first, next and then*.	• Provide big and little versions of objects for children to play with and compare. • Share picture books showing objects of contrasting sizes.

Mathematics

RANGE 3

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
 **Comparison** • Responds to words like *lots* or *more* **Counting** • Says some counting words • May engage in counting-like behaviour, making sounds and pointing or saying some numbers in sequence **Cardinality** • Uses number words, like *one* or *two* and sometimes responds accurately when asked to give one or two things	• Talk with young children about *lots*, *more* and *not many* and *not enough* as they play. • Draw attention to contrasting differences and changes in amounts e.g. adding more bricks to a tower or eating things up. • Model counting things in everyday situations and routines. • Take opportunities to say number words in order with children as they play, e.g. *1,2,3 go!* • Use number words in meaningful contexts, e.g. *Here is your other mitten. Now we have two.*	• Play hiding games so children notice that something has *gone*. • Provide varied sets of objects for playful opportunities for children to independently explore *lots*, *more*, *not many* and *not enough*. • Count while engaging in everyday tasks and while moving around. • Sing songs with counting strings.
Spatial Awareness • Enjoys filling and emptying containers • Investigates fitting themselves inside and moving through spaces	• Model thinking during tidy up routines to promote logic and reasoning about where things fit in or are kept. • Support children's interest in body-sized spaces and provide commentary on the child going *inside*, *under*, *over*, *between and squeezing through*. • Look for opportunities to use spatial language during play activities.	• Designate specific places or spaces for items to be kept and fitted into for tidying. • Respect children's urge to explore spaces, to get inside and move between. • Build towers *up* for the child to knock *down*. • Provide shape sorters and packaging where children can hide, enclose or post items through holes.
Shape • Pushes objects through different shaped holes, and attempts to fit shapes into spaces on inset boards or puzzles • Beginning to select a shape for a specific space • Enjoys using blocks to create their own simple structures and arrangements	• Model thinking about the properties of shapes when selecting them to fit into spaces, e.g. *Oh look, we need a round one*. • When playing alongside children who are building, provide commentary about the shapes you are using.	• Provide a range of inset board and puzzles with large pieces. • Provide a range of construction materials for independent play. • Organise storage by their shape, with photos or silhouettes to show where things are kept.
Pattern • Becoming familiar with patterns in daily routines • Joins in with and predicts what comes next in a story or rhyme • Beginning to arrange items in their own patterns, e.g. lining up toys	• Highlight different times of the day and talk about what comes next within the pattern of the day. • Leave a space for children to do the next action or word in familiar songs and stories with repeating elements. • Comment on what is *the same* and what is *over and over again* in patterns found in the environment.	• Plan to share stories and songs that contain repeated elements which help children to anticipate what might come next.

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 3 (cont.) **Measures** • Shows an interest in size and weight • Explores capacity by selecting, filling and emptying containers, e.g. fitting toys in a pram • Beginning to understand that things might happen now or at another time, in routines	• Use the language of size and weight as children are involved in everyday play and routines. • Use the language of capacity as children explore water or sand to encourage them to think about when something is *full, empty or holds more.* • Emphasise the sequence within familiar activities or routines.	• Provide a range of objects, including big, heavy and awkward ones that can be transported, both indoors and outdoors. • Provide different sizes and shapes of bags, boxes and containers so that children can experiment with filling, experiencing weight and size. • Plan to share images and books which show the order of daily routines.
 RANGE 4 **Comparison** • Beginning to compare and recognise changes in numbers of things, using words like *more, lots or 'same'* **Counting** • Begins to say numbers in order, some of which are in the right order (ordinality) **Cardinality (*How many?*)** • In everyday situations, takes or gives two or three objects from a group • Beginning to notice numerals (number symbols) • Beginning to count on their fingers.	• Include the number sequence in everyday contexts and songs so children experience the order of the numbers (ordinality) • Encourage children to explore the collections they make, comparing amounts and counting some of the items, emphasising the last number, e.g. 1,2,**3**. *There are 3 leaves.* • Use opportunities to model and encourage counting on fingers. • When singing number rhymes with props, draw attention to contrasting differences and changes in numbers, checking together *How many now?* • Point out the number of things whenever possible, e.g. rather than just *chairs*, say *four chairs.* • Encourage children to use marks to represent their mathematical ideas in role play. • Help children to give or get two or three items, e.g. during snack time help children to take two pieces of fruit.	• Provide buckets and bags for children to create collections of objects which they can count. • Provide mark-making materials indoors and outdoors for children to represent their own ideas in play. • Provide opportunities for children to explore cardinality in the environment using self-correcting resources, e.g. jigsaw with two ducks and the number two, or displays showing the numeral and the number of items. • Sing counting songs and rhymes which help to develop children's understanding of number. • Say the counting sequence going to higher numbers, in a variety of contexts, indoors and out, and sometimes counting backwards.
Spatial Awareness • Moves their bodies and toys around objects and explores fitting into spaces • Begins to remember their way around familiar environments • Responds to some spatial and positional language • Explores how things look from different viewpoints including things that are near or far away	• Encourage children to predict what they will see next on a familiar route. • Take everyday opportunities to use words for position and direction accompanied by gesture (e.g. *in, on, inside, under, over*) using equivalent terms for these in home languages through liaison with families where possible. • Enjoy games involving jumping, running and hiding and make very simple obstacle courses, e.g. *going up* and *down.* • Model your thinking when arranging things, using some position words. • Help children to create simple roads and rail tracks and talk about position. • Value children's explorations of spaces and viewpoints and their interest in how things look different.	• Design outdoor spaces where children can learn through a variety of spatial experiences (*going under, over, around, on top, through*) and hear spatial language in context. • Encourage children to freely communicate their mathematical thinking through gesture, talk and graphical signs. • Plan stimulating indoor and outdoor spaces where children make choices about where to go and create their own routes. Provide materials to create trails. • Provide resources for transporting.

Mathematics

RANGE 4 (cont.)

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
 Shape • Chooses puzzle pieces and tries to fit them in • Recognises that two objects have the same shape • Makes simple constructions	• Chat about the shape of the pieces and the holes when fitting pieces into inset puzzles. • Model comparing two objects to see if they have the same shape in purposeful contexts. • Suggest choosing a particular shaped item for a purpose. • Model your thinking when building.	• Provide a range of inset and jigsaw puzzles of increasing complexity for children to choose. • Provide a variety of construction materials including some with identical pieces so that children freely explore *same* and *different*.
Pattern • Joins in and anticipates repeated sound and action patterns • Is interested in what happens next using the pattern of everyday routines	• Talk with children about the patterns you notice around you. • Comment on and help children to recognise the patterns they make in their mark making, loose parts and construction. • Draw children's attention to the patterns in their routines by asking what comes next.	• Provide a range of natural and everyday materials, as well as blocks and shapes, with which to make patterns. • Plan opportunities for children to experience pattern such as percussion, music and action games that involve repeated sounds or actions.
Measures • Explores differences in size, length, weight and capacity • Beginning to understand some talk about immediate past and future • Beginning to anticipate times of the day such as mealtimes or home time	• Use everyday opportunities to describe everyday items and contexts using informal language of size (*giant, teeny, big, little, huge, small*), length (*long, tall, short*), weight (*heavy, light*) and capacity (*full, empty*). • Observe children's problem-solving when ordering things by size, e.g. stacking cups, sensitively supporting by offering one if they are really struggling. • Look out for opportunities to compare things purposefully such as finding out whether a teddy will fit in a bed. • When children talk about their experiences at home and in the setting, use some language of time (*before, later, soon, next, after, morning, afternoon, evening, night-time*). • In everyday activities, make a commentary about the sequence of events. • When sharing stories and books, draw attention to routines and time sequences within them.	• Provide similar items of contrasting sizes so that children have many opportunities to encounter the language of size. • Provide resources with clearly different weights to support direct comparison, and something to carry them in. • Provide equipment with varied capacities and shapes in the sand, water, mud kitchen and role play areas.

RANGE 5

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

Comparison

- Compares two small groups of up to five objects, saying when there are the same number of objects in each group, e.g. *You've got two, I've got two. Same!*

Counting

- May enjoy counting verbally as far as they can go
- Points or touches (tags) each item, saying one number for each item, using the stable order of 1,2,3,4,5.
- Uses some number names and number language within play, and may show fascination with large numbers
- Begin to recognise numerals 0 to 10

Cardinality

- Subitises one, two and three objects (without counting)
- Counts up to five items, recognising that the last number said represents the total counted so far (cardinal principle)
- Links numerals with amounts up to 5 and maybe beyond
- Explores using a range of their own marks and signs to which they ascribe mathematical meanings

Composition

- Through play and exploration, beginning to learn that numbers are made up (composed) of smaller numbers
- Beginning to use understanding of number to solve practical problems in play and meaningful activities
- Beginning to recognise that each counting number is one more than the one before
- Separates a group of three or four objects in different ways, beginning to recognise that the total is still the same

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Encourage children to share items between two people or toys.
- Capitalise on children's fascination with counting by joining in when they count in games.
- Enjoy counting forwards and back (sometimes to much higher numbers). Use different voices, e.g. high or growly.
- Use opportunities within daily routines to support children's developing sense of number.
- Model and encourage counting and representing numbers within role play, e.g. making a telephone call using a list of numbers.
- Value children's own mathematical representations within their pretend play.
- When counting with children, playfully make deliberate mistakes for fun, expecting children to correct them.
- Model writing numerals, e.g. on badges, birthday cards and banners.
- When counting objects with children emphasise the cardinal principle: *1*, *2*, ***3***, *there are three cups*.
- Invite children to count out a number of things from a larger group, e.g. *Can you get five crackers?*
- Encourage children to use their fingers to show an amount e.g. when asking another child to share resources, to show on their fingers how many they need.
- Emphasise the *one more, one less* pattern in rhymes and traditional tales, asking children to predict the next number.
- Model wondering and talking about how you might solve a number problem.
- Value and support children to use their own graphics when problem solving.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Provide a numeral rich environment, e.g. in role-play areas, mud-kitchen recipes, numbers on trikes and toilet doors.
- Provide numerals that children can pick up and use within all aspects of their play.
- Provide resources indoors and outside for children to explore and talk about higher numbers.
- Model using objects to illustrate counting songs, rhymes and number stories, sometimes using pictures and numerals, to enable children to use those resources independently.
- Play with either dot or numeral dice. Discuss that six on the dice is worth more than four.
- Provide a variety of mathematical picture books and share them as part of "warm and cuddly" maths times.
- Explore different arrangements of the same number, e.g. partitioning five in different ways; hiding one group and "guessing" the hidden number.
- Model counting items rhythmically, including objects into a container, claps or drumbeats.
- Support children to choose how to arrange collections of two, three and four objects in different ways.
- Provide spaces to display children's ongoing mathematical thinking, e.g. their own ways of representing their thinking, and scribing children's words.

Mathematics

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5 (cont.) **Spatial Awareness** • Responds to and uses language of position and direction • Predicts, moves and rotates objects to fit the space or create the shape they would like	• When children are exploring, use the language of position and direction in context (*in*, *on*, *inside*, *under*, *over*, progressing to *between*, *beside*, *next to* *through*, *along*, including relative terms which depend on where you are, e.g. *behind*, *in front of*, *forwards*, *backwards*) using equivalent terms for these in home languages through liaison with families where possible. • On walks, in pictures or while playing, point out how things or people that are far away look smaller. • Support children in their problem solving when they are creating rail tracks and road layouts. • In block play, sensitively support and challenge experienced builders to make bridges and enclosures. • Encourage children to persevere with jigsaws, perhaps demonstrating "hovering" jigsaw pieces to check if they will fit.	• Provide spaces to display children's ongoing mathematical thinking, e.g. their own ways of representing their thinking and scribing children's words. • Provide opportunities for children to explore position themselves *inside*, *behind*, *on top* and so on. • Provide picture books to stimulate discussion about position and direction. • Create trails and treasure hunts with the children. • Organise the indoor and outdoor environment with outlines for objects or specific places for children to tidy up items by fitting them into the designated space.
Shape • Chooses items based on their shape which are appropriate for the child's purpose • Responds to both informal language and common shape names • Shows awareness of shape similarities and differences between objects • Enjoys partitioning and combining shapes to make new shapes with 2D and 3D shapes • Attempts to create arches and enclosures when building, using trial and improvement to select blocks	• Help children to choose shapes for a purpose, e.g. a triangular block for a roof and the wedge-shaped block for a ramp. • Offer an appropriate or inappropriate shape for what you think the child's purpose might be to investigate their thinking. • As children experience shapes, use informal language (e.g. *slanty*, *pointy*, *twisty*, *wiggly*, *bumpy*), common shape names (e.g. *cylinder*, *cone*, *circle*, *square*) and "nearly" shapes (e.g. *This is almost a square but it's got curvy corners*). Find out and use equivalent terms for shapes in home languages. • Discuss how shapes can be partitioned in everyday contexts, e.g. cutting food in different ways. • Value children's constructions and solutions to problems they have set themselves and talk about how the shapes have combined to make new shapes.	• Provide differently shaped resources to handle, carry, move and explore. • Provide large and small blocks and boxes for construction both indoors and outdoors.

RANGE 5 (cont.)	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
	Pattern • Creates their own spatial patterns showing some organisation or regularity • Explores and adds to simple linear patterns of two or three repeating items, e.g. stick, leaf (AB) or stick, leaf, stone (ABC) • Joins in with simple patterns in sounds, objects, games and stories dance and movement, predicting what comes next	• Whilst playing alongside children, model simple repeating patterns of two or three items and encourage children to create and continue patterns. • Demonstrate arranging objects in spatial patterns when building, collaging or playing with loose parts. • Draw children's attention to patterns around them including from a range of cultures. • When making patterns, help children to solve problems.	• Provide a range of items for free exploration of patterning indoors and outdoors including natural materials, pattern blocks, loose parts, mats, trays and strips. • Encourage children to join in with body patterns or repeating sections of songs. • Pause to encourage prediction when enjoying stories and rhymes with repeating elements, sometimes using props. • Emphasise the repeating pattern when turn taking. • Provide patterned resources including those representing a range of cultures, such as clothing, fabrics or wrapping paper.
	Measures • In meaningful contexts, finds the longer or shorter, heavier or lighter and more/less full of two items • Recalls a sequence of events in everyday life and stories	• During play, model comparing lengths and distances. • Look out for meaningful opportunities for children to compare by length, weight, capacity and time using comparative language (*longer/shorter, heavier/lighter, holds more/holds less, longer time/shorter time*). • Encourage children to participate in seesaw and balance scale play. • Encourage children to respond to and use words such as *before, after, soon* or *later* when talking about routines, recent events and events in a story or rhyme.	• Provide problem-solving opportunities indoors and outdoors for comparing length, weight and capacity, e.g. *Which is the best bottle so we'll have enough drink for everyone at the picnic?* • Ask children to predict *What happens next?* using visual timetables, books and stories. • Provide items that can be ordered by size, such as plates and clothes in role play.

Mathematics

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

Comparison

- Uses number names and symbols when comparing numbers, showing interest in large numbers
- Estimates of numbers of things, showing understanding of relative size

Counting

- Enjoys reciting numbers from 0 to 10 (and beyond) and back from 10 to 0
- Increasingly confident at putting numerals in order 0 to 10 (ordinality)

Cardinality

- Engages in subitising numbers to four and maybe five
- Counts out up to 10 objects from a larger group
- Matches the numeral with a group of items to show how many there are (up to 10)

Composition

- Shows awareness that numbers are made up (composed) of smaller numbers, exploring partitioning in different ways with a wide range of objects
- Begins to conceptually subitise larger numbers by subitising smaller groups within the number, e.g. sees six raisins on a plate as three and three
- In practical activities, adds one and subtracts one with numbers to 10
- Begins to explore and work out mathematical problems, using signs and strategies of their own choice, including (when appropriate) standard numerals, tallies and "+" or "-"

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Model comparing numbers in problems about fair shares.
- Play games such as hide and seek that involve counting, forwards and backwards.
- Talk with children about the strategies they have used to solve a problem. Spot opportunities to playfully pose composition problems for children to explore.
- Discuss the order of numbers in context, e.g. finding a page number.
- Enjoy subitising games and sustained shared thinking about number, indoors and outdoors.
- Encourage cardinal counting by saying how many there are after counting (*…6, 7, 8. There are 8 balls*).
- In everyday activities, ask children to count out a number of things from a group (e.g. *Could you get seven cups for snacktime?*)
- Encourage children to make predictions and visualise the outcome in stories, rhymes and songs if one (or two) is added or taken away.
- Talk to children about the marks and signs they use to represent and communicate their thinking. As appropriate, model and discuss informal and standard ways (e.g. using arrows, plus and minus signs).
- Begin to model calculations in mathematical stories and number rhymes and in real contexts, using a range of ways of representing (e.g. five-frames). Use both informal and standard ways to record these, including tallies and symbols. Discuss children's own graphical strategies to solve problems, using some vocabulary of addition and subtraction.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Involve children in voting, e.g. for books to read at story time, using linking cubes with children's names on.
- Discuss examples and display large numbers including hundreds, thousands and a million.
- Jump with children along a number track, counting each jump or counting on.
- Sing counting songs and count together forwards and backwards, sometimes starting from different numbers and in different step sizes. Discuss numbers coming *before*, *after* and *between* and stress patterns.
- Plan opportunities to order mixed-up numerals.
- When counting groups as part of routines, e.g. self-registration with ten-frames, dinner chart etc,. record the final total as a label for children to see.
- Subitise with children, talking about how they see numbers of things made up in a variety of arrangements (e.g. recognising odd and even numbers).
- Pose everyday estimation problems and establish mental estimation benchmarks, e.g. more or less than 10.
- Set up an estimation station where everyone records guesses; later count and order the guesses.
- Build counting and ways of representing numbers into everyday routines.
- Provide numeral cards for children to order on a washing line.
- Play subitising games which involve quickly revealing and hiding numbers of objects, perhaps showing numeral cards and fingers.
- Drop marbles into a tin and ask the children to listen (without looking) to count how many there are.
- Provide opportunities for children to match a number of objects to the numeral, including zero, and display number lines to 100 at child height.
- Provide dice, board and card games, sometimes involving older children, families and members of the local community.
- Provide resources to make "staircase" patterns which show that the next counting number includes the previous number plus one.
- Display children's mathematical representations, including explanations of the children's meaning making.

RANGE 6 (cont.)

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
Spatial Awareness • Uses spatial language, including following and giving directions, using relative terms and describing what they see from different viewpoints • Investigates turning and flipping objects in order to make shapes fit and create models; predicting and visualising how they will look (spatial reasoning) • May enjoy making simple maps of familiar and imaginative environments, with landmarks	• Encourage the use of relative terms (*in front of, behind, before and after, in a line, next to and between).* • Encourage children to explore what can be seen from different viewpoints. • Encourage children to describe position and give directions in play and in everyday routines. • Encourage children to create scaled-down models such as in small world play. • When children are fitting shapes into an outline or making a model from a 2D picture, help them to select more spatially challenging activities. • Encourage children to make maps of routes they have walked or travelled in some way.	• Play barrier games (where players have an identical set of objects which are hidden from each other; one player makes an arrangement of objects and gives instructions to the other to try to make the same arrangement). • Plan opportunities for children to describe and recall familiar routes. • Engage families in taking photos of familiar things from different viewpoints.
Shape • Uses informal language and analogies, (e.g. *heart-shaped and hand-shaped leaves*), as well as mathematical terms to describe shapes • Enjoys composing and decomposing shapes, learning which shapes combine to make other shapes • Uses own ideas to make models of increasing complexity, selecting blocks needed, solving problems and visualising what they will build	• Encourage children to use the names of shapes and their properties (e.g. *straight, curved, edges*) and prompt them to say what shapes remind them of. • Discuss different examples of the same shape (e.g. equilateral and right-angled triangles) in a variety of orientations. • Take opportunities to discuss the shapes that children paint, draw and collage and shapes noticed in their local environment using regular shapes and shapes with no name. • When acting out their own stories encourage children to make the shapes involved on their own or with others. • When constructing, sensitively discuss which shapes make other shapes (e.g. triangles making rectangles and hexagons with pattern blocks or mosaic tiles). • Challenge children to make more complex constructions such as towers of arches, a window or a staircase.	• Provide resources for shape play including unit blocks, pattern blocks, mosaic tiles and jigsaw puzzles with different levels of challenge. • Teach strategies for solving shape and jigsaw puzzles, describing shape properties and modelling the mathematical vocabulary such as *straight, corner, edges*. • Play games focussing on the properties of shapes, such as hiding and partially revealing a shape, asking children to say what different shapes it could be or not, and why.
Pattern • Spots patterns in the environment, beginning to identify the pattern "rule" • Chooses familiar objects to create and recreate repeating patterns beyond AB patterns and begins to identify the unit of repeat	• Encourage children to notice and appreciate a range of patterns involving repetition and symmetry in the environment, including traditional patterns from a range of cultures. • Model using symbols to represent a pattern in other ways (e.g. using a spot/cross/dash pattern of symbols and doing a twirl/jump/glide in response). • Make deliberate mistakes when creating patterns alongside children and playfully challenge them to fix the problem. • Make border patterns where the repeating pattern continues around an object or frame.	• Provide opportunities for printing patterns using a variety of objects. • Using photos, challenge children to copy and continue patterns. • Invite children to create a pattern with the same structure using different objects (e.g. instead of a red/blue/blue pattern, create a sheep/cow/cow pattern).

Mathematics

RANGE 6 (cont.)

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
Measures • Enjoys tackling problems involving prediction and discussion of comparisons of length, weight or capacity, paying attention to fairness and accuracy • Becomes familiar with measuring tools in everyday experiences and play • Is increasingly able to order and sequence events using everyday language related to time • Beginning to experience measuring time with timers and calendars	• When comparing the length, weight and capacity of things in play and everyday activities, encourage children to predict and give reasons. • Discuss accuracy, for instance matching ends or starting points, balancing exactly or "fullness". • Support timed challenges by timing runs, trails, obstacle courses, etc. and teach children how to use the stopwatch. • Discuss the order and sequence of events in routines and role play using the language of time (*first*, *then*, *after*, *before*, *next*, *sooner*, *later*). • Draw children's attention to visual timetables and clock times, focusing on the hour hand.	• Have areas where children can explore the properties of objects, compare lengths, weigh and measure. • Provide objects in a range of contexts varying in length, capacity or weight, including tall thin, short fat, large light and small heavy things. • Provide pictorial sequences for instructions. • Model using measuring tools including height charts, rulers, tape-measures, scales and timers. • Sing songs about the days of the week and months of the year, referring to a calendar. Countdown to events.

Statutory ELG: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Statutory ELG: Numerical Patterns

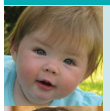
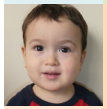
Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Statutory Educational Programme: Mathematics

In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the world: People and communities

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGES 1 - 2  	*See Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language*	*See Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language* • Provide opportunities, both indoors and out, for babies and toddlers to see people and things beyond the baby room, including the activities of older children.
• Starts to realise they influence people, e.g. as they laugh and smile so do the people they are with • Develops a sense of belonging to their family and their key carer • Recognises key people in their own lives		
RANGE 3 	• Help children to learn each other's names, e.g. through songs and rhymes, and use them when addressing children. • Be positive about differences between people and support children's acceptance of difference. Be aware that negative attitudes towards difference are learned from examples the children witness. • Ensure that each child is recognised as a valuable contributor to the group. • Celebrate and value cultural, religious and community events and experiences.	• Collect stories for, and make books about, children in the group, showing things they like to do and things that are important to them, in languages that are relevant to them wherever possible. • Provide books and resources which represent children's diverse backgrounds and which avoid negative stereotypes, ensuring different cultures are represented but especially the backgrounds of the children in the room. • Make photographic books about the children in the setting and encourage parents to contribute to these. • Provide positive images of all children including those with diverse physical characteristics, including disabilities. • Support good ecological habits in daily life by providing first-hand experiences, e.g. waste disposal by putting papers in recycling bins, helping planting flowers and seeds, provisioning bird tables, leaf piles for hedgehogs and woodlice.
• Is curious about people and shows interest in stories about people, animals or objects that they are familiar with or which fascinate them • Is interested in photographs of themselves and other familiar people and objects • Enjoys stories about people and nature (birds, bees, snails, cats, dogs, etc) and is interested in photographs of themselves with these.		

Understanding the world: People and communities

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4	• Has a sense of own immediate family and relations and pets • In pretend play, imitates everyday actions and events from own family and cultural background, e.g. making and drinking tea, going to the barbers, being a cat, dog or bird • Beginning to have their own friends • Learns that they have similarities and differences that connect them to, and distinguish them from, others	• Talk to children about their friends, their families, and why they are important. • Be sensitive to the possibility of children who may have lost special people or pets, either through death, separation, displacement or fostering/adoption.	• Share photographs of children's families, friends, pets or favourite people, both indoors and out. • Support children's understanding of difference and of empathy by using props such as puppets and dolls to tell stories about diverse experiences, ensuring that negative stereotyping is avoided. • Ensure children have resources so that they can imitate everyday actions and events from their lives and that represent their culture.
RANGE 5	• Shows interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them • Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines • Remembers and talks about significant events in their own experience • Recognises and describes special times or events for family or friends • Shows interest in different occupations and ways of life indoors and outdoors • Knows some of the things that make them unique, and can talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends or family	• Encourage children to talk about their own home and community life, and to find out about other children's experiences. Be aware that some children's home lives may be complicated or disrupted, and talking about them may be difficult. • Ensure that children learning English as an additional language have opportunities to express themselves in their home language some of the time. • Encourage children to develop positive relationships with community members who visit the setting, such as fire fighters, refuse collectors, delivery personnel, care home resident, artists. • Share stories about people from the past who have an influence on the present.	• Plan extra time for helping children in transition, such as when they move from one setting to another or between different groups in the same setting. • Provide activities and opportunities for children to share experiences and knowledge from different parts of their lives with each other. • Provide ways of preserving memories of special events, e.g. making a book, collecting photographs, sound or video recording, drawing and writing. • Invite children and families with experiences of living in other countries to bring in photographs and objects from their home cultures including those from family members living in different areas of the UK and abroad. • Ensure the use of up-to-date, appropriate photographs of parts of the world that are commonly stereotyped and misrepresented.

Understanding the world: People and communities

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines
- Talks about past and present events in their own life and in the lives of family members
- Knows that other children do not always enjoy the same things, and is sensitive to this
- Knows about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities, cultures and traditions

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Encourage children to share their feelings and talk about why they respond to experiences in particular ways.
- Explain carefully why some children may need extra help or support for some things, or why some children feel upset by a particular thing.
- Help children and parents to see the ways in which their cultures and beliefs are similar, sharing and discussing practices, resources, celebrations and experiences.
- Strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and faiths, and those of others in their community, by sharing and celebrating a range of practices and special events.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

RANGE 5 & 6 (cont)

- Help children to learn positive attitudes and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes, e.g. using puppets, Persona Dolls, stories and books showing black heroes or disabled kings or queens or families with same sex parents, having a visit from a male midwife or female fire fighter.
- Visit different parts of the local community, including areas where some children may be very knowledgeable, e.g. Chinese supermarket, local church, elders lunch club, Greek café.
- Provide role-play areas with a variety of resources reflecting diversity.
- Make a display with the children, showing all the people who make up the community of the setting.
- Share stories that reflect the diversity of children's experiences.
- Invite people from a range of cultural backgrounds to talk about aspects of their lives or the things they do in their work, such as a volunteer who helps people become familiar with the local area.

Statutory ELG: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

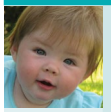
- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

Statutory ELG: People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

Understanding the world: The world

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 1  • Moves eyes, then head, to follow moving objects • Reacts with abrupt change when a face or object suddenly disappears from view • Looks around with interest when in a room, garden, balcony or park, visually scanning the environment for novel, interesting objects and events • Smiles with pleasure at recognisable playthings • Repeats actions that have an effect, e.g. kicking or hitting a mobile or shaking a rattle	• Encourage young babies' movements through your interactions, e.g. touching their fingers and toes and showing delight at their kicking and waving. *See Characteristics of Effective Learning – Playing and Exploring, and Physical Development*	• Provide a range of everyday and natural objects to explore such as in treasure baskets for sitting babies. • Provide additional interest – make small changes in the predictable environment. • Provide spaces that give young babies different views of their surroundings, such as a soft play area, under a tree, on a lap, looking at bushes and flowers in a garden or park. • Ensure that babies and toddlers experience the natural world around them: the wind, the sun, the moon, the movement of the leaves in the trees and different sounds such as birdsong and insect sounds.
RANGE 2 • Closely observes what animals, people and vehicles do • Watches toy being hidden and tries to find it, watches intently where a spider has scuttled away under leaves • Looks for dropped objects • Becomes absorbed in combining objects, e.g. banging two objects or placing objects into containers • Knows things are used in different ways, e.g. a ball for rolling or throwing, a toy car for pushing	• Play hiding and finding games inside and outdoors. • Plan varied arrangements of equipment and materials that can be used with babies in a variety of ways to maintain interest and provide challenges. • Draw attention to things in different areas that stimulate interest, such as a patterned surface.	• Provide lift-the-flap books to show something hidden from view. • Play hide-and-seek outside. • Provide a variety of interesting things for babies to see when they are looking around them, looking up at the ceiling or peering into a corner. • Display and talk about photographs of babies' favourite places. • Take babies on regular outings to a range of local environments.
RANGE 3 • Is curious and interested to explore new and familiar experiences in nature: grass, mud, puddles, plants, animal life • Explores objects by linking together different approaches: shaking, hitting, looking, feeling, tasting, mouthing, pulling, turning and poking • Remembers where objects belong • Matches parts of objects that fit together, e.g. puts lid on teapot	• Talk with children about their responses to sights, sounds and smells in the environment indoors, in playgrounds, with nature in gardens and parks and discover what they like about playing outdoors. • Encourage young children to explore puddles, trees and surfaces such as grass, concrete or pebbles. • Introduce principles of recycling, planting and care for our resources.	• Develop the use of the outdoors so that young children can investigate features, e.g. a mound, a path or a wall, and experience weather, large spaces and seasonal change. • Provide a collection of sets of items for children to explore how objects can be combined together in heuristic play sessions.

Understanding the world: The world

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 4	• Notices detailed features of objects in their environment • Can talk about some of the things they have observed such as plants, animals, natural and found objects • Enjoys playing with small world reconstructions, building on first-hand experiences, e.g. visiting farms, garages, train tracks, walking by river or lake	• Tell stories about places and journeys.	• Make use of outdoor areas to give opportunities for investigations of the natural world, for example, provide chimes, streamers, windmills and bubbles to investigate the effects of wind. • Provide story and information books about places, such as a zoo or the beach, to remind children of visits to real places.
RANGE 5	• Comments and asks questions about aspects of their familiar world such as the place where they live or the natural world • Talks about why things happen and how things work • Developing an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time • Shows care and concern for living things and the environment • Begin to understand the effect their behaviour can have on the environment	• Use parents' knowledge to extend children's experiences of the world • Support children with sensory impairment by providing supplementary experience and information to enhance their learning about the world around them. • Arouse awareness of features of the environment in the setting and immediate local area, e.g. make visits to shops or a park. • Use conversation with children to extend their vocabulary to help them talk about their observations and to ask questions. • Ensure adults know and use the widest vocabulary that they can, e.g. using the correct name for a plant or geographical feature.	• Use the local area for exploring both the built and the natural environment. Regularly take small groups of children on local walks, taking the time to observe what involves the children's interest. • Provide opportunities to observe things closely through a variety of means, e.g. magnifiers and photographs, phone apps to listen to and recognise birds. • Explore different habitats outdoors, e.g. scent, colour and shape of flowers attracting bees, making a wormery, planning bird feeding on the ground and higher level. • Provide play maps and small world equipment for children to create their own environments as well as represent the familiar environment. • Teach skills and knowledge in the context of practical activities, e.g. learning about the characteristics of liquids and solids by involving children in melting chocolate or cooking eggs, or observing ice outdoors. • Share stories related to pollution, climate change, habitat erosion, etc.

Understanding the world: The world

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Looks closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change in nature
- Knows about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things
- Talks about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another
- Makes observations of animals and plants and explains why some things occur, and talks about changes

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Help children to notice and discuss patterns around them, e.g. tree bark, flower petal or leaf shapes, grates, covers, or bricks.
- Examine change over time, for example, growing plants, and change that may be reversed, e.g. melting ice.
- Use appropriate words, e.g. *town*, *village*, *path*, *house*, *flat*, *cinema*, *skyscraper*, *hydrant*, *cirrus*, *cumulonimbus*, *temple and synagogue*, to help children make distinctions in their observations.
- Help children to find out about the environment by talking to people, examining photographs and simple maps and visiting local places.
- Encourage children to express opinions on natural and built environments and give opportunities for them to hear different points of view on the quality of the environment.
- Encourage the use of words that help children to express opinions, e.g. *busy*, *quiet* and *pollution*.
- Use correct terms so that, e.g. children will enjoy naming a chrysalis if the practitioner uses its correct name.
- Pose carefully framed open-ended questions and prompts, such as *How can we…? What would happen if…? I wonder….*

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

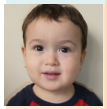
- Give opportunities to record and creatively represent findings by, e.g. drawing, writing, making a model or photographing, through music, dancing or dressing up.
- Provide stories that help children to make sense of different environments.
- Provide first-hand experiences to support children in making sense of micro-environments, the specific conditions which enable each plant or animal to live and thrive.
- Provide stimuli and resources for children to create simple maps and plans, paintings, drawings and models of observations of known and imaginary landscapes.
- Give opportunities to design practical, attractive environments, for example, planting and taking care of flower and vegetable beds or organising equipment outdoors.
- Make connections with places and spaces locally, such as museums, galleries, open spaces, arts centres, sports centres. Encourage parents to join you on regular outings, which can result in family visits to the same places.

Statutory ELG: The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Understanding the world: Technology

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGES 1 - 2 	*The beginnings of understanding technology lie in babies exploring and making sense of objects and how they behave* (*see* Playing and exploring, Thinking creatively and critically)	*See* Playing and exploring, Thinking creatively and critically	*See* Playing and exploring, Thinking creatively and critically
RANGE 3 	• Anticipates repeated sounds, sights and actions, e.g. when an adult demonstrates an action toy several times • Shows interest in toys with buttons, flaps and simple mechanisms and begins to learn to operate them	• Comment on the ways in which young children investigate how to push, pull, lift or press parts of toys and domestic equipment. • Talk about the effect of children's actions, as they investigate what things can do.	• Have available robust resources with knobs, flaps, keys or shutters. • Incorporate technology resources that children recognise into their play, such as a camera.
RANGE 4 	• Seeks to acquire basic skills in turning on and operating some digital equipment • Operates mechanical toys, e.g. turns the knob on a wind-up toy or pulls back on a friction car • Plays with water to investigate "low technology" such as washing and cleaning • Uses pipes, funnels and other tools to carry/ transport water from one place to another	• Support children in exploring the control technology of toys, e.g. toy electronic keyboard. • Talk about digital and other electric equipment, what it does, what they can do with it and how to use it safely. • Talk to children about "low technologies" such as washing and drying, transporting water and using water to make things "work".	• Provide safe equipment to play with, such as torches and walkie-talkies. • Let children use machines like the photocopier to copy their own pictures. • Provide a range of materials for children to "stain" and have a go at washing, rinsing and drying outside in the sunshine. • Provide a range of pipes, funnels, containers, water wheels and water for children to play with.

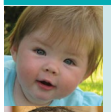
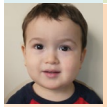
Understanding the world: Technology

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5	• Knows how to operate simple equipment, e.g. turns on CD player, uses a remote control, can navigate touch-capable technology with support • Shows an interest in technological toys with knobs or pulleys, real objects such as cameras, and touchscreen devices such as mobile phones and tablets • Shows skill in making toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps to achieve effects such as sound, movements or new images • Knows that information can be retrieved from digital devices and the internet • Plays with a range of materials to learn cause and effect, for example, makes a string puppet using dowels and string to suspend the puppet	• Support and extend the skills children develop as they become familiar with simple equipment, such as twisting or turning a knob. • Draw young children's attention to pieces of digital apparatus they see or that they use with adult supervision. • Talk to children about their uses of technologies at home and in other environments to begin to understand what they already know about and can do with different technologies. • Ask open-ended questions and have conversations about children's interest in technological toys to enable children to learn about different technologies. • Support children to be curious in grappling with cause and effect, e.g. learning that pulling a string may make a puppet arm lift.	• When out in the locality, ask children to help to press the button at the pelican crossing, or speak into an intercom to tell somebody you have come back. • When in the community and on trips to places such as the park, encourage children to take photographs and use mobile apps of things that interest them, ready to revisit later. • Provide a range of materials that enable children to explore cause and effect.
RANGE 6	• Completes a simple program on electronic devices • Uses ICT hardware to interact with age-appropriate computer software • Can create content such as a video recording, stories, and/or draw a picture on screen • Develops digital literacy skills by being able to access, understand and interact with a range of technologies • Can use the internet with adult supervision to find and retrieve information of interest to them	• Encourage children to speculate on the reasons why things happen or how things work. • In conversation highlight technology in aspects of nature, e.g. encouraging models of birds showing purposes and functions of wing feathers, body feathers, beaks, feet reflecting differences of different kinds of birds. • Support children to coordinate actions to use technology, for example, call a telephone number or create a video recording. • Teach and encourage children to click on different icons to cause things to happen in a computer program. • Talk to children about their actions, and support children to understand different purposes of different technologies. • Retrieve content and use to facilitate discussions, allowing children to recall trips/ past events to enable them to connect to their wider community.	• Provide a range of materials and objects to play with that work in different ways for different purposes, for example, egg whisk, torch, other household implements, pulleys, construction kits. • Provide a range of programmable toys for children to play with, as well as equipment involving ICT, such as computers, touchscreen devices and internet-connected toys.

Statutory ELG: None

Birth to Five Matters: Children require access to a range of technologies, both digital and non-digital in their early lives. Exploring with different technologies through play provides opportunities to develop skills that children will go on to develop in their lifetimes. Investigations, scientific inquiry and exploration are essential components of learning about and with technology both digitally and in the natural world. Through technology children have additional opportunities to learn across all areas in both formal and informal ways. Technologies should be seen as tools to learn both from and with, in order to integrate technology effectively within early years practice.

Expressive arts and design: Creating with materials

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGES 1 - 2  	• Experiments with a range of media – tools, materials, sound and whole body movement -- through multi-sensory exploration	• Attend to how babies and children are using their whole body in sensing, exploring and experimenting with space, texture, sounds, rhythms, materials, and tools. • Welcome the ways in which babies and children arrange, combine, transform, group, and sequence materials that both natural and manmade.	• Create a rich and well-ordered environment that enables babies and children to use all their senses. • Choose and select with intention the materials and tools available to children. • Create the time and space that will ensure that children can engage in depth with a diverse range of materials.
RANGE 3 	• Continues to explore and experiment with an increasing range of media and movement through multi-sensory exploration and expression • Moves while singing/vocalising, whilst listening to sounds and music, while playing with sound makers/instruments • Mirrors and improvises actions they have observed, e.g. clapping or waving • Sings/vocalises whilst listening to music or playing with instruments/sound makers • Notices and becomes interested in the transformative effect of their action on materials and resources	• Listen to and enjoy with children a variety of sounds, and music from diverse cultures. • Sensitively introduce children to language to describe sounds and rhythm, e.g. *loud* and *soft*, *fast* and *slow*. • Understand that young children's creative and expressive processes are part of their development of thinking and communicating as well as being important in their own right. • Become familiar with the properties and characteristics of materials and tools. • Observe, analyse and document the processes involved in a child's creative and expressive processes, to support greater understanding, inform planning and share with families, carers, and other professionals.	• Offer a variety of objects that will make different sounds, such as wood, pans and plastic bottles filled with different things. • Create opportunities to encounter and revisit key materials, resources and tools where children can further explore their properties including form, colour, texture, composition. • Create space and time for movement and dance both indoors and outdoors.
RANGE 4 	• Joins in singing songs • Creates sounds by rubbing, shaking, tapping, striking or blowing • Shows an interest in the way sound makers and instruments sound and experiments with ways of playing them, e.g. *loud/quiet*, *fast/slow* • Experiments with ways to enclose a space, create shapes and represent actions, sounds and objects • Enjoys and responds to playing with colour in a variety of ways, for example combining colours • Uses 3D and 2D structures to explore materials and/or to express ideas	• Help children to listen to music and watch dance when opportunities arise, encouraging them to focus on how sound and movement develop from feelings and ideas. • Recognise that children can become fascinated by a pattern of actions or interactions with tools and materials, gaining confidence over extended periods of time. • Encourage and support the inventive ways in which children use space, combine and transform both 3D and 2D materials. • Be sensitive in how you support a child who is using line, colour, tone and form. It is not necessary for them to have the verbal language to explain, for example, drawing. The drawing itself is one of their multi-modal languages.	• Plan a varied and appropriate series of live performances for all young children, e.g. musicians, dancers, storytellers. • Draw on a wide range of art works from a variety of cultural backgrounds to extend children's experiences and to reflect their cultural heritages, e.g. architecture, ceramics, theatre. • Continue to provide opportunities to encounter and revisit key materials, resources and tools through which children can further explore their properties including form, colour, texture and composition. • Invite children to look at and touch unusual or interesting materials, artefacts and resources in their everyday environment, chosen for their design, beauty, pattern and ability to inspire exploration.

Expressive arts and design: Creating with materials

RANGE 5

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Explores and learns how sounds and movements can be changed
- Continues to explore moving in a range of ways, e.g. mirroring, creating own movement patterns
- Enjoys joining in with moving, dancing and ring games
- Sings familiar songs, e.g. pop songs, songs from TV programmes, rhymes, songs from home
- Taps out simple repeated rhythms
- Develops an understanding of how to create and use sounds intentionally
- Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed
- Develops an understanding of using lines to enclose a space, and begins to use drawing to represent actions and objects based on imagination, observation and experience
- Uses various construction materials, e.g. joining pieces, stacking vertically and horizontally, balancing, making enclosures and creating spaces
- Uses tools for a purpose

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Support children's talk by sharing terms used by artists, potters, musicians, dancers, e.g. as children show interest in exploring colour mixing, support them in using terms such as *tint*, *shade*, *hue*.
- When children have a strong intention in mind, support them in thinking about what they want to create, the processes that may be involved and the materials and resources they might need.
- Encourage children to notice changes in properties of media as they are transformed, e.g. through becoming wet, dry, flaky or fixed. Talk about what is happening, helping them to think about cause and effect.
- Observe, analyse and document the processes involved in a child's creative and expressive processes, to support greater understanding, inform planning and share with families, carers, and other professionals.
- Encourage children to notice changes in movement and sound, e.g. *louder*, *quieter*, *smaller*, *bigger*. Talk about what is happening, helping them to think about cause and effect.
- Introduce new skills and techniques based on your observations and knowledge of children's interests and skills.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

- Offer resources for mixing colours, joining things together and combining materials, supporting where appropriate.
- Create a place where work in progress can be kept safely.
- Share with children other artists' work that connects with their ideas, interests and experiences.
- Introduce children to a wide range of music, movement, painting and sculpture.
- Provide a range of musical instruments that are used in different ways, for children to bang, pluck, blow, strum.
- Offer children opportunities to use their skills and explore concepts and ideas through their representations.

Expressive arts and design: Creating with materials

RANGE 6

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing

- Begins to build a collection of songs and dances
- Makes music in a range of ways, e.g. plays with sounds creatively, plays along to the beat of the song they are singing or music they are listening to
- Uses their increasing knowledge and understanding of tools and materials to explore their interests and enquiries and develop their thinking
- Develops their own ideas through experimentation with diverse materials, e.g. light, projected image, loose parts, watercolours, powder paint, to express and communicate their discoveries and understanding.
- Expresses and communicates working theories, feelings and understandings using a range of art forms, e.g. movement, dance, drama, music and the visual arts.

Positive Relationships: what adults might do

- Draw attention to children's choice and use of: materials, tools and techniques, experimentation with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Use individual, small group, and large group discussion to regularly engage children in explaining work in progress.
- Recognise the importance of drawing in providing a bridge between imaginary play and writing, and that all are key forms of communication and tools for thinking.

Enabling Environments: what adults might provide

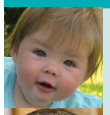
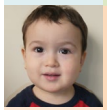
- Offer opportunities to encounter and revisit key materials, e.g. drawing media, paper, paint, cardboard and clay in order to continue to develop expertise as tools for expression and communication.
- Provide a range of joining materials (e.g. stapler, masking tape, glue, string, thread, split pins, treasury tags, card strips) to support children working in both 2D and 3D.
- Supply open-ended props and materials that can easily be transformed in play.

Statutory ELG: Creating with Materials

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Expressive arts and design: Being imaginative and expressive

A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGES 1 - 2  	• Responds to and engages with the world that surrounds them, e.g. sounds, movement, people, objects, sensations, emotions (her own and others)	• Notice the ways in which babies react to other babies and adults and the world that surrounds them. • Tune into and sensitively respond to babies' and children's expressive and communicative actions.	• Create a rich environment that enables babies and children to use all their senses. • Provide babies and children with a range of. experiences to feed their imaginative potential, e.g. stories, images, music, natural and urban experiences, social encounters (mealtimes, shopping, visitors).
RANGE 3 	• Expresses self through physical actions and sound • Pretends that one object represents another, especially when objects have characteristics in common • Creates sound effects and movements, e.g. creates the sound of a car, animals	• Show genuine interest and be willing to play along with a young child who is beginning to pretend. • Model or join in pretend play, such as pretending to drink from an empty toy cup.	• Provide a range of resources including familiar and non-specific items that can be used in a range of ways, such as magazines, real kitchen items, fabric, hoops, sponges, rope etc.
RANGE 4 	• Uses everyday materials to explore, understand and represent their world – their ideas, interests and fascinations • Begins to make believe by pretending using sounds, movements, words, objects Beginning to describe sounds and music imaginatively, e.g. *scary music* • Creates rhythmic sounds and movements	• Observe and sometimes take part in children's make-believe play in order to gain an understanding of their interests. • Observe and reflect on the children's own explorations and creations.	• Offer a variety of stimulating resources that can be used in different ways both inside and outside e.g. fabric, boxes, sound makers, water, string bags and planks. • Create time and space for children to develop their own creations, e.g. photographs, sounds, movement, constructions, stories, collages.
RANGE 5 	• Uses movement and sounds to express experiences, expertise, ideas and feelings • Experiments and creates movement in response to music, stories and ideas • Sings to self and makes up simple songs • Creates sounds, movements, drawings to accompany stories	• Ensure children have opportunities to experience the world outside the setting, e.g. through walks, visits, visitors, links with children's homes. • Support children's development of imaginary worlds by encouraging new experiences, inventiveness, empathy and new possibilities. • Share a diverse range of text, image-based and oral stories to stimulate imaginative responses.	• Tell stories based on children's experiences and the people and places they know well as well as stories that stimulate the imagination. • Create spaces for children to respond to stories and their representing their ideas of what they hear, imagine and enjoy through a variety of art forms and materials.

Expressive arts and design: Being imaginative and expressive

	A Unique Child: what a child might be doing	Positive Relationships: what adults might do	Enabling Environments: what adults might provide
RANGE 5	• Notices what other children and adults do, mirroring what is observed, adding variations and then doing it spontaneously • Engages in imaginative play based on own ideas or first-hand or peer experiences. • Uses available resources to create props or creates imaginary ones to support play • Plays alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme	• Co-create stories with children based on their ideas, experiences and the people and places they know well or imaginary ones.	• Offer children a wide variety of materials and resources, both inside and outside that stimulate their imagination to build, to become, to represent and experiment with their imaginative play and thinking.
RANGE 6	• Creates representations of both imaginary and real-life ideas, events, people and objects • Initiates new combinations of movements and gestures in order to express and respond to feelings, ideas and experiences • Chooses particular movements, instruments/ sounds, colours and materials for their own imaginative purposes • Uses combinations of art forms, e.g. moving and singing, making and dramatic play, drawing and talking, constructing and mapping • Responds imaginatively to art works and objects, e.g. *this music sounds likes dinosaurs, that sculpture is squishy like this [child physically demonstrates], that peg looks like a mouth* • Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play • Plays cooperatively as part of a group to create, develop and act out an imaginary idea or narrative	• Support children to gain confidence in their own way of representing and sharing ideas. • Be aware of the link between children's imaginative play and how they develop a narrative structure. • Recognise and promote children's agency in expressing their unique and subjective viewpoint through the arts. • Support children in communicating through their bodies by responding to, and sometimes joining in with their expressive movement linked to their imaginative ideas. • Introduce descriptive language to support children within the context of their own imaginative experiences. • Celebrate children's imaginative ideas and creations by sharing them, e.g. impromptu performances, learning journeys with families, display documentation, digital portfolios.	• Enrich the environment inside and out with materials, resources, natural objects, images, music, dance (via image, film) for children to inspire their imagination. • Make materials accessible so that children are able to imagine and develop their enquiries and ideas while they are still fresh in their minds. • Provide children with opportunities to develop their enquiries using materials and tools over extended periods of time.

Statutory ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

Glossary

A guide to the meanings of terms as used in Birth to 5 Matters

2D (two-dimensional) shapes	flat shapes that have width and height but not depth, e.g. common regular shapes such as rectangle, oval, triangle and hexagon
3D (three-dimensional) shapes	solid shapes that have width, height and depth, e.g. common regular shapes such as sphere, pyramid and cube
ableism	discrimination against disabled people in favour of non-disabled people
adult-led	where adults plan and provide opportunities for children to be introduced to or further develop skills and knowledge
agency	ability to act and make decisions that influence events and affect one's world
anti-racism	recognising the existence of racism in its many forms and taking appropriate action to remove it
asylum seeker	a refugee engaged in the legal process to seek a right to remain
attuned	sensitive, positive and responsive to children's cues regarding their emotions, interests, and communications
autonomy	being in control of, or an active agent in, one's life
bias	leaning towards a way of thinking about people which influences engagement with them, based on assumptions or previous interactions with other people who have shared characteristics which may include, race, religion, sexuality or socio-economic status
capacity (in mathematics)	how much a container can hold (linked to volume or the amount of space things take up)
cardinality	quantity (a number of things) or "how many-ness"
child-initiated	where a child determines the activity – what they will use, what they will do, who is involved
child-led	where the child takes the lead and the adult responds
children	all babies, toddlers and young children from birth to the end of the EYFS, up to 71 months
co-construction	working with others to develop concepts, skills and knowledge
cognitive	relating to the ability to think, have, gain and use knowledge through memory and reasoning
comparison (number in mathematics)	the relative size of numbers including finding which is larger or smaller
comparison (measure in mathematics)	comparing one object to another on the basis of one attribute (e.g. length, weight or capacity) is direct comparison; using a third object as the "measurer" is indirect comparison
composition (number in mathematics)	how a number is made up; includes all of the number combinations that make up a given number
composition (in expressive arts)	putting different elements together to give structure and convey intentions, such as sounds, or visual elements such as line, shape, colour, value, texture, form, and space
concept	a general idea formed in the mind about a thing or group of things, derived from specific instances or occurrences.
continuous provision	environment and resources provided for children to explore freely, which support learning with or without an adult and enable children to revisit and build on their learning

creative thinking	using imagination to generate new ideas; related to critical thinking in working with ideas and plans
critical thinking	analysing or synthesising information from which to make decisions or judgements, build theories or to reflect and evaluate
cultural capital	what children bring with them, and develop from their experiences and opportunities
culture	the ideas, customs, traditions and interests of groups of people
curriculum	a plan for children's development and learning experiences, both formal and informal
digital literacy	skills associated with finding, identifying, evaluating and using information, understanding the purposes of the technology being used and having the skills to create content
discrimination	unfair or less favourable treatment because of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion/belief or other characteristics
dispositions	enduring habits of mind and action
ethnicity	being from a particular group of people or those who identify with each other due to shared language, nationality, culture or religion
expressive	to be communicative in conveying ideas, emotions, and thoughts; modes include dance, story, drawing, music, as well as in writing and talking
everyday activities	the structures and routines of the day, e.g. mealtimes, nap times, story time
faith	strong beliefs which might be linked to religious doctrine or tradition
flexible thinking	the ability to quickly change the direction of thinking, finding new ways to approach a situation or solve a problem
free flow	where children have the choice to move freely between areas and environments, indoors and outdoors, during their play
funds of knowledge	knowledge that is linked to cultural practice within families and communities
gender	a social construction describing attributes of masculinity and femininity
graphics (mathematics)	the visual marks and representations (graphics) young children choose to use to explore mathematical meanings and communicate their thinking, including mark-making and standard symbols
holistic	recognising all aspects of children's development and learning, including physical, personal, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive
heuristic play	exploratory play with everyday items, often arranged for mobile babies and toddlers to freely explore groups of objects
homophobia	negative attitudes and behaviours towards those who are lesbian, gay and bisexual
identity	sense of self influenced by many factors such as social, cultural and political context, family background, gender, and faith
internet-connected toys	physical toys that are connected to the internet and respond based on interactions
intersectionality	the way in which various identity markers are layered or overlap within one person, which can increase the impact or the degree to which discrimination is experienced
intrinsic motivation	motivation that is driven by inherent satisfaction; the behaviour itself is its own reward
knowledge	facts, information, understanding about things

LGBTQIA+	a collective term representing people who identify as: **lesbian; gay** (generally refers to gay men but can also be an umbrella term for gay men and women); **bisexual** (the attraction to multiple genders, often including one's own gender); **transgender** (when a person's gender does not line up with their assigned sex at birth); **queer** (catch-all term for anyone in the community, to be more inclusive to people who do not fit into the other categories; the "q" might include "questioning" people who are exploring their sexual or gender identities and may not want to commit to a certain label); **intersex** (someone born with biological sex characteristics that are not traditionally associated with male or female bodies); **aromantic** (someone who experiences little to no romantic attraction)/**asexual** (someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction)/**agender** (someone who identifies with no particular gender); **plus** (inclusive of all other identities)
loose parts	Items with no specific direction that can be used by themselves or with other materials in multiple ways
low technology	technologies that are non-mechanical, not advanced or "high technology" such as digital technology
mastery	embedded competence and confidence within an area of learning which can be recalled and transferred to different contexts
minoritised	the process by which certain groups have less power or representation compared to members of other groups in society
mirroring	responding to another's movements, gestures, sounds or expressions by doing something similar
motor functions	relating to muscle movement
multimodal languages	communication can be written, oral, visual, digital and non-verbal, all of which contribute to making meaning
neurological functions	relating to the function of nerves and the nervous system
numerals	the symbols which represent numbers e.g. 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7…
objective (for learning)	short, specific statements about the intended learning
open-ended	having no specific direction or purpose, and no pre-determined use, process or outcome, to be interpreted and directed by the children
ordinality	the position and order of the counting numbers, including the relative place of any number in the number sequence as being next to, before, after, near to, in between, etc any other number
orientation	the way round an object or image is turned or facing
palmar grip	using a fist grip to pick up objects
parents	used here to include all carers of children in the EYFS
pedagogy	the understanding of how children learn and develop and the practices through which adults can enhance that process, rooted in values and beliefs about what we want for children and supported by knowledge, theory and experience
planned activities	experiences planned specifically to further develop skills and knowledge or introduce new ideas
practitioner	all early years professionals who work directly with children in EYFS settings
prejudice	preconceived idea about a person or group that is not factual or based on experience; it can be positive or negative
problem solving	something you do not immediately know the answer to, so have to decide a way to find a solution

processes	the steps a child goes through as they create and express, including include thinking, exploring, experimenting, attempting, adapting, consulting, comparing; all inform and influence each other
professional love	a concept explored by Dr Jools Page to describe the feelings of love, intimacy and care which practitioners experience in their reciprocal relationships with children
progress	moving forward
properties (shape in mathematics)	qualities, features or characteristics of a shape
race	a social construct based on skin colour and facial features which has no inherent biological basis but affects social categories and relationships
racism	prejudice and discrimination from an individual, community or institution against a particular racial or ethnic group
refugee	a person who has fled their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster and sought safety in another country
repeating pattern	a repeating pattern is where the order of some items (or sounds, actions, ideas, etc.) is continually duplicated; the "unit of repeat" is the section that is repeated to generate the pattern
resilience	capacity to cope with, adapt to, and recover from setbacks or adversity
schema	pattern of repeated play and behaviours that helps children organise information
sensory functions	related to the physical senses e.g. touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight, vestibular sense
setting	all types of provision delivering the EYFS including childminders, private, voluntary and independent providers, nursery, infant and primary schools
self-regulation	ability to regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviour to enable positive action toward a goal
serve and return	interactions where the child "serves" by initiating contact, and the adult "returns" by responding appropriately with eye contact, gestures or words
sexual orientation	the sexual attraction that a person feels towards another person, e.g. being heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual or asexual
skills	abilities
spatial awareness	interpretation of how things, including own body, relates to one another and the spatial environment
stereotypes	generalisations which label people and make assumptions about them
strategic	long term/overall approach towards aims based on evidence
subitising - conceptual	instantly recognising the total based on the parts
subitising - perceptual	immediate recognition of how many without needing to count, involving very small numbers and assisted by familiar arrangements such as dice patterns
sustained shared thinking	when two or more people "work together" in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate an activity, extend a narrative, etc.; both must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend understanding
symmetry	shapes and patterns which flip over a line or axis, in a mirror fashion
systemic racism	form of racism that pervades institutions and organisations
working theories	the ways children think about, inquire into and make meaning about their worlds as they attempt to make connections between prior and new experiences and understandings

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What do you like about your early years setting?

"Lily and Jasper. (A friend and the childminder's dog) I make biscuits."

Ivy, 3

A Unique Child

When referring to the guidance for the Areas of Learning and Development, it is important to start with what is observed and understood about the individual child.

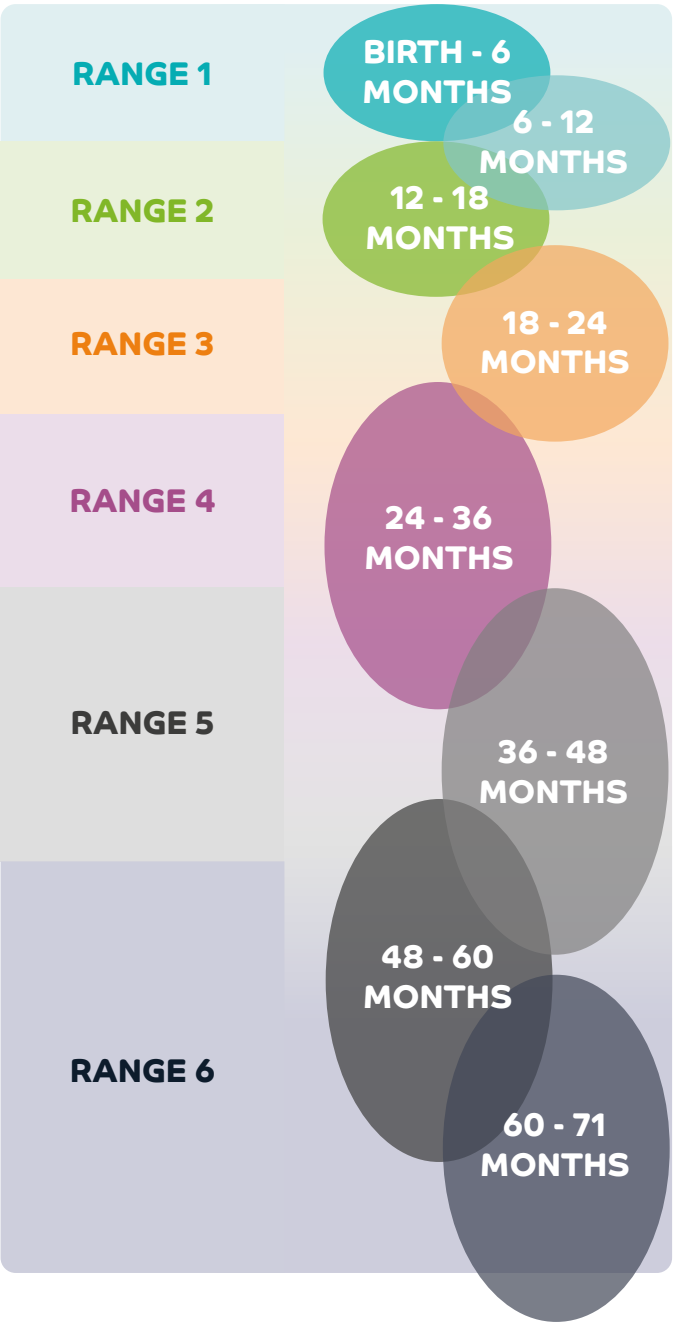
A typical progression in development and learning has been grouped into broad ranges in the column for A Unique Child. This is intended to support knowledge of a general pattern of child development.

Practitioners can identify a range that most closely describes the child's development and learning, and then consider the suggestions for adults within that range (or earlier ranges) to plan to support continued progress.

The guidance can also help to identify when children may need additional support, by referring to the key provided here which links the ranges to typical age spans.

In summative assessments, comparing best-fit judgements of ranges with typical age spans can help identify whether children are roughly on track, or are progressing more slowly or quickly. This information can be useful for leaders and managers in planning for the continual improvement of practice and provision in the setting.

Key to understanding the age ranges:



Notes

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