



Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage



Guidance



Early years

Early years practitioners

Early years settings which receive nursery grant funding and schools with nursery and reception aged children

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Definition of terms

Throughout this booklet, we use the term **setting** to mean local authority nurseries, nursery centres, playgroups, pre-schools, accredited childminders in approved childminding networks, or schools in the independent, private or voluntary sectors, and maintained schools.

The adults who work with children in the settings, whatever their qualifications, are referred to as **practitioners**.

The word **parents** is used to refer to mothers, fathers, legal guardians and the primary carers of children in public care.

The term **curriculum** is used to describe everything children do, see, hear or feel in their setting, both planned and unplanned.

The role of the practitioner includes establishing relationships with children and their parents, planning the learning environment and curriculum, supporting and extending children's play, learning and development, and assessing children's achievements and planning their next steps. The word **teaching** is used to include all these aspects of their role.

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Parliamentary Under
Secretary of State for
Employment and Equal
Opportunities

Foreword by Margaret Hodge MBE MP

In October 1999, we published a booklet introducing the early learning goals, with the promise of more detailed curriculum planning guidance to follow. I am very pleased to present that to you now. This new, comprehensive guidance for early years practitioners sets out in detail, with plenty of practical and illustrative examples, what might reasonably be expected of children at different stages in the foundation stage. I am sure that it will be of value to early years practitioners in every setting, as well as to those more widely involved in early education. It is the core reference document for the successful implementation of the foundation stage from September 2000.

Our aim is to provide a high quality, integrated early education and childcare service for all who want it. The foundation stage of education will make a positive contribution to children's early development and learning. During this time we cannot afford to get things wrong. The early years are critical in children's development. Children develop rapidly during this time – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The foundation stage is about developing key learning skills such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work together and cooperate with other children. It is also about developing early communication, literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare young children for key stage 1 of the national curriculum.

This guidance includes examples of learning activities for children at various stages of their development and describes 'stepping stones' towards the early learning goals, which most children should achieve by the end of the foundation stage (the end of the primary school reception year). Its principal aim is to help practitioners to plan how their work will contribute to the achievement of the early learning goals. It also discusses the role of the practitioner and other adults and introduces the good practice that underpins effective early education.

All children should be given the opportunity to experience the very best possible start to their education. We need to ensure that our children enter school having established solid foundations on which they can build. This will help to ensure that they continue to flourish throughout their school years and beyond.

I am particularly proud of this guidance because it is not simply a product of government. It is something you have asked for and it has been developed drawing on the extensive expertise of a group of early education specialists, representing a broad range of early years interests. Contributors include leading practitioners, academics, and representatives from organisations committed to the care, development and education of young children. The guidance is yours, to help you achieve a better future for our children. I commend it to you.

MARGARET HODGE

Foreword by Nick Tate

Chief Executive, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

The introduction in September 2000 of a foundation stage for children aged three to the end of the reception year was strongly supported by those who responded to QCA's consultation in Spring 1999.

The establishment of a foundation stage is a significant landmark in funded education in England. For the first time it gives this very important stage of education a distinct identity. The early learning goals set high expectations for the end of the foundation stage, but expectations that are achievable for most children who have followed a relevant curriculum. We published *Early learning goals* in October 1999 and promised that we would publish additional guidance to help practitioners understand what the goals mean for children aged three to five throughout the foundation stage and what practitioners need to do to help children make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, them.

This guidance has been developed by QCA, working with early years practitioners and experts. We have worked closely throughout with our national partners, in particular the national literacy and numeracy strategies and Ofsted. The purpose of the guidance is to help practitioners provide learning and teaching experiences of the highest quality throughout the foundation stage, while allowing them to respond flexibly to the particular needs of the children, families and community with whom they work. In this way, standards of learning and teaching will be raised, so helping to give children secure foundations on which future learning can build.

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Using this guidance

This guidance is intended to help practitioners plan to meet the diverse needs of all children so that most will achieve and some, where appropriate, will go beyond the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

Guidance is given on effective **learning and teaching** to help practitioners in the planning and teaching of an appropriate curriculum for:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

For each of the six areas of learning, additional guidance is given on **learning and teaching**. This highlights those things to which practitioners need to give particular attention in that area of learning.

Stepping stones

– to help practitioners plan

To help practitioners in **planning**, the guidance identifies:

- ‘Stepping stones’ that show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need to learn during the foundation stage in order to achieve the early learning goals. They are not age-related, although it is likely that three-year-old children will be better described by earlier stepping stones, shown in the yellow band, progressing through those in the blue band, with later stepping stones in the green band normally describing older children in the foundation stage. The early learning goals form the final stepping stones.

Examples of what children do

– to help practitioners assess

To help practitioners in **assessing**, the guidance identifies:

- ‘Examples of what children do’, which will help practitioners to identify when knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes have been achieved by individual or groups of children, and to plan next steps in children’s learning. They provide snapshots of children in various settings and put the stepping stones into familiar contexts.

What does the practitioner need to do?

– to help practitioners teach

To help practitioners in **teaching**, the guidance identifies:

- ‘What does the practitioner need to do?’, showing how practitioners can both support and consolidate that learning and help children make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, the early learning goals.

The guidance reflects and is consistent with the principles and aims already set out in the *Early learning goals* booklet published in October 1999. This also contained sections on partnership with parents, the diverse needs of children, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children with English as an additional language and play. All of these sections have been included in this guidance and their implications reflected throughout.

Practitioners will wish to refer to these sections as they plan for the children in their setting to make progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, the early learning goals. Examples of how a range of settings have done this are included in a new section, ‘Putting the principles into practice’. This sets out common features of good practice which result from the principles and which all practitioners should consider when evaluating their own practice and that of their setting.

The foundation stage

The foundation stage begins when children reach the age of three. Many children first attend some form of pre-school or nursery soon after their third birthday. Children may go to a number of settings during the foundation stage, attending part-time or full-time. A few will stay at home until they begin primary school.

Children will have already learnt a great deal by the time they are three years old. Many children will have been taken to groups such as parent and toddler groups, and some children will have had experience of group settings such as day centres or home settings with a childminder. For others, it will be their first experience of a group setting. It is important that early years practitioners work in partnership with parents and other adults. These may include speech therapists, district nurses, health visitors, Portage workers and teachers of the visually and hearing impaired. Partnerships are promoted by valuing and building on children's previous learning.

The setting chosen by parents will depend on:

- the needs of the child;
- what is available near the child's home or the parents' place of work;
- what is available near to where the child is cared for and local policies on admission to nursery and reception classes;
- parents' childcare needs;
- parents' preferences.

All settings that receive nursery education grant funding are required to offer high-quality provision. Most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Practitioners should plan a



curriculum that helps children make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, these goals.

At whatever age children begin pre-school or school, they will have had a range of different experiences. They will have learnt a great deal, particularly from their families, and will have varied interests and skills. Children aged three, four and five are constantly encountering new experiences and seeking to understand them in

order to extend their skills, develop their confidence and build on what they already know. They learn in many different ways. Practitioners have a crucial role in this learning and should draw on a range of teaching and care strategies and knowledge of child development. Children deepen their understanding by playing, talking, observing, planning, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and to each other. Practitioners need to plan learning experiences of the highest quality, considering both children's needs and achievements and the range of



learning experiences that will help them make progress. Well-planned play is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge during the foundation stage.

The last year of the foundation stage is often described as the reception year, since most children are admitted to the reception class of an infant or primary school at some point during that year. The introduction of the foundation stage does not change the compulsory school age as defined in the Education Act 1996, which is the beginning of the term after a

child's fifth birthday. National curriculum programmes of study for key stage 1 have been written to be taught in years 1 and 2. The foundation stage prepares children for learning in key stage 1 and is consistent with the national curriculum.

The following table shows some of the different settings children attend before and during the foundation stage. It makes clear the marked variation in the ages at which children begin pre-school settings and later reception and year 1 classes in primary schools.

		January	September	September	September
A September-born boy		3.3 years Joins nursery class	3.11 years In nursery class	4.11 years Joins reception class	5.11 years Joins year 1
An October-born girl with a hearing impairment	Specialist teacher at home from age six months. From age two attends a local authority family centre two mornings each week	3.2 years Continues to attend family centre two mornings each week	3.10 years Joins nursery school that has special unit	4.10 years Remains in nursery school – joins reception class with support in summer term	5.10 years Joins year 1
A December-born girl	Joins nursery centre soon after second birthday	3.0 years Remains in nursery centre	3.8 years In nursery centre	4.8 years Joins reception class – moves to mixed-age (reception and year 1) class in January	5.8 years Remains in reception/ year 1 class
A February-born boy with learning difficulties	Receives Portage home teaching from age one	2.10 years Joins assessment unit in special school	3.6 years In special school nursery	4.6 years Joins mainstream reception class	5.6 years Joins year 1
A March-born boy	Cared for by childminder from age nine months	2.9 years With childminder plus visits to childminders' drop-in	3.5 years Remains with childminder, who is now accredited as education provider, plus two mornings at pre-school	4.5 years Joins reception class plus before- and after-school care with same childminder	5.5 years Joins year 1
A June-born girl		2.6 years At home and attends parent/ toddler group	3.2 years Joins independent school early years class	4.2 years Remains in school early years class	5.2 years Joins year 1
An August-born boy		2.4 years At home	3.0 years Joins playgroup	4.0 years Joins reception class	5.0 years Joins year 1

Aims for the foundation stage

All settings and schools that receive grant funding for the education of children aged three to five are required to plan activities and experiences that help children make progress in their development and learning. Young children will have had a wide range of different experiences and will have a wide range of skills and interests when they join a setting or school at the age of three, four or five. They need a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take their learning forward and to provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued.

Monitoring of each child's progress throughout the foundation stage is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that particular difficulties in any of the areas of learning, whatever the cause, are identified and addressed. This process needs to start before the child joins the setting, with practitioners listening to parents' accounts of their child's development and noting any concerns. Prompt and appropriate action at this stage could help to prevent children from developing learning difficulties later in their school career. There will be a small number of children in the foundation stage who have special educational needs or disabilities that will require specific provision, such as specialist teaching, adapted equipment or support from an adult, for particular activities. It is essential that these children are identified as soon as possible and appropriate support provided. Other children may be more able and need activities that offer an appropriate challenge. Monitoring of each child's progress throughout the foundation stage will also ensure that their achievements can be celebrated.

The curriculum for the foundation stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- **personal, social and emotional well-being:** in particular by supporting the transition to and between settings, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of that group and community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted;
- **positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning:** in particular an enthusiasm for knowledge and learning and a confidence in their ability to be successful learners;
- **social skills:** in particular by providing opportunities that enable them to learn how to cooperate and work harmoniously alongside and with each other and to listen to each other;
- **attention skills and persistence:** in particular the capacity to concentrate on their own play or on group tasks;
- **language and communication:** with opportunities for all children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use and to listen carefully;
- **reading and writing:** with opportunities for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books;

- **mathematics:** with opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them;
- **knowledge and understanding of the world:** with opportunities for all children to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts, and to explore and find out about their environment and people and places that have significance in their lives;
- **physical development:** with opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills and to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe;
- **creative development:** with opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities.

Parents as partners

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. Therefore, each setting should seek to develop an effective partnership with parents.



A successful partnership needs a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. There are many ways of achieving partnership with parents, but the following are common features of effective practice:

- practitioners show respect and understanding for the role of the parent in their child's education;
- the past and future part played by parents in the education of their children is recognised and explicitly encouraged;
- practitioners listen to parents' accounts of their child's development and any concerns they have;
- arrangements for settling in are flexible enough to give time for children to become secure and for practitioners and parents to discuss each child's circumstances, interests, skills and needs;
- all parents are made to feel welcome, valued and necessary through a range of different opportunities for collaboration between children, parents and practitioners;
- the knowledge and expertise of parents and other family adults are used to support the learning opportunities provided by the setting;
- practitioners use a variety of ways to keep parents fully informed about the curriculum, such as the brochures, displays and videos which are available in the home languages of the parents, and through informal discussion;

- parents and practitioners talk about and record information about the child's progress and achievements, for example through meetings or making a book about the child;
- relevant learning activities and play activities, such as reading and sharing books, are continued at home. Similarly, experiences at home are used to develop learning in the setting, for example visits and celebrations.

Principles for early years education

These principles are drawn from, and are evident in, good and effective practice in early years settings.

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.

Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Children are entitled to provision that supports and extends knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence, and helps them to overcome any disadvantage.

Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. They must build positive relationships with parents in order to work effectively with them and their children.

Early years experience should build on what children already know and can do. It should also encourage a positive attitude and disposition to learn and aim to prevent early failure.

No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children can have security and confidence.

To be effective, an early years curriculum should be carefully structured. In that structure, there should be three strands:

- provision for the different starting points from which children develop their learning, building on what they can already do;
- relevant and appropriate content that matches the different levels of young children's needs;
- planned and purposeful activity that provides opportunities for teaching and learning, both indoors and outdoors.

There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves. Children do not make a distinction between 'play' and 'work' and neither should practitioners. Children need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities.

Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children, informed by a knowledge of how children develop and learn and a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning.

Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process and help them make progress in their learning.

For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. It provides the structure for teaching within which children explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves, thus enabling them to learn, develop and make good progress.

Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high-quality care and education by practitioners.

These principles are the basis on which every part of this guidance has been developed, and are reflected throughout.

Putting the principles into practice

The following section sets out the common features of good practice that will result from these principles. It also gives examples that show how they have been put into practice in a range of different settings.

These principles require practitioners to work in partnership with parents to support each individual child and ensure no child is disadvantaged or excluded. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- manage carefully the transition between home and setting and between different settings, to support everyone involved;
- establish feelings of trust and respect with parents and children;
- treat children as individuals to ensure each has equality of opportunity;
- find out about the child's ethnic, faith and cultural heritage and home experiences, so that familiar experiences and interests can be used as starting points for learning and teaching;
- promote self-confidence and a positive attitude to learning in all children, whatever their gender, ethnicity, home language, special educational needs, disability or ability;
- recognise that being successful and feeling confident and secure are major factors in protecting children against early failure.

Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.

Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect within which children can have security and confidence.

For example, at a nursery, the children start to visit with their parents as babies or toddlers. By offering childcare and group work with and apart from children, practitioners help parents develop skills that support them and their children. They encourage parents to share their knowledge and views of their child's development and raise any concerns. The setting has a multilingual practitioner who relates with families from a range of ethnic and cultural traditions. She ensures that families know about the services available and is a link between the families, key staff and other agencies. The practitioners ensure that the displays and resources reflect children's home and community experience. Before admission at age three, a practitioner visits the family and child at home to get to know them. The family is given information in an accessible format about the way sessions are organised that outlines how different activities contribute to the curriculum. The parent is encouraged to stay with the child as part of the process of transition between home and the group wherever possible and arrangements are flexible to accommodate the needs of working parents. Throughout the family's association with the setting, the key practitioner, parent and child talk regularly to check how well they are all adjusting to the arrangements for settling in, learning and teaching. She makes sure that the family or child's particular interests and experiences, such as the birth of a new baby, are used in planning work with the child. When the child transfers to primary school, the practitioner ensures that the parent knows how to select a school and how the transition will work. She meets the parent to prepare the final record of the child's progress and attainment. She liaises with the receiving school and the family so that everyone is kept fully informed.

These principles require practitioners to understand how children develop and learn during the early years. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- have an understanding of how children develop and learn from birth to age six;
- have a clear awareness of the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to learning that children need to acquire in order to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage;
- are aware of how children learn most effectively so that they can identify the range of needs and learning styles within their group;
- are aware of those children who may require additional help and those who are more able and of how support needs to be provided;
- evaluate their practice, recognising the importance of identifying and meeting their training needs.

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.

Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

For example, as part of the training plan negotiated with and supported by the managers of their settings, a group of practitioners and parents from several types of setting meet regularly to share experiences and ideas. The group work is a valuable part of systematic training and alerts people to other training opportunities. Most have been on training courses provided by a range of early years support groups and charities and to workshops run by individual settings. Some have gained qualifications, such as an NVQ level 3 or a degree in child development and/or in teaching.

Previous meetings have focused on supporting early literacy and talking with children. The current meeting is to help practitioners and parents help children to resolve conflict. In small groups, adults with different types of training and experience list typical situations in which conflicts occur. When the lists are compared, similar situations are identified; these include taking a toy from another child, having a tantrum when asked to change an activity, sitting next to a child who does not want this, and disrupting other children's play.

Small groups discuss how to step in and what to say to help the children involved develop the skills they need to resolve their conflicts. The ideas are then shared to find the best method. The notes of the meeting help people reflect on what is reasonable at different stages of children's development and the different ways in which children learn.

These principles require practitioners to plan a learning environment, indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning through rich and stimulating experiences and by ensuring each child feels included. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- use materials, equipment and displays that reflect the community the children come from and the wider world;
- plan an environment free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practice;
- include the local community and environment as a source of learning;
- encourage children to make choices and develop independence by having equipment and materials readily available and well organised;
- provide resources that inspire children and encourage them to initiate their own learning;
- give the children the space they need for their activities.

No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised.



These principles require practitioners to plan and organise the learning environment to provide experiences that build on what children already know and to involve themselves in children's learning. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- enable children to become involved by planning experiences which are mostly based on real life situations;
- allow time for sustained concentration;
- understand that every aspect of learning for young children – personal, social, emotional, physical and intellectual – is interrelated and interdependent and reflect this in their planning.

This principle requires practitioners to plan a carefully structured curriculum that provides rich and stimulating experiences. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- plan experiences that are relevant, imaginative, motivating, enjoyable and challenging;
- make effective use of unexpected and unforeseen opportunities for children's learning that arise from everyday events and routines;
- make good use of outdoor space so that children are enabled to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.

Early years experience should build on what children already know and can do.

Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.

For example, the practitioners in a pre-school have set up a 'hospital'. This arises in response to a child's experience of breaking an arm and bringing in her X-ray, and the children's interest in her plaster cast. Practitioners and children decide that the hospital needs a reception area with a telephone, appointment book, pencils and notepad. Children take the role of receptionist, answering calls and making appointments and relevant notes. Their 'writing' uses a number of well-known letters or approximations of letters or numbers. Children dress as nurses and doctors, attend to patients and 'write' prescriptions, which the 'patients' take away. A practitioner shows children how to use bandages. He becomes a patient so that the children can practise on him. He draws a child who is being disruptive into the play. The practitioner and children talk about taking temperatures and refer to known and big numbers. They make the connection between a high temperature and evidence that something is wrong. Although children join and leave the play, many sustain their attention for a long time. Some play a number of roles and perform many actions, while some repeat and practise the experiences important to them. A parent joins the play to support those children using a home language other than English.

The practitioners make sure that the children spend their time in worthwhile and challenging activities. Throughout the session there is a supportive routine with a mix of group and individual activities together with opportunities for children to make choices about activities. This provides the security which promotes confidence and the challenge which promotes learning.

To be effective, an early years curriculum should be carefully structured.

For example, in a childminding setting, the practitioner plans each day so that her two children and the child in her care have a range of different experiences, indoors and outdoors. She plans creative work such as cooking and painting in the kitchen while the sitting room is used for quiet activities such as stories and using puzzles and games. The practitioner's small garden is used for digging and planting, and once a week she takes the children to the local leisure centre. There they take part in physical activity in a group for children aged between two and five. On the way to the centre she encourages the children to think about what they will do on the apparatus, in the ball pit and on the trampolines. During the hour-long session the children take an energetic part in the activities. From the sidelines, the practitioner encourages their growing confidence and independence and joins in as they count the number of jumps they have done on the trampoline. From time to time they return to her side for a brief conversation about what else they might do.

At the end of the session, the three children and the practitioner talk about the activities as they have a drink and snack that she has brought along. They discuss the new child who cried and would not leave his mother and what he could have been frightened of.

On another day, the children collect fallen leaves after running through them on the way to the shops and library. Later they make a collage and find out about the leaves from a reference book.

This principle requires practitioners to observe children and respond appropriately to help them make progress. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles;
- use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child;
- match their observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

These principles require practitioners to provide a relevant curriculum that is carefully structured, with well-planned activities and appropriate intervention. This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- plan their time well, so that most of it is spent working directly with children;
- help to extend children's vocabulary and language;
- help children to see the purpose of activities;
- accommodate the different ways children learn by planning for the same learning objective in a range of different ways;
- help children consolidate their learning by revisiting the same learning objective many times;
- establish an ethos in which individual achievements are valued;
- plan sessions to include adult- and child-planned activities, with uninterrupted time for children to work in depth.

Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.

For example, in a playgroup, practitioners make detailed observations of the children. These help them to recognise patterns in children's play, how they interact with adults and each other, what they are interested in and how learning can be extended.

The notes are kept in a portfolio for each child. It is used as a basis for discussion between practitioners and with parents and children. Parents are encouraged to ask questions about what their child does in the setting. Many see links with interests at home and begin to keep a home diary which they share regularly with practitioners, who include this information in the portfolio and use it when planning activities for the child.

To be effective, an early years curriculum should be carefully structured.

There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and also those that they plan or initiate themselves.

Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.

For example, during the summer term, the reception class has two practitioners, who work effectively together as a team so that minimum time is spent on management and supervision and maximum time on teaching. On entry in the mornings, the children select from a range of activities while one practitioner talks to parents and completes the register and the other works with the children. Later, one adult leads the shared reading with the whole group and the other sits alongside some children who need help to sustain attention. The practitioners raise discussion points that encourage children to talk about the story during their time together in groups. In later activities such as listening games and building models, practitioners will, through conversation and commentary, help children learn new words and ways of using them for different purposes, such as to ask a question or to explain what they have done. Links are made between activities, for example after the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, a group of children work with the practitioner to write a note to warn Goldilocks that the bears are returning.

Both practitioners present activities in many ways. For example, early writing of a child's name may be practised, refined and consolidated:

- through labelling their own work;
- as part of role play;
- by using a computer in the estate agent's shop;
- through recording how a child made a carrier bag;
- by making a card for a celebration;
- by playing with magnetic alphabet letters;
- by making letters with dough.

Following these and similar activities, the adults praise the children's efforts. This teaches them that an achievement, such as persevering in order to gain a new skill, is valued.

Meeting the diverse needs of children

Practitioners need to provide relevant learning and development opportunities and set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the diverse needs of children, so that most achieve the early learning goals and some, where appropriate, go beyond them by the end of the foundation stage. Practitioners must be aware that children bring to their early learning provision different experiences, interests, skills and knowledge that affect their ability to learn. An awareness and understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities¹ that cover race, gender and disability and of the code of practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs² is essential. Practitioners should plan to meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

In order to meet children's diverse needs, and help all children make the best possible progress, practitioners should:

- plan opportunities that build on and extend children's knowledge, experiences, interests and skills and develop their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn;
- use a wide range of teaching strategies, based on children's learning needs;
- provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate, support and develop children and help them to be involved, concentrate and learn effectively;
- provide a safe and supportive learning environment, free from harassment, in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged;

¹ *The Sex Discrimination Act 1975; The Race Relations Act 1976; The Disability Discrimination Act 1995.*

² *From September 2001, it is anticipated that the revised SEN Code of Practice will specify particular requirements for intervention in early years settings.*

- use materials that positively reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- plan challenging opportunities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitor children's progress, identifying any areas of concern, and taking action to provide support, for example by using different approaches, additional adult help or other agencies.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Practitioners will need to plan for each child's individual learning requirements, including those children who need additional support or have particular needs or disabilities. The focus should be on removing barriers for children where these already exist and on preventing learning



difficulties from developing. Early years practitioners have a key role to play in working with parents to identify learning needs and respond quickly to any area of particular difficulty, and to develop an effective strategy to meet these needs, making good use of individual education plans, so that later difficulties can be avoided. Wherever possible, practitioners should work together with staff from other agencies, such as local and community health services, to provide the best learning opportunities for individual children.

Practitioners should take specific action to help children with special educational needs to make the best possible progress by:

- providing for those who need help with communication, language and literacy skills, and planning, where necessary, to develop understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences through, for example:
 - using alternative and augmentative communication, including signs and symbols;
 - using visual and written materials in different formats, including large print and symbol text, using information and communication technology (ICT), other technological aids and taped materials;
 - using materials and resources that children can access through sight, touch, sound and smell;
 - increasing children's knowledge of the wider world by using word descriptions and other stimuli to extend their experiences and imagination.
- planning for full participation in learning and in all physical and practical activity through, for example:
 - providing additional support from adults, when needed;
 - adapting activities or environments, providing alternative activities, and using specialist aids and equipment, where appropriate.
- helping children who have particular difficulties with behaviour to take part in learning effectively through, for example:

- setting reasonable expectations that have been discussed with the child and with parents and carers, establishing clear boundaries and appreciating and praising children’s efforts;
- encouraging and promoting positive behaviour, giving children every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with another child or children;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to value and respect their own contribution and that of others.

Children with English as an additional language

Many children in early years settings will have a home language other than English. Practitioners should value this linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. These children will be at many stages of learning English as an additional language. Some children are bilingual from birth because their families have talked to them in more than one language. Some children will be acquiring English as an additional language. As with their first language, this needs to be learnt in context, through practical, meaningful experiences and interaction with others. These children may spend a long time listening before they speak English and will often be able to understand much of what they hear, particularly where communication through gesture, sign, facial expression and using visual support such as pictures and puppets is encouraged.

Learning opportunities should be planned to help children develop their English and support provided to help them take part in other activities by, for example:

- building on children’s experiences of language at home and in the wider community by providing a range of opportunities to use their home language(s), so that their developing use of English and other languages support one another;
- providing a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults;
- ensuring all children have opportunities to recognise and show respect for each child’s home language;
- providing bilingual support, in particular to extend vocabulary and support children’s developing understanding;
- providing a variety of writing in the children’s home languages as well as in English, including books, notices and labels;
- providing opportunities for children to hear their home languages as well as English, for example through use of audio and video materials.



Learning and teaching

Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Effective learning involves:

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other

If there is a stimulating environment, young children's learning will be enhanced. Children should be able to use available resources to explore at their own pace. For example, in a creative workshop area children change the cars they are making into a train as they make associations between their own ideas and the way the materials are fixed together. Well-organised resources that are easily accessible encourage children to make choices and explore. This also allows practitioners to work alongside children, to value what they are doing and to interact appropriately to support development and learning, rather than simply managing resources. One child's interest can encourage other children to become involved in activities. For example, a child with speech difficulties loves music and knows all the actions to a song tape. Other children join in by watching him and following his movements.

- Children learning through movement and all their senses

Young children are active learners who use all their senses to build concepts and ideas from their experiences. For example, children listening to music may clap their hands, bounce up and down or sway to its rhythm; children looking at 'larger' and 'smaller' clothes may try them on; a child who is visually impaired may stroke and feel a guinea pig to find out what it looks like.

- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth

The process of learning, as well as the content or outcomes, is important for young children. They need time to explore if they are to be satisfied with a piece of learning. Sometimes this may mean that the practitioner needs to be flexible in what they had planned for the session. Sometimes it may mean finding ways for children to return to activities at a later time. For example, a child climbing in the garden sees a spider. She recalls seeing a book about spiders and goes indoors to find it. She shows a friend the picture and then takes him outdoors to find the real spider, which is now spinning a web. The two children return indoors to the painting easel and paint spiders. They become interested in making web patterns with many different coloured lines. Finally, they cover their paintings with a single colour and use their fingers to 'draw' spiders in the wet paint. This whole process has taken some 40 minutes of concentrated, focused and sustained activity, which the children describe in detail to their group and key practitioner at the end of the session.

- Children feeling secure, which helps them to become confident learners

The significant adults to whom children relate during the foundation stage expand from the family to include the practitioners in early years settings. Children, their parents and practitioners need to develop positive relationships based on trust. Young children often want immediate answers to their questions and grow in confidence when they receive relevant attention during activities. The parallel growth of confidence and trust enables children to take risks in their learning, to try to solve problems and to view practitioners as helpful teachers.

- Children learning in different ways and at different rates

Practitioners need to understand that children learn the same thing in different ways and that progression in their learning happens at different times and at different rates. At an early stage, children may show their involvement through facial expression, for example wonder at a snowstorm, or through stance, for example crouching to peer at an insect. They may spend considerable time examining objects or books on display or be engaged in repeating experiences or in play. Some will learn more readily outdoors or through music and dance. As they grow older, children may record what they have experienced in drawings, paintings, models or writing.

- Children making links in their learning

Certain ideas captivate many children and steer their learning. Observations of children show that what appears to be random play can often be linked to the development of concepts such as position, connection or order. For example, a child constantly assembling wooden blocks gives the practitioner an insight into that child's learning, so that activities can be planned that will help develop the child's understanding of ideas such as shape, space and number.

- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language

Children engaged in 'small world' play and role play of various types will enact scenarios for long periods using the 'scripts' they know from home or television experience, for example going to the shops or the doctor or surviving as a dinosaur. Children are quick to learn and use relevant new vocabulary however difficult it seems to adults. Children like, but are also still at the stage of being frightened by, acting out some experiences, for example the implied danger from stories such as *Little Red Riding Hood* or *Anansi*, and the practitioner needs to be sensitive to this. In order to include all children, practitioners should plan for the specific needs of children whose first language is not English or who sign or use other forms of communication by, for example, playing alongside them to help them join in or by ensuring other children in the group have learnt to sign.

Teaching means systematically helping children to learn so that they are helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward, as well as helped to reflect on what they have already learnt. Teaching has many aspects, including planning and creating a learning environment, organising time and material resources, interacting, questioning, responding to questions, working with and observing children, assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents. The quality of each of these aspects of teaching is informed by the practitioners' knowledge and understanding of what is to be taught and how young children learn. Practitioners teach children in many ways. The different ways to teach may be selected at the planning stage or may be a perceptive response to what children do or say. Although teaching can be defined simply, it is a complex process. Young children do not come into a setting in a neat package of social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. During the foundation stage, physical and social development will vary enormously from child to child. The strategies used in learning and teaching should vary and should be adapted to suit the needs of the child.

Effective teaching requires:

- Working in partnership with parents, because parents continue to have a prime teaching role with their children

For example, while washing up, parents and children talk about the size of the bubbles and what the utensils have been used for, or on a bus or car journey the family talk about the journey and where they are going. In a positive relationship, parents and practitioners will be able to talk about children's responses to activities and experiences in the family and in the setting. Children should be encouraged to take home books to share with their parents and bring objects from home that are relevant to what they are doing in the setting, such as a photograph of themselves as babies for a discussion about themselves.

- Promoting children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable

Children feel secure when they take part in activities that interest them, for example role play or stories. The practitioner can help children build on prior learning by pitching the play or story at a level that is demanding but still within the child's reach.

- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviour

For example, practitioners can model being a learner as they work with children. Practitioners' behaviour towards each other and with parents should be a model for courtesy and respect. Practitioners model active listening when they listen attentively to children, when they support a child who is being called names or harassed, when they show they are willing to take turns in the conversation and when they show respect for what the child has to say. Practitioners teach social and emotional skills when they help children care for resources and show them how to negotiate over the use of equipment.

- Using language that is rich and using correct grammar. Recognising that what is said and how the practitioner speaks is the main way of teaching new vocabulary and helping children to develop linguistic structures for thinking

A major role in teaching involves extending children's language sensitively, while acknowledging and showing respect for home language, local dialect and any forms of augmentative communication that children may be using. Practitioners teach children key words by using them in response to a child's 'have-a-go' words rather than by telling children they are wrong. In this non-judgemental and unthreatening way they help children develop speech using appropriate words and speech patterns. In settings where children have a home language other than English, or sign or use symbols to communicate, the use of these by practitioners and other children can significantly enhance communication for everyone.

- Using conversation and carefully framed questions because this is crucial in developing children's knowledge

Conversation, open-ended questions and thinking out loud are important tools in developing vocabulary and in challenging thinking. Practitioners can use discussion times well by demonstrating questions such as 'How can we ...?', 'Can you find a way to ...?', 'How does this work?' and 'What other words can we use?' Encouraging children to reflect on and tell others what they have been doing, 'I wonder if ...?', helps them to give voice to what they know and to practise thinking and new vocabulary.

- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge

Practitioners who know the children they teach are able to judge when they are ready to be taught skills such as using scissors and staplers safely. For example, sensitivity is needed in judging when a child has sufficient hand-eye coordination and confidence to be taught how to hold and use correctly such tools as a magnifier or a pencil.

- Children teaching each other

More experienced children in the setting can help those who are less experienced by showing them where to find resources and demonstrating and talking to them about, for example, where to begin when reading a book, what will happen next within the routine or how to negotiate for a turn on the computer. They will practise their own skills and language and become more secure in their knowledge and understanding as they show and explain what they have done to other children.

- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects the attitudes to learning that children develop

Practitioners' values and beliefs will affect their teaching and how children learn. Motivating children to concentrate, to persevere and to try several ways to make something work rather than giving up requires practitioners to use encouraging, friendly, optimistic and lively approaches to support children. Enabling children to learn should be based on knowing what children can do, identifying what comes next and knowing when it is timely to intervene and when to hold back.

- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching

Children can be helped to develop independence, self-control and self-reliance if practitioners plan the environment carefully by making full use of available space, indoors and outdoors. High-quality resources, including recycled items, should be made accessible in an attractive and stimulating way for all children, for example by placing the sand tray on the floor for children who are unable to stand. Having routines and a rhythm to the day helps children to gain confidence and independence. For example, by knowing that there will be time to come back to activities, children can choose to join a group who are going to cook or listen to a story.

- Skilful and well-planned observations of children

Information about what children have done and said can be gathered through observations of children that are sometimes recorded by the practitioner, for example in writing, photographs or on video or audio tape. Talking to children, assessing outcomes such as models, paintings, designs, drawings or ‘writing’, and observing them individually and in groups in different activities give an insight into what children know, understand and can do, and where they need support. Logging children’s use of a particular activity or a play scenario helps practitioners monitor how children use their time, their particular interests and any gaps in their experiences, so that practitioners can plan a balanced curriculum that takes note of children’s strengths, interests and needs.

- Assessing children’s development and progress to serve several purposes. Assessment opportunities may be identified in planning or arise spontaneously

Assessment gives insight into children’s interests, achievements and possible difficulties in their learning from which next steps in learning and teaching can be planned. It also helps ensure early identification of special educational needs and particular abilities.

- Working with parents, who are vital partners in the assessment and planning process

Practitioners should share with and receive from parents information about children’s achievements and targets. Parents have important information that supports practitioners’ planning for, and work with, children. Such information may include children’s competence in their language at home, whether or not it is English, their ability to be imaginative and inventive outside the setting and their competence in using technology at home. This sharing of information between the setting and the home helps to ensure that appropriate targets are set for children and that both practitioners and parents know about them and can continue to work together to teach and support their children.

- Identifying the next step in children’s learning to plan how to help children make progress

Practitioners need to share information gained from assessment to:

- inform their future planning;
- group children for particular activities and interests;
- ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all children;
- promote continuity and progression.

Where practitioners are clear about what children know, the skills they have developed, the attitudes they have towards learning and the interests they have, they can plan how best to take the learning and teaching forward.

- Using assessment to evaluate the quality of provision and practitioners training needs

Practitioners can identify areas for improvement in terms of organisation, management, extending resources or training to improve provision and their own knowledge, skills and understanding and the effectiveness of their teaching.

Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing, they behave in different ways: sometimes their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.

The role of the practitioner is crucial in:

- planning and resourcing a challenging environment;
- supporting children's learning through planned play activity;
- extending and supporting children's spontaneous play;
- extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.

Through play, in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;
- be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- take risks and make mistakes;
- think creatively and imaginatively;
- communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems;
- express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.



Areas of learning and early learning goals

The foundation stage curriculum is organised into six areas of learning:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

The six areas help practitioners plan the learning environment, activities and experiences and provide a framework for the early years curriculum. This does not mean that all of young children's learning is divided up into areas. One experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. For example, children building with blocks may cooperate in carrying the heavy and large blocks, negotiate the best place to put them, compare the weight and dimensions of different blocks and act out an imaginary scene. Therefore, they may be developing language, mathematical, physical, personal and social competencies through this one activity.

Early learning goals

The **early learning goals** establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage, **but are not a curriculum in themselves**. They are organised into the six areas as the curriculum and provide the basis for planning throughout the foundation stage, so laying secure foundations for future learning. By the end of the foundation stage, some children will have exceeded the goals. Other children will be working towards some or all of the goals – particularly younger children, those children who have not had high-quality early years experience, those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.

Stepping stones

This part of the guidance sets out the early learning goals for each area of learning. It shows what practitioners need to know about children's learning in each area and what this means for their teaching, including planning and assessment, throughout the foundation stage. It identifies '**stepping stones**' of progress towards the early learning goals and so helps practitioners to understand what the goals mean for young children throughout the foundation stage. These stepping stones identify developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children need if they are to achieve these early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

The stepping stones are not age-related goals and the number varies between and within areas of learning. In some cases the stepping stones relate to an individual aspect of an early learning goal, in others a group of closely linked aspects have been brought together with one set of stepping stones. Progression is shown by the use of yellow, then blue and then green bands.

It is likely that most three-year-old children in the foundation stage will be better described by the earlier stepping stones shown in the yellow band, while the later stepping stones shown in the green band will usually reflect the attainment of five-year-old children. Practitioners will need to assess children carefully and plan accordingly.

It is important to remember that although these stepping stones are presented in a hierarchical order where possible, not all children conform so neatly to this sequence of learning. Some will have attained confidence in some of the later stepping stones but not in some of the earlier ones. Some stepping stones will appear to have been achieved very quickly, others will take much longer. As children move from one stepping stone to another, they take with them what they have already learned and continue to practise, refine and use their previous learning, so that learning becomes consolidated.

Examples of what children do

What does the practitioner need to do?

‘Examples of what children do’ gives examples that will help practitioners identify how children in their setting are progressing. **‘What does the practitioner need to do?’** shows how the practitioner can use this information to support and consolidate the child’s learning and help the child to make progress. By using this guidance to assess and plan for individuals and groups of children, practitioners will ensure that all children are given the opportunity throughout the foundation stage to make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, the early learning goals.

Links to the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy

The sections of this guidance on ‘communication, language and literacy’ and ‘mathematical development’ cover the foundation stage, from age three to the end of the reception year. The early learning goals are in line with the objectives in the frameworks for teaching literacy and mathematics, which should be taught throughout the reception year. This guidance helps reception teachers to plan using those objectives in order to meet the needs of the children in their classes. Reception teachers may choose to cover the elements of the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson across the day rather than in a single unit of time. In order to ensure a smooth transition to the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson in year 1, both should be in place by the end of the reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. It is crucial that settings provide the experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves. To give all children the best opportunities for personal, social and emotional development, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- establishing constructive relationships with children, with other practitioners, between practitioners and children, with parents and with workers from other agencies, that take account of differences and different needs and expectations;
- finding opportunities to give positive encouragement to children, with practitioners acting as positive role models;
- planning opportunities for children to work alone and in small and large groups;
- ensuring that there is time and space for children to focus on activities and experiences and develop their own interests;
- planning activities that promote emotional, moral, spiritual and social development alongside intellectual development;
- planning experiences that help children develop autonomy and the disposition to learn;
- providing positive images in, for example, books and displays that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, religion, special educational needs and disabilities;
- providing opportunities for play and learning that acknowledge children's particular religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds;
- planning for the development of independence skills, particularly for children who are highly dependent upon adult support for personal care;
- providing support and a structured approach to achieve the successful social and emotional development of vulnerable children and those with particular behavioural or communication difficulties.

Learning

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learn.

Effective learning involves:

- Children feeling safe, secure and able to trust the practitioners who work with them

Children learn to trust practitioners when they have consistent key adults to relate to and when they receive consistent responses and feel valued because adults engage in their play, support their interests and converse with them. Children will develop a sense of belonging in an environment in which they can predict the shape of the day and its rhythms. They respond well to appropriate and real responsibilities such as planning the environment, tidying up, serving snacks and taking messages.

- Children learning to respect themselves and others

Children will learn from opportunities to form positive relationships in a setting that supports mutual respect and understanding and that celebrates and acknowledges differences. Children learn from adults as guides and role models in the setting, and so develop anti-discriminatory attitudes.

- Respecting children's culture so that they develop a positive self-image

Gaining a knowledge and understanding of their own culture and community helps children develop a sense of belonging and strong self-image. Each child has a culture defined by their community and more uniquely by their family. Role play provides an effective environment where children can explore their own culture and appreciate the similarities and differences in those of others. A positive self-image and high self-esteem gives children the confidence and security to make the most of opportunities, to communicate effectively and to explore the world around them.

- Children learning about relationships

Children learn in a setting about different kinds of relationships. They identify a particular partner to work or make a play scenario with and another to sit and chat with. Being with the same adults and children within the setting gives children time and opportunity to develop relationships that promote social competence.

- Children learning about the importance of friendships

When children share their experiences with peers and practitioners, they need to encounter empathy and active listening. By sharing emotions and responses during activities and experiences, they develop sensitivity to the needs of others and begin to learn about the value of and need for trust, honesty, support and reliability.

- Children developing a positive disposition to learn

A positive disposition to learn grows from experiences that children enjoy and can control, are interesting and aid success. Such experiences foster feelings of competence and self-confidence. They motivate children to learn and carry on learning.

- Children having opportunities for problem-solving

Allowing children to think about and practise ways of solving problems helps them to gain confidence in themselves as problem-solvers, to develop the problem-solving habit and to feel capable of responding to self-chosen challenges.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

- Practitioners who act as positive role models through what they say and do

Teaching

Practitioners play a crucial role in securing children's personal, social and emotional development.

If practitioners show excitement when they learn new things, show awareness of the needs of others and consider carefully the effect of their actions and words, children are likely also to develop such skills and attitudes. For example, if the practitioner shares decisions with the children on the organisation of the environment, provision of resources and the content and direction of their activities, they will learn to be independent and curious and to take the initiative. If the practitioner says 'please' when making a request and allows children time to finish what they are saying before responding, children will learn to be courteous and attentive. Encouragement and appreciation are essential to the child, but empty praise can be unhelpful. Practitioners need to think about the

amount of praise they give and explain clearly why they are praising, for example, 'Well done, you worked out how to fix that jigsaw together,' or 'You did very well. You wanted to play with that truck but you waited your turn.' They should also encourage children to describe their efforts and give children opportunities to praise themselves, such as by asking, 'Are you pleased with it?' Practitioners can positively influence the way children learn from one another, for example by suggesting one child seeks the opinion of another child 'expert' in resolving a problem. By being alert to any injustices during the course of the daily routine, it can be demonstrated that such injustices are always addressed and resolved. By observing friendships as they emerge and noting common play interests, practitioners can plan strategies to support the development of social skills and friendships. At times of conflict, the adult can help a child feel in control by intervening calmly, acknowledging the feelings of the children, gathering information about what has happened, restating the problem, asking for ideas about solutions and supporting negotiation about how to go forward.

- Practitioners who respond to both children's learning needs and their interests

Practitioners need to plan for activities that combine what children want to do with what they need to do to make progress in their learning. They also need to provide children with opportunities to participate in planning their own activities or to make choices within the planned activity, for example which resources will be used, where they are going to work or who will collaborate with them on something. When planning new learning experiences, practitioners need to think about how new learning can be explored with familiar materials by using them in new ways or by presenting previous learning experiences through new materials. By presenting familiar events in 'novel' ways, children are offered valuable new insights. The planned routine of the setting will provide a framework of support for children. A routine should not be rigid but should comprise a predictable sequence of events, smooth transitions from one period of activity to the next and consistency in adult expectations and support. This will meet children's needs for a secure, safe, purposeful environment.

- Practitioners promoting children's learning by planning experiences and activities that challenge them but are achievable

Children will encounter many problems and challenges as they engage in their activities. Sometimes they will fail in what they are trying to do and need to try again and again. Some challenges and problems will be carefully planned by adults so that they take account of individual strengths and are appropriate and do not frustrate or demoralise children. Some children will need to experience many 'small step' challenges. All children need achievable challenges so that they have positive experiences and learn to regard themselves as capable and successful.

- Practitioners who use communication and language in order to support children's personal, social and emotional development

Many young children rely on gesture and facial and body language to initiate interaction and express their feelings. These strands continue to be important in achieving successful social communication and emotional development and need to be developed alongside the necessary language. Practitioners should know about and be able to respond to different forms of body language, for example in many cultures casting the eyes down is

respectful and should not be interpreted as defiant or sullen. Practitioners can promote interactions by acting as a catalyst and then withdrawing. For example, the practitioner, on being offered pitta bread in the home corner says it is more tasty when it is warm and asks if it could be heated up. The child then negotiates with another who is already at the cooker and begins to discuss the cakes that are in the oven and whether there is room for the pitta bread too. Initiating interactions and entering conversations are sophisticated skills which require knowledge of social codes and conventional phrases such as 'Excuse me' and 'May I tell you about?' Practitioners also need to help children by offering the vocabulary with which to articulate their feelings in a wide range of contexts, to practise resolving conflict, make choices and decisions, see situations from another's point of view and form relationships. Using open-ended questions such as, 'How ...?', 'Why ...?' and 'What will happen if ...?' provides children with an environment that encourages exploration and will set any learning outcome in the context of being part of a problem-solving process rather than as success and failure. Open-ended questions support children in thinking in open-ended ways, with the possibility of unexpected and inventive outcomes.

- Practitioners who understand the importance of role play in children's personal, social and emotional development

Children learn many skills and attitudes in well-planned role play. It encourages individual and cooperative play and gives children opportunities to express feelings, to use language, to develop literacy and numeracy skills and to learn without failure. Role play gives children the opportunity to make sense of their world. It is sometimes useful to have two scenarios such as the home and the shop, which allows children to make connections in their learning.

- An environment indoors and outdoors where children feel secure, valued, confident and independent

Practitioners can support the successful induction of new children by ensuring the environment, furnishings and room organisation reflect things familiar to them and reflect their family, ethnicity, religion and culture. For children to be confident to try new activities and initiate ideas, practitioners will need to provide an environment that allows a wide range of choices and opportunities for self-initiated activity. Practitioners can support children in developing independence and self-confidence by providing well-defined areas of interest and an orderly storage system where children have consistent access to materials and equipment.



Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show curiosity</p> <p>Have a strong exploratory impulse</p> <p>Have a positive approach to new experiences</p>	<p>Rebecca spent a long time exploring soapy sand. It felt lovely so she made different patterns in it with her fingers.</p> <p>Ellie has Down's syndrome. She watches Reece on the slide. She climbs up but when she tries to turn round, her legs get tangled. She persists and finally manages. The practitioner joins in the celebration of her success and she does it again and again, more skilfully each time.</p>
<p>Show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities</p> <p>Show confidence in linking up with others for support and guidance</p>	<p>Joseph had been experimenting with a range of pipes, guttering and boxes. He talked to the practitioner about what he had done and investigated further as a result of that discussion.</p>
<p>Display high levels of involvement in activities</p> <p>Persist for extended periods of time at an activity of their choosing</p> <p>Take risks and explore within the environment</p>	<p>A parent was working with a group of children who were experimenting with patterns. Tunde talked about the pattern in his painting, while Louise was more interested in the shapes it contained. Eleanor decided to make a pattern like the one on a piece of material she had selected.</p>
<p>Continue to be interested, excited and motivated to learn</p> <p>Be confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in a familiar group</p> <p>Maintain attention, concentrate, and sit quietly when appropriate</p>	<p>A group of children was being visited by an elderly neighbour of the setting. She had been invited to join the group, show her lace and demonstrate how lace is made. The children gathered round and sat quietly while she told them all about it.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Interact with children in support of their interests and allow them to learn from their mistakes
- Observe children engaged in self-chosen activities and use this in planning
- Provide manipulative and open-ended materials that appeal to children's senses
- Plan activities in new ways and through different materials, for example use a mixture of glue and water instead of just water to investigate flow

- Value, support and encourage independent learning
- Make materials accessible to children
- Teach children to use and care for materials and then trust them to do so independently

- Provide activities that encourage children to ask questions, seek answers, take decisions and solve problems
- Provide opportunities for self-chosen activities and for choices within adult-initiated activities
- Provide experiences, activities and materials that are challenging but achievable
- Give children opportunities to complete activities to their satisfaction

- Prepare children for new activities and experiences, understanding that such experiences can be both exciting and worrying
- Encourage children to explore and talk about new learning, valuing their ideas and ways of doing things
- Give opportunities for children to pursue their learning without interruption and come back to activities when necessary

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for dispositions and attitudes

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Separate from main carer with support</p>	<p>When Patricia arrived, she always looked for her key practitioner. Her granny stayed with her as she decided what to do and became involved in an activity with other children and the key practitioner.</p>
<p>Separate from main carer with confidence</p> <p>Have a sense of belonging</p> <p>Show care and concern for self</p> <p>Talk freely about their home and community</p>	<p>Katie comes in, waves goodbye to her dad and rushes to tell her friend about the ambulance outside her house the night before.</p> <p>Mary comes in and places her coat on her coat peg which is labelled and has her photograph above it. She collects her name and registers herself on her group's noticeboard before choosing to paint a picture of her hamster.</p> <p>Stephen puts on a sunhat to make sure he does not get burnt while playing outside on a hot day.</p> <p>Mustafa says, 'It's Id tomorrow so I am staying at home for a big party.'</p>
<p>Have a sense of self as a member of different communities</p> <p>Express needs and feelings in appropriate ways</p> <p>Initiate interactions with other people</p>	<p>Will tells a visitor the way to the office and adds, 'I'm in Yellow class and this is my school.'</p> <p>Sam said, 'Me and Zoe are going to the tree house and the scary monsters are after us.'</p> <p>Molly and Paige both want the buggy – they pull at it and hit each other. The practitioner intervenes to stop the fighting and helps the children sort out their disagreement. They agree to each go round the garden five times and the practitioner helps them to count the circuits.</p> <p>James asks if he can help to plant the potatoes in the garden because he helps on his family allotment.</p>
<p>Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate</p> <p>Have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others</p> <p>Have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people</p>	<p>When Chris arrived at school, Lionel gave him his birthday present. 'I've already got this book, haven't I, Dad?' said Chris, and Lionel began to cry. Chris looked with concern at his friend and said, 'But it's alright, it's my favourite and I can have one in the kitchen and one in my bedroom.' At circle time, Lionel and Chris showed the book to the group. The group talked about the different ways their families celebrated birthdays and other special days and the reasons for doing so.</p> <p>Alison told the other children about her visit to London to stay with her aunt and meet her new uncle. 'My uncle took me to his temple. It was beautiful, and then we went back to have dinner at their house,' she said, 'but I like my own home as well.'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

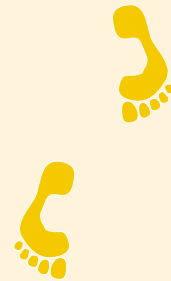
- Ensure key practitioners are familiar to the children
- Set up a comprehensive settling-in programme
- Listen to parents' views on their child's development and any concerns they have about their child's progress
- Create positive relationships with parents and offer them information, support and understanding
- Give children opportunities for contributing their experience, knowledge and ideas and acknowledge and respond to them
- Plan an environment that is accessible and welcoming to all children

- Encourage children to cope with their own needs, supporting them where necessary
- Give opportunities to form stable relationships with adults and with peers in spontaneous and planned groups
- Encourage children to talk about their own home and community life, and to listen carefully as other children talk about their own experiences

- Support children's growing ability to express a wide range of feelings orally
- Acknowledge children's feelings and work with them to resolve conflicts
- Observe children to ensure interventions are appropriate and timely
- Use appropriate language, such as 'May I tell you about ...?' and 'What are you doing?'

- Encourage children to share their feelings and talk about why they respond to experiences in particular ways
- Provide opportunities for children to acknowledge and respond to each others' feelings
- Give information that helps children to understand why people do things differently from each other, and encourage children to talk about these differences

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for self-confidence and self-esteem

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Feel safe and secure and demonstrate a sense of trust</p> <p>Seek out others to share experiences</p> <p>Relate and make attachments to members of their group</p>	<p>Ahmed has brought a favourite toy he received for his birthday to show to his group at snack time. He entrusts it to the practitioner to look after.</p> <p>Terry tells his friend during role play in a travel agent's how frightened he felt during a heavy storm when he was on holiday in a tent.</p> <p>Abigail shows Henry, a new child, the sandpit. She pats the side for him to sit next to her. She hands him a spade and he copies her as she digs. She regularly looks at his face.</p>
<p>Demonstrate flexibility and adapt their behaviour to different events, social situations and changes in routine</p>	<p>The children are frustrated by the fact that they cannot play outdoors because the big mower is in use, but they understand why it would be dangerous.</p>
<p>Value and contribute to own well-being and self-control</p>	<p>Jeff and Oliver have disagreed in the past, but Jeff asks Oliver to help him build a marble run because the practitioner has told him Oliver had built one before.</p>
<p>Form good relationships with adults and peers</p> <p>Work as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that there needs to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups of people, including adults and children, to work together harmoniously</p>	<p>Children from the pre-school came to visit the reception class they were to join after Christmas. The reception children showed them round the classroom and talked about what they were doing that day. Gina opened the door and ran outside. Peter fetched her back and explained, 'We can only go outside when an adult has opened the door, so we know there's someone to make sure we're safe.'</p> <p>The children were very excited when the local city farm brought a lamb to visit them. They all wanted to hold the bottle to feed the lamb, but waited quietly until it was their turn.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Respond promptly and with genuine interest to children's shared discoveries, information and news
- Provide stability in staffing and in grouping of the children
- Have consistent and appropriate expectations of all children, that take account of their development and culture
- Establish routines with predictable sequences of events
- Provide time, space and materials for children to collaborate with one another in different ways, for example building constructions, solving problems, sharing confidences
- Provide a role play area resourced with materials reflecting their family lives and communities

- Demonstrate a positive attitude to change
- Recognise and exploit opportunities for children to practise and demonstrate flexibility in response to change
- Prepare children for changes that may occur in the routine

- Give children practice in resolving social conflict
- Provide activities that involve turn-taking and sharing
- Support children in linking with others with openness and self-confidence, for example to seek help

- Ensure that children and adults make opportunities to listen to each other and explain their actions
- Involve children in agreeing codes of behaviour and taking responsibility for their implementation

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for making relationships

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Begin to accept the needs of others, with support</p>	<p>Sean was holding a train; he then put it on the train track. Michael snatched it and ran off with it and Sean shouted, 'Hey, that's mine!' He ran after Michael, held out his hand and said, 'Give that back, I was using it.' Michael hesitated, looked at the practitioner who had come to join them, and then returned it.</p>
<p>Show care and concern for others, for living things and the environment</p>	<p>Several butterflies emerged from their chrysalises. Luke wanted to hold one and Stefan reminded him he needed to stand very still. Luke said if he wasn't gentle, '... they'll break and squash.' The practitioner said, 'You mustn't try to pick them up at all, just let them walk on to you. Butterflies are very delicate.' Luke nodded and replied, 'I won't. I'll be very still.'</p>
<p>Show confidence and the ability to stand up for own rights</p> <p>Have an awareness of the boundaries set and behavioural expectations within the setting</p>	<p>Explaining to a visitor, Max said, 'We clear away our things when we are finished so everything is ready for the next person.'</p>
<p>Understand what is right, what is wrong, and why</p> <p>Consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others</p>	<p>The class was discussing how they would need to rearrange the classroom to make it safe for a visually impaired child about to join them. Alex complained about having to move the block area to a smaller space but said, 'I won't say that to Kirsty or she might think we don't want her to come to our class.'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Set, explain and maintain clear, reasonable and consistent limits so that children can play and work, feeling safe and secure
- Help children to manage their own behaviour
- Give children time to develop understanding of rules and how they can contribute to creating a community
- Share with parents the rationale of boundaries and expectations to achieve a joint approach

- Demonstrate concern and respect for others, living things and the environment and talk about issues
- Help children to understand that name calling is hurtful and unacceptable
- Collaborate with children in creating explicit rules for the care of the environment

- Be alert to injustices and demonstrate that they are addressed and resolved
- Listen to children respectfully when they raise injustices and involve them in finding a 'best fit' solution

- Involve children in identifying issues and finding solutions
- Encourage children to think about issues from the viewpoint of others
- Affirm and praise positive behaviour, explaining that it makes children and adults feel happier

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
behaviour and self-control

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show willingness to tackle problems and enjoy self-chosen challenges</p> <p>Demonstrate a sense of pride in own achievement</p>	<p>William wants to join some boxes together to make a lion. He tries joining them with glue but they keep falling apart. He tries more and more glue, with no success. He rejects offers of help and eventually finds some small boxes that glue successfully. He goes to show his lion to his key practitioner.</p> <p>Nicola went over to the washbasin, turned on the tap and rubbed her hands together. 'I can do it,' she said to the practitioner, holding out her hands.</p>
<p>Take initiatives and manage developmentally appropriate tasks</p>	<p>Yasmin decides to make a model of a castle with the large blocks. As the model and its 'story' develop, she changes it into a shopping centre.</p>
<p>Operate independently within the environment and show confidence in linking up with others for support and guidance</p>	<p>Nathan is hearing impaired and is watching children acting out the story of <i>Brown Bear</i> with puppets. He makes eye contact with the practitioner, who comes to sit beside him. When the performance ends, she suggests other children might like to take part and Nathan becomes one of the actors.</p>
<p>Dress and undress independently and manage their own personal hygiene</p> <p>Select and use activities and resources independently</p>	<p>The children dressed themselves after their swimming lesson, helping each other where necessary. As they returned to the classroom, a small group went to look for the resources they needed for the book they were going to make called 'How to learn to swim'.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide a positive atmosphere where achievement is positively valued
- Observe children's strengths and encourage children to take the initiative in their learning

- Consider if and when to intervene to support and guide children
- Encourage children to solve problems and support them through the process by clarifying the problem with them

- Encourage children to turn to each other for assistance in solving problems
- Encourage children to find, use and return materials for themselves
- Encourage children to see adults as a resource and as partners in their learning
- Give children with special educational needs and/or disabilities appropriate support in gaining access to materials

- Give children time to practise more difficult skills such as tying, and encourage them to help each other
- Ensure that the learning environment enables children to be independent in using resources
- Encourage children to attempt skills and activities and to gain proficiency, for example putting on shoes

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for self-care

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Make connections between different parts of their life experience</p>	<p>Alice pushes the playdough with the palms of her hands, adds more flour and pushes again. 'This is how I help my mum to make pizzas,' she says.</p>
<p>Show a strong sense of self as a member of different communities, such as their family or setting</p>	<p>The children have been brought together to discuss watching a mother bathing her baby earlier in the session. The children talk about babies and younger brothers and sisters at home and how they are cared for. Rehana said, 'My mum puts oil on my baby sister's skin when she has had a bath.'</p>
<p>Have an awareness of, and show interest and enjoyment in, cultural and religious differences</p> <p>Have a positive self-image and show that they are comfortable with themselves</p>	<p>Harry looks at the 'weaving loom' created from wire netting on the garden fence. He asks the practitioner how to do it, who says, 'Why don't you ask Shamimara? She wove the streamers in the netting. She can show you.'</p> <p>Later, Harry and Shamimara look at books showing people weaving in different countries.</p> <p>Charlie is a wheelchair user. When the practitioner asks the group for help in finding the repeated phrase in the big book they are using, he volunteers. 'I can read it. I am a good reader.' He propels the wheelchair, unaided, up to the book where he points to and reads the words.</p>
<p>Understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs, that need to be treated with respect</p> <p>Understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect</p>	<p>Bulent's brother had got married and he was showing the photographs to a group of children. They talked about why the bride had money pinned to her dress and, with the practitioner, talked about the different customs they had experienced at weddings.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

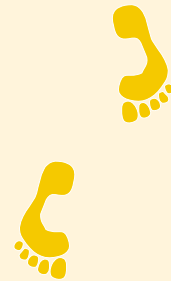
- Provide activities and opportunities for children to share experiences and knowledge from different parts of their lives with each other
- Develop positive relationships with parents

- Create a feeling of openness so that children are able to learn from one another and from each other's family experiences
- Anticipate the best from each child and be alert to their strengths

- Strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and faiths and those of others
- Ensure that materials and images used and displayed are accurate and non-stereotypical
- Give children opportunities to be curious, enthusiastic, engaged and tranquil, so developing a sense of inner self and peace

- Encourage children to talk with each other about similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.
- Ensure all children are given support to participate in discussions and to be listened to carefully

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
sense of community

... to the end of the foundation stage

Communication, language and literacy

Communication, language and literacy depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use them. This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes, being read a wide range of books and reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes. To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in communication, language and literacy, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- providing opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other;
- incorporating communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning;
- giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books;
- giving opportunities for linking language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences such as cookery and gardening;
- planning an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books;
- providing opportunities for children to see adults writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script;
- providing time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups, with particular awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of children for whom English is an additional language, using their home language when appropriate;
- planning opportunities for children to become aware of languages and writing systems other than English, and communication systems such as signing and braille;
- early identification of and response to any particular difficulties in children's language development;
- close teamwork between, where appropriate, bilingual workers, speech therapists and practitioners;
- opportunities for children who use alternative communication systems to develop ways of recording and accessing texts to develop their skills in these methods.



Learning

The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning. Learning to listen and speak emerge out of non-verbal communication, which includes body language such as facial expression, eye contact, bending the head to listen, hand gesture, and taking turns. These skills develop as children express their needs and feelings, interact with others and establish their own identities and personalities. The ability to communicate gives children the capacity to participate more fully in their society. They do so with adults who understand what they say through developing close relationships with them in an affectionate atmosphere. Parents most easily understand their very young children's communications and can often interpret for others. At first, all learning arises from physical action and the gathering of experience through the senses. Therefore, children learn best when activities engage many senses. Initially their attempts to communicate will be non-verbal. As language develops, thought becomes less dependent on action. Non-verbal messages remain an important form of communication throughout life.

In this area of learning, effective learning involves:

- Opportunities to speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities

In play, children are given the chance to imagine and to recreate experience. As they explore situations, events and ideas, for example building with blocks or making a journey on vehicles, they improve their competence with language through social interaction, repetition and consolidation. Language is developed further and links made with literacy if, for example, in the above types of play, children are also encouraged to look at maps and plans and relevant reference books. As they play, children will practise doing and saying things that they are not really able to do, such as making a journey in space. They can capture their actions in drawing, early writing or painting, and retell events to friends, practitioners and parents. They are learning that pictures and words are symbolic ways of preserving meaning.

- Using communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum

Young children's learning is not compartmentalised. They learn when they make connections between experiences and ideas that are related to any aspect of their life in the setting, at home and in the community. Young children also learn best when they are happy and confident. A love of books and stories, rhymes and poems and a growing interest in rhyming, alliteration, sounds and words, depend on mutual pleasure and enthusiasm in planned and incidental work.

- Being immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication

Everyday situations such as getting dressed, shopping, walking or driving to the setting provide rich contexts to encourage conversation and to extend the use of language. Children's surroundings offer natural opportunities to look at and learn about printed language, such as on food packets, road signs and labels.

Teaching

Practitioners teach children communication, language and literacy in many ways and in a number of different styles. Each aspect – speaking, listening, reading and writing – needs to be planned for, so that practitioners know how to respond to children or take the lead, both in activities structured by children and those directed by adults.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

- Practitioners valuing talk and alternative forms of communication

Children will become confident speakers if talk is valued in the setting and they are encouraged to want to communicate. For some children this will involve learning to communicate through signing. Confidence and competence go hand in hand. With support, children will move from simple statements to asking questions, commenting on differences and making comparisons. They will use their developing vocabulary to name and classify, make elaborate statements and retell experiences.

- Practitioners observing children and planning for the contexts in which they best develop their speaking and listening and their understanding of reading and writing

Children will be quiet in some activities and talkative in others. Children are more likely to speak and listen when they feel confident and are motivated. Children are more likely to talk and to listen when they understand the key language connected with an activity, such as playing with dough or constructing a model. Children are more likely to look at books in a quiet, designated space and where interested adults share books with them. Children are more likely to write as part of purposeful play.

- Practitioners helping children to develop language for communication through interaction and expression

Children will learn to understand and be aware of other points of view if practitioners demonstrate strategies such as listening, turn-taking and initiating and sustaining a conversation gently and respectfully. Children will increase attention, understanding and interest when listening if practitioners do the same and show that they appreciate their efforts. They will increase their knowledge and use of conventions, such as for asking, initiating, refusing and greeting, if practitioners expect children to try and if they support children with reassuring reactions.

- Practitioners modelling the use of language as a tool for thinking

Children learn to use language in its immediate context first. For example, they seek information by asking ‘why’ type questions and then refine or follow up the answers. They will explain things, use language so that it makes sense, and draw conclusions if they hear and see practitioners who do so. They will learn to develop language from mainly using the present tense to talking about the past and possible future experiences if practitioners model this and encourage children to get involved.

- Practitioners demonstrating the use of language for reading and writing

Demonstrating the use of language for reading and writing will be through telling stories and sharing books in a clear and lively way that motivates children. It will be through encouraging children to read and write in a variety of play and role play situations that match their interests and stimulate dialogue, activity and thinking. Children will learn about the different purposes of writing by seeing practitioners write for real purposes such as making lists, greetings cards, books to recall a visit or event, and labels for displays and models. Children who are encouraged to refer to

their own name, for example using a name card to show they are present, will begin to write it, particularly if they receive appropriate praise and encouragement.

- Practitioners helping children understand how text works

Children will begin to learn that reading in English is from left to right and top to bottom and begin to recognise favourite phrases, for example 'Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man', if they are in small enough groups to face the text from the same direction as the reader or writer. Being able to dictate text to adults and see it written enables children to learn about the conventions of print in English. Children's experience of different scripts at home should be acknowledged and built on when learning about the conventions of English.

- Planning that is flexible and informed and that involves the whole team

Plans need to focus on all aspects of communication, language and literacy. Planning needs to outline learning activities in the whole learning environment, indoors and outdoors, for individuals and for small and larger groups. Planning needs to identify explicitly how language will be used, the related vocabulary and opportunities for literacy for all children.



Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Use words and/or gestures, including body language such as eye contact and facial expression, to communicate</p>	<p>On a visit to the canal, James's eyes widen as the water gushes into the lock to let the boat out.</p> <p>Arianne, who is Greek, shows how in her culture she shakes her head to mean 'yes'.</p>
<p>Use simple statements and questions often linked to gestures</p> <p>Use intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make their meaning clear to others</p>	<p>As he heard a door open, Stevie looked at the practitioner, pointed and said, 'Mummy's back?', making clear by the way he said the words that he was not sure.</p>
<p>Have emerging self-confidence to speak to others about wants and interests</p> <p>Use simple grammatical structures</p> <p>Ask simple questions, often in the form of 'where' or 'what'</p> <p>Talk alongside others, rather than with them. Use talk to gain attention and initiate exchanges. Use action rather than talk to demonstrate or explain to others</p> <p>Initiate conversation, attend to and take account of what others say, and use talk to resolve disagreements</p>	<p>Pointing to a picture, Laura said, 'Who's that in the tree? I see the owl, he's there.'</p> <p>As he played in the sand, Jonathan commented, 'I've got a dog called Max.' Peter looked at him and said, 'I've a dog, too.' Jonathan asked, 'What's your dog's name?'</p>
<p>Interact with others, negotiating plans and activities and taking turns in conversation</p>	<p>A group of children were planning a journey in a bus they had built. Sue said, 'You be the driver and I'll collect tickets. OK, I'll drive if you want to be the conductor.'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide opportunities for children that encourage them to use gesture to communicate
 - Talk with children to make links between their gestures and words: 'You have bumped your leg and I can see from your face that it is hurting you.'
- Encourage children to express their needs in words and adopt common social conventions
 - Provide experiences that encourage learning through the whole body, such as climbing, cookery, clay and painting, so that adults can support children's actions with language, for example, 'You're going up the slide and now you are coming down.'
 - Respond to children and reply in words that extend and model the child's communication. For example, child: 'Dog in bath ...', adult: 'Yes, that's right, the dog's in the bath. I think they're going to get all the mud off him ...' Judge whether and how best to intervene
 - Support children in developing alternative communication strategies, such as signing, where appropriate
 - Provide opportunities for children whose home language is other than English to use that language
- Encourage conversation and help children to respond to the contributions of others in role play and other activities
 - Look at books and talk about and name objects in real everyday situations such as going to the shops or putting away toys
 - Encourage conversation with others and model appropriate conventions – taking turns, waiting until someone else has finished, listening to others and using expressions such as 'please', 'thank you' and 'can I ...?'
 - Provide time for children to initiate discussions from shared experiences and texts
 - Give thinking time for children to decide what they want to say and how they will say it
- Set up collaborative tasks, for example constructions, food activities, story-making through role play and problem-solving, and help children to talk and plan together about how they will begin, what parts each will play and what materials they will need

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
language for communication

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Listen to favourite nursery rhymes, stories and songs. Join in with repeated refrains, anticipating key events and important phrases</p> <p>Respond to simple instructions</p> <p>Listen to others in one-to-one/small groups when conversation interests them</p>	<p>While the practitioner was reading the story, children began to join in with a repeated refrain, 'You can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man.'</p>
<p>Listen to stories with increasing attention and recall</p> <p>Describe main story settings, events and principal characters</p> <p>Question why things happen, and give explanations</p>	<p>Kerry and David had built a tower. As Kerry went to put another brick on the top, David moved away. 'If you put that there it will crash down.'</p> <p>Lauren said, 'My dad and I went to the dentist yesterday. My dad had to sit in the chair and open his mouth, then me.'</p>
<p>Initiate a conversation, negotiate positions, pay attention to and take account of others' views</p>	<p>Jamal asked, 'Can I play in the hospital first, because I am going to the dentist later?' The practitioner replied, 'Yes, Jamal, but you need to tidy away the bricks you are using first, please.'</p>
<p>Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and readily turn to it in their play and learning</p> <p>Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard by relevant comments, questions or actions</p> <p>Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems</p>	<p>Frances talked about how excited she had been when she had seen a shark at the aquarium. The children decided to play at sharks. 'I know, you be the one who eats it all up, then I come in and ...,' and they agreed and changed roles as their play progressed. For the rest of the day they returned to the phrase they had created for their shark, 'Here comes the shark ... snap, snap, crunch.'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Take time to listen to children and take account of what they say in your response to them
- Choose stories with repeated refrains, use story props that encourage looking and give focus
- Choose action songs with looking and pointing and songs that require replies and turn taking, such as 'Tommy Thumb'
- Give clear directions, for example, 'Come and sit down, please.'
- Help children deal with directions involving more than one action, for example, 'Put the cars away, please, then come and wash your hands for dinner.'

- Use stories with props or puppets which encourage naming and thinking about how people think and feel
- Comment on what is happening during activities, for example, 'Your hands are sticky with the glue, aren't they? Do you remember when we made the bread yesterday? That was a different kind of sticky.'
- Provide practical experiences that encourage children to ask and respond to questions, for example pulleys and wet and dry sand

- Give time and opportunities for children to have conversations with each other
- Provide models of language for negotiating, for example, 'May I ...?', 'Would it be alright ...?', 'I think that ...' and 'Will you ...?'

- Foster children's enjoyment of spoken and written language in their play by providing interesting and stimulating opportunities
- Encourage children to predict possible endings to stories and events
- Encourage children to listen to each other and allow time for thinking and for children to frame their ideas in words
- Encourage children to think about the effect of the words they use
- Model questions and explanations for children and help them expand on what they say
- Model fluent, phrased reading with big books and encourage children to predict, take over the telling and retell favourite stories

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for language for communication

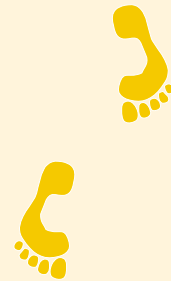
... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Use familiar words, often in isolation, to identify what they do and do not want</p> <p>Use vocabulary focused on objects and people who are of particular importance to them</p>	<p>Ming, playing in the home corner, exclaimed, 'My doll!' when another child tried to pick it up.</p> <p>Every time she heard it fly overhead, Janice rushed to the window and shouted, 'Helicopter, helicopter!'</p>
<p>Build up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences</p> <p>Begin to experiment with language describing possession</p>	<p>'One day I got up, and one day I said, "come on ... be quick," to my mum, and one day I went out to play in the snow,' said Natalie.</p>
<p>Extend vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming</p> <p>Use vocabulary and forms of speech that are increasingly influenced by experience of books</p>	<p>In talking about his visit to his grandad, Aaron said, 'Once upon a time, I went ...'</p>
<p>Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meanings and sounds of new words</p>	<p>Tony enjoys putting words together to make new words. He describes his new puppy as 'nibblynaughty' when he tells everyone about his shoes being chewed.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Take part in children's play, modelling appropriate vocabulary
 - Introduce new words in the context of activities
 - Engage children's interest in words from stories, poems and songs
 - Recognise the special additional needs of children with sensory or communication difficulties, making use of their preferred means of communication, such as signing
-
- Extend children's language, and model the correct use of words
 - Show interest when children use words well to communicate and describe their experiences
-
- Encourage children to sort, group and sequence in their play – use words such as *last, first, next, before, after, all, most, some, each, every*
 - Encourage language play, for example through stories like 'Goldilocks' and action songs that require intonation
-
- Provide opportunities for talking for a wide range of purposes, for example to present ideas to others as descriptions, explanations, instructions or justifications and to discuss and plan individual or shared activities
 - Encourage children to experiment with words and sounds, for example in nonsense rhymes

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for language for communication

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Use isolated words and phrases and/or gestures to communicate with those well known to them</p>	<p>Megan smiled at the practitioner as she arrived. The practitioner smiled and said, 'Hello, good morning. Jack's been waiting for you to arrive.' Megan said, 'Hello,' smiled again and rushed off to find Jack.</p>
<p>Begin to use more complex sentences Use a widening range of words to express or elaborate ideas</p>	<p>Nina went to fetch Andrew to sit next to her at lunchtime. 'Come in, it's time for dinner. You'll get hungry if you stay out here,' she said.</p>
<p>Link statements and stick to a main theme or intention Consistently develop a simple story, explanation or line of questioning Use language for an increasing range of purposes Confidently talk to people other than those who are well known to them</p>	<p>Tanya said, 'It's not fair. They've been on it all the time and we can't get a go.' Holly noticed the visitor standing looking slightly lost and said, 'Excuse me, the way to the office is down there.'</p>
<p>Speak clearly and audibly with confidence and control and show awareness of the listener, for example by their use of conventions such as greetings, 'please' and 'thank you'</p>	<p>Christopher took his model to the nursery class to show it to the children. He explained how he made the wheels go round and pointed to the axle.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Talk with and listen to children, responding to what they say
- Introduce children to the language they need to communicate within their daily experiences

- Help children expand on what they say, introducing and reinforcing the use of more complex structures
- Provide new vocabulary to understand and explain events

- Model language used for a range of purposes, for example requesting, explaining, sharing and instructing
- Be aware of the range of purposes for which children talk, and plan opportunities for each to be developed
- Model language appropriate for different audiences, for example a close friend or a visitor
- Model use of social conventions, while responding sensitively to social conventions at home

- Encourage children to present and explain ideas to others and to expand what they say into, for example, complete statements or questions
- Help children to stick to the point and sensitively rephrase what they say to improve clarity and logic
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in meaningful speaking and listening activities
- Demonstrate that the contributions of children are valued and are used to inform and shape the direction of discussions

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for language for communication

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Use action, sometimes with limited talk, that is largely concerned with the 'here and now'</p>	<p>Tristan was drawing a picture using the crayon closest to where he had sat down. He watched other children as they selected different colours, looked at his drawing and took the red crayon to use.</p> <p>Lydia is playing in the sand and says out loud what she is doing, 'Sand, sand ... in here ... oh ... tip over.'</p>
<p>Talk activities through, reflecting on and modifying what they are doing</p> <p>Use talk to give new meanings to objects and actions, treating them as symbols for other things</p> <p>Use talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next</p> <p>Use talk, actions and objects to recall and relive past experiences</p>	<p>Brent was playing on his own with the 'small world' toys. 'This one's going to get the lorry ... but the car comes in ... this is his dad – no, no, no ... now you'd better go to bed.'</p> <p>The children had watched holes being drilled in the wall to hang flower baskets. Cheryl picked up a piece of wood, held it against the wall and said, 'I'm making a hole.'</p> <p>Following a farm visit, Fiona talked as she rearranged the farm animals she was playing with. 'Put baby sheep here ... oh no ... no mummy ... that sheep lost its mum, had to have a bottle.'</p> <p>Paul was intrigued by the automatic barrier in the car park. He set up a stick across two chairs and raised it, saying, 'Barrier up!' every time anyone came through.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Use talk to describe what children are doing by providing a running commentary, 'Oh I can see what you are doing you have to put the milk in the cup first. Can I have some more please?'
- Use talk to anticipate or initiate what children will be doing, for example, while cooking, talk through each stage in the process, 'We need some eggs,' and use the shared talk to anticipate the activity, 'Let's see if we can find some in here.'
- Talk to children about what they have been doing, and help them to join in, for example, 'You have been making a model ... and you told me it was going to be a tractor. Show me where the driver sits. What's this lever for?'

- Provide models of problem-solving language
- Talk through to modify actions, for example, 'Well, that didn't stick so what else can we use? We could try the paste, but I don't know if it will stick wood together.'
- Encourage children to use objects to represent a variety of things, for example, in role play, making a car, 'We'll need a steering wheel,' 'What shall we use for a gear lever?'
- Play alongside children, using words and actions to represent objects, for example say, 'Mm I'd like some more cake,' while pretending to cut a slice and pass it
- Prompt children's thinking and discussion through involvement in their play, for example, 'Do you think they can all get in the car?' 'And what's this one for?' 'Who's going to live in the house?' 'What is going to happen now?'
- Set up shared experiences that children can reflect on, for example visits, cooking or stories that can be re-enacted
- Help children to predict and order events coherently by providing props and materials and encouraging children to re-enact using talk and action

Progression from age three ...



Stepping stones

Examples of what children do

Begin to use talk instead of action to rehearse, reorder and reflect on past experience, linking significant events from own experience and from stories, paying attention to sequence and how events lead into one another

Begin to make patterns in their experience through linking cause and effect, sequencing, ordering and grouping

Begin to use talk to pretend imaginary situations

Lewis described how they had made cakes earlier in the day. 'First we put them in the oven for 20 minutes, but it wasn't enough, so we cooked them a bit longer.'

Trudie was sorting out the brick box. 'These ones all fit in here and go in here ... put all the blue ones together and I'll have the greens.'

The children were looking out of the window at the waving branches. 'We won't play out today because it's too windy ... you might get blown away. Last time some branches got blown off.'

Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences

Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events

Patience stroked the guinea pig, which was squeaking. She speculated to her friend, 'I think he's telling me he likes being stroked.' 'Why do you think that?' 'Well, he hasn't run away, has he?' she replied.

After listening to the practitioner reading *The Quangle-wangle's hat*, Tom asks, 'What's "grantusthat"?'

While telling her friend, over the phone, how to make the bulbs in her doll's house light up, Hasima asked, 'Are you sure the wires are screwed up tight in the bulb holder?'

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Set up displays that remind children of what they have experienced, using resources such as objects, artefacts, photographs, books
- Provide opportunities to reflect on and recount past events and stories. Encourage story-making, using well-known characters and themes
- Provide for, initiate and join in imaginative and role play, encouraging children to talk about what is happening, and act out the scenarios in character
- Ask children to think in advance how they will accomplish a task. Talk through and sequence the stages for example in making soup, 'We peel the vegetables before we chop them up.'
- Encourage children to categorise and order things, for example in table-top games with bricks, in puzzles, when sorting out snacks or putting things away, and in role play
- Use materials that work, for example water wheels, batteries and bulbs, and construction materials, so that children can predict and explain processes and outcomes
- Use stories to focus children's attention on predictions and explanations, for example, 'What will she have to do now?' 'Why did the boat tip over?' and general patterns, for example what generally happens to 'good' and 'wicked' characters at the end of stories
- Encourage children to see patterns in experiences and events, for example, 'When I put my wet gloves on the radiator, they dry out.'



- Encourage children to talk about how they feel, for example after a disagreement, when they are excited at seeing snow, or at the birth of a sibling
- Create a story with children, asking them to predict what will happen next
- Ask children to tell you about what they are going to do before they do it, and ask them to suggest possible outcomes, for example, 'It might break because there are too many in it.'
- Help children to identify patterns, for example, 'He always sleeps in the day', draw conclusions, 'The sky has gone dark, it must be going to rain', explain effect, 'It sank because it was too heavy', predict, 'It might not grow in there if it is too dark', and speculate, 'What if the bridge falls down?'
- Ask children to give reasons, further explanations or evidence for what they say
- Take an interest in what and how children think and not just what they know
- Encourage children to explore and ask about the meanings of words
- Encourage children to explain sometimes how things work in words rather than actions



Early learning goals for language for thinking

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Enjoy rhyming and rhythmic activities</p> <p>Distinguish one sound from another</p>	<p>Pip enjoys singing along to the rhymes on the cassette. She bounces up and down in time to her favourites.</p> <p>The children laugh as they try to say 'Cackling cockerels' faster and faster.</p> <p>Helen recognises the sound of her mother's car and jumps up to open the door.</p>
<p>Show awareness of rhyme and alliteration</p> <p>Recognise rhythm in spoken words</p>	<p>Marco taps the rhythm of his name with two taps and Benjamin with three taps.</p> <p>When asked if she would like to serve the sausages, Sarah laughed, saying, 'They're all "s" like me.'</p>
<p>Continue a rhyming string</p> <p>Hear and say the initial sound in words and know which letters represent some of the sounds</p>	<p>Gail, who is beginning to learn braille, is delighted to find the word rhymes with her name and then lists other words: whale, snail, hail, sale, tail, rail.</p> <p>Thomas notices the six letters in his name whenever he sees them, such as 'h' at the beginning of 'house'.</p> <p>Marcus says that his name begins with the sound 'm', Faraz with 'f' and Tommy with 't'. He shows a visitor the letters that represent these and other sounds.</p>
<p>Hear and say initial and final sounds in words, and short vowel sounds within words</p> <p>Link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet</p> <p>Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words</p>	<p>Leanne has written a request to her dad who is spending a long time on the phone, 'pz cn I hv a d' (Please can I have a drink).</p> <p>While out shopping, Chantal pointed to the word 'Chemist' and asked what it said. When told, she said, 'It's got "Ch" at the beginning like Chantal.' The practitioner explained that 'Ch' can be pronounced in a number of ways – 'sh' as in Chantal and 'k' as in 'chemist' – but mostly it is pronounced 'ch' as in 'children'.</p> <p>Mark's writing shows he can identify middle vowels although he doesn't always use the correct letter – 'I got ap and lut ad the bed' (I got up and looked under the bed).</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide opportunities for rhythmically moving to music, for example skipping, rocking and dancing. Teach children rhyming songs, some with actions. Make up alliterative jingles, for example, 'Busy bees buzz about'
- Encourage listening to distinguish sounds, for example noticing different songs of birds or noises in the street, and games guessing which object makes a particular sound when hit
- Encourage children to imitate sounds with their voice, for example farm animals, 'ee-aw', a pneumatic drill, 'ddddddd'
- Know that certain English speech sounds may not be used in children's home language(s), and ensure that children have opportunities to hear sounds clearly, modelled as part of everyday activities

- 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, for example 'Hickory Dickory boot, the mouse ran down the ----'
- When making up alliterative jingles, draw attention to the similarities in sounds at the beginning of words and emphasise the initial sound, for example 'mmmmummy', 'shshshadow', 'K-K-K-Katy'

- Play games that help children create rhyming strings of real and imaginary words
- Talk to children about the letters that represent the sounds they hear at the beginning of their own names and other familiar words. Incorporate these in games
- Play interactive games to encourage children to listen for the sound at the beginning of a word

- Play interactive games to encourage children to listen for the sound at the end and then in the middle of words and use the correct letter for the sound
- Show interest in and build on children's own observations about letters in words
- Model writing so that children can see spelling in action and recognise how to put their knowledge of sounds to full use. Encourage children to apply their own knowledge of sounds to what they write
- Read children's writing so that they understand that writing is an important way of communicating
- Sing the alphabet

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for linking sounds and letters

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Listen to and join in with stories and poems, one-to-one and also in small groups</p> <p>Show interest in illustrations and print in books and print in the environment</p> <p>Begin to be aware of the way stories are structured</p>	<p>Callum ran to the computer and looked at the screensaver. 'It says, " Hello" ,' he said.</p> <p>Neil sits with a book on his lap, turning the pages and telling the story using the pictures, using phrases such as, 'Once upon a time', 'and Mummy answered'.</p>
<p>Have favourite books</p> <p>Handle books carefully</p> <p>Suggest how the story might end</p> <p>Know information can be relayed in the form of print</p> <p>Hold books the correct way up and turn pages</p> <p>Understand the concept of a word</p>	<p>Hannah is sitting in deep concentration, turning the pages in the correct order as she looks for the picture of the dragon.</p> <p>Brent knows the story of <i>The little red hen</i> off by heart and recites it, using many words and phrases in the book, giving different voices to each animal.</p> <p>Lee opens his birthday present, a kite, and asks what the assembly instructions mean.</p>
<p>Enjoy an increasing range of books</p> <p>Begin to recognise some familiar words</p> <p>Know that information can be retrieved from books and computers</p>	<p>Bethany gave her friend Sarah her name card to put with her wellingtons at the beginning of the day.</p> <p>Yen asks the practitioner to read the ingredients for making Chinese dumplings.</p>
<p>Explore and experiment with sounds, words and texts</p> <p>Retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories</p> <p>Read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently</p> <p>Know that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom</p> <p>Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events, and openings, and how information can be found in non-fiction texts to answer questions about where, who, why and how</p>	<p>Jamie and Kofi retell the story <i>Too much talk</i> with additional sound effects for 'Aiyeeee' and 'He ran and ran, uphill and downhill'. The children make up their own version of the story, substituting different people and taking objects and making up appropriate voices for them.</p> <p>Philippa reads <i>The tiger who came to tea</i>, using a variety of cues, including her knowledge of the story and its context, her awareness of how it should make sense grammatically and her ability to read some simple words by sound and some by recognition.</p> <p>Mehmet refers to the 'beginning' and 'end' of a story, for example, 'I don't like that ending. I think she should've run away.'</p> <p>Robert finds a book about farm machinery. He finds the chapter on milking machines in the contents page and uses the pictures and captions to find out where the milk is stored after the cows have been milked.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Find opportunities to tell and read stories to children, using props and actions
 - Talk to children about characters and their feelings about the story, and encourage discussion and comparison with people from their own experience. Make reference to the characters in books during other activities
 - Encourage the children to use the stories they hear in their play
 - Create an environment rich in print and the opportunity to add to it
 - Create an attractive book area where children and adults can enjoy books together
 - Take children to visit a local library and/or encourage the librarian to visit the setting
- Discuss with children the characters in the books being read. Encourage them to predict outcomes, to think of alternative endings and to compare plots with their own experience
 - Introduce children to books and other materials that provide information or instruction. Carry out activities using instructions, such as reading a recipe to make a cake
 - Talk about books, using appropriate vocabulary, for example 'page', 'cover', 'back', 'front', 'author', 'illustrator' and 'word'. Compare the appearance and direction of English print with those of other languages
 - Help children to acquire the concept of a word by, for example, playing with words, using names and labels and by pointing them out in the environment and text
 - Read stories that the children already know, pausing at intervals to encourage them to 'read' the next word
- Encourage children to recall words they see frequently, such as 'EXIT', own and friends' names, 'open' and 'bus stop'
 - Use books, other reference material and computers with the children to answer their questions and provide instructions
 - Continue to model writing for different purposes, talking about the writing, particularly the way it is organised
- Discuss different versions of the same story
 - Create group poems encouraging imaginative writing such as similes, for example 'as loud as thunder'
 - Model reading while children can see the text, maintaining natural intonation and observing punctuation
 - Create imaginary words to describe, for example, monsters or other strong characters in stories and poems
 - Help children identify the main events in a story, for example by discussing the implications if an element is changed. Encourage the children to enact stories and to use them as the basis for further imaginative play
 - Encourage children to add to their first-hand experience of the world through the use of books, other texts and information and communication technology (ICT)
 - Encourage children to use a range of reading strategies by modelling different strategies and providing varied texts through which that range can be used

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for reading

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Draw and paint, sometimes giving meanings to marks</p>	<p>Chloe covered the whole paper and said, 'I'm writing.'</p> <p>'What an interesting drawing,' the practitioner said as she joined Aftar at the easel. 'That's my dad, and that's our flat,' Aftar replied. 'And that's me standing outside.'</p> <p>Samuel makes a mark on his dad's birthday card and says, 'That says Samuel.'</p>
<p>Ascribe meanings to marks</p>	<p>Lynn said, 'I have told everyone, "Put the lids on the felt tip pens," ' as she covered the piece of card with marks and occasional letter shapes.</p> <p>Marcia is playing in the café and writes customers' orders on her notepad. She tells the chef, 'They want pizzas.'</p>
<p>Begin to break the flow of speech into words</p> <p>Use writing as a means of recording and communicating</p>	<p>Dexter tells the practitioner a story at a pace she can write it down.</p> <p>Marcus says his name begins with 'm', Faraz with 'f' and Tommy with 't'. He writes, 'Marcus, fz and tm' on a drawing of them playing together.</p>
<p>Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words</p> <p>Attempt writing for different purposes, using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions</p> <p>Write their own names and other things such as labels and captions and begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation</p>	<p>David writes, 'I went to seey fiyuwerccs and hat to pc in the pub' (I went to see fireworks and had to park in the pub).</p> <p>Jim writes captions for the photographs in his album, with some help from the practitioner with words he did not know. 'I saw my Auntie Flo at the wedding.'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

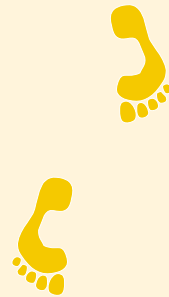
- Encourage children to draw and paint and talk to them about what they have done
- Provide opportunities for children to see practitioners using writing for a purpose, for example lists, messages and reminders
- Include opportunities for writing in role play and other activities
- Encourage activities in which children will need, and therefore experiment with, writing, for example labelling contents on the outside of a bag, leaving a message

- Write poems and short stories in front of children, asking for their contribution
- Make books with children of activities they have been doing, using photographs of the children as illustrations
- Encourage children to use different forms of writing, for example lists, cards, stories and instructions

- Act as a scribe for children. After they say the sentence, repeat the first part of the sentence, say each word as you write
- Talk to children about your writing and involve them in the process, for example by enlisting their help in putting recipe instructions in the correct order
- Encourage children to use their ability to hear the sound at the beginning of words in their writing

- Write stories, poems and non-fiction texts with children
- When writing, talk about what you are doing and why, and talk through some of your decision-making on the way, such as what to write, choice of words, order. Continually reread the writing to provide a good model for children when they write
- Encourage children to use their ability to hear the sounds at various points in words in their writing
- Encourage children to reread their writing as they write
- Provide materials and opportunities for children to initiate the use of writing in their play, as well as creating purposes for independent and group writing

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for writing

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination</p> <p>Use one-handed tools and equipment</p>	<p>Connor spent a long time pouring water from a jug into containers of different sizes, sometimes accurately and sometimes spilling it over the sides.</p>
<p>Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement</p> <p>Manipulate objects with increasing control</p>	<p>Kyle enjoys using paint. He covers the paper using large brush strokes.</p> <p>Darren helps to feed the goldfish, using a pincer movement with his finger and thumb as he sprinkles the food in the tank.</p> <p>Angela arranges the furniture carefully in the doll's house. She picks up the tiny crockery and places it carefully on the dresser.</p>
<p>Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines</p> <p>Begin to form recognisable letters</p>	<p>Angus uses a bucket of water and large brush to paint the wall with water. His arm goes up and down over the same spot to make sure he has covered it.</p> <p>Callum and Stella were making a drawing of the minibeasts they had found outdoors. 'There were lots of caterpillars,' Stella told the practitioner, 'and they looked like this,' pointing to the Cs she had drawn. 'Like my name,' said Callum.</p>
<p>Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed</p>	<p>Osman was writing a caption to put next to the felt-tip pens he had just tidied. He found the packet and wrote 'felt tip pens' on the piece of card he had chosen.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide activities that give children the opportunity and motivation to practise manipulative skills, for example cooking and playing instruments
- Teach children the skills they need, for example cutting with scissors, and plan opportunities for them to practise those skills

- Provide opportunities for children to explore shapes and direction using the whole body, for example by playing games involving moving in circles, forwards and backwards
- Provide opportunities for large shoulder movements, for example helping children to fix ribbons to the end of sticks to swirl in the air, throwing, batting balls suspended on rope, dancing, making patterns in soapy sand and painting
- Provide opportunities for children to develop fine motor control by, for example, pouring water into tiny cups, finger games and setting out cutlery

- Model large anticlockwise and up-and-down letter movements, for example using sky writing, drawing in sand and painting
- Give opportunities to practise repeating the same movement
- Encourage children to practise letter shapes as they paint, draw and record, for example the sun or caterpillars, and as they write, for example, their names, the names of their friends and family or captions
- Encourage children to hold pencils and small tools efficiently
- Provide a variety of writing tools and paper, indoors and outdoors
- Provide opportunities to write purposefully by, for example, placing notepads by phones or making a reservation list in the café

- Give children extensive practice in writing letters, for example labelling their work, making cards, writing notices
- Continue writing practice in imaginative contexts, joining some letters if appropriate, for example 'at', 'it', 'on'
- Intervene to help children hold a pencil effectively
- Use opportunities to help children form letters correctly, for example when they label their paintings

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
handwriting

... to the end of the foundation stage

Mathematical development

Mathematical development depends on becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Mathematical understanding should be developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play, so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers, including numbers larger than 10. To give all children the best opportunities for effective mathematical development, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- many different activities, some of which will focus on mathematical development and some of which will draw out the mathematical learning in other activities, including observing numbers and patterns in the environment and daily routines;
- practical activities underpinned by children's developing communication skills;
- activities that are imaginative and enjoyable;
- help for those children who use a means of communication other than spoken English in developing and understanding specific mathematical language;
- opportunities to observe, assess and plan the next stage in children's learning;
- relevant training to improve practitioners' knowledge, skills and understanding.



Number

Numbers as labels and for counting

Numbers can be used as 'labels'. For example, houses and other buildings have numbers to help people find them in a street, cars and other road vehicles have registration numbers, and buses have numbers that indicate their routes. Children may see numbers being used when a television channel is selected, the video recorder is programmed or food heated in the microwave. At an early stage, children notice where numbers are used, begin to recognise their form and learn some number names.

Counting involves saying the number names in order, matching the numbers to objects counted, knowing that you say one number for each object you count, and knowing that when you count, the last number you say gives the number of objects in the group. Children will later see that counting involves knowing that the number in a group is the same even if the objects are counted in a different order.

Calculating

The act of calculating at this stage is all about using numbers in practical contexts, being able to talk about numbers in everyday life and beginning to make logical deductions about these numbers. It involves comparing numbers of objects (leading to subtraction), combining numbers of objects (addition), sharing objects equally between some children or grouping objects in, say, twos or threes (division) and adding groups of the same number of objects (multiplication). The 'objects' referred to here may be actual objects such as bricks or pencils, but could also be 'events' such as a number of jumps or sounds.

Shape, space and measures

The words 'shape' and 'object' in this section apply to two-dimensional or three-dimensional objects or shapes. Experiencing the properties of shapes is much more important than the naming of shapes (triangles, cubes, etc), although some mathematical names may be introduced.



Shape

Awareness of shape involves recognising similarities and differences and distinguishing properties of shapes. It involves, for example, exploring which will roll and which will 'sit' flat on a table, saying how many sides or corners a shape may have or knowing what shape the faces of a 3D shape are. It also involves being able to identify and name some familiar shapes in the environment, for example noticing that some windows are square-shaped, plates are round or circle shapes, cans of beans are cylinders and packets of cornflakes are in boxes or cuboids.

Space

Awareness of space involves handling shapes and fitting them together. Children will use shapes to build models in imaginative play and they will move objects in different directions or along pathways. They will arrange shapes to create pictures and patterns, and this might involve using suitable alternatives when they run out of a shape – two triangles that fit together to replace a square, for example. They will talk about what they are doing and can be encouraged to use some shape or positional language. They might be able to follow directions that involve positional language, such as, 'Put the teddy bear in the box, please,' or 'You'll find it on the shelf by the books.'

Measures

Understanding measure develops from activities such as packing, filling and emptying bags and other containers or making something to fit, such as cutting string for a makeshift belt when dressing up. Measuring involves being able to compare sizes and quantities. Sometimes this can be done directly, for example when finding the longest zip fastener in the collection. Where direct comparison is not possible, measuring involves using some kind of 'measure'. For example, to compare their hat sizes, each child might cut a strip of paper so that the ends just touch when it is placed around their head,

and then compare strips. In other situations, they might need to use a unit of some kind in order to measure the objects or amounts. Units can be uniform non-standard units, for example interlocking cubes, sticks of the same length, cups of water or buttons of the same size.

In the longer term, children will learn about measuring time. There are two aspects involved with the concept of time. One is about marking specific moments in time, for example, 'We all go home at 12 o'clock,' or 'Today is Tyrell's birthday.' Children will also learn about the order of some routine events, for example, 'We always have a story when we've had our snacks.' The other aspect of time concerns the passage of time, that is how long it takes to do something.

Children will become familiar with ideas such as morning/afternoon, day/night and learning about landmark times in the day if these are discussed during the course of the children's day. At this stage, telling the time is not an appropriate activity, but as with other types of measuring, children can compare short periods of time with uniform non-standard units. For example, they might try to finish tidying before the sand timer runs out or they might cycle twice around the playground before it is time to give the bike to someone else.

Learning

Children's mathematical development arises out of daily experiences in a rich and interesting environment.

Effective learning involves:

- Children initiating activities within a carefully planned environment, that promote learning and can be extended

For example, Rebecca and Niamh are playing in the toyshop that is stocked with a range of toys, a calculator and a till with lots of plastic pound coins. Paper and pencils are available and the children have written some labels, though the numbers are not recognisable to others. They are joined by the practitioner, who asks if the shop is open. The children ask what she wants, and she says, 'A doll with long hair, please.' Niamh picks up the nearest doll and offers it. Rebecca says, 'No, that's got short hair. She wants this one,' and picks a doll with long hair. The practitioner thanks her and asks how much it costs. Rebecca looks at the label and says, 'Five pounds.' The practitioner offers four coins and asks, 'Is that enough?' Rebecca counts the coins and says, 'I want another one.' When the practitioner gives her another coin, she puts them in the till.

- Children enjoying mathematical learning because it is purposeful

For example, a group of children are setting up the doll's house, selecting from a box of furniture and people. Martha says, 'I'm going to put the bed up here, in here.' Japhen asks, 'Where shall I put the cooker?' 'In the kitchen.' 'Which one is the kitchen?' 'Next to the sitting room, there.' Amina puts the car in the garage. Toby collects all the bathroom furniture together, places it in the bathroom, and says, 'I've got all of it. Put it in the bathroom. That goes there, and the bath ... by the wall.' Martha completes the bedroom furniture. 'That's all done now,' Japhen says, 'We've put it all in. Now the people - where to put them!' Martha says, 'The baby needs a bath. In the bath with you! You can't get out yet, you're not clean.' The practitioner asks Amina, 'Where is the mummy going?' 'Shopping.' 'And how is she getting there?' 'In the car. The car goes over there to the shops.'

- Learning which is consolidated and extended through games and gives children opportunities to practise their mathematical skills and knowledge

For example, a group of children play a game in which the practitioner plays the ‘monster muncher’, who takes a number of linking cubes from a child while they shut their eyes. Each child has 10 cubes, and if they work out how many are missing, the monster muncher gives the cubes back. Louise has seven left and says, ‘You’ve taken two.’ ‘Here are two,’ says the practitioner, ‘Have you got 10 now?’ ‘No’, says Louise, ‘No, it’s only nine, you must have taken three!’ ‘There you are,’ says the practitioner, giving her another cube. ‘Seven and three make 10 altogether.’ Liam has seven left, counts them and then points at the table, where the missing cubes were, saying, ‘Eight, nine, 10 – that’s three!’

The practitioner asks how he has worked it out. ‘I counted the spaces,’ Liam says, and as other children have a turn he urges, ‘Count the spaces! Count the spaces!’

- Children being confident and enthusiastic to join in with or talk about mathematical activities

Children may choose to play with shapes or wooden blocks, or to get out a game and play it independently. They may reveal their interest and curiosity by offering statements such as, ‘This leaf is pointy,’ or ‘There’s three and there’s three! I’m three!’ or they may comment on shapes or spot similarities. They might, for example, be seen to substitute two triangular blocks for a missing rectangular one or use a paper semicircle to make a cone shaped hat.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

- Practitioners who help children to see themselves as mathematicians, and develop positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning

Teaching

Children have a natural interest in numbers, measuring and shapes, aroused by interaction with their environment and with other people. This enthusiasm needs to be encouraged and will form a sound basis for later mathematics. It is important that children’s experiences of mathematics are enjoyable and meaningful and that their confidence is always fostered through building from what they know, understand and are able to do. Everyday contexts for purposeful mathematics help to generate enthusiasm. These will include stories and rhymes on a mathematical theme, with props, actions or humour that children and practitioners enjoy. Other group activities such as cooking and gardening can also be useful here. Reciting numbers in unison, for example, can encourage and support children who are just beginning to learn numbers in order. Without being the focus of attention, they can join in the ‘counting’ when confident with part of the sequence or let the rest of the group carry on when they are unsure. Over time, they will be able to join in more fully.

- Practitioners who maintain children’s enthusiasm and confidence when they begin to record their mathematics

Asking children to ‘put something on paper’ about what they have done or have found out will allow them to choose how to record or whether to, for example, use a picture, some kind of tally or write a number. Children are most likely to want to ‘put something down’ when the record has some purpose for them. They will enjoy making labels to show the number of bricks in each tin when playing at muddling the tins and guessing how many bricks they may find when they open each one. Talking about the mathematics in different practical situations and making a paper and pencil record when it has some purpose for the children will promote confidence.

It will provide a much stronger foundation for mathematical development than an introduction to 'sums' such as $2 + 3 =$ before children have had opportunities to explore number situations, count, begin to calculate, talk about how they worked things out and record in their own ways.

- Planning a range of mathematical opportunities

Planning for mathematics will be concerned with both daily activities and longer-term development. Much work will involve number, but practitioners should aim for a balance with work on shape and measures, patterns, making connections and seeing relationships, and make good use of mathematical language in all these activities.

- Making good use of opportunities to talk 'mathematically' as children play or take part in normal daily activities

Paintings, drawings and models, playing with sand and water, preparing food and role play all provide opportunities for the discussion of mathematical ideas. Practitioners can also encourage mathematical discussion by setting up specific activities or providing specific resources that encourage children to explore mathematical ideas, with clear learning outcomes in mind. Much of the language used will be descriptive. Although it is important for practitioners to use the correct mathematical terminology, it is more important to encourage children to use their own ways of describing what they see, feel or touch. Naming shapes, for example 'triangle' or 'cube', is not as important as children gaining experience of what shapes are like or how they can be used. For example, circles can represent eyes or the sun, cubes are useful for building and boxes can be broken down to make a flat shape.

- Practitioners encouraging children's mathematical development by intervening in their play

Intervening in children's play includes asking appropriate questions such as, 'How many people have you drawn?', 'Are any of those shapes the same?' and 'Have all the trucks got the same number of wheels?' Some questions will not have exact or immediate answers, for example, 'How shall we decide who has first turn?' or 'Who used the most bricks for their tower?' Comments such as, 'What a lot of beads you have there,' or 'That looks heavy,' or 'I like the way you have drawn a tree on both sides of the house,' can also help to establish mathematical ideas and provide the opportunity to introduce new language and to encourage discussion.

- Practitioners who develop children's thinking by showing an interest in methods, not just solutions

Questions such as, 'Tell me how you made your model,' or 'How did you work out the missing number?' are useful ways of finding out how a child is thinking. Such questions encourage children to organise their ideas as they explain what they have done. Opportunities for children to work together and check and correct each other can also be helpful in developing their thinking.

- Practitioners who understand that mathematical development does not depend on specific resources

It is important to provide a rich environment outdoors as well as indoors, in which children are provided with interesting materials to sort, count, talk about, compare, use for making models and so on. Everyday objects and materials such as boxes, chopsticks, large coins, play-people, building bricks, measuring jugs and water will interest children. Large quantities will add to the fun and encourage children to count beyond 10. Children will also enjoy playing with some of the mathematics materials they will

- Practitioners who are confident about themselves as mathematicians and understand the links between different areas of mathematics

use later. For example, including calculators in role play situations, using computers to make tallies or using interlocking cubes or number rods when creating pictures, prints or models will help children to become familiar with the materials.

Many adults are less confident about mathematics than other areas of learning. Sometimes adults think of mathematics as 'doing sums' and are not aware that it involves much more than that. The separate headings 'Numbers as labels and for counting', 'Calculating' and 'Shape, space and measures' are used to organise mathematics. This does not mean that the ideas they include will be met separately or in the order presented. Many of the ideas that appear in the 'Shape, space and measures' section will provide good opportunities for using numbers. For example, finding answers to questions such as, 'How many spoonfuls of sand did you put in the bucket?' will involve counting. The idea of 'pattern' runs through the different aspects of mathematics. Children might notice repeating patterns of colours or shapes on a favourite tee-shirt, for example, or they might help to create a repeating pattern with beads. Children begin to appreciate symmetry, and this may feature in some of their drawings. They might also notice patterns when working with numbers of objects, for example, 'You get three and I get four. Three, four!'

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show an interest in numbers and counting</p> <p>Use some number names and number language spontaneously</p> <p>Enjoy joining in with number rhymes and songs</p> <p>Use mathematical language in play</p>	<p>Warren watches with interest as the practitioner spoons the powder paint into the pot, counting as she does so.</p> <p>Tania looked at the bricks on the floor and said, 'There are lots and lots ... a hundred, a million.'</p> <p>A small group of children were jumping from log to log. The practitioner joined them. Amir jumped on three logs and shouted, 'Three!'</p>
<p>Show curiosity about numbers by offering comments or asking questions</p> <p>Use some number names accurately in play</p> <p>Willingly attempt to count, with some numbers in the correct order</p> <p>Recognise groups with one, two or three objects</p>	<p>George handed round the cups to the children, saying, 'There's one for you, and one for you,' as he went round the group.</p> <p>A group of children had been singing 'One potato, two potato ...' with the practitioner. When they had finished, Jessica asked the practitioner, 'What number is "more"?'</p> <p>Ayeshe enjoys running her fingers over the felt numeral three, feeling its shape.</p>
<p>Show confidence with numbers by initiating or requesting number activities</p> <p>Count up to three or four objects by saying one number name for each item</p> <p>Recognise some numerals of personal significance</p> <p>Begin to represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper or pictures</p> <p>Recognise numerals 1 to 5, then 1 to 9</p> <p>Count out up to six objects from a larger group</p> <p>Count actions or objects that cannot be moved</p> <p>Select the correct numeral to represent 1 to 5, then 1 to 9, objects</p> <p>Show increased confidence with numbers by spotting errors</p> <p>Count an irregular arrangement of up to 10 objects</p> <p>Say the number after any number up to 9</p> <p>Begin to count beyond 10</p>	<p>When Nicole arrived each day, she counted how many children had already put their photo on the number line to show that they had arrived.</p> <p>Simeon pointed to the number 5 on the telephone. 'That says five and I'm five,' he said.</p> <p>One of the children's favourite games was helping the teddy to learn to count. The practitioner used teddy to count, 'One, two, four, five.' William and Leah shouted out, 'He missed the three!' and began making up their own jumbled sequences of numbers and correcting each other.</p> <p>Even when the game was over, Josh continued throwing the die, reading the number and counting pennies from the large pile on the table.</p> <p>'Listen for how many,' said Zara as she dropped pennies noisily into the tin.</p> <p>A group of children were doing a jigsaw together. They shared out the pieces and counted to check everyone had the same number.</p> <p>Kim and Edward made a number track, first to 10, then adding numbers to 17 when they realised they could throw the beanbag further than they had expected.</p>
<p>Say and use number names in order in familiar contexts</p> <p>Count reliably up to 10 everyday objects</p> <p>Recognise numerals 1 to 9</p> <p>Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems</p>	<p>As the children were tidying away the hoops, they counted to make sure that all 10 had been found and put away.</p> <p>The children were playing a game where one of them selected and hid an object to describe to the group while the others closed their eyes. Before they opened them, they counted, '10, nine, eight ... zero.'</p> <p>Daniel and Esther each collected a large pile of stones. Daniel said, 'I think I've got 30.' Esther replied, 'No you haven't. I've got more than you and I've counted mine and I've got 27.' They counted Daniel's pile, and laughed when they realised that many of his stones were smaller and he had 42.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Use number language, for example 'one', 'two', 'three', 'lots', 'hundreds', 'how many?' and 'count', in a variety of situations
 - Use stories and rhymes to develop understanding of number
 - Encourage children to use number, for example when invited for tea in role play say, 'I would like two biscuits, please.'
 - Provide a variety of numerals for children to handle, for example large numerals made of wood, sandpaper and string
- Use large dice or dominoes and encourage instant recognition of one, two or three spots
 - Model and encourage use of mathematical language by, for example, asking questions such as, 'How many saucepans will fit on the shelf?'
 - Model counting to five and beyond
 - Provide number labels for children to use, for example by putting a number label on each bike and a corresponding number on each parking space
- Create opportunities for children to use number language
 - Provide opportunities for children as a group to join in reciting the number names in order
 - Participate in children's play to encourage use of number language
 - Model touching or moving objects while counting them
 - Display numerals in the environment, for example a sign to show how many aprons go on each hook or a large number track on which children can play
 - Encourage estimation, for example estimate how many sandwiches to make for the picnic
 - Encourage counting of things that cannot be touched, such as jumps
 - Model and encourage use of mathematical language, for example number names to 10, 'Have you got enough to give me three?'
 - Provide opportunities for children to count to 10 or more
 - Use 'missing number' problems, for example which card the puppet has lost from the 1 to 10 pack or which number has been covered on the track
 - Model estimating 'how many' in large groups of objects
- Give children responsibility for counting and checking as part of everyday routines
 - Use rhymes, songs and stories involving counting on and counting back
 - Model the numbers in songs, rhymes, stories and various counting activities on a number line
 - Use comments when children create large collections or use lots of pieces to make large structures to encourage them to think about quantity, for example, 'What a tall tower! How many bricks did you use?'
 - Model estimating number in very large groups of objects, introducing the names of very large numbers, for example hundreds, thousands, millions
 - Demonstrate how arranging them in rows of five or 10 helps in counting large numbers

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for numbers as labels and for counting

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Compare two groups of objects, saying when they have the same number</p>	<p>The children were watching the goldfish swim around. Terri said, 'Those two are playing with each other, but that one is all on his own.'</p>
<p>Show an interest in number problems</p> <p>Separate a group of three or four objects in different ways, beginning to recognise that the total is still the same</p>	<p>Alan said, 'If you want to come on our plane, we'll have to put in another chair.'</p> <p>A group of children were acting the story of <i>Three Billy Goats Gruff</i>. Charlotte said, 'The big one has gone over the bridge, so there are one, two left. Now he's gone over. Only one left.'</p>
<p>Sometimes show confidence and offer solutions to problems</p> <p>Find the total number of items in two groups by counting all of them</p> <p>Use own methods to solve a problem</p> <p>Say with confidence the number that is one more than a given number</p>	<p>Colin and Ben suggest what might be done about the extra biscuit. 'Someone else can have the extra one.' 'Get one more and then we can both have two.'</p> <p>Adeola enjoyed picking up as many conkers as she could, grabbing more and working out how many she had altogether. 'Five and four ... nine! That's my best go.'</p> <p>Jordan was finding out which fruit the children wanted. 'Do you want an apple or a banana?' he asked and made a mark on his clipboard. He counted the marks and said, 'There's six apples and nine bananas ... lots more want bananas.' The practitioner asked, 'How many children have you asked?' Jordan looked at his marks. 'That's nine, then 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. There's 15 people!'</p>
<p>In practical activities and discussion begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting</p> <p>Use language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers</p> <p>Find one more or one less than a number from one to 10</p> <p>Begin to relate addition to combining two groups of objects and subtraction to 'taking away'</p>	<p>The children were reading a story and predicting what would happen next. 'If two more come there will be seven, because five and two make seven.'</p> <p>Singing the sausage song, Tessa said, 'If one more bursts there will be four left.'</p> <p>Playing the dice game, Ryan thought Luke had miscounted. 'No!' said Luke, 'I had seven and then I threw away three, so that's four. That's right!'</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Model language that may not be as familiar to children as 'more', such as 'same as', 'less' or 'fewer'

- Create opportunities for children to separate objects into unequal groups as well as equal groups
- Pose problems as you read number stories or rhymes, for example, 'How many will there be in the pool when one more frog jumps in?'
- Model and encourage use of related mathematical language, for example 'share', 'some', 'each', 'more', 'less', 'fewer', 'same as' and number names up to five, then 10

- Pose more complex problems, for example sharing a number of things when there will be a remainder
- Show interest in how children solve problems and value their different solutions
- Encourage children to count how many there are altogether by moving two groups close to each other if necessary
- Encourage children to record what they have done, for example by drawing or tallying
- Provide experience of reciting number names from starting points other than one, to help children 'count on'
- Make sure children are secure about the order of numbers before asking what comes after or before each number
- Play games where a number of objects are hidden from a group and children guess how many
- Deliberately give the wrong number and ask children to tell you how to put it right
- Model and encourage use of mathematical language, for example 'count', 'count on', 'how many', 'altogether', 'add', 'one less' and 'number before'

- Discuss with children how problems relate to others they have met and their different solutions
- Encourage children to choose numbers for problems and to make up their own story problems for other children to solve
- Encourage children to extend problems, for example, 'Suppose there were three people to share the bricks between instead of two.'

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for calculating

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show an interest in shape and space by playing with shapes or making arrangements with objects</p> <p>Show awareness of similarities in shapes in the environment</p> <p>Observe and use positional language</p> <p>Use size language such as 'big' and 'little'</p>	<p>Owen enjoyed matching shapes to the spaces in his puzzle. Katrina watched and said, 'There, look there,' when he picked up the last piece.</p> <p>Victoria said, 'I've got the big cup for my drink.'</p>
<p>Show interest by sustained construction activity or by talking about shapes or arrangements</p> <p>Use shapes appropriately for tasks</p> <p>Begin to talk about the shapes of everyday objects</p>	<p>Claire and Iram were building houses with large blocks. They looked at the blocks and decided, 'We need that one, it's flat ... and that pointy one.' 'I need a slopy one for my roof,' Iram said, and went to look for one.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Use shape and positional language such as, 'Can you see a shape like this?', 'What could fit inside this box?' or 'Tell me which shape biscuits you like?'
- Encourage children to talk about the shapes they see and use and about how they are arranged
- Tell stories about journeys, plan real journeys or talk about journeys made together, for example the places passed on a visit to the shops
- Model the language for shape, position and measures in discussions, for example 'ball shape', 'box shape', 'in', 'on', 'inside', 'under', 'longer', 'shorter', 'heavy', 'light', 'full' and 'empty'

- Organise the environment for shape matching, for example use pictures of different bricks on their containers to show where they are kept
- Value children's constructions by displaying them or taking photographs

Progression from age three ...



Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Sustain interest for a length of time on a pre-decided construction or arrangement</p> <p>Match some shapes by recognising similarities and orientation</p> <p>Use appropriate shapes to make representational models or more elaborate pictures</p> <p>Show curiosity and observation by talking about shapes, how they are the same or why some are different</p> <p>Find items from positional/directional clues</p> <p>Describe a simple journey</p> <p>Order two items by length or height</p> <p>Choose suitable components to make a particular model</p> <p>Adapt shapes or cut material to size</p> <p>Select a particular named shape</p> <p>Begin to use mathematical names for 'solid' 3D shapes and 'flat' 2D shapes and mathematical terms to describe shapes</p> <p>Show awareness of symmetry</p> <p>Order two or three items by length</p> <p>Order two items by weight or capacity</p> <p>Instruct a programmable toy</p>	<p>Danny decided to make a box for his model. He chose a piece of card that was an appropriate shape for the base, and different shapes for the sides.</p> <p>Lindsey was concentrating on a shape puzzle. She turned one piece around several times. Finally she flipped it over. 'There!' she said with satisfaction as the piece fitted into the space.</p> <p>Stevie looked at the rhomboid. 'It looks like a boat,' she said. She picked up a triangle. 'This one's different ... it's only got three points.'</p> <p>Bahar said to the practitioner, 'I came from my cousin's house today. We had to come round the park and past the shops and over the big road to get here.'</p> <p>Jade took the longest zip from the collection. She enjoyed placing it against the others' clothes, saying, 'Too long for your dress,' 'Too long for your coat.'</p> <p>A group of children used interlocking shapes to make a box long enough to hold some pencils. Later in the day, they decided to make a table and some chairs for their doll's house.</p> <p>'I chose the box to print with,' Rachel said. 'See, I put that side in the paint and made a square.'</p> <p>Kate programmed a toy to reach the door.</p>
<p>Use language such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' or 'lighter' to compare quantities</p> <p>Talk about, recognise and recreate simple patterns</p> <p>Use language such as 'circle' or 'bigger' to describe the shape and size of solids and flat shapes</p> <p>Use everyday words to describe position</p> <p>Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems</p>	<p>Dougal searched for a cube among the modelling materials. 'We want to make a die,' he explained, 'So it has to have six sides for all the spots.'</p> <p>Anne drew the boat she had just made 'as if I was looking at it like a seagull.'</p> <p>Simon and Ena were choosing cars from the box to race down the slope. They guessed which would go the furthest and then experimented to see if they were right.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide a range of boxes and materials for models and constructions such as 'dens', indoors and outdoors
- Use shapes that are 'not quite', for example, a circle, a cube
- Use shape and position language, for example, 'Which shape will fit here?', 'Is this a square as well?' or 'Which shape could we use for the wheel?'
- Provide examples of the same shape in different sizes
- Encourage imagery, for example ask children to imagine what might be inside a box and help them to focus on both shape and size
- Ask 'silly' questions, for example show a tiny box and ask if there is a bicycle in it
- Model and encourage use of mathematical language and discussion, for example 'same because', 'different because', 'curved', 'have corners', 'circles', 'squares', 'taller/shorter'
- Encourage children to extend provision and participate in new arrangements such as redesigning the home corner or the garden
- Play 'peek-a-boo', revealing shapes a little at a time and at different angles. Ask children to say what they think the shape is, what else it could be or what it could not be
- Ask for shapes, using their mathematical name and by describing properties, for example, 'I want a shape with four straight sides and four corners,' or 'Has anyone got a square I could use?'
- Be a robot and ask children to give you instructions to get to somewhere. Let them have a turn at being the robot for you to give instructions to

- Ask questions such as, 'Why isn't this one a triangle?' or 'What's special about the square?'
- Encourage children to explain what someone would see if they looked at a shape from a different viewpoint, for example, 'What shape would you see if I turned this cone upside down?' or 'What would you see if you were small enough to walk inside this sweet tube. What shape would you see at the end?'
- Encourage children to extend problems, for example, 'Suppose the bed was for the teddy instead.'



Early learning goals for
shape, space and measures

... to the end of the foundation stage

Knowledge and understanding of the world

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography, and information and communication technology (ICT).



To give all children the best opportunities for developing effectively their knowledge and understanding of the world, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- activities based on first-hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making and discussion;
- an environment with a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors that stimulate children's interest and curiosity;
- opportunities that help children to become aware of, explore and question issues of differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion and culture and of special educational needs and disability issues;
- adult support in helping children communicate and record orally and in other ways;
- supplementary experience and information for children with sensory impairment.

Effective learning involves:

■ Practical activities

Learning

Young children are finding out more and more about the world they live in and the people they encounter. Children acquire a range of skills, knowledge and attitudes related to knowledge and understanding of the world in many ways. They learn skills necessary to this area of learning by using a range of tools, for example computers, magnifiers, gardening tools, scissors, hole punches and screwdrivers. They learn by encountering creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environments and in real life situations, for example in the shop or in the garden. They learn effectively by doing things, for example by using pulleys to raise heavy objects or observing the effect of increasing the incline of a slope on how fast a vehicle travels. They need to work with a range of materials in their activities, for example wet and dry sand, coloured and clear liquids, compost, gravel and clay. They will begin to understand the past by examining appropriate artefacts such as toys played with by their parents when they were children. Understanding design work will come from using a variety of joining methods and materials.

■ Interaction with each other and with adults

Children gain information from adults by imitating their behaviour and through explicit teaching, for example with regard to health and safety in the use of tools and hygiene in cooking. Their range of vocabulary can be increased through hearing new words being used appropriately by adults

and other children, for example when sensitively intervening in their role play or exploring different materials. Children respond to practitioners' enthusiasm for planned activities, and this may prompt their inquisitive questioning. They gain knowledge from each other in incidental interaction, for example when talking about their different experiences of celebrations at home. They copy each other, for example in trying out new ways of making their tall constructions stable. Children also show each other how to do things, for example how to use a map, a tool or a computer program.

■ Gathering information

Children need opportunities to gather information to satisfy their curiosity. They do this in many ways, for example by asking questions of adults, of each other and of themselves. This personal questioning may be evident in their behaviour, for example choosing to sit quietly, thinking about what they need before collecting resources and beginning a design activity. They also gather information by looking at books, using CD ROMs, audio and visual reference material, pictures, photographs, maps, artefacts and products and by talking to visitors and making visits.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

■ Practitioners teaching powerful lessons by modelling different behaviours

Teaching

Children will learn to investigate, be curious, be enthusiastic, experiment, solve problems, pose questions, use reference skills, adopt appropriate language, and be conscious about health and safety and hygiene if they see the practitioners around them operate in this way. For example, children will name a chrysalis correctly if the practitioner commonly uses correct scientific language in discussions. Children will understand the value of using books or CD ROMs to follow up questions and find new information. If practitioners search alongside the children to answer a question, for example about the number of snails in the garden after a night of rain, the children will be encouraged to be observant, practical researchers.

■ Direct teaching of skills and knowledge

Children need to know how to use tools and equipment correctly and safely. These skills must be carefully taught. Information may be given during an investigation, for example, in a cooking activity, the practitioner might say, 'We call some flowing materials "liquids" but when they cool they may become "solid".' The giving of some information may be pre-planned, such as before a visit to a farm or library children may be taught about the simple symbols used in these places in order to help them make the most of their experience. 'Giving the game away' too early during an investigative activity may limit the depth of children's learning. For example, telling children that magnets attract and push away before they have a chance to experience the 'eureka moment' provides information but prevents the development of investigative skills, including observation, testing and analysing.

- Practitioners who interact with, and support, children by encouraging them and helping them to learn from their mistakes

Children should receive positive encouragement to try out new ideas. For example, initiative can be encouraged by giving children opportunities to rearrange large blocks to create a building to be used in role play. Sometimes their ideas may not work, for example in the choice of an adhesive or joining technique in making a product or when a paper bag made with staples is not strong enough for a heavy weight. Children may then be encouraged to try something else. If the practitioner interprets such attempts as failures instead of building on them, the child may be discouraged from experimenting and taking risks.

- The use of carefully framed questions

Open-ended questions are important tools in developing vocabulary and in helping children think things through, for example, 'How can we?', 'What would happen here if?', 'What can you see here?', 'Can you find a way to?', 'What else can we try?', 'Why would you go there?', 'What do they use this for?', 'How does it work?' and 'What does it do?' The effective practitioner uses children's discussions well. Encouraging the children to tell each other what they have found out, to speculate on future findings or to describe their experiences enables them to rehearse and reflect on their knowledge and to practise new vocabulary.

- Planning for equal access to the curriculum

Practitioners need to plan for all children to participate in the activities provided. For example, practitioners need to encourage both boys and girls to use construction equipment, engage in role play, use ICT or undertake investigation and design tasks. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities need to be provided with access to appropriate resources. Equipment may need to be adapted, for example when cooking with visually impaired children. The breadth of children's cultural and religious experiences should be reflected in the resources, for example cooking utensils, clothes and range of food available in the home corner.

- Making effective use of outdoors and the local neighbourhood

Outdoor activities allow children to have real experiences, for example of weather, of creatures in their natural environment and of the buildings that surround them. It allows them to work on a large scale, such as in construction, water play and mapping. These experiences can be extended during indoor play, for example by looking with magnifiers at plants or creatures that have been collected carefully from the garden or making a model of buildings encountered on a journey.

- Giving careful consideration to the provision and access of resources

Resources and equipment need to be readily available to children. They need to be wide ranging to challenge children to make real choices, for example in the joining techniques and materials to be used in making a bag for potatoes for a supermarket. Children can be beneficially involved in making decisions, such as in developing a role play area or creating a display. The children should have access to different ways of using reference skills to gain information, for example through books, photographs, artefacts, natural objects, visits, interviews and the investigation of products.

- Using parents' knowledge to extend children's experiences of the world

Parents can provide a diversity of insight into faiths, cultures, history and places, for example when cooking in the home corner or when visiting places such as the synagogue or market. Their ongoing involvement ensures that children learn from the breadth of parents' experience and perceptions.



Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show curiosity and interest by facial expression, movement or sound</p>	<p>Michael hears the siren of a fire engine and imitates the sound. Pippa claps her hands and laughs at her friend who is blowing bubbles.</p>
<p>Show curiosity, observe and manipulate objects</p> <p>Describe simple features of objects and events</p>	<p>Patsy looks at and strokes the inside of the horse chestnut cases collected on a walk and pricks the spikes of a case against her hands.</p>
<p>Examine objects and living things to find out more about them</p>	<p>Janice takes apart the pepper grinder to discover its use and moves the parts. She notices the different materials each part is made of.</p>
<p>Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate</p> <p>Find out about, and identify, some features of living things, objects and events they observe</p>	<p>Patrick listens to sounds of farm animals on a CD ROM, following a visit to the city farm.</p> <p>Corin finds a caterpillar in the garden and matches it to a picture in a book.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide interesting and attractive resources and learning environments, to stimulate children's curiosity
- Encourage and respond to children's signs of interest and extend these through questions, discussions and further investigation
- Familiarise children with surroundings and the natural world using, for example, sensory trails, visits to shops, exploring the setting and looking at pictures, books and videos

- Give time for exploratory play, for example stirring cornflower mixture, digging in the garden, taking apart and putting together objects from construction kits
- Model descriptive vocabulary and encourage its use
- Encourage close observation, for example by drawing the surroundings, natural or made objects
- Visit and/or use photographs of the local area to identify features, for example library, railway, church, mosque or postbox
- Give opportunities to take part in events, for example celebrate the opening of a new building, plant an anniversary tree

- Discuss reasons that make activities safe or unsafe, for example hygiene, electrical awareness, appropriate use of senses when tasting different flavourings, smelling plants, feeling textures of materials, listening to sound or careful use of tools
- Provide opportunities for children to examine objects to understand textures, shape and material
- Encourage children to talk about their findings, ask questions and speculate on reasons

- Give opportunities to record findings, for example drawing, writing, making a tape or model and photographing
- Give opportunities, some adult directed, some child initiated, to investigate, using a range of techniques and senses

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
exploration and
investigation

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Explore objects</p> <p>Show an interest in why things happen and how things work</p>	<p>Amy is fascinated by a kaleidoscope and wonders at the moving shapes and colours.</p>
<p>Sort objects by one function</p> <p>Talk about what is seen and what is happening</p>	<p>While playing with a toy fire engine, Lucy puts all the hoses and reels into one compartment and all the hammers and ladders into another.</p>
<p>Notice and comment on patterns</p> <p>Show an awareness of change</p>	<p>Some children talk about the changes in ingredients as they mix them together during a cooking activity. They watch, fascinated, as the cake rises in the microwave.</p> <p>Nadia and Masud discuss the rising level and size of bubbles as they use a whisk in the water tray.</p>
<p>Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change</p> <p>Ask questions about why things happen and how things work</p>	<p>Angela investigates why the bike stops when the brakes are pressed. She gets her friend to operate the lever as she looks at the way the brakes touch the wheel.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide and encourage children to play with and talk about collections of objects that have similar and different properties, for example natural and made, size, colour, shape, texture, function
- 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 and tape recorder

- Encourage children to sort objects by different criteria, for example things found on a walk or tools in the design area, as they set tables or organise storage of collections of clothes in the home corner
- Talk about tools and their effects and objects and how they work, for example a washing machine at home, a teapot or a water wheel

- Provide opportunities for children to notice and discuss patterns around them, for example rubbings from grates, covers, bricks, tree bark
- Discuss events that occur regularly within the children's experience, for example seasonal patterns, daily routines, celebrations
- Examine change over time, for example growing plants or looking at photographs of children since birth, and change that may be reversed, for example melting ice

- Encourage children to observe, comment on and record similarities, differences, patterns and change within their activities
- Model investigative behaviour and raise questions such as, 'What do you think?', 'Tell me more about?', 'What will happen if?', 'What else could we try?', 'What could it be used for?' and 'How might it work?'
- Encourage children to raise questions and suggest solutions and answers

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
exploration and
investigation

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Investigate construction materials</p> <p>Realise tools can be used for a purpose</p>	<p>Christine makes patterns from playdough using a stick to shape holes in the playdough.</p>
<p>Join construction pieces together to build and balance</p> <p>Begin to try out a range of tools and techniques safely</p>	<p>Following a visit to the High Street, some children make a church tower out of small wooden bricks. They make a label by cutting out a small square of paper, glue it using a spreader and fix it to a piece of dowel rod which they stand in plasticine.</p>
<p>Construct with a purpose in mind, using a variety of resources</p> <p>Use simple tools and techniques competently and appropriately</p>	<p>Nicky and Sue visit a travel agent with their practitioner. When they return to the setting they use scissors, glue, string and a hole punch to make a bag to carry some of the brochures home.</p>
<p>Build and construct with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources, and adapting their work where necessary</p> <p>Select the tools and techniques they need to shape, assemble and join materials they are using</p>	<p>Louise decides to make a toy vehicle, selects various objects and materials from a wide range available, and chooses to use scissors, stapler, elastic bands and glue to join them together. She modifies her initial idea by using masking tape.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

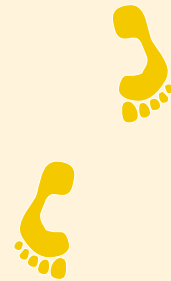
- Provide for and support children in the use of a range of construction materials, including construction kits containing a variety of shapes, sizes and ways of joining
- Praise initiative in improvising with materials and objects
- Introduce children to appropriate tools to work on different materials
- Model the language of designing and making, for example 'join', 'build' and 'shape'

- Provide opportunities for children to construct for their own purposes
- Provide ideas and stimuli for children, for example photographs, books, visits, close observation of buildings
- Teach and support use of a range of tools, for example scissors, hole punch, stapler, junior hacksaw, glue spreader, rolling pin, cutter, knife, grater, and encourage children to use correct names of tools

- Give children opportunities to practise using an increasing range of techniques and tools and provide a variety of materials
- Discuss purposes of design and making tasks
- Teach joining, measuring, cutting and finishing techniques and their names
- Make links with children's experiences to provide design and make opportunities, for example a ladder for Anansi or a wall with a soft landing for Humpty Dumpty

- Provide opportunities for children to practise their skills, initiate and plan simple projects and select, choose and devise their own solutions in design and making processes
- Extend range of techniques such as cutting (scissors, pastry cutter, moulds, tearing), joining (adhesives, stapling, masking tape, treasury tag, paper clip, paper fastener, elastic band, sewing) and finishing (crimping, weaving, tufting, pleating, painting, colouring)
- Encourage use of evaluative and comparative language, for example 'longer', 'shorter', 'lighter', 'heavier' and 'stronger'

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
designing and making skills

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
Show an interest in ICT	Hannah is fascinated by remote control cars, preferring playing with them to anything else
Know how to operate simple equipment	Malika pushes the button at the pedestrian crossing and watches for the green man.
Complete a simple program on the computer and/or perform simple functions on ICT apparatus	<p>While dancing in the garden, Jonathan stops and rewinds the cassette player to replay his favourite music.</p> <p>Georgia manoeuvres her wheelchair outside and motors around with the other children who are pushing trucks.</p>
Find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning	While playing in the role play area which is set up as a hospital, Darren takes on the role of the receptionist, types some letters on the computer and prints them out.

What does the practitioner need to do?

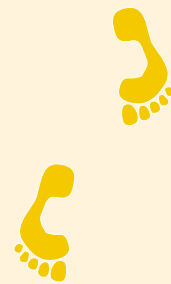
- Give opportunities to control a programmable toy, for example a floor robot
- Help children to become aware of technology around them in the setting, local environment and home, for example washing machines, street lights, telephones, cash registers and burglar alarms
- Stimulate all children's interest in ICT and other technology

- Teach simple skills of using equipment, for example switching on and off
- Help children understand how things work by giving them opportunities to take apart and reassemble, for example telephones and radios
- Build on ICT skills children develop at home

- Teach and encourage use of ICT in the setting, for example tape recorder and headphones, programmable toys and clicking on different icons to cause different things to happen on a paint program
- Provide opportunities in role play areas to use ICT
- Introduce the correct language in conversations, for example the names of technological equipment and the operations performed on them, such as 'eject', 'double click', 'rewind' and 'crash'

- Give opportunities for the use of ICT to develop skills across the areas of learning, for example a talking word processor to develop language and communication, vocabulary and writing, talking books for early reading, a paint program to develop early mark making, a telephone for speaking and listening, CD ROMs, video and television and musical tapes to find things out
- Encourage children to observe and talk about the use of ICT in the environment on local walks, for example traffic lights, telephones, street lights, barcode scanners to identify prices in shops
- Encourage children to show each other how to use ICT equipment

Progression from age three ...



**Early learning goals for
information and
communication technology**

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
Remember and talk about significant things that have happened to them	Lydia tells her practitioner about a trip to the seaside and the dead jellyfish on the sand.
<p>Show interest in the lives of people familiar to them</p> <p>Begin to differentiate between past and present</p>	<p>A group of children look at photographs of themselves and each other as babies and compare what they can do now with what they could do then.</p> <p>During the spring and summer, the children observe the life cycle of frogs, butterflies and annual plants in the garden and pond and describe and draw the changes over time.</p>
<p>Find out about past and present events in their own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know</p>	<p>After a visit by her grandmother, Grace talks to a group about the old toys she has brought for display and explains how they were used by her grandmother when she was a girl.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Encourage role play of events in children's lives
- Talk about and show interest in children's lives and experiences
- Model the use of language of time in conversations, for example 'yesterday', 'old', 'past', 'now' and 'then'

- Encourage discussion of important events in the lives of people children know, such as their family
- Encourage children to use the vocabulary of time in discussions
- Sequence events, for example photographs of children from birth
- Use stories that introduce a sense of time and people from the past
- Make books of events in settings, for example summer fair, building a climbing frame, shopping expedition, learning about a festival
- Observe changes in the environment, for example through the seasons or as a building extension is built
- Provide long-term growing projects, for example sowing seeds or looking after chicken eggs

- Encourage children to ask questions about events in each other's lives in discussions and explore these experiences in role play
- Provide reference material for children to use, for example photographs, books, interviewing visitors
- Compare artefacts of different times, for example garden and household tools

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for a sense of time

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show an interest in the world in which they live</p>	<p>While out for a walk, the children show an interest in the pond and the bridge going over it.</p>
<p>Comment and ask questions about where they live and the natural world</p> <p>Notice differences between features of the local environment</p>	<p>On the way home, Joe notices the different road signs and wants to know what they mean.</p> <p>A group of children talk about the different shapes of windows and sizes of buildings on the walk to the shops.</p>
<p>Observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world</p> <p>Find out about their environment, and talk about those features they like and dislike</p>	<p>The children match photographs to places in their local environment and work out a route from the local shop to their setting.</p> <p>While walking in the local area, the children talk about how the flower baskets improve it and how the litter makes it look untidy.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Arouse awareness of features of the environment in the setting and immediate local area, for example make visits to shops or park
- Provide play maps and 'small world' equipment for children to create their own environments

- Introduce vocabulary to enable children to talk about their observations and to ask questions
- Use appropriate words, for example 'park', 'town', 'village', 'countryside', 'road', 'path', 'railway', 'house', 'flat', 'market', 'temple' and 'synagogue', to help children make distinctions in their observations
- Use stories that help children make sense of different environments

- Provide opportunities for children to find out about the environment by interviewing local people, examining photographs and simple maps, making focused visits to the local natural and built environment
- Provide stimuli and resources for children to create simple maps and plans, paintings, drawings and models of observations of the area and imaginary landscapes
- Encourage children to express opinions on natural and built environments and give opportunities for children to hear different points of view on the quality of the environment
- Give opportunities to design practical, attractive environments, for example taking care of the flowerbeds or organising equipment outdoors
- Encourage the use of words that help children to express opinions, for example 'busy', 'quiet', 'noisy', 'attractive', 'ugly', 'litter', 'pollution'

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for a sense of place

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
Express feelings about a significant personal event	Nansi tells everyone how sad she feels about the death of her pet hamster.
Describe significant events for family or friends	David describes a family wedding, the special food and clothes for the occasion and what it felt like to be a pageboy.
Gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others	Earl and Poppy cut up the vegetables to make a traditional Caribbean dish.
Begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people	Paula explains to her mum that her friend is lighting candles at home to celebrate Divali.

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Be ready to listen to children wanting to talk about significant events and give them time to formulate thoughts and words to express feelings
- Introduce language that describes emotions, for example 'sad', 'happy', 'angry', 'lonely', in conversations with the children when they express their feelings about special events

- Use group times to share events in children's lives
- Model careful listening and ask questions that show respect for children's individual contributions
- Explain the significance of special events to children
- Support children in finding appropriate ways of preserving memories of special events, for example making a book, collecting photographs, tape recording, drawing and writing

- Introduce children to a range of cultures and religions, for example tell stories, listen to music, dance, eat foods from different cultures and use resources in role play that reflect a variety of cultures, such as clothes, cooking implements, vegetables, badges, symbols, candles and toys
- Look at pictures and videos of the cultures of children within the setting and other cultures outside children's experience

- Look at books that show different languages, dress and customs
- Deepen children's knowledge of cultures and beliefs, for example by looking at books, listening to simple short stories in different languages, handling artefacts, inviting visitors to the setting from a range of religious and ethnic groups, and visiting local places of worship and cultural centres where appropriate

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
cultures and beliefs

... to the end of the foundation stage

Physical development

Physical development in the foundation stage is about improving skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development has two other very important aspects. It helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. Effective physical development helps children develop a positive sense of well-being.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective physical development, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- planning activities that offer appropriate physical challenges;
- providing sufficient space, indoors and outdoors, to set up relevant activities;
- giving sufficient time for children to use a range of equipment;
- providing resources that can be used in a variety of ways or to support specific skills;
- introducing the language of movement to children, alongside their actions;
- providing time and opportunities for children with physical disabilities or motor impairments to develop their physical skills, working as necessary with physiotherapists and occupational therapists;
- using additional adult help, if necessary, to support individuals and to encourage increased independence in physical activities.





Learning

Young children's physical development is inseparable from all other aspects of development because they learn through being active and interactive. Young children use all their senses to learn about the world around them and make connections between new information and what they already know.

Effective learning involves:

- Giving children plenty of time to explore, experiment and refine movements and actions unhurriedly
- A safe, well-planned and resourced learning environment
- Supporting other areas of learning through physical activity

Children will develop physical skills if they have sufficient time to persist and learn from their mistakes. Confidence and self-esteem grow when children are successful, whether it is in riding a scooter, pedalling a car or moving to a favourite piece of music.

Children need to develop control over their bodies and the way they move, such as when they ride wheeled toys to represent ambulances, requiring bursts of fast pedalling, or pushing toys and changing direction to avoid obstacles. Natural materials, such as a fallen tree or piles of leaves, can provide inexpensive resources that involve all of the senses, but careful assessment is needed to make sure they are safe to use.

Large-scale movements, such as climbing over, under, through, around and between, and similar small-scale movements with tools and equipment provide opportunities for children to learn and practice new words and ideas in practical situations.

Individually, children learn and improve skills such as hopping or skipping as they play alone or alongside peers. Children have opportunities to improve social and communication skills when physical play involves others, such as throwing and catching or rolling and capturing a tyre. Similarly, developing skills in cutting and sticking give children more confidence and success in designing and making models and objects. Energetic bursts of running improve children's understanding of speed and strength. Re-enacting a story to music or with props enables children to express feelings and to practise different emotional responses.

- Children using and learning through all their senses

Large and small movements provide opportunities for children to see things from different perspectives such as from the top of a climbing frame, in a tunnel or below a box, to feel different sensations such as hanging upside down, turning over a bar or squeezing a tube of glue, to hear different sounds such as thuds, slides and swishes, and to smell differences such as the grass and safety surfaces, paints and cooking.

- Building on children's developing skills to promote confidence and independence

Children who practise and succeed in filling containers in the water tray will handle drinks more successfully and have the confidence to, for example, pour out their own drinks. Children will also improve their ability to take care of themselves, for example dressing, going to the bathroom or washing hands, if they are encouraged to be responsible for meeting their own needs.

Teaching

The role of the practitioner is crucial in planning and providing an environment that encourages children to do things, talk about what they are doing and think about how they can improve their actions or movements.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

- Providing opportunities for regular and frequent physical activity indoors and outdoors

Where possible, practitioners should allow children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. Children will improve their coordination, control and ability to move more effectively if they can run, climb, balance, swing, slide, tumble, throw, catch and kick when they want to and are motivated and interested in doing so. Where buildings and/or outdoor areas are limited, practitioners should arrange visits to parks and sports or leisure centres so that children can enjoy the freedom of large-scale movement such as climbing and balancing on large apparatus and running energetically the distance between resources.

- Ensuring that space is safe to use, and that outdoor clothing is safe and sensible

Practitioners should be aware of, and carry out, the risk assessment procedures agreed in their setting. They should discuss with children different 'zones' for activities so that children engaged in different activities are not put at risk. Children's clothing should be checked for safety and appropriate spare clothes should be available.

- Offering a range of stimuli for movement, such as action rhymes, stories, music and props

These activities will encourage children to move both individually and as part of a group. They will help children to make a physical response to stories and express feelings as they move or dance. Props such as scarves and streamers will encourage children's movement and dance.

- Introducing the vocabulary of movement and words of instruction

Children will use new words such as 'slither' and 'gallop' if they are encouraged to do so. They will develop a clearer understanding of words such as 'follow', 'lead' and 'copy' when they are associated with actions.

- Teaching directly skills such as picking up a bulky object, getting onto the slide or responding to signals

Children will learn to do things safely if they are taught to do so. Games such as 'Statues' or 'Simon says' will help children learn how to respond to oral and non-verbal signals. Taking care and being courteous will be reinforced by modelling and by giving praise.

- Providing a range and sufficient quantity of small objects to handle

A range of objects will include 'small world' toys, construction sets, threading and posting toys, shapes and materials for making. Children will develop skills if they are encouraged to work effectively in comfortable and appropriate positions such as sitting, kneeling or standing at table or floor level. A sufficient quantity of material will make it easier for children to share and to work alongside each other cooperatively.

- Countering stereotypical behaviours that hinder children's development

Practitioners need to ensure that all children are encouraged to develop fine control skills and take part in energetic activities. Careful attention should be given to providing appropriate support for any children with mobility difficulties to ensure they reach their full potential.

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Move spontaneously within available space</p> <p>Respond to rhythm, music and story by means of gesture and movement</p> <p>Can stop</p>	<p>Sean heard a plane flying overhead and looked up to watch it. He put out his arms and moved around, making engine noises. He did this for several minutes before lying down. 'Now the plane has landed,' he said.</p>
<p>Move freely with pleasure and confidence</p> <p>Move in a range of ways, such as slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping</p> <p>Use movement to express feelings</p> <p>Adjust speed or change direction to avoid obstacles</p> <p>Negotiate space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children</p>	<p>A favourite tape was playing outside. The children moved enthusiastically, using their arms and legs and shaking their heads in time to the music.</p>
<p>Go backwards and sideways as well as forwards</p> <p>Experiment with different ways of moving</p> <p>Initiate new combinations of movement and gesture in order to express and respond to feelings, ideas and experiences</p> <p>Jump off an object and land appropriately</p>	<p>Obi crossed the swinging bridge on the climbing frame. He enjoyed making it swing as he went across.</p>
<p>Move with confidence, imagination and in safety</p>	<p>A large group of children are 'Going on a bear hunt' and carry out the actions of the story outdoors, interpreting the different ways of moving and carefully avoiding bumping into each other.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide safe spaces, undertake risk assessment, create 'zones' for some activities, explain safety to both children and parents
- Plan time for children to explore space available and their own potential for moving within it
- Give as much opportunity as possible for children to move freely between indoor and outdoor spaces
- Be alert to the safety of children, particularly those who might overstretch themselves
- Ensure children wear appropriate clothing while being sensitive to the requirements for modesty in some cultures and religions
- Talk to children and help them explore new ways of moving
- Offer a range of stimuli to generate movement, including music, songs, action rhymes and stories

- Provide additional challenge and stimulus through access to a range of resources. Join in and make suggestions where appropriate, for example, 'Can we get from here to the wall without ...?'
- Provide safe mirrors as children experiment with and observe gesture and facial expressions
- Teach safety techniques such as getting onto the slide or picking up a bulky object
- Teach skills which will help children to keep themselves safe, for example responding rapidly to signals including visual signs and notes of music, role play with road layouts
- Introduce language of negotiation and cooperation, such as 'share', 'wait', 'take turns', 'before' and 'after'

- Encourage children to move both individually and as part of a group
- Use music of different kinds and from a variety of cultures with space, time, opportunity and encouragement to respond
- Encourage children to make a response to stories and rhymes with actions, such as 'The wheels on the bus'
- Teach and encourage children to use the vocabulary of movement such as 'gallop' and 'slither', of instruction such as 'follow', 'lead' and 'copy' and of feeling such as 'anger', 'excitement', 'anxiety' and 'affection'
- Provide props for children to hold that encourage and support their movement and dance
- Endorse success and offer challenges on an individual basis without comparing children's attainments
- Model safety consistently, for example tidiness and mats in place, and teach children how, for example, to approach things safely

- Talk with children about their actions and encourage them to explore different ways of representing ideas and actions as they move
- Provide opportunities for children to repeat and change their actions so that they can think about, refine and improve them

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for movement

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Manage body to create intended movements</p> <p>Combine and repeat a range of movements</p>	<p>Nikki was helping to sweep up after lunch. He looked for a piece of food, went over to it, crouched down, brushed it into his dustpan, stood up, went to the bin and emptied the dustpan. He repeated this until all the pieces were gone.</p>
<p>Sit up, stand up and balance on various parts of the body</p> <p>Demonstrate the control necessary to hold a shape or fixed position</p> <p>Mount stairs, steps or climbing equipment using alternate feet</p>	<p>While watching the geese in the park, Olivia tries to imitate them by standing on one leg, sometimes overbalancing.</p>
<p>Manipulate materials and objects by picking up, releasing, arranging, threading and posting them</p> <p>Show increasing control over clothing and fastenings</p>	<p>Winston carefully sprinkled the cress seeds over the tray of compost.</p> <p>Ami fastened the buttons on her coat. 'I can't do my dress buttons because they are at the back,' she said.</p>
<p>Move with control and coordination</p> <p>Travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment</p>	<p>A group of children were playing 'Snakes and Ladders'. They shook the dice carefully and rolled them onto the floor in a controlled way. They picked up the counters and moved them skilfully up and down the board.</p> <p>The practitioner had created an obstacle course. Claudette swung along the overhead ladder, hand over hand, crawled through the tunnel, hopped along the bench and rolled sideways across the mat.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Respect individual progress and preoccupations, allow time to explore and practise movements
- Use observation and knowledge to know when to intervene with fresh challenges or when to allow children time to perfect a new skill or explore an idea
- Encourage children to move using a range of body parts and to perform given movements at more than one speed such as quickly, slowly, on tiptoe
- Encourage body tension activities such as stretching, reaching, curling, twisting and turning
- Celebrate each child's attainment by inviting them to demonstrate it as appropriate to others from time to time

- Celebrate each fresh accomplishment of each child
- Provide balancing challenges, for example walking along a chalk line – straight and then twisty or on a slightly raised surface
- Plan games to encourage children to move and then stop, for example moving like an animal
- Teach and encourage children to use the vocabulary of controlled effort, for example 'strong', 'firm', 'gentle', 'heavy', 'stretch', 'reach', 'tense' and 'floppy'
- 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 equipment that offers a range of challenges, such as climbing frame, scrambling net and logs

- Provide objects that can be handled safely, including 'small world' toys, construction sets, threading and posting toys, dolls' clothes, material for collage and shapes
- Encourage children to adopt a position in which they can work comfortably and effectively, such as sitting, kneeling or standing at a table or at floor level
- Give individual children opportunities and encouragement to build up the skills which lead to personal autonomy, such as dressing and undressing and using knives/forks/chopsticks

- Talk with children about their actions and encourage them to think about and practise the way they move and use resources, for example carrying a book can be done with one hand, a jug of water may need two, the floor is safe to roll over but a narrow bench may need hands and feet
- Teach children skills that help them in their actions, for example how to lift and move a chair safely

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for movement

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Negotiate an appropriate pathway when walking, running or using a wheelchair or other mobility aids, both indoors and outdoors</p> <p>Judge body space in relation to spaces available when fitting into confined spaces or negotiating holes and boundaries</p>	<p>Alison and Jason were pretending to be a train going to the seaside. They chugged around the garden, moving in and out of the equipment.</p> <p>Lee crouches down very low to get under the bars of the climbing frame.</p>
<p>Show respect for other children's personal space when playing among them</p> <p>Persevere in repeating some actions/attempts when developing a new skill</p> <p>Collaborate in devising and sharing tasks, including those which involve accepting rules</p>	<p>Chelsea waits until another child has climbed all the steps on the slide before climbing herself.</p>
<p>Move body position as necessary</p> <p>Show a clear and consistent preference for the left or right hand</p>	<p>Terry moves the ironing board around in the home corner so that he can use the iron with his left hand. He pulls his sweater off over his head to iron it.</p>
<p>Show awareness of space, of themselves and of others</p>	<p>A group of children took the large blocks outside so that they had enough space to build a tower and could see how far away the bricks landed when it fell, without the possibility of hurting anyone.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Create space, time and safe surfaces that will allow children to plan their own routes, both indoors and outdoors
- Provide real and role play opportunities for children to create pathways, for example road layouts, taking the 'baby' in the push-chair to the home corner, 'going on a picnic', taking a message from one adult to another and acting out a story about a real or imaginary journey
- Provide materials with which children can improvise their own spaces and enclosures, for example blankets and planks
- Introduce the vocabulary of spatial relationships, with prepositions such as 'between', 'through' and 'above'

- Mark out boundaries for some activities so that children can more easily regulate their own activities
- Provide sufficient materials for children to share, for example more than one engine with the train track
- Provide some activities that work, or are more fun, only when shared with another child
- Extend skills by introducing 'following' and 'imitating' games
- Be alert to sources of conflict and help children to agree on ways to resolve them, for example by agreeing a time for each child's turn on equipment

- Talk with children about body parts and bodily activity, teaching the vocabulary of body parts and positions, for example by using action rhymes such as 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes' and 'Tommy Thumb'
- Provide safe mirrors with role play and encourage children to talk about what they see
- Observe mark making, dancing and kicking activities so that practitioners can be aware of children's dominant foot and handedness
- Provide a range of left-handed tools for children who need them, especially left-handed scissors

- Talk with children about different spaces so that they are able to match space with their actions
- Teach children to think about space around them as part of their planning for what they do

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for sense of space

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show awareness of own needs with regard to eating, sleeping and hygiene</p> <p>Often need adult support to meet those needs</p>	<p>Yvonne ran up to the practitioner, held out her hands and said, 'They're dirty.' 'Shall we wash them?' asked the practitioner. Yvonne nodded and followed the practitioner to the bathroom.</p>
<p>Show awareness of a range of healthy practices with regard to eating, sleeping and hygiene</p> <p>Observe the effects of activity on their bodies</p>	<p>Sonia puts the cup she had used in the sink, ready to be washed.</p> <p>On a walk over a deep, pebbly beach, Jasvinder comments, 'My legs are tired doing this. My feet are sinking.'</p>
<p>Show some understanding that good practices with regard to exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health</p>	<p>After spending the morning being very active, Toni said, 'I need something to eat before I do any more. I am very hungry.'</p>
<p>Recognise the importance of keeping healthy and those things which contribute to this</p> <p>Recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active</p>	<p>The group was discussing the difficulty of going to sleep at night when it was still sunny and warm. They talked about ways of keeping cool and how difficult it was when they woke up tired in the morning.</p> <p>After playing 'What's the time, Mr Wolf?' the children noticed that their hearts were beating faster. They talked with the practitioner about other times this had happened, and why.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

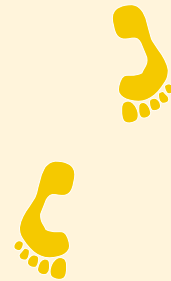
- Encourage children to ask for help, and provide the help sensitively
- Talk to children about why you encourage them to, for example, rest when they are tired, wear wellingtons when it is wet

- Create opportunities for moving towards independence, for example having hand-washing facilities safely within reach or children making decisions for themselves, such as choice of food
- Recognise and promote understanding that foods from a range of cultures and religions can be enjoyable and form a healthy diet
- Plan so that children can be active in a range of ways, including while using a wheelchair

- Help children to understand the thinking behind the good practices they are encouraged to adopt
- Be sensitive to varying family expectations and life patterns when encouraging thinking about health
- Ensure that children who get out of breath have time to recover
- Be aware of specific health difficulties among the children in the group, such as allergies
- Promote awareness by talking to children about exercise and its effect on their bodies

- Find ways of involving children so that they are all able to be active in ways that interest them and match their health and ability
- Talk with children about keeping healthy, acknowledging that there are many things that they do not control
- Provide opportunities for children to talk about any particular issues they have, supporting them where necessary

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for health and bodily awareness

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Operate equipment by means of pushing and pulling movements</p>	<p>Sarita pushed the doll in a buggy to see the nurse at the clinic in the role play area.</p>
<p>Construct with large materials such as cartons, long lengths of fabric and planks</p> <p>Show increasing control in using equipment for climbing, scrambling, sliding and swinging</p>	<p>Frances loved the new climbing frame and experimented with different ways of using it. She was one of the first children in the group to discover the fun of hanging upside down.</p>
<p>Use increasing control over an object by touching, pushing, patting, throwing, catching or kicking it</p> <p>Retrieve, collect and catch objects</p>	<p>Kerry hit the ball with a stick around traffic cones, laughing when sometimes she hit the ball too hard and 'it went miles'.</p>
<p>Use a range of small and large equipment</p>	<p>A group of children turned the role play area into a cave, using rugs, large pieces of material and tables. They secured the covers to the table legs with string, which they cut and tied carefully.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Ensure that equipment is appropriate to the size and weight of children in the group
- Plan to make equipment available and accessible to all children for the whole of the day or session, if possible
- Meet needs that are not likely to be met outside, for example because of the lack of safe outdoor play space in homes and the local community

- Check children's clothing for safety, for example ensuring that toggles on coats and hoods cannot get tangled in tricycle wheels
- Regularly check resources for safety, for example ensuring fabric is clean or planks are not splintered
- Provide a wide range of resources, including small wheeled vehicles, 'small-world' toys, bean-bags, balls that do and do not bounce, miniature resources in role play areas, hoops, sticks, bats and skittles

- Model collaboration in throwing, rolling, fetching and receiving games, encouraging children to play with one another once their skills are sufficient
- Create groupings of children who can support and learn from one another
- Ask open-ended questions such as, 'How far can yours go?' which can lead children towards estimating and recording

- Provide opportunities for children to develop and refine existing skills
- Teach skills where necessary and then give children the chance to practise them

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for using equipment

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination</p> <p>Use one-handed tools and equipment</p>	<p>Jacob spent a long time pouring water from a jug into containers of different sizes, sometimes accurately and sometimes spilling it over the sides.</p>
<p>Demonstrate increasing skill and control in the use of mark-making implements, blocks, construction sets and 'small world' activities</p> <p>Understand that equipment and tools have to be used safely</p>	<p>Erdal used the rotary egg whisk vigorously to make the soapy water even more bubbly.</p>
<p>Explore malleable materials by patting, stroking, poking, squeezing, pinching and twisting them</p> <p>Manipulate materials to achieve a planned effect</p> <p>Use simple tools to effect changes to the materials</p> <p>Show understanding of how to transport and store equipment safely</p> <p>Practise some appropriate safety measures without direct supervision</p>	<p>Liam was making a tray of cakes from dough. He used an icing bag to decorate the cakes.</p>
<p>Handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control</p>	<p>Alistair and Anna were using the woodwork bench to make a wooden frame for their painting. When they had measured and cut the wood, they decided wood glue would be better than nails to join the sides.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide a wide range of activities that give children the opportunity and motivation to practise manipulative skills, for example cooking, playing instruments
 - Observe closely to establish the position in which children have best control
 - Teach children the skills they need, for example cutting with scissors, and plan opportunities for them to practise those skills
- Ensure equipment is of good quality, well maintained and well presented
 - Promote progression in mark-making by providing paper and brushes or pencils in a range of sizes and offering children fresh challenges as appropriate
 - Provide opportunities for children to sometimes use all their fingers or the whole hand, for example with finger-paints or cornflour, and sometimes use just one finger, for example when making patterns in damp sand
 - Encourage use of fingers and writing and drawing implements to both follow and create patterns
 - Introduce the vocabulary of direction, including where appropriate clockwise and anticlockwise
- Encourage use of large and small arm movements with left to right, top to bottom movements. Large movements can be used with, for example, chalkboards, painting trees and fences with water, using big brushes or rollers
 - Provide a wide range of materials including clay and more than one kind of dough
 - Give opportunities to explore before using tools
 - Offer additional resources – tools, techniques, other materials – if a satisfactory result cannot be achieved
 - When children want to achieve a specific result, encourage them to talk through in advance what they plan to do and why, so that the practitioner can assist as necessary, and encourage children to reflect on what they have done
 - Introduce and encourage children to use the vocabulary of manipulation, for example 'squeeze' and 'prod', and the language of description, for example 'spiky', 'silky', 'lumpy' and 'tall'
 - Model and teach safe practice and allow children increasing responsibility, under supervision, for carrying out the practices they have been taught

- Teach children how to use tools and materials effectively and safely
- Provide opportunities for children to practise and refine their skills
- Talk with children about what they are doing, how they plan to do it, what worked well and what they would change next time

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for
using tools and materials

... to the end of the foundation stage

Creative development

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play.

To give all children the best opportunity for effective creative development, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- a stimulating environment in which creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued;
- a wide range of activities that children can respond to by using many senses;
- sufficient time for children to explore, develop ideas and finish working at their ideas;
- opportunities for children to express their ideas through a wide range of types of representation;
- resources from a variety of cultures to stimulate different ways of thinking;
- opportunities to work alongside artists and other creative adults;
- opportunities for children with visual impairment to access and have physical contact with artefacts, materials, spaces and movements;
- opportunities for children with hearing impairment to experience sound through physical contact with instruments and other sources of sound;
- opportunities for children who cannot communicate by voice to respond to music in different ways, such as gestures;
- accommodating children's specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to particular forms of art or methods of representation.





Learning

Children's creativity develops most productively within a rich learning environment supported by interventions of sensitive and responsive adults.

Effective learning involves:

- Children having time to explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities

Children will learn to respond, explore, express, communicate their ideas and use their imagination when they have sufficient time to explore and research their ideas, imitate what they see, experiment with ideas and bring their own ideas to the process. Children need to spend some time with adults who are themselves creative. They will learn effectively when they encounter experiences and resources that stimulate their curiosity and when given opportunities to put together and take apart ideas, materials and experiences. The creative process is not always instant, so children need support in taking the time necessary to work at their ideas and to finish their work.

- Children feeling secure to try new experiences and ways of doing things

Children need to feel safe enough to take risks, make mistakes and be adventurous in their creative pursuits. Giving them help in tolerating uncertainty and discarding ideas that are not useful will support this. If children are to have the confidence to try innovative ideas, they must be given time to work at their own pace.

- Children learning through all of their senses

Creative development requires children to learn to express with all of their senses. To achieve this, they need to investigate and communicate new ideas across the different areas of creative development. For example, they need to be given opportunities to explore the ways in which, through dance and physical activities, we can 'think' with our bodies.

In this area of learning, effective teaching requires:

- Practitioners who give children opportunities to develop their own ideas
- Valuing children's own ideas and not expecting them to reproduce someone else's picture, dance, model or recipe
- Practitioners who plan experiences, opportunities and the environment to support children's ability to discover, explore and express their creativity
- Practitioners who interact with and support children in developing confidence, independence in making choices, and children's response to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel
- Good quality resources and artefacts

Teaching

In this way, children are able to communicate ideas and feelings, make connections, innovate and solve problems. It begins with curiosity and involves children in exploration and experimentation. As they express their creativity, they draw upon their imagination and originality. They make decisions, take risks and play with ideas. Children's creativity develops over time and takes time. It is best facilitated by adults who sensitively support this process and do not dominate it. If they are to be truly creative, children need the freedom to develop their own ideas and the support of adults who can help them gain the skills that enable their creativity to have expression.

Creativity is not about pleasing adults or producing adult-determined art, music or dance. While understanding what someone else has done is part of the exploratory process, it is not in itself creative. Creativity occurs when children are able to use that understanding by integrating it into their own work and creating something new. If there is an end product, it needs to be determined by the child and created by the child. Children need access to a wide range of stimuli and ideas. They need opportunities to play with these ideas, incorporating them into their own creations. Practitioners may model and pass on skills and knowledge, but children must be allowed to make things their own.

The practitioner must create a climate where curiosity is encouraged and where children can experience the unexpected. Children need enough space to create over time, so that things can be left out or can be stored safely until later and do not always have to be tidied away. Practitioners must provide an environment, materials and experiences that promote aesthetic awareness and an appreciation of things of beauty. Materials and experiences should reflect a range of cultures, beliefs and traditions.

Children need to be given sufficient time to explore, experiment, practise, repeat and consolidate ideas and skills. The practitioner must achieve an appropriate balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated activities and encourage the development of the skills and knowledge that enable children to express their creativity. At times, it will be appropriate to directly teach new skills, for example print making. At other times, children need opportunities to choose to use these skills, for example in making cards for celebrations. Children will need support in making choices and decisions and using the skills and knowledge they have gained to enhance their own creations. Practitioners must use their judgement to know when intervention would be intrusive and when a child is experiencing frustration and needs support.

Practitioners need to ensure that children have access to good quality materials and examples of other creations at the exploratory stage. It is important to help them integrate these experiences into their own work,

in their own way. Providing children with well-planned opportunities to work with artists, musicians, dancers and other creative people will encourage them to develop confidence in their own creativity and to work in new ways.

- Practitioners who talk to children about their work, introducing appropriate vocabulary

By acting as role models, working alongside the children and allowing them to comment on and discuss their work, practitioners help children learn to critically evaluate their own work. It is important to give sensitive feedback to children about what they have been doing, which is not based on the practitioner's preconceived expectations of the techniques to be used and the outcomes of the activity. This requires an understanding of the ways in which every child's creativity will be expressed differently. Children should be encouraged to talk to each other about their work, saying what they like and how it might be made even better. Practitioners should introduce children to the appropriate technical vocabulary at the appropriate time and model such vocabulary, so that they have the means to express their aims and evaluate their success.

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Begin to differentiate colours</p> <p>Use their bodies to explore texture and space</p> <p>Make three-dimensional structures</p>	<p>The children collect paper and materials for a 'texture wall'. They touch them with their fingers and feel them against their cheeks to get a sense of their properties. Amy holds up a piece of wrinkled shiny paper and is transfixed by the effect of light hitting it.</p>
<p>Differentiate marks and movements on paper</p> <p>Begin to describe the texture of things</p> <p>Use lines to enclose a space, then begin to use these shapes to represent objects</p> <p>Begin to construct, stacking blocks vertically and horizontally and making enclosures and creating spaces</p>	<p>Alexander is using purple paint, which is his favourite colour. He makes lots of 'spiral' marks and movements on his paper. He repeats this exercise using crayons and again in his lunchtime custard. He goes to the music area and dances round and round to a tape. Emily joins in and they imitate each other's movements.</p>
<p>Explore what happens when they mix colours</p> <p>Understand that different media can be combined</p> <p>Make constructions, collages, paintings, drawings and dances</p> <p>Use ideas involving fitting, overlapping, in, out, enclosure, grids and sun-like shapes</p> <p>Choose particular colours to use for a purpose</p> <p>Experiment to create different textures</p> <p>Work creatively on a large or small scale</p>	<p>Melanie tips red and white paint onto her mixing tray and stirs them together. With much delight she announces, 'Look, look, it's gone pink!'</p> <p>A small group of children were dancing. They circled round and round each other, and went through the spaces between each other.</p> <p>After watching a television programme about dinosaurs, Philip used lots of boxes to make a large model. He looked for something hard and scaly for the dinosaur's back.</p>
<p>Explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions</p>	<p>A small group of children are using large blocks to represent their experience of a visit to the ferry port. Having constructed a large model that covers most of the carpeted area, they focus on the fine detail. After much discussion and negotiation they make arrows for the one-way system and a variety of signs and symbols. They tell the stories of the various people who will go on the ferry and are most concerned as to whether one family will get there on time.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide a wide range of materials, resources and sensory experiences to enable the children to explore colour and texture
 - Make time and space for the children to express their curiosity and explore the environment using all their senses
 - Extend children's thinking through sensitive and well-timed and well-considered comments and questions
 - Be aware of health and safety issues as children explore the environment, explaining what is and is not safe to touch and where it is safe to engage in movement
- Demonstrate, teach and model skills and techniques associated with the things children are doing, for example show them how to stop the paint from dripping or how to balance bricks so that they will not fall down
 - Introduce vocabulary to enable children to talk about their observations and experiences, for example 'smooth', 'shiny', 'rough', 'prickly', 'flat', 'patterned', 'jagged', 'bumpy', 'soft' and 'hard'
 - Make suggestions and ask questions to extend children's ideas, for example, 'I wonder what would happen if you used the chalk on its side on that bumpy piece of paper?'
- Support children in mixing colours, joining things together and combining materials, demonstrating where appropriate
 - Introduce vocabulary to help children compare and talk about what is happening, for example 'lighter', 'darker', 'thicker', 'thinner' and 'shade'
 - Encourage children to describe their actions and the effects of their actions
 - Encourage children to move and use spaces to develop creative ideas
 - Support children in thinking through their projects, making suggestions and offering options
 - Help children gain confidence in their own way of representing ideas
 - Offer constructive feedback and help children to begin to make aesthetic judgements about their work. Ask questions such as, 'Was that how you wanted it to look?', 'Is there any part you would like to change?' and 'Which bit do you like best?'
- Provide children with opportunities to use their skills and explore concepts and ideas through their representations
 - Support children in making choices
 - Help children to express the way they feel about their representations, modelling appropriate words at appropriate times, for example, 'That makes me feel very ...'
 - Continue to give constructive feedback and support children in making aesthetic judgements

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for exploring media and materials

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Join in favourite songs</p> <p>Show an interest in the way musical instruments sound</p> <p>Respond to sound with body movement</p> <p>Enjoy joining in with dancing and ring games</p>	<p>Nia likes to sing action songs and join in with the movements. For example, she touches her head, shoulders, knees and toes while singing the song.</p>
<p>Sing a few simple, familiar songs</p> <p>Sing to themselves and make up simple songs</p> <p>Tap out simple repeated rhythms and make some up</p> <p>Explore and learn how sounds can be changed</p> <p>Imitate and create movement in response to music</p>	<p>Leroy is walking up the stairs. As he goes he sings to himself to accompany his actions, 'I'm going up the stairs, I'm going up the stairs, I'm going up the stairs.'</p>
<p>Begin to build a repertoire of songs</p> <p>Explore the different sounds of instruments</p> <p>Begin to move rhythmically</p>	<p>A group of children enjoy singing 'Peter hammers with one hammer, one hammer, one hammer'. As they sing, some children join in by banging drums. Nazim chooses to go to the music area and selects a shaker. He explores the shaker for 20 minutes, totally involved in the sounds created.</p>
<p>Recognise and explore how sounds can be changed, sing simple songs from memory, recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and match movements to music</p>	<p>The practitioner plays a range of music on her guitar, sometimes strumming the strings, sometimes plucking them. The children greatly enjoy responding to the music with movement, and take great pleasure in observing each other's interpretations of various parts of the music. Sarah is hearing impaired and enjoys taking part in this group, but needs to touch the guitar in order to participate fully.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Provide opportunities for children to explore the sounds of everyday objects and musical instruments, especially things that can be shaken and struck
 - Ensure that the music and songs used reflect a wide range of types and cultures, for example orchestral music and reggae music
 - Sing with children frequently
 - Help children to link sound and movement, for example making big movements to loud music and small movements to quiet music
 - Use sound at storytime, for example beating a drum when the giant approaches
- Provide opportunities for children to play instruments alongside adults, especially things that can be played with a 'hitting' action
 - Extend the children's experience of instruments and knowledge of their names and the ways in which they can be played
 - Allow plenty of time for exploration
 - Select songs for children to sing that are within children's pitch and have plenty of repetition
 - Allow children to hear a song many times before asking them to sing it
 - Introduce the language of dynamics, such as 'fast', 'slow', 'loud' and 'quiet' and of pitch, such as 'high' and 'low'
 - Introduce children to a wide range of music and dance
- Provide opportunities for children to move to music, supporting the interpretation of the music and drawing their attention to the movements of other children
 - Encourage children to describe their movement, supporting this process with the appropriate vocabulary
 - Introduce vocabulary to enable children to talk about the ways in which music and dance affect them, for example 'happy', 'sad', 'excited', 'afraid'
 - Introduce vocabulary to enable children to describe the ways in which instruments are played, for example 'plucked', 'bowed', 'blown', 'hammered', 'hit', 'beaten'
- Talk about and show children how musical instruments can be played in a variety of ways to produce different sounds
 - Continue to support children in reflecting upon and improving their own work and the work of others
 - Enable children to experience live and recorded performance whenever possible

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for music

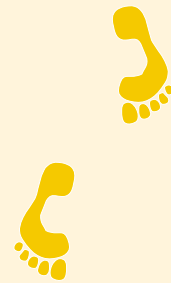
... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Pretend that one object represents another, especially when objects have characteristics in common</p> <p>Notice what adults do, imitating what is observed and then doing it spontaneously when the adult is not there</p>	<p>Tina picked up a green foam block and handed it to the practitioner, saying, 'Here's a cup of tea.' The practitioner pretended to drink it. With visible delight, Tina took back the block and continued the pretence.</p>
<p>Use one object to represent another, even when the objects have few characteristics in common</p> <p>Use available resources to create props to support role play</p> <p>Develop a repertoire of actions by putting a sequence of movements together</p> <p>Enjoy stories based on themselves and people and places they know well</p> <p>Engage in imaginative and role play based on own first-hand experiences</p>	<p>The children have selected blocks of different sizes and are using them as microphones and guitars. They have also used a line of blocks to demarcate the 'stage' area. They perform a singing and dancing routine based on the latest release of their favourite pop group.</p> <p>After watching some ladybirds in the garden, Andrea and Joshua made two wings each from large pieces of red paper. They asked the practitioner to help fasten the wings to their backs, crouched down and imitated the movements of the ladybirds.</p>
<p>Introduce a story line or narrative into their play</p> <p>Play alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme</p> <p>Play cooperatively as part of a group to act out a narrative</p>	<p>A group of children have packed a bag with resources from the home corner. They are planning to go on a picnic. In the adjoining block area they have built a car to take them to the picnic. They discuss where they will go and set off on their journey.</p>
<p>Use their imagination in art and design, music, dance, imaginative and role play and stories</p>	<p>In response to listening to music that represents the sea, the children compose their own sound picture. This leads them into planning and constructing a pirate ship in the role play area. They use materials in the art and technology area to make hats, flags and other props to support their play.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Be interested and participate in children's play
 - Model the pretending process, supporting children's understanding of the ways in which one object can be used to represent another
- Ensure that there is enough time for children to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings in a variety of ways, such as in role play, by painting and by responding to music
 - Provide appropriate materials, and extend children's thinking through involvement in their play, using questions thoughtfully and appropriately
- Pay particular attention to children who are less confident
 - Be aware of the link between imaginative play and children's ability to handle narrative
 - Introduce language that enables children to talk about their experiences in greater depth and detail
- Be aware of what fires children's imagination
 - Support children's ideas through the provision of appropriate materials
 - Model techniques and teach skills that will enable children to do what they have planned successfully
 - Extend children's experience and expand their imagination through pictures, paintings, poems, music, dance and story
 - Support children's developing understanding of the ways in which paintings and pictures and music and dance can express different ideas, thoughts and feelings
 - Regularly introduce new vocabulary to enable children to talk about their experiences and feelings and describe their actions

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for imagination

... to the end of the foundation stage

Stepping stones	Examples of what children do
<p>Show an interest in what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel</p> <p>Use body language, gestures, facial expression or words to indicate personal satisfaction or frustration</p>	<p>The children are really enjoying scuffing through the leaves, taking great delight in the noise they make and twirling round and round as they mirror the movement of the leaves. Jake is profoundly deaf. He enjoys the movement aspects of the activity and the texture of the leaves.</p> <p>Harry is trying to tie a knot to fasten string to his model. He keeps dropping one strand of string. He stamps his foot and throws his model on the floor, bursting into tears of frustration.</p>
<p>Further explore an experience using a range of senses</p> <p>Begin to use representation as a means of communication</p> <p>Describe experiences and past actions, using a widening range of materials</p>	<p>James is twirling round and round making the clothes he wears from the dressing up rack flare out. As he does so he calls to the practitioner, 'Look at me, look at me!' The practitioner shows him how to use a scarf and a streamer to make swirling lines as he twists round. This leads to discussions on lassos and how they work.</p>
<p>Try to capture experiences and responses with music, dance, paint and other materials or words</p> <p>Develop preferences for forms of expression</p> <p>Talk about personal intentions, describing what they were trying to do</p> <p>Respond to comments and questions, entering into dialogue about their creations</p> <p>Make comparisons</p>	<p>A group of children expend great energy collecting a large pile of leaves, saying that they are building a 'massive bonfire'. Another group of children use leaves and sticks to make a 'big nest'. Megan pretends the trees are giants and they are hiding her from a monster. The children make a collection of leaves to group and display later.</p>
<p>Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel</p> <p>Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments</p>	<p>It was a very windy day and the children spent some time outdoors, running around. They watched the way the wind blew the leaves around and the sounds it made. Some children used musical instruments to recreate the sounds, while others moved like the blowing leaves.</p>

What does the practitioner need to do?

- Show sensitivity to children's expressions and the range of different ways in which they express themselves
- Make time for children to communicate their responses, listening carefully and showing interest in what they have to say
- Allow children to work through their frustrations, supporting them in finding solutions to problems
- Provide experiences that involve all the senses and movement

- Encourage children to describe their experiences
- Be interested in children's responses, observing their actions and listening carefully
- Introduce and model new vocabulary to enable children to talk about what they are doing
- Introduce new tools and techniques when appropriate
- Show children that you appreciate their creations and would welcome them sharing their ideas with you
- Encourage children to discuss and appreciate the beauty around them in nature and the environment

- Introduce descriptive language to support children, for example 'rustle' and 'shuffle'
- Support children in expressing opinions and introduce language such as 'like', 'dislike', 'prefer' and 'disagree'
- Talk about how to listen when someone is explaining what they have done, and consistently model careful listening
- Provide children with examples of how other people have responded to experiences, engage them in discussions of these examples and help them to make links and connections

- Help children to support other children and offer another viewpoint
- Continue to develop the vocabulary that enables children to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings
- Encourage discussion about the beauty of nature and people's responsibility to care for it
- Introduce examples of how others have represented an experience or idea in a range of media
- Support children in evaluating their own work and in considering possible changes to it

Progression from age three ...



Early learning goals for responding to experiences, and expressing and communicating ideas

... to the end of the foundation stage

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Executive summary

Overview

This book contains the early learning goals and principles and aims for the foundation stage, which includes children from age three to the end of the reception year.

It gives examples of children at different stages of progress towards the early learning goals throughout the foundation stage and guidance on how practitioners can support that progress.

Copies of this document can be obtained from:

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