

Mulberry Wood Wharf Primary

Early Years Assessment Policy

Approval Body:	Mulberry Stepney Green and Mulberry Wood Wharf LGB
Approval Date:	March 2023
Implementation Date:	March 2023
Review Date:	March 2024
Policy Version:	1

Early Years Assessment at Mulberry Wood Wharf Primary

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence

Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. Assessment should inform an ongoing dialogue between practitioners and year 1 teachers about each child's learning and development, to support a successful transition to key stage 1.

Assessment at the start of the reception year – the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. It provides a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school. It will provide a starting point to measure the progress schools make with their pupils between reception and the end of primary school.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report. These should help inform a dialogue between reception and year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in year 1.

Schools must share the results of the Profile with parents and/or carers, and explain to them when and how they can discuss the Profile with the teacher who completed it. If a child moves to a new school during the academic year, the original school must send their assessment of the child's level of development against the early learning goals to the relevant school within 15 days of receiving a request. If a child moves during the summer term, relevant providers must agree which of them will complete the Profile.

The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Providers should consider whether they may need to seek specialist assistance to help with this. Children will have differing levels of knowledge, skills and abilities across the Profile and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.

Information to be provided to the local authority

Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities, upon request. Local authorities are under a duty to return this data to the relevant Government department.

Observational assessment

Practitioners can use observational assessment to understand children's learning. Practitioners watch, listen and interact as children engage in everyday activities, events and experiences, and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding.

Observational assessment is the most reliable way of building up an accurate picture of children's development and learning. This is especially true where the attainment demonstrated is not dependent on overt adult support. Observational assessment is central to understanding what children really know and can do.

Some observations will be planned but some may be a spontaneous capture of an important moment. It is likely that observations of everyday activities will provide evidence of attainment in more than one area of learning.

Observational assessment doesn't need prolonged breaks from interaction with children, or excessive written recording. It is likely to be interwoven with high quality interactions or conversations in words or sign language with children about their activities and current interests.

Responsible pedagogy

Responsible pedagogy is evident when practitioners have a good understanding of how children develop and because of that can accurately assess the child when they demonstrate their learning and development. Responsible pedagogy enables each child to demonstrate learning in the fullest sense. It depends on the use of assessment information to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child. Effective

assessment can only take place when children have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding, learning and development in a range of contexts.

Children must have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development. The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning. Integral to this is an ethos that:

- respects each child as an individual
- values children's efforts, interests and purposes as instrumental to successful learning
- When practitioners are evaluating the effectiveness of their assessment processes they should consider:
 - child development, both the biological and cultural aspects, and its impact on how learning may best be supported
 - planning that ensures a relevant, motivating, flexible and interesting curriculum
- provision of an environment that truly enables successful learning by all children in their care
- the need for detailed understanding of the EYFS framework for assessment in order to gather accurate, reliable and meaningful information
- the importance of high quality adult interaction, which is sensitive and adaptive to the needs of individual children and capable of promoting learning
- organisational aspects of provision, resources, curriculum and people Successful implementation of these aspects of pedagogy and provision will enable practitioners to make an accurate, reliable and consistent assessment of children's learning. This will inform planning for year 1.

Child-initiated activity

Children with effective learning characteristics:

- are willing to have a go
- are involved and concentrating
- have their own ideas
- choose ways to do things

- find new ways of doing things
- enjoy achieving what they set out to do

To accurately assess these characteristics, practitioners need to observe learning that children have initiated rather than only focusing on what children do when prompted.

Children need rich opportunities to initiate ideas and activities so that they can develop the learning characteristics that are assessed by the EYFS profile. These characteristics also support lifelong learning.

Embedded learning and secure development

Children can demonstrate embedded learning and secure development without the need for overt adult support. Where learning is secure it is likely that children often initiate the use of that learning. Practitioners will make judgements by observing behaviour that a child demonstrates consistently and independently in a range of situations. Attainment in this context will assure practitioners of the child's confidence and ownership of the specific knowledge, skill or concept being assessed. Skillful interactions with adults and learning, which is supported by them, are necessary on the journey to embedding skills and knowledge.

Links in the area of learning

Areas of learning, and therefore the ELGs, are often interlinked. These may also be related to the characteristics of effective learning. If practitioners can see these links it will join up the assessment process. Practitioners will be able to capture each child's learning more effectively and genuinely.

Practitioners can also reflect on these links when they quality assure their assessment judgements. They must consider where the different aspects and levels of attainment make sense when they are put together.

Practitioner knowledge

Most evidence for EYFS profile judgements will come from practitioners observing a child's self-initiated activities. Adult-led activities can offer insight into children's attainment by making sure the child has the opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

Much practitioner knowledge of what children know and can do will be gathered from day-to-day interactions. This is not often formally recorded, however it:

- provides the basis for making judgements

- provides a focus for moderation dialogue
- informs future practice and provision

Contributions to the assessments

Accurate assessment will depend on contributions from a range of perspectives, including the child's. Practitioners should involve children fully in their own assessment by encouraging them to communicate about and review their own learning. Assessment should build on the insights of all adults who have significant interactions with the child. Adults with different roles will be able to make different contributions.

Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between settings and home. A review of a child's achievements should include those demonstrated at home. Assessments that do not include the parents' contribution give an incomplete picture of a child's learning and development.

Internal Moderation of the EYFS profile

In their own provision, practitioners can agree assessment judgements with others informally. This might involve 2 practitioners (for example, a teacher and teaching assistant, or a reception class teacher and year 1 teacher, or a teacher and headteacher) discussing evidence about a child's development. The moderation of the EYFS profile is supported by LAs, or LA-approved agencies, through a programme of visits and meetings.

Moderation of the EYFS profile is a sampling process and not a method for checking each child's attainment. LA moderation visits use discussion to check that practitioners are making accurate assessments and applying them consistently. Evidence discussed includes:

- materials
- knowledge of the child
- anecdotal incidents
- results of observations
- information from additional sources that supports the overall picture of the child's development

Evidence does not have to be formally recorded or documented. The extent to which the practitioner chooses to record information will depend on individual preference. Paperwork should be kept to the minimum that practitioners need to illustrate, support and recall their knowledge of the child's attainment. The outcome of moderation should be recorded.

Evidence and documentation of the EYFS profile

Over the course of the year, practitioners should build their knowledge of what each child knows and can do. This will help them to make an accurate end of year judgement. They are not required or expected to carry out other assessments in addition to the EYFS profile. Settings can record children's learning in any way that helps practitioners to support their learning and development and make accurate summative assessments.

Practitioners must make their final EYFS profile assessments based on all their evidence. 'Evidence' means any material, knowledge of the child, anecdotal incident or result of observation, or information from additional sources that supports the overall picture of a child's development.

Evidence should come from day-to-day activity in the classroom and can be drawn from a variety of sources. The type of evidence will vary from setting to setting, class to class, and even child to child. The form of evidence supporting a practitioner judgement is entirely up to the practitioner. Practitioners should avoid excessive evidence gathering.

There is no requirement that evidence should be formally recorded or documented. Practitioners should keep paperwork to the minimum needed to illustrate, support and recall their knowledge of the child's attainment.

A setting's assessment policy should outline when it is necessary to record evidence. In developing their policies, settings should consider how to minimise practitioner workload so they can focus their efforts on teaching.

When evidence does need to be recorded, this should follow the principles and recommendations outlined in the independent report:

[Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with data management](#)

Practitioners may include the following to support their judgements:

- knowledge of the child
- materials, which illustrate the child's learning journey, such as photographs
- observations of day-to-day interactions
- video, tape, audio or electronic recordings
- the child's view of his or her own learning
- information from parents or other relevant adults

Professional development and previous work on assessment in the EY

Why do we assess?

We came to the conclusion that assessment tells us about the unique child, it can inform how we plan for their next steps in learning. We assess so that we can measure progress, what the children were able to do and what they can do now. We assess so that our judgements are accurate and that we can make an informed decision when it comes to making summative assessments.

How do we ensure that we can talk about each area of learning for each pupil?

There are 17 areas of learning and within those learning strands there are a lot of development stages. There is potentially a lot of observing of one child if you were to look at each area of learning as a separate entity. We have taken on board what the handbook states about looking at the child holistically and making cross-curricular links when observing their play and interactions. We decided to make an assessment timetable that weaves into the current curriculum. We decided it was about ensuring that pupils have access to a broad provision that encompasses all areas of learning. We decided to monitor the areas of learning that appear to have less evidence and discuss these in more detail during phase meetings.

How do we track pupils so that a) They get equal 'airtime'? b) So we avoid "it's 10 am, I'm going to go observe x"

We have tried several timetabling options for this in the past and found that they did not work, for example we would observe pupils at a planned time and come away from that observation having not collected much information. We decided that in the autumn term we would make time to observe every pupil in the class with a focus on their involvement and wellbeing. We then decided we would prioritise further and longer observations with pupils who were displaying low in wellbeing and involvement so that we could plan the provision around their needs. We decided that we would focus on pupils who puzzle us to get to know them better and how they see the world, again to ensure our provision was meeting their needs. We have adapted the curriculum and timetable to ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for practitioners to play, observe and interact with all pupils taking in micro data or more formal observations. We have made sure there is a sensible balance between child initiated and adult initiated activities throughout the day. We have ensured that the children have extended periods of uninterrupted play so that they can learn and demonstrate characteristics of learning.

Are there certain weekly activities we can do that capture progress over time?

We decided to make an overview of the year and plan in certain times that we would capture a child's learning and development. This is detailed below. One example was speech. Historically pupils who start with us are below or well below their development age in speech therefore we decided that capturing a child's speech during different moments of the year was important so that we could see progress and be accurate with the summative judgements we make on speech. Speech also links to several of the areas of learning and is a required skill to be able to be secure. The team also felt that there were certain areas of learning that repeatedly lacked evidence such as 'The world' and 'managing media and materials' therefore we planned in observation and evidence points throughout the year that linked well with the entitlement curriculum on offer. This would be additional to the ongoing assessments/evidence collection that would be made.

How can we ensure we do not over assess and record everything?

We realised that we had to value all forms of evidence collection and that they all work together to build a picture of each child. For example, looking at the special books alone will tell you very little about a pupil however if you look at the evidence on Tapestry and speak to key workers then there is a wealth of information about the child. We felt that we had been undervaluing the significance of the daily professional dialogues that happen between practitioners and because this was not 'recorded' then it got ignored when it came to looking at evidence to secure judgements. We realised that micro data, teacher knowledge and professional dialogue contributed largely to the assessments that we made. We decided that any evidence we collected had to be significant, we have a rule where we ask ourselves 'so what?' The purpose being so that we don't fall into the trap of recording everything a child does when we know what they can do already, we agreed that evidence we collect should amaze, surprise or puzzle us and that it should show a process of learning, preferably linked to several areas of learning and not just demonstrating a one of skill - we agreed that observations that are recorded should be significant.

How can we ensure that the tablet does not become a barrier between interaction the adult-child has.

As we moved to a more digital evidence collection system we were concerned about the use of iPads and how this could impact on the interactions between the practitioner and child and also whether the child would feel that their freedom and privacy is compromised. We did agree that there is no easy set rule for this and this should be managed by practitioners and their professional judgement.

Evidence collection at Mulberry Wood Wharf

1. Tapestry profile for each child (a digital platform that can evidence notes, videos and photographs, accessible by practitioners and parents.
2. Special book - a book that children can collect work in to remember their time in the Early Years
3. Teacher knowledge, micro data from observing, playing and interacting with pupils
4. Starting school notes and observations
5. Discussions with practitioners and parents
6. Staff communication book

Key: Underlined = all pupils will have a piece of evidence

Date/term	Summative assessment	Formative assessment/Evidence collection (to support the summative assessment)	Other – including moderation and monitoring.
<p>September - October</p> <p>(also includes any pupils who begin school on future dates)</p>	<p><u>On entry data for Reception</u></p> <p>RBA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission information notes • Visit observations • Conversations with parents • Informal Observations of pupils (micro – data) • Adult Communication book • Daily discussions • Weekly planning meetings • <u>Introductory commentary of pupil's interests/unique child/what we already know/their starting point (to be included in...)</u> • <u>Mark making evidence no.1</u> • <u>Short film of them in the new learning environment</u> 	<p>EH to moderate judgements with Nursery and Reception</p> <p>Teachers responsibility to track pupils and organise opportunities for observation.</p>

<p>October - December</p>	<p><u>December – data input for reception</u></p> <p>Analysis of data-progress check (head and EY lead)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned observations, pupils who puzzle/surprise/low wellbeing or involvement. (These can be recorded in the form of a written obs/film/photograph accompanied by professional dialogue) • Planned opportunities for maths evidence collection • Planned opportunities for PD evidence collection • <u>All pupils to have a ‘helicopter stories’ video recording (C&L, R, BI, PSED)</u> • <u>All pupils to have a speech recording that links to an area that is often more difficult to collect evidence for. (P&C, TW, EA). Opportunities to be planned for.</u> • <u>Various carpet sessions filmed so they can be reflected on in planning meetings (several tagging of pupils)- fit in 5</u> • <u>All pupils to have a unique learning journey that shows learning and development (progress) and CofL)</u> 	<p>Head to monitor range of evidence collection and significance in particular maths.</p> <p>Parents evening Pupil progress meetings- SLT In school moderation/online moderation - Head to lead. Identification of exceeding pupils - class teachers Who is at risk of being emerging? - class teachers MTP for spring term based on analysis- class teachers</p>
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<p>January - March</p>	<p><u>End of march – data input for reception</u></p> <p>Analysis of data - progress check (head)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Mark making evidence no.2</u> • Planned observations, pupils who puzzle/surprise/low wellbeing or involvement. (These can be recorded in the form of a written obs/film/photograph accompanied by professional dialogue. • Planned opportunities for maths evidence collection • Planned opportunities for PD evidence collection • Spring show (<u>PSED, EA, P&C</u>) • <u>All pupils to have a ‘helicopter stories’ video recording (C&L, R, BI, PSED)</u> • <u>All pupils to have a speech recording that links to an area that is often more difficult to collect evidence for. (P&C, TW, EA). Opportunities to be planned for.</u> • <u>Various carpet sessions filmed so they can be reflected on in planning meetings (several tagging of pupils)</u> • <u>All children to have a learning journey that has a commentary on the progress they have made.</u> 	<p>Monitoring emerging pupils- head</p> <p>Monitoring exceeding pupils - head</p> <p>Monitoring of all areas of learning and evidence collection and children's profiles- head</p> <p>Staff meetings- sharing examples of exceeding to build a portfolio of exemplifications/to add and compare to out of school moderation. - all staff</p> <p>In school moderation/online moderation - Head to lead.</p> <p>MTP for summer term based on analysis- class teachers</p>
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<p>April - July</p>	<p>EYFSP completion for LA June (reception only)</p> <p>Analysis of end of year data for Reception with reference to TH/national scores.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark making evidence - no.3 • Planned observations, pupils who puzzle/surprise/low wellbeing or involvement. (These can be recorded in the form of a written obs/film/photograph accompanied by professional dialogue) • Planned opportunities for maths evidence collection • Planned opportunities for PD evidence collection • <u>All pupils to have a 'helicopter stories' video recording (C&L, R, BI, PSED)</u> • <u>All pupils to have a speech recording that links to an area that is often more difficult to collect evidence for. (P&C, TW, EA). Opportunities to be planned for.</u> • <u>Various carpet sessions filmed so they can be reflected on in planning meetings (several tagging of pupils)</u> 	<p>TH moderation? Making accurate judgements- in school - Head to lead Transition (see plan) – Heato lead Pupil progress meetings- SLT Parents evenings/publishing of reports - teachers</p>
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