

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Incey Winceys Day Nursery and Preschool each key person has a commitment to keeping detailed and appropriate records on each key child and their development using the online system Tapestry.

From the first day of settling the key person begins writing/recording observations on their key child, whilst bearing in mind that the priority during the settling is for the child to feel comfortable.

Observation

Observations are written/recorded primarily by the key person as and when development has been made or to record a “wow” moment.

Using Tapestry, we record a child’s development through a written description, an optional photo or video and this is linked where appropriate to the areas of learning in the EYFS, characteristics of effective learning and the Leuven scales of wellbeing and involvement.

The observation should state exactly what the child is doing, without personal opinion, and words or noises the child uses should be recorded using “ ” and recorded exactly, e.g. “brrrum” / “ga la ga la”.

It should include as much detail as appropriate, for example if the child is still using both hands then state which hand has been used, along with the grip.

It should be written in the present tense and **observations should be written at the time of observing**. If it is not appropriate to use the iPads at that moment, staff take written notes and type them up as soon as possible.

The observation should include the following information:

- The date and time of the observation
- The observer’s name and child’s name
- The area(s) of learning the observation applies to
- The characteristic of effective learning the observation applies to
- The well-being score and the involvement score (Leuven scales)

Observations can also be used to track behavioural patterns and additional observations may be carried out in individual circumstances, e.g. to monitor

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transitions, emotional well-being and additional needs. Notes are taken discreetly and separately to track incidents such as biting to try to ascertain a pattern.

Summative Assessments

Once the observation has been written, the observer uses the EYFS Development Matters on the Tapestry app to assess the child's current stage of development and selects the appropriate age band on the Tapestry system.

Reports are written termly by the key person and involve a written summary of the child's development in each area (under twos focus on the three prime areas of learning) and the band of learning is recorded. A copy of the report is shared online with parents prior to each parents evening.

Parents evening usually takes place on the second Wednesday of January, April and September between 6-7pm and each family is given a time slot in advance.

Reports feed into the planning for the child's next steps and Tapestry helps to identify gaps in the learning journal, give possible next steps and highlight needs.

Concerns about a child's development may be identified by the key person and in working with the SENCo they will observe and monitor the child and liaise with the parents to decide a plan of action that is appropriate for the child.

Progress Tracker

The child's developmental age bands are also recorded on the Tapestry progress tracker, and Management monitor the development, providing monthly updates on all children to allow staff to provide the support needed. We also filter the information to monitor practitioners, key groups, rooms etc. This allows issues around practitioners' assessments to be identified, eg one member of staff consistently bands children 'too high', or someone only doing creative activities.

The progress tracker is used to identify children with areas of additional needs, and for children already receiving additional support it helps to show whether the support is effective.

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Planning

The key person uses their observations and assessment to write a next step for each key child per month. The next step should be age and stage appropriate when selected and often is chosen based on the suggestions from Tapestry which identifies areas of strength and weakness for each child, using their previous observations as a guide.

Next steps must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed)

The next step for under twos should relate to one of the three prime areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

For children over two the next step could relate to the prime areas above, or to one of the four specific areas:

- Maths
- Literacy
- Expressive arts and design
- Understanding the world

The next steps are logged onto a whole room planner which helps group children with similar plans into smaller groups, allowing two or more key persons to support each other.

The key person must also plan and write accompanying activities that they will carry out to support the achievement of the next steps.

Each key person is responsible for organising their week, planning on days the child is in and at times the child will be most ready to learn. The key person carries out each activity wherever possible, as we understand most children feel most comfortable with their key person. If the key person is away for a planned absence, they will leave ideas for activities to be carried out while they are away.

The activities must be carried out as often as necessary and practical and if a next step is completed within the month, a new next step is selected.

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If an activity has not been successful in any way or the child does not wish to take part, reasonable adaptations or changes are made to try to make it successful, otherwise the key person makes notes and tries alternative methods, for instance trying it again in the garden.

Secondary key persons should support as much as possible with activities and group activities are used wherever possible to encourage social interactions.

The cycle then repeats, as ongoing observations are carried out to assess the child's development and to assess the progress regarding the next step, leading to planning for next month's next steps.

The nursery welcomes parents to upload observations, photos and videos of the child outside of nursery to help provide a holistic view of the child's development and if appropriate, to help feed into the next steps and planning process.