

Early Years - Small Steps Support



Monitoring progress document - Prime Areas of learning

This document is designed to aid Early Years providers and Early Years professionals (advisors and practitioners) to monitor and celebrate the progress children with SEND make in the Prime Areas of learning. This is a toolkit that can be used, however there are other guidance documents available to help aid your assessments, including the Development Matters revised: 2023, Birth to 5 Matters 2021 and a Celebratory Approach to SEND Assessment (Pen Green), amongst others.

The observation checkpoints, that are included in the Development Matters - non-statutory curriculum guidance for EYFS, are included within this Small Steps Support Document. The document is designed to be used as a 'best fit' and although many providers find it useful to highlight progress and what a child can do, it is not a tick list.

It is important to note that this document is not a deficit model. It is not to be used to demonstrate what a child cannot do, but rather celebrate the achievements a child can do. We advise that this document is used to inform formal assessment, such as an EHCNA but further documents such as the Graduated Approach document (Section 5) in the EHCNA Request form, Individual Plan, and Speech and Language Monitoring Tool should be used to monitor progress and support for children with identified SEND. Setting should also use their own tracking and monitoring systems.

The wording within this document is also open to interpretation to provide flexibility in how it is used by providers. For example, on some of the statements it says 'responds'; we have intentionally left this vague as what this looks like will inevitably be different for different children, i.e., how they show their responses will be different. This means you can use this document to fit around children's individual needs and again celebrate their successes.

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Communication and Language: Listening, Attention and Understanding

0 - 3 months

- Most responsive to primary carer's voice
- Makes own sounds or physical response when talked to
- Responds to significant sensory changes in environment e.g., light, sound, vibration.
- Is calmed by soft speech or song.
- Makes fleeting eye contact during interactions with prime carers or familiar adults.
- Startles to sudden sounds
- Looks briefly at moving objects.
- Responds to a familiar sound and / or voice e.g., quietens, alerts, body movement, eye flicker.

3 - 6 months

- Imitates some facial expressions from prime carer and / or familiar adults e.g., a smile, sticking out their tongue.
- Turns towards a familiar sound (e.g., footsteps) or voice, locating range of sounds with increasing accuracy.
- Pays fleeting attention to music, mobile or similar.
- Watches adults' faces when they talk.
- Can distinguish between familiar voices.
- Shows a simple reflex response to a range of sensory stimuli, objects, people and/or activities.
- Shows a response that something has happened e.g., door closing or phone ringing.
- May show excitement or anticipation when people approach.
- Listens to familiar voices even though they can't see them.

6 - 9 months

- Responds to familiar voices by smiling, looking, or moving.
- Turns to own name.
- Responds to 'no' and other inhibitive sounds.
- Responds to familiar rhymes, songs, and finger play by eye gaze and / or body movements (e.g., flapping hands, moving legs)
- Watches with fleeting interest the actions of others
- Can focus on different sounds in their environment.
- Demonstrates extended attention within familiar settings.
- Shows a response to significant changes in a person's tone of voice/speech.
- Shows a response to changes in the actions of others.
- Show consistent awareness that something has happened or changed e.g., environment/people.

9 - 12 months

- Begins to point to things they want.
- Begins to respond to familiar gestures, single words and sounds e.g., waving 'bye' to familiar adults.
- Responds to familiar rhymes and songs by moving their body parts and joining in with some actions during adult-led song time e.g., rocking for 'Row, Row, Row the Boat'.
- Turns to an environmental sound or familiar name / object by looking e.g., doorbell, dog barking.
- Begins to focus on an activity of their choice for short periods.
- Responds to familiar words or phrases by looking or with gestures e.g., 'Daddy'.
- Has a greater focus on motivating tasks for a longer period of time?
- Responds to own name by stilling or turning.
- Responds to familiar greetings through gesture/sound/eye gaze etc. e.g., turning/stilling.
- Begins to respond to stimuli presented in an on/off pattern.
- Begins to recognise and respond to key objects of reference e.g., nappy at changing time/ bottle/cup at snack time.
- Begins to make a choice to select a desired object from two.

12 - 18 months

- Consistently points to items of interest and use gestures to show things to adults.
- Begins to listen and respond to one step instructions containing one key word e.g., get your cup.
- Chooses between two objects e.g., 'do you want baby or car?'
- Begins to respond to simple commands / instructions when in a familiar context with a familiar adult e.g., point to Mummy, give the apple to Mummy.
- Understands familiar single words in new contexts e.g., 'bath' at home and elsewhere.
- Concentrates, for short periods, intently on an object or activity of own choosing / dominant stimulus
- Enjoys a wider range of nursery rhymes, trying to join in with some simple actions e.g., clapping hands and/ or vocalisations.
- Stops in response to 'no' or inhibitive sounds.
- Becomes excited and waits during anticipation games e.g., waiting for 'go' in 'ready, steady, go' or, '1, 2, 3... go' games or songs.
- Imitates a sequence of three or more actions.

18- 24 months

- Understands a range of single words and some simple action words.
- Consistently listens and responds to simple one step instructions in context e.g., sit down.
- Consistently listens and responds to one key word instructions e.g., when given a choice of teddy or dolly, will point to dolly, rather than teddy.
- Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories with multiple / complex actions, trying to join in with some actions and attempting vocalisations, albeit not always clear e.g., 'Wind the Bobbin Up'.
- Pays attention to own choice of activity, may move quickly from activity to activity.
- Understands approximately 50 familiar naming words.
- Attention focused on the activity so that they may appear not to hear or respond e.g., when playing with toys

- Listens with interest to general conversation, responding to familiar words that interest them, e.g., 'biscuit'.
- Begins to show an interest in what other children are playing and will occasionally join in
- Understands more words than they can say - between 200-500 words.
- Begins to respond appropriately to simple two-part instructions or requests such as 'get your shoes and put on your coat' or 'pick up the ball and give it to me'.

24- 30 months

- Begins to respond to two key word instructions e.g., when given the choice of teddy or dolly / choice of apple / cake, will respond by giving the apple to dolly.
- Indicates understanding of action words by demonstrating with self / toy e.g., 'make teddy jump'.
- Points to five body parts on request independently
- Picks out a simple familiar instruction even when there is background noise, for example 'dinner time', 'no' or 'stop now'.
- Listens to music and responds when it is turned off, for example stops singing or dancing or turns to look at the stereo.
- Begins to shift to a different task if attention fully obtained with adult / visual prompting and support.
- Responds appropriately to 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions with gesture / single words.

30 - 36 months

- Consistently shifts to a different task if attention fully obtained with adult / visual prompting and support.
- Consistently responds appropriately to simple two-part instructions or requests such as 'get your shoes and put on your coat' or 'pick up the ball and give it to me'.
- Recognises and responds to many familiar environmental sounds, e.g., turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door.
- Consistently recognises and joins in with familiar and self-chosen rhymes, number songs and actions, such as 'The wheels on the bus'.
- Shows understanding of action words by pointing to the right picture.
- Briefly attends to activities of others.
- Shows understanding of prepositions 'in' and 'on' such as 'put dolly in the box' by carrying out action or selecting correct picture.

36 - 42 months

- Shifts from one activity to another independently if you gain their attention, for example will stop when asked to and help tidy up.
- Joins in with an activity that an adult or a child suggests.
- Understands use of objects e.g. 'Which one do we cut with?'
- Begins to respond to three key word instructions e.g., when given the choice of teddy or dolly / size / choice of apple / cake, responds by giving the apple to little dolly.
- Shows understanding of prepositions e.g., 'under', 'on top', 'behind', 'next to' by carrying out an action or selecting a correct picture.
- Begins to follow instructions containing concepts of size (big / little), position (in / on), number and colour.
- Joins in with key words and repeated refrains and anticipates key events/phrases in rhymes and stories.
- Listens to familiar stories, verbally and / or using visual prompts.
- Anticipates what might happen next in familiar stories with adult support.

- Listens to others in one-to-one or small groups when conversation interests them.

42 - 48 months

- Follows general directions, if not intently focused e.g., instructions given as a large group
- Consistently responds to three key word instructions e.g., when given the choice of teddy or dolly / size / choice of apple / cake, responds by giving the apple to little dolly.
- Consistently follows instructions containing concepts of size (big / little), position (in / on / under / behind/ on top), number and colour.
- Begins to understand and respond to 'why' and 'how' questions e.g., 'how can we clean up the juice?' 'Why do you want to wear your coat outdoors today?'
- Returns to a task after interruption e.g., toilet break.
- Perseveres for extended periods of time at an activity of their choosing.
- Understands all pronouns: 'they', 'he', 'she', 'him' and 'her'.
- Listens to familiar stories with increasing attention and recall, verbally and / or using visual prompts e.g., sequencing pictures.
- Predicts what might happen next after listening to part of a familiar story e.g. 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt', providing a verbal response, action and / or selecting a sequencing picture.
- Sings a large repertoire of songs.
- Knows many rhymes.
- Talks about familiar books.
- Tells a long story.

48 - 54 months

- Follows a short story without pictures or props.
- Carries out two unrelated directions e.g., 'put your lunchbox away and get your coat on'.
- Recalls what is missing from selection of items when one is removed e.g., Kim's Game
- Shows variability in listening behaviour; may move around and fiddle but still be listening or sit still but not absorbed by activity e.g., whilst listening to a story, the child fiddles with their zip
- Enjoys listening to stories, however, can only focus on one thing at a time.

54 - 60 months

- Understands a range of complex sentence structures including negatives, plurals, and tense markers (past /present tense)
- Beginning to understand humour, e.g., nonsense rhymes, jokes.
- Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion.
- Links significant events from own experience and from stories, paying attention to sequence and how events lead one to another.
- Predicts what might happen next after listening to part of an unfamiliar story.
- Listens to longer stories with adult on a one-to-one basis.
- Listens attentively to stories / songs / rhymes in a class group.

Communication and Language: Speaking

0 - 3 months

- Communicates feelings by crying, gurgling, and squealing, for example when contented, angry or in pain.
- Communicates needs by crying, gurgling, and squealing for example when hungry or tired.
- Starts to make a range of sounds such as coos, gurgles, chuckling.

3 - 6 months

- Makes own sounds in response to a familiar adult/to gain attention.
- Lifts arms in anticipation of being picked up.
- Makes sounds for pleasure e.g., tuneful vocalisation to self when lying in cot or at play.
- Makes a range of different cries or sounds to show needs and feelings.
- Begins to direct gaze towards desired object.

6 - 9 months

- Begins to babble by repeating a series of the same sounds e.g., 'ba ba ba', 'ma ma ma'
- Begins to develop and use vowel sounds from the language used at home, for example 'a' as in hat or 'e' as in pet.
- Begins to 'takes turns' in conversation by babbling with a familiar person.
- Gestures or looks to make requests and to share an interest.
- Consistently directs gaze towards desired object.
- Begins to imitate vocalisations within own repertoire of sounds.
- Begins to vocalise or make physical contact to initiate an interaction.

9 - 12 months

- Uses voice or gesture to attract attention (e.g., holding up objects, waving arms, eye gazing); ask for things (e.g., reaching, opening, and shutting hands); refuse (e.g., pushing objects away, shaking head)
- Produces and copies non-speech sounds e.g., coos, raspberries.
- Babbles using consonants and vowels such as 'baba', 'gaga'.
- Begins to develop and use some consonant sounds, for example 'p' 'b' 'd' 'm'.
- Makes a sound and waits for a response.
- Copies the speech sounds of others.
- Uses a single word / sign / photograph / symbol appropriately e.g., 'cup'.

12 - 18 months

- Says around ten words, although they may not be clear.
- 'Takes turns' in conversation with babbling and some single words / recognisable sounds e.g., 'Dada' for 'Daddy'.

- Uses single words / signing / photographs / symbols to communicate for a range of purposes e.g., 'more', 'bye-bye', 'teddy'.
- Uses sounds in play e.g., 'brrrm' for toy car.
- Frequently imitates words and sounds from adult production.
- 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 e.g., 'baba' for 'baby'.
- Vocalisations start to have the tone and rhythm of home language.

18 - 24 months

- Uses a range of adult like speech patterns (jargon) and says around 20 words.
- Copies familiar expressions e.g., 'Oh dear', 'All gone'.
- Uses different types of everyday words including nouns (naming words), verbs (action words) and adjectives (describing words), e.g., banana, go, sleep, hot.
- Begins to put two words together e.g., 'want ball', 'more juice'.
- Begins to talk about people and things that are not present e.g., 'Mummy gone'.
- Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk, e.g., reaches toward toy, saying 'want it'.
- Comments using a single word or known phrase to describe a situation e.g., 'doggy' or 'fall down'.
- Uses a mixture of words and vocalisation (jargon) combined with or instead of gestures when playing.
- Talks to self continuously when playing, although may not be readily understood.

24 - 30 months

- Says up to 50 words.
- Uses gesture and / or signing to support others to understand their wants / needs.
- Puts two or three words together.
- Asks a variety of simple questions e.g., 'what?', 'where?'
- Uses personal pronouns, e.g., 'me', 'my' (not always grammatically correct) e.g., 'my do it'.
- Uses short phrases, 'my got one'.
- Uses a range of verbs to describe actions e.g., 'boy jumping'.
- Links noun and verb e.g., 'Daddy sleeping'.
- Learns new words very rapidly and can use them to communicate.

30 - 36 months

- Uses around 100-200 words.
- Asks questions frequently, such as people's names and objects.
- Sometimes uses pronouns ('he' / 'she') and prepositions ('in/on'), although not always accurately
- Uses longer simple sentences with up to 3- 4 words, (e.g., 'Mummy gone work')
- Begins to use word endings e.g., 'going', 'cats'.
- Uses a variety of questions e.g., 'what?', 'where?', 'who?', 'why?'

- Holds a simple conversation with an adult jumping from topic to topic.
- Uses language / non-verbal communication e.g., gesture / photo / symbols / signing to share feelings, experiences, and thoughts.
- Anticipates key events and important phrases in familiar rhymes and stories.
- Talks to self in play.
- Tells own name and age.
- Speech can be understood by familiar adults and peers, with some errors such as 'sh', 'ch', 'th' and 'r'.

36 months

- Uses around 300 words.
- Uses some descriptive language, including time words (e.g., 'later'), space words (e.g., 'over there') and function words (e.g., explain function of items)
- Frequently uses pronouns ('he', 'she') and prepositions ('under')
- Retells a simple past event in order e.g., fell down, hurt finger.
- Answers 'yes / no' questions appropriately
- Provides information about self and favourite things.
- Talks with peers during play about what they are doing and/or to direct them e.g., 'you be the Mummy'.
- Modulates volume of voice

42 - 48 months

- Uses sentences of 4-6 words
- Uses possessives, for example 'the boy's teddy'.
- Questions why things happen and gives explanations e.g., 'who?', 'what?', 'when?', 'how?', 'why?'
- Provides appropriate answers in response to 'where?', 'who?' and 'what?' questions e.g. 'Where is the sponge?' - 'under the sink'
- Uses 'and', 'because' 'so' to link simple phrases.
- Begins to use a range of tenses e.g. (play, played, playing) at times, making errors e.g. 'I runned outside'
- Uses language they hear around them in their community and culture.
- Uses talk to explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next.
- Talks about things that are of particular importance to them.
- Builds vocabulary reflecting the breadth of their experiences e.g., the topic of dinosaurs.
- Speech is understood by unfamiliar adults, with some errors e.g., 'r', 'l', 'th', 'sh', 'j'.

48 - 54 months

- Retells a simple story recalling events and characters.
- Uses future tense e.g., 'will play'.
- Names time of day associated with activities.
- Begins to introduce a storyline / narrative into their role play / small world play.
- Watches / waits for listener confirmation before continuing (nod / smile)

54 - 60 months

- Gives a connected account of events or experiences, using language of 'first', 'next' and 'then'.
- Tells longer stories, sometimes mixing fact and fiction.
- Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations.
- Uses talk to work out problems by organising, sequencing, and clarifying their thinking, ideas, feelings, and events.
- Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Self-Regulation

0 - 3 months

- Calms from being upset when held, rocked, spoken to, or sung to with soothing voice.
- Begins to recognise body sensations e.g., hunger.
- Shows a response to sounds and sights by eye tracking, head, or body movements.
- Begins to have facial expressions / sounds or gestures to communicate their feelings - different cries for different things
- Seeks and accepts comfort - cries or vocalises when hungry / tired or has a need.
- Responds by snuggling in when held or fed by a familiar adult.

3 - 6 months

- Shows emotional responses to that of others e.g., smiling.
- Anticipates feeding care routines by showing excitement.
- Expresses feelings strongly through crying to make sure that their needs will be met.
- May whimper, scream and cry if left alone for too long.
- If their needs are not responded to, they may become withdrawn and passive.
- Is affirmed and comforted by familiar carers through voice, physical presence, and touch, e.g., singing, cuddles, smiles or rocking.

6 - 9 months

- Seeks physical and emotional comfort by snuggling in to trusted adults.
- Communicates a range of emotions (e.g., pleasure, interest, fear, surprise, anger, and excitement) through making sounds, facial expressions, and moving their bodies.
- Caregiver and child are closely attentive to each other and engage in sensitive, responsive exchanges.
- Shows distress at being left alone and pleasure at return of familiar people.
- Makes use of special people for comfort and security
- Reacts emotionally to other people's emotions; smiling when smiled at and becoming distressed if they hear another child crying.
- Reacts to toys being withdrawn.
- Responds to simple lap time e.g., stiffens / relaxes facial expression, eyes widening.
- Reacts differently to physical interactions e.g., rough and tumble play.
- Responds to different temperatures on the body e.g., getting cold after a bath.
- Aware of people near them e.g., by turning head or eyes towards them, quietens or increases sounds /vocalisations.

9 - 12 months

- Shows a wider variety of feelings, using crying, gestures, and vocalisations freely to express their needs.
- Uses familiar adult to share feelings and for 'emotional refuelling' when feeling tired/anxious.

- Uses a comfort object, familiar others, routines, or spaces to soothe themselves, particularly when separated from their close carer.
- Co-operates as they become familiar with and anticipate routines e.g., nappy changing, getting dressed.
- Begins to express a range of emotional responses: excited, worried, crying.
- Likes to have sight or hearing range of a familiar adult and reacts when main carer leaves the room.
- Has a wariness of strangers?
- Protests or shows resistance by stiffening or vocalisations to show annoyance / refusal.

12 - 18 months

- Responds to emotions in key adult voices.
- Explores the boundaries of behaviours, may look at an adult to check before acting or testing boundaries.
- Needs constant supervision due to dangers of increased exploration.
- Participates in daily activities as they become familiar with and anticipate routines e.g., getting dressed or finding their beaker.
- Can usually be distracted when upset with a gentle prompt.

18 -24 months

- Expresses positive feelings such as joy and affection and negative feelings such as anger, frustration, and distress e.g., through actions and / or behaviours and a few words.
- Experiences a wide range of feelings with great intensity, such as anger and frustration.
- Developing impulse control, will look towards a caregiver before acting.
- May lose control of feelings, body and thinking when distressed.
- Tantrums if frustrated but can be easily distracted.
- 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.
- Pleased by praise.
- Developing an awareness when they have done something wrong.

24 - 30 months

- Can feel overwhelmed by intense emotions, resulting in an emotional collapse ('meltdown') when frightened, frustrated, angry, anxious, or overstimulated (e.g., fight, flight, freeze)
- Seeks comfort from familiar adults when needed, distracts themselves with a comfort object when upset.
- Responds to the feelings of others, showing concern and offering comfort.
- Joins in with familiar routines when in a small group.
- Expresses their own preferences for what they want to play / eat / wear.
- Shows a growing awareness that others have feelings.
- Sometimes complies with requests, sometimes may be stubborn.

30 - 36 months

- May recognise that some actions can hurt or harm others and begins to stop themselves from doing something they should not do.
- Expresses emotions of pride and embarrassment as well as a wide range of other feelings
- Begins to modify own behaviour with support.
- Aware adult may approve / disapprove of their actions e.g., checks to see if adult is watching, or looks guilty if caught in the act.
- May display feelings of intense emotions through their actions e.g., voice or / and physical.
- Less easily distracted.

36 - 42 months

- Expresses a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others and through their behaviour and play.
- May exhibit increased fearfulness of things like the dark or monsters etc. and possibly have nightmares.
- Talks and responds about how others might be feeling.
- Has a developing awareness that their actions and words can hurt others' feelings?
- Modifies behaviour, with support, to fit in with what others are doing e.g., waiting a short time for a turn.
- Has strong sense of own space and own possessions?
- Complies with familiar rules e.g., not climbing as they may fall.

42 - 48 months

- Takes turns more readily with reminders.
- Does not always need an adult to remind them of a rule.
- Asks permission to use a toy a peer is playing with.
- Some understanding of sharing e.g., toys, snacks
- A developing ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviour to enable them to achieve a goal.

48 - 54 months

- Understands their own and other people's feelings of happiness / sadness, offering empathy and / or comfort.
- Attempts to repair a relationship or situation where they have caused upset.
- Understands how their actions impact other people.
- Is more able to manage their feelings when their wishes cannot be met.
- Negotiates solutions to conflicts in their play.
- Strongly self-willed
- Easily upset by failure
- Understands the need to argue with words rather than actions.
- Expresses their needs, a wider range of feelings and behaviour in appropriate ways.

54 - 60 months

- 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 within a range of environments.
- Understands what is considered right and wrong and can explain why.
- Seeks ways to manage conflict, for example through holding back, sharing, negotiation and compromise.
- Has awareness of the boundaries set and behavioural expectations within a range of environments?
- Engages in socially acceptable behaviour in public, able to manage thoughts, feelings, and behaviour.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing Self

0 - 3 months

- Sleeps for periods of two hours or more
- Begins to look at familiar adult for brief periods.
- Makes sounds, eye contact and movements to initiate social interaction.
- Learns about their physical self through exploratory play with their hands and feet and movement.
- Expresses discomfort, hunger, or thirst
- Opens mouth for bottle and/or breast or shows awareness of naso-gastric (NG) tube.

3 - 6 months

- Has predictable sleeping pattern and sleeps more at night than during the day.
- Makes sounds to get attention for comfort, nourishment, or company.
- Laughs to express pleasure when happy or cries when upset.
- Enjoys playing with own hands and fingers.
- Participates in short, shared interaction when sounds and expressions are mirrored back to them by close adults e.g., laughing and gurgling.
- Expresses awareness of their physical self through their own movements, gestures, and expressions by touching their own and others' faces, eyes, and mouth in play and care events
- Communicates discomfort or distress with a wet or soiled nappy.
- Anticipates food routines with interest.

6 - 9 months

- Has regular naps during the day?
- Opens mouth for spoon and food.
- Accepts a range of tastes, consistencies, and textures (runny, thick, paste, puree, lumps)
- Tolerates face and hair washing.
- Enjoys playing with own feet and toys.
- Repeats action, e.g., dropping toy, accompanying with vocalising to attract adult's attention.
- Chews on baby toothbrush
- Drinks from two handled beaker with help

9 - 12 months

- Starts to show own food preferences, including fruit and vegetables.
- Drinks from feeder cup independently
- Has one nap during the day
- Plays with range of bath toys.

- Pulls off hat, gloves, socks.
- Shows an interest in their reflection in a mirror, although may not yet realise that the reflection is them.
- Repeats action when responded to e.g., dropping spoon from highchair.
- Initiates simple game, inviting adult to join in by pausing, looking e.g., banging objects together.
- Expresses more awareness of their physical self by exploring objects around them inside and outdoors.
- Develops confidence to try new things.
- Begins to co-operate with nappy changing.
- Grasps finger foods
- Tries to share control of the spoon.
- Tolerates hand over hand support e.g., holding a spoon.

12 - 18 months

- Begins to participate in bathing e.g., holding out arms and legs for washing and later uses sponge, following prompting.
- Cooperates with drying hands.
- Tolerates use of toothbrush and toothpaste
- Actively cooperates with nappy changing e.g., lies still, helps hold legs up.
- Starts to communicate urination, bowel movement.
- Attempts to put shoes on
- Accepts new textures and tastes such as larger pieces of food and increasing range.
- Looks back to familiar adult to check if not sure about something.
- Points and vocalises to draw adult's attention to something of interest.
- Briefly demonstrates a scenario in their play related to their everyday life, e.g., wiping doll's face.
- Responds to their own name and enjoys finding own nose, eyes, or tummy as part of interactive games.
- Shows separation anxiety (if left) 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, e.g., 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.

18 -24 months

- Holds open cup with both hands, drinks without much spilling.
- Starts to be less messy with food.
- Develops own likes and dislikes of food and drink.
- Tolerates use of toothpaste and brush and may help brush their teeth.
- Rubs hands with soap and rinses under water.
- Shows some awareness of what a potty or toilet is used for.
- Puts on hat and slip on shoes.

- Pulls down zip on coat.
- Assists with removing loose garments e.g., pyjama bottoms, unbuttoned coat, cardigan.
- Smiles or laughs when successful.
- Seeks reassurance from familiar adult when tired, upset or hurt.
- Is aware of and interested in their own and others' physical characteristics, pointing to and naming features e.g., noses, hair, and eyes.
- Experiments with what their bodies can do through setting themselves physical challenges, e.g., pulling a large truck upstairs.

24 - 30 months

- Asks, or searches for food when hungry.
- Willing to try new food textures and tastes.
- Feeds self with spoon without spilling and increasing need to be in control.
- Indicates need for toilet by behaviour e.g., dancing movements or holding self.
- Tolerates sitting on potty or toilet.
- Clearly communicates wet or soiled nappy or pants.
- Locates arms in coat or shirt when held by an adult, pulls top down over head.
- Enjoys exploring new places with a trusted adult.
- Shows persistence in expressing needs, if not met
- Knows their own name, preferences, and interests.
- Is developing an emerging understanding of similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- Makes choices and decisions based on personal preferences and own ideas.
- Growing in independence, rejecting help e.g., 'me do it'.

30 - 36 months

- Eats with a fork and a spoon, able to blow e.g., candles or when cooling food.
- Pours drink from jug with some spillage.
- Helps wash self, turns taps on and off and helps dry self after washing.
- Willing to have a go at brushing their own teeth however needs an adult to supervise / support.
- Toilet trained with infrequent accidents.
- Removes or pulls up trousers.
- Shows active sense of humour, does things to make others laugh.
- Very aware of others' reactions, likes to demonstrate ability.
- Searches out familiar adult for comfort.
- Shyness with strangers, especially adults
- Likes to sit, cuddle and share events of the day with familiar adults.
- Is becoming aware of their unique abilities e.g., riding a scooter, dancing, singing / signing.
- Begins to use 'me', 'you' and 'I' in their talk and to show awareness of their social identity of gender, ethnicity, and ability.

36 - 42 months

- Asks for toilet using voice, gesture, or action, for example, leads adult to toilet and asks verbally or makes a sign.
- Usually able to control bowel with occasional accidents.
- Pulls down own pants when using the toilet, flushes toilet with support, waits to be wiped.
- Brushes own teeth and hair
- Dresses and undresses but need help with fastenings.
- Helps with food preparation, beginning to use a knife for spreading.
- Beginning to have food preferences and expresses them.
- Separates from main carer with confidence.
- Is more outgoing towards strangers and more confident in new social situations.
- More willing to take risks and try new things.
- Able to express their needs and ask adults for help.
- Shows strong personal preference e.g., clothes.
- Is becoming more aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others in more detailed ways and identifies themselves in relation to social groups and to their peers.
- Enjoys having a 'job' e.g., fetching the milk carton / fruit / washing up.

42 - 48 months

- Understands need for variety in food, eats a healthy range of foods.
- Knows when to wash hands and face.
- Carries scissors carefully.
- Developing sense of basic road safety
- May argue to achieve own wishes.
- Is confident in seeking comfort, reassurance and help from special people.
- Is sensitive to others' messages of appreciation or criticism.
- Develop ideas about themselves according to the messages they hear from others.
- Recognises that they are part of a group e.g., badger class.

48 - 54 months

- Uses personal hygiene materials competently.
- Reliably dry and clean during the day
- Understands not to touch hot surfaces.
- Developing awareness of the importance of daily exercise
- Expresses wishes and needs clearly, can wait, modify, and defer.
- Enjoys receiving praise for achievements.
- Approaches new challenges with confidence.
- Recognises that they belong to different communities and social groups and communicates freely about.

- own home and community
- 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.
- Displays perseverance in carrying out a chosen activity.

54 - 60 months

- Understands need for hygiene in food preparation, serving and eating.
- Begins to take responsibility for self-care in washing and teeth cleaning.
- Knows the routine of wiping self and hand washing and usually carries this out.
- Shows confidence in speaking to others about their own needs, wants, interests and opinions in familiar group.
- Displays resilience when faced with challenges e.g., learning a new skill.
- Able to negotiate and accept others' perspectives.
- Describes self in positive terms and talks about abilities.
- Shows confidence and ability to stand up for themselves.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Building Relationships

0 - 3 months

- Shows their readiness to be social through using their sensory abilities, following movement, and gazing at faces intently.
- Most responsive to prime carer's voice
- Begins to look at familiar adult for brief periods.
- Turns eyes and or head towards voice.
- Stops crying when picked up.
- Makes own sounds or physical response when talked to
- Responds to interactions with small movement of fingers, arms, legs, eye flicker, turn head, smile (flicker), sounds.

3 - 6 months

- Moves body, arms, and legs and changes facial expression in response to others e.g., sticking out tongue, opening mouth and widening eyes.
- Holds up arms to be picked up and cuddled and is soothed by physical touch such as being held, cuddled, and stroked.
- Laughs or squeals to express pleasure when happy or excited.
- Shows delight at tickling and anticipation games.
- Begins to respond to other children touching them or interacting with them.
- Interacts with others through turning their head, eye movements, body movements, rolling towards others etc.

6 - 9 months

- Responds to what a carer is paying attention to e.g., following their gaze.
- Distinguishes between people, recognising the look, sound, and smell of their close carer.
- Smiles more often to familiar rather than unfamiliar people.
- Likes and responds to cuddles and being held.
- Makes body stiff and vocalises when protesting.
- Shows anticipation when playing games through sounds and body movements.
- Makes choices by looking, turning head, eye flicker, body movements etc.

9 - 12 months

- Responds to facial expressions of happiness and sadness in others.
- Makes use of special people for comfort and security
- 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.
- Interested in watching others, especially children.
- Laughs with favourite people.
- Reacts to audience, repeats activity or action when encouraged.

- Shows delight at active rough and tumble play.
- Shows anticipation in interactive games such as peep po.

12 - 18 months

- Shows shyness around unfamiliar people and shows preference for certain people.
- May look concerned if hears crying, or displays excitement if hears familiar, happy voice.
- Initiates interaction with other children e.g., vocalising, reaching, moving towards
- Engages another person to help achieve a goal e.g., to get an object out of reach.
- Seeks reactions e.g., to minor injury.
- Draws others into social interaction through calling, crying, and babbling, smiling, laughing, and moving their bodies and limbs.
- Cooperates with caregiving experiences, such as dressing.

18 -24 months

- Enjoys playing alone and alongside others (parallel play)
- Will often watch, follow, and imitate others in their play.
- May find long periods of social engagement overwhelming and may withdraw.
- 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.
- 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 e.g., their dummy.

24 - 30 months

- 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.
- May dislike sharing a preferred adult's attention with another child.
- Enjoys conversation with carers.
- Engages in play with other children.
- May intentionally hurt another person if angry.

30 - 36 months

- Enjoys company of other children and wants to play with them.
- Enjoys gaining attention of others and sustaining interaction.
- Defends own possessions.
- 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.
- Closely watches others' body language to begin to understand their intentions and meaning.

- 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.

36 - 42 months

- Sometimes shares or takes turns with others with adult guidance to understand 'yours' and 'mine'.
- Notices and asks questions about differences, such as skin colour, types of hair.
- Seeks out companionship with adults and other children, sharing experiences and play ideas.
- Participates in some co-operative play.
- Joins in group activities.
- Shows initiative and autonomy in relating with others.
- Identifies self with children of same age and gender.
- Uses their experiences of adult behaviours to guide their social relationships and interactions.

42 - 48 months

- Understands that own actions affect other people e.g., may comfort a child they have upset.
- 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.
- Initiates play by giving peer a role, e.g., 'you be the Mummy'.
- Begins to select friends and exclude others.
- Articulates their wants and needs.
- Looks to a supportive adult for help in resolving conflict with peers.

48 - 54 months

- Independently plays in small and large groups.
- Enjoys doing things with other children and adults.
- More confident in new social situations
- Develops particular friendships with other children.
- Starts to recognise their friends may have different ideas.
- Returns to the secure base of a familiar adult to recharge and gain emotional support and practical help in difficult situations.

54 - 60 months

- Enjoys playing alone, alongside and with others, inviting others to play and attempting to join others' play.
- Takes turns, shares resources and equipment with peers.
- Aware that there are different ways in which to behave dependent on the situation and company they are in
- Represents and recreates what they have learnt about social interactions from their relationships with close adults, in their play and relationships with others.
- More able to understand other people's needs, wants and behaviours.

- Takes steps to resolve conflicts with other children by negotiating and finding a compromise; sometimes by themselves, sometimes with support.
- Proactively seeks adult support.

Physical Development: Gross Motor Skills

0 - 3 months

- Startle reflex with whole body movement
- Grasps finger if palm touched or briefly grasps an object when it is placed in their hand.
- Keeps hand closed with thumb tucked into palm.
- Turns head to side when placed on tummy.
- Holds head in midline when on back.
- Waves arms and legs and can wiggle/squirm when lying on their back.
- Rolls from side to back.
- Blinks eyes spontaneously
- Closes eyes to bright lights
- Turns head or eyes towards light or sounds.
- Shows a preference for high-definition colours e.g., black/white.
- Follows faces or objects with both eyes when these are near their face and are slowly moving side to side.
- Looks from one object to another.
- Moves all limbs freely.
- Able to hold head steady for few seconds when being moved from lying to sitting.

3 - 6 months

- Moves arms more than legs.
- When lying on their back, can bring hands together over their chest, touching their fingers.
- When lying on their back, reaches randomly towards toys e.g., baby gym.
- When lying on their back, lifts legs into a vertical position and grasps feet and plays with toes.
- Moves head to look around when lying on their back or in supported sitting position (where appropriate)
- Able to control head e.g., not floppy when supported in an upright position.
- Arm and leg movements become smoother and less jerky.
- When lying on their tummy, child lifts head using forearms to support (straight arms and flat hands)
- Tracks primary caregiver/s with large body movements as they move around the room.
- When they have a toy in their hand(s), they hold it whilst looking at it, wave it about and may explore it orally.
- Using hands and / or feet, feels and plays with objects of different textures and tolerates new textures.
- Reaches out persistently and deliberately for toys and faces that interest them, developing awareness that their hands are their own and they can control them.
- May fix gaze on something of interest when looking around their environment.
- Begins to weight bear when held standing on a hard surface.

6 - 9 months

- When placed in a sitting position, leans forward and then returns to original position.
- Sits with support with head and back straight and turns head from side to side to look around.
- Tries to sit up from lying on their back when hands are held.
- Rolls over from front to back and from back to front.
- Demonstrates pre-crawling movements with arms and legs when lying on tummy.
- Takes weight through legs and bounces up and down when in a standing position (where appropriate)
- Makes stepping movements when held by an adult.
- Pulls self to standing against a support e.g., furniture, but does not yet lower self-down with control.
- Puts arms up to be lifted.
- Kicks legs vigorously one leg then the other
- When sitting, puts hands out when off balance to save self from falling.

9 - 12 months

- Pulls self to sitting position.
- Sits unsupported on the floor and can adjust body posture when leaning forward to pick up and
- manipulate a toy without losing balance.
- Sits up from lying down.
- Rolls from front to back/back to front with deliberate intent and can roll from left to right and right to left.
- Moves around independently e.g., commando crawling / bottom shuffling / sliding on the back / crawling.
- Moves from a sitting position to a hands and knees crawling position.
- Whilst in a crawl position, reaches out with one arm and maintains balance.
- Takes weight through legs when placed in a supported standing position.
- Kneels up against furniture.
- Pulls self to standing against furniture and lowers self-down with increasing control.
- Walks around furniture lifting one foot and stepping sideways (cruising)
- Walks with one or both hands held by an adult.
- Stands by themselves for a few seconds when placed in a standing position.
- Gets onto a low edge or step.
- Walks with a push along walker or by pushing a stable toy.
- Stretches out with one hand to grasp a toy when offered.
- Throws toy or object with random aim.

12 - 18 months

- Sits well and gets into sitting position independently.
- Pulls to standing from sitting e.g., using furniture or adult support.

- Sits down from a standing position with control.
- Crawls upstairs and comes down backwards on knees.
- Takes a few steps independently, these may be uneven.
- Picks up an object on the floor with support from an adult or furniture.
- Climbs forward onto adult's chair then turns and sits.
- Gets onto child's chair themselves backwards or sideways.
- Purposefully throws a small ball or other object.
- Turns over containers to tip out contents.

18 -24 months

- Sits and plays in more than one position e.g., kneeling, legs outstretched, legs crossed, side sitting.
- Walks well, with shorter steps, legs closer together and no longer needs to hold arms up for balance.
- Attempts to run carefully but not yet smoothly.
- Changes direction whilst walking
- Walks backwards for a few steps when pulling an item or toy using rope or string.
- Lifts leg whilst holding onto an adult to assist with dressing.
- Gets onto a chair independently.

24 - 30 months

- Runs well although not always avoiding obstacles.
- Kicks a ball e.g., stands on one foot while kicking with the other.
- Jumps with both feet off the ground.
- Squats down to pick up objects, occasionally falling.
- Returns to standing after squatting down to pick up an object.
- Carries large objects whilst walking.
- Moves a tricycle or bike by pushing feet along floor.
- Pushes and pulls large toys or objects, difficulty steering around obstacles.
- Walks upstairs holding an adult's hand or banister by putting two feet on each step.

30 - 36 months

- Jumps from a small step or low piece of equipment.
- Rolls or throws ball or bean bag more accurately e.g., passing to another person, aiming at a target.
- Catches a large ball thrown into two arms e.g., beach ball, balloon ball, light football.
- Kneels without support.
- Bends over to retrieve an item from the floor without needing to hold on to anything.
- Runs safely on whole foot.
- Negotiates obstacles and turn corners when running.

- Stands independently from a kneeling position without using furniture to support.
- Stands on tiptoe when holding onto something.
- Walks downstairs, two feet to each step whilst carrying a toy.
- Walks backwards, forwards and sideways.
- Steers a wheeled toy with hands and attempts to pedal e.g., balance bike / trike.

36 - 42 months

- Moves freely with confidence in a range of ways e.g., slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding, hopping.
- Climbs confidently and begins pulling themselves up on play equipment.
- Climbs stairs, ladders or gym equipment using alternate feet.
- Pedals a tricycle.
- Squats with steadiness to rest or play with object on the ground and rises to feet without using hands.
- Walks along a bench / low wall.
- Kicks a large ball successfully with directed aim.
- Kicks smaller balls forcibly.
- Catches a large ball.
- Catches a small ball at close range.
- Links two movements together e.g., run and jump into a puddle; walk and duck under a climbing frame.

42 - 48 months

- Stands on one foot for a few seconds independently.
- Rides a two-wheel bike with stabilisers or lifts both feet off the floor on a balance bike.
- Hops up and down with adult support.
- Jumps from apparatus landing appropriately.
- Runs skilfully, adjusting speed and direction to avoid obstacles.
- 'Bounce passes' a large ball and receives a bounce pass.

48 - 54 months

- Avoids obstacles and changes direction when riding a bike / tricycle.
- Throws a small ball up and down, catching it as it falls.
- Travels with confidence and skill around, under, over and through gymnastic equipment
- Jumps over a low hurdle e.g., up to 10cm high.
- Bends knees to touch toes.
- Climbs up a slide and comes down independently.

54 - 60 months

- Attempts to jump using a skipping rope.
- Bends over and touches toes with straight legs.
- Copies a sequence of gross motor movements after demonstration, e.g., hop, jump, skip.
- Master's throwing and catching a variety of different sized balls.
- Performs dances using simple movement patterns.
- Takes part in simple team games, developing simple tactics for defending and attacking.
- Rides a two-wheeled bike independently.

Physical Development: Fine Motor Skills

0 - 3 months

- Brings hands to mouth.
- Moves arms and legs.
- Hands start to open more e.g., may open in response to touch.
- Looks at own hands.
- Looks from one object to another i.e., shifts visual attention.
- Tracks a person or object with both eyes.

3 - 6 months

- Holds hands together.
- Reaches for toys with both hands.
- Explores hands and fingers e.g., watches them, presses hands together, clasps and unclasps hands.
- Holds object for a couple of seconds, when placed in palm of hand.
- Follows objects with both eyes in all directions.
- Brings hand / object to their mouth.
- Fixes gaze on something of interest when looking around their environment.
- Uses whole hand to hold objects for longer periods (palmer grasp)
- Reaches out to faces with both hands to touch and explore.

6 - 9 months

- Takes most objects to mouth.
- Pats and bangs objects with open hand
- Explores by grabbing or scratching textures and surfaces within reach.
- Holds a small object in their hand using a firm palmer grasp.
- Reaches for small objects.
- Brings fingers in towards the palm to curl fingers around an object (palmar grasp)
- Uses fingers like a rake, curling fingers over objects to bring them close (raking grasp)
- Shakes and bangs objects.
- Transfers objects from one hand to the other
- Keeps hands open and relaxed most of the time.
- Begins to pick up small items.
- Grasps a toy using both hands at once.
- Accepts and holds a second item whilst maintaining hold of original item.
- Begins to pull objects out of containers.
- Splashes water with a flat hand

9 - 12 months

- Releases an object voluntarily by dropping it but not yet placing object down deliberately.
- Explores objects by banging, shaking, and turning them around in their hands.
- Explores different textures with hands in a sensory way e.g., cornflour, beans, icing sugar.
- Aware that hand movements can leave a mark, e.g., plays with food on tray of highchair.
- Bangs two toys together in the midline.
- Holds an object and bangs or taps it against a surface.
- Copies clapping hands.
- Begins to put objects into a container.
- Begins to isolate index finger.
- Manipulates malleable materials.
- Begins to stack blocks on top of each other.
- Uses two hands to lift small and large objects in and out of containers.
- Picks up objects using pads of the thumb and index finger (inferior pincer grasp)
- Stretches out with one hand to grasp a toy if offered.
- Looks at and knocks down an object placed at table height, shoulder height or floor level.
- Intentionally pass an object to an adult

12 - 18 months

- Picks up, holds, and releases small objects with precision using tips of fingers (superior or 'neat' pincer grasp)
- Notices their hands or tools they use can make marks as they explore sensory materials.
- Claps hands together spontaneously
- Waves goodbye
- Begins to stack blocks on top of each other.
- Puts objects and toys into and out of containers with one hand.
- Pulls along toys and items using a rope or string.
- Uses a single finger to touch or point e.g., to indicate need, to explore an object or to activate a cause-and-effect device.
- Points to and pokes objects with index finger
- Copies finger movements
- Begins to use a spoon and cup.
- Helps turn the pages of a board book but may turn more than one at a time.
- Fits large shapes into a posting box or shape sorter.
- Removes pieces from an inset puzzle or pegs from a pegboard.

18 -24 months

- Begins to pick up something small with their first finger and thumb i.e., a pincer grasp.
- Releases items when held with pincer grasp.
- Uses hands to twist, turn and manipulate an object.
- Scoops with a spoon at mealtimes or during play
- Puts rings on a ring stacker.
- Builds a taller block tower.
- Turns pages of a book one at a time

24 - 30 months

- Stabs food with a fork at mealtimes
- Uses a pouring action when playing with containers in sand or water.
- Presses small switches and buttons using index finger.
- Squeezes toys or instruments to produce a sound (both two handed and using one hand)
- Deliberately places small objects e.g., pegs in a pegboard, pieces into an inset puzzle.
- Builds tall structures without them falling over.
- More co-ordinated hand movements; using both hands at the same time.
- Uses appropriate actions to explore properties of objects e.g., turning, twisting, rolling, and pressing.

30 - 36 months

- Holds cup with or without handles with two hands, drinking with minimal spilling.
- Threads large beads onto rod, wire, or floppy cord e.g., washing line cord or heavy shoelace.
- Uses a knife to chop soft items.
- Places objects down neatly and precisely
- Fits increasingly small shapes and objects into holes during posting activities.
- Puts tiny objects into a small container.
- Squeezes a pair of loop scissors independently to make single snips when an adult is holding the paper.

36 - 42 months

- Threads onto a shoelace
- Removes unfastened clothing independently e.g., tops, bottoms, socks, footwear.
- Creates long shapes when rolling dough.
- Holds scissors in one hand, makes single cuts in paper.
- Folds paper in half
- Manipulates puzzle pieces to complete an inset jigsaw.

42 - 48 months

- Pours, sieves, and digs with control.
- Builds towers using several small connecting bricks.
- Shows control in holding and using books, hammers and mark making tools.
- Makes consecutive cuts in self-held paper.
- Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts, and bolts.

48 - 54 months

- Uses wind-up toys.
- Cuts simple shapes and manipulates a conventional pair of scissors.
- Manipulates puzzle pieces to complete a simple jigsaw.

54 - 60 months

- Handles tools, objects, construction, and malleable materials safely with increasing control and intention.
- Manages all fastenings on clothes with minimal help.
- Skilfully operates appropriate electronic devices with ease and control.
- Makes simple stitches using a large needle.
- Effectively uses a range of tools with consistent control e.g., uses scissors to cut along a line.