

Planning for Learning through All about me

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Making plans

Child-friendly planning

The purpose of planning is to make sure that all children enjoy a broad and balanced experience of learning. Planning should be flexible, useful and child-friendly. It should reflect opportunities available both indoors and outside. Plans form part of a planning cycle in which practitioners make observations, assess and plan.

Children benefit from reflective planning that takes into account the children's current interests and abilities and also allows them to take the next steps in their learning. Plans should make provision for activity that promotes learning and a desire to imagine, observe, communicate, experiment, investigate and create.

Plans should include a variety of types of activity. Some will be adult-initiated or adult-led, that focus on key skills or concepts. These should be balanced with opportunities for child-initiated activity where the children take a key role in the planning. In addition there is a need to plan for the on-going continuous provision areas such as construction, sand and water, malleable materials, small world, listening area, role-play and mark-making. Thought also needs to be given to the enhanced provision whereby an extra resource or change may enable further exploration, development and learning.

The outdoor environment provides valuable opportunities for children's learning. It is vital that plans value the use of outdoor space.

The UK Frameworks

Within the UK a number of frameworks exist to outline the provision that children should be entitled to receive. Whilst a variety of terms and labels are used to describe the Areas of Learning there are key principles which are common to each document. For example they advocate that practitioners' planning should be personal based on observations and knowledge of the specific children within a setting. They acknowledge that young children learn best when there is scope for child-initiated activity. In addition it is accepted that young children's learning is holistic. Although within the documents Areas of Learning are presented separately to ensure that key areas are not overlooked, within settings, children's learning will combine



areas. Thus the Areas of Learning are perhaps of most use for planning, assessment and recording.

Focused area plans

The plans you make for each day will outline areas of continuous provision and focused, adult-led activities. Plans for focused-area activities need to include aspects such as:

- resources needed;
- the way in which you might introduce activities;
- individual needs;
- the organisation of adult help;
- size of the group;
- timing;
- safety;
- key vocabulary.

Identify the learning and the Early Learning Goals that each activity is intended to promote. Make a note of any assessments or observations that you are likely to carry out. After carrying out the activities, make notes on your plans to say what was particularly successful, or any changes you would make another time.

Using the 'Early Learning Goals'

The principles that are common to each of the United Kingdom curriculum frameworks for the early years are described on page 2. It is vital that, when planning for children within a setting, practitioners are familiar with the relevant framework's content and organisation for areas of learning. Regardless however, of whether a child attends a setting in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales they have a right to provision for all areas of learning. The children should experience activities which encourage them to develop their communication and language; personal, social, emotional, physical, mathematical and creative skills. They should have opportunities within literacy and be encouraged to understand and explore their world.

Within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012), Communication and Language; Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are described as Prime Areas of Learning that are 'particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive' (page 4, DfE 2012). The Specific Areas of Learning are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

For each Area of Learning the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) describe what children are expected to be able to do by the time they enter Year 1. These goals, detailed on pages 4 to 7, have been used throughout this book to show how activities relating to 'All about me' could link to these expectations. For example, for Personal, Social and Emotional Development one aim relates to the development of children's 'self-confidence and self-awareness'. Activities suggested which provide the opportunity for children to do this have the reference PSE1. This will enable you to see which parts of the Early Learning Goals are covered for a given theme and to plan for areas to be revisited and developed.

In addition, an activity may be carried out to develop a range of different Early Learning Goals. For example, whilst exploring faces children might make 'Please smile' posters and use writing skills. In addition, they will consider what makes people want to smile and use creative skills. Thus, whilst adult-focused activities may have clearly defined goals at the planning stage, it must be remembered that as children take on ideas and initiate their own learning and activities, goals may change.



The Prime Areas of Learning Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity. (CL1)

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. (CL2)

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events. (CL3)

'All about me' provides many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. When the children go on a sound detecting walk, or listen to a book being read, they will develop skills for CL1. Games such as 'I spy', or describing objects in a feely bag, encourage both speaking and listening as well as require the children to follow instructions. Times spent speaking about family members and events, will allow children to develop their understanding and provide occasions for children to ask and answer questions.

Physical Development

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing. (PD1)

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently. (PD2)

'All about me' offers many opportunities for children to enjoy movement activities and to handle tools and equipment. When children move and balance, or use their hands for aiming, catching and throwing to explore body parts, they can develop and demonstrate control and co-ordination. Activities relating to food, wearing appropriate clothes and taking exercise will contribute to the development of knowledge of health and self-care. Areas such as basic hygiene and going to the toilet independently, however, will be part of on-going, daily activity and, as a result, PD2 will appear less frequently than PD1 within the described activities for Physical Development.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help. (PSE1)

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride. (PSE2)

Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas

about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children. (PSE3)

'All about me' offers many opportunities, both for child-initiated and adult-led activities, that will develop children personally, socially and emotionally. When discussing how body parts are used, or how to handle precious objects, children have the opportunity to make relationships. When considering which clothes to wear for a variety of weather children can develop self-confidence and self-awareness. Many of the areas described within the ELGs for Personal, Social and Emotional Development though, will be covered on an almost incidental basis. Any activity that involves collaboration will help children to build relationships whilst self-confidence can be promoted through activities that allow children to show initiative and follow their own trains of thought.

The Specific Areas of Learning

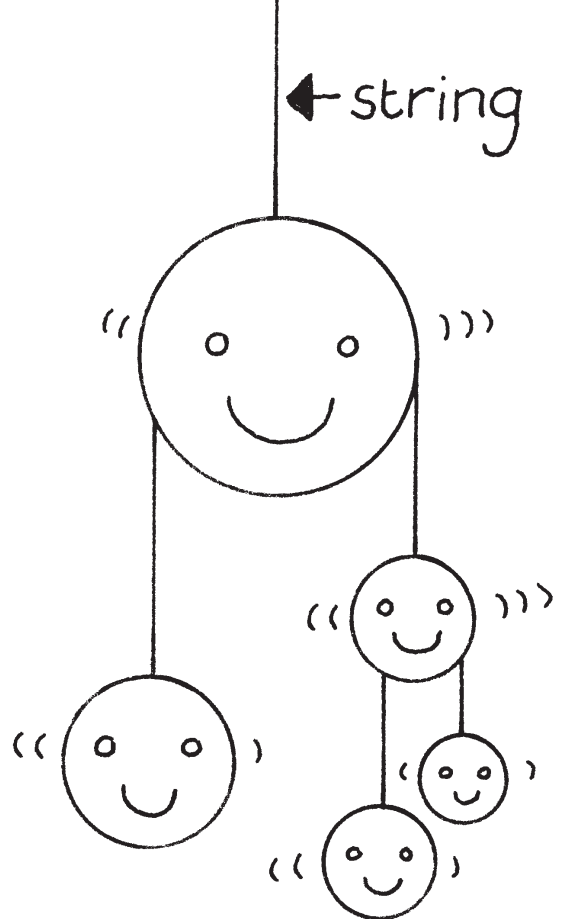
Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. (L1)

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible. (L2)



Theme 6: Faces



Communication and Language

- Together plan a 'Disguises Day'. Talk about the activities children would like to happen and the jobs that will have to be done for the day to take place. (CL3)
- As a group look for faces within picture books. Encourage children to consider why the faces are happy, sad, worried... (CL2)

Physical Development

- Tell the story of a spy putting on his disguise and encourage children to mime to the story. (PD1)
- Play shadow games in which children are the spies who are trying to track you. Stress the importance of only moving when you move and trying to keep in your shadow. (PD1)
- Draw with chalk on the playground a variety of large faces with flowing hair. Use them for aiming games and for walking on the lines. (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- In circle time, talk about the importance of smiling. At the end of the session pass a smile around the circle (see activity opposite). (PSE2)
- Declare a 'Smile Week' in which children will try to make people feel happy by smiling at them. (PSE3)

Literacy

- Provide magazines from which children can cut faces. Encourage them to stick faces in small books and write captions such as happy, sad and cross. (L2)
- Make 'smile please' posters. (L2)
- In small groups complete sentences such as, 'I am sad when...' or 'I am happy when...'. Enjoy reading the written sentences. (L1, 2)

Mathematics

- Use the face as the stimulus for counting activities with a small group. Count how many ears, eyes, noses and mouths the group has. Encourage them to notice that the number of eyes is the same as the number of ears. As children begin to notice similarities, ask them to predict how many chins the group will have. (M1)
- Provide children with drawings of half faces.

Encourage children to complete the pictures to make symmetrical faces. Use plastic mirrors to check the faces are symmetrical. (M2)

- Provide each child with a selection of sticky paper regular shapes. Ask them to make pictures of faces. Encourage the children to talk about the shapes they use for the eyes, nose, mouth and ears. (M2)

Understanding the World

- Use mirrors or digital photographs to allow children to observe their own faces and then make paper-plate face masks. (UW1)
- Give descriptions of children to the group and ask them to say who you are describing. As you play, help children to realise the differences and similarities they have with peers. (UW1)
- Share photos of events children celebrate. Look at faces and talk about the emotions they show. Did children enjoy the events? Why/why not? (UW1)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Make happy face mobiles by cutting card faces, decorating both sides and stringing them together (see diagram above). (EAD1)
- Sing 'If you're happy and you know it clap your hands' (Traditional). Encourage children to suggest emotions and actions e.g.
 - If you're angry and you know it shake your head.
 - If you're sad and you know it have a hug. (EAD1)
- Make two-faced puppets which smile and cry from paper plates (see activity opposite). (EAD2)
- Use pasta, string and wool to make collages of faces. These are particularly effective if they are sprayed with silver or gold paint when dry. (EAD2)

Activity: Smiling

Learning opportunity: Working collaboratively, listening to others and talking with feeling.

Early Learning Goal: Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Managing feelings and behaviour.

Resources: A hand puppet.

Key vocabulary: Smile, happy.

Organisation: Whole group sitting on the floor in a circle.

What to do: Remind the group of the routines for circle time and the importance of always looking at the person who is speaking. Praise those who are already looking at you as you talk.

Show the group your puppet. Tell the group its name and that it is very special to you because whenever you see it you smile. Ask the children how they feel when someone smiles at them. What makes them smile?

Pass the puppet around the circle. Whoever holds the puppet has the opportunity to speak. Once all the children who want to have spoken, talk about the importance of smiles for helping us to feel good. Finish by 'passing a smile' around the circle.

Activity: Happy/Sad puppets

Learning opportunity: Using a variety of materials to make puppets and using the puppets in imaginative, and role play situations.

Early Learning Goal: Expressive Arts and Design. Being imaginative.

Resources: Selection of scraps of material, paper, wool, sequins; felt pens; ready mixed paints; glue; scissors; an example of a paper-plate puppet clown. For each child: two small paper plates, card to make the hat and a thick 30cm long piece of dowelling or cardboard tubing.

Key vocabulary: Names of materials and colours being used, happy, sad.

Organisation: Small group.

What to do: Show the group the example of the puppet. Show them that it has two faces and ask why that would be useful in a play. Let the group ask the clown some questions.

Give each child a plate and ask them to draw a happy face on the underneath/non waxy side. Remind children of where they need to position the eyes. Repeat this with the sad face. Finally, stick strips of paper or wool on for hair. When dry, stick the plates together with glue with the dowelling/card tube stuck inside for the neck/handle. (See diagram.)

Make hats from card and glue them on to the heads. When completely dry, the children can use their puppets to make up plays, tell stories, take on safe walks or simply be friends that listen and talk.

Display

Display the face collages with a 'smile please!' poster on a board and hang the smiling mobiles close by. Cover a table with a cloth and carefully place the clown puppets on it. To the side arrange a table or large box as a puppet theatre for children to use their puppets in. Also include a book of tickets and till so that children can sell tickets for their shows.

