

Planning

“Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2021, p15

Plan for individuals

Practitioners plan using observations of each unique child from home and the setting. Planning should include a balance of child- initiated opportunities and adult led activities. You should plan to include indoors and outdoors. The EYFS presents seven separate areas of learning but remember everything links.

Remember to plan to help children to develop the characteristics of effective learning.

Planning can be in the moment, over a day or a week, or to support a current interest for as long as it lasts. There will probably be several interests going on at the same time.

Plan for groups

Children have their own individual needs, but it should be possible to plan for groups of children with similar needs and interests.

Individual next steps do not need to be written and will often be addressed in the moment.

High quality continuous provision ensures that appropriate experiences are always available. Planning should include enhancements and adaptations to continuous provision to meet the needs of the children.

Planning for continuous provision

Planning for continuous provision is not a list of resources to be ‘put out’ nor does it have to be in writing. Any written planning should meet the needs of your practitioners and your setting. For example, you might have many practitioners working different shifts. Written plans might be helpful to ensure practitioners know what they need to do.

Essentials for Effective Planning:

Any paperwork should be manageable and realistic.

You must know your children:

- their interests
- learning styles
- motivations
- what switches them off
- who gets on with whom
- the level at which they are working in each area of curriculum
- what they can do and what they need to master next.

Be aware of the 'big picture':

- Why is this learning important?
- Do the children know why they are being given this learning opportunity?
- How will it help them in other areas?
- Have you considered which skill to teach/master first?

Use your knowledge of child development:

- Do children have the foundation skills to understand what you are doing/teaching?
- Is what you are asking children to do developmentally appropriate?

Ensure you have an enabling environment:

- Can you explain WHY you have planned the environment or are interacting in a particular way?

Give the children ownership:

- Are children involved in discussion about what is provided and why?
- Do they contribute to the learning opportunities/outcomes?
- Do they set themselves challenges and targets?

Plan for direct and discreet teaching (adult led/intentional pedagogy). E.g. an adult supported board game.

Plan for opportunities for children to independently use & apply and embed skills: E.g. opportunities to use numbers in play such as prices in shop.

Planning overview

Planning must be flexible and make effective use of unforeseen opportunities.

Adult led experiences to develop skills and knowledge should be playful and engaging.

Regularly discuss plans to ensure that children's interests and needs are met and built on.

Reflect on the different rates at which children are developing.

Adjust practice if needed.

PLEASE NOTE. The planning templates are examples only. You may already have a system in place that works for you. If you wish to use these templates, you might need to adapt these to suit the needs of your setting. Add in any extra information that is important to you, such as the Leuven Scales for wellbeing and involvement.