Tachbrook Nursery School
Assessment and Record Keeping Policy

'Happy, healthy & high expectations'

REVIEWED: September 2024

Assessment & Record Keeping Policy

'Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.' Development Matters 2021

At Tachbrook Nursery we recognise the importance of assessing and documenting the progress and development of children during their early years. This policy aims to ensure effective and consistent assessment practices and record keeping that support children's learning and development. We are committed to providing a holistic and individualised approach to assessment and record keeping, while respecting the confidentiality and privacy of children and families.

Aims:

1. Purpose of Assessment and Record Keeping:

a. To monitor and evaluate children's progress, strengths, and areas for development.

b. To identify individual learning needs and provide appropriate support and interventions.

c. To inform planning and delivery of high-quality, responsive early years provision.

d. To establish effective communication with parents/carers regarding their child's development.

2. Assessment Principles:

a. Assessment will be continuous, formative, and age-appropriate, focusing on all areas of a child's development: physical, cognitive, language, literacy, social-emotional, mathematical, creative, and understanding of the world.

b. Assessments will be inclusive, respecting and valuing each child's unique background, abilities, and interests.

c. Multiple methods and tools will be used, including observation, documentation, discussions with parents, and age-appropriate assessments.

d. Assessments will be fair, unbiased, and free from discrimination.

e. Assessments will be ongoing, with regular opportunities for reflection, analysis, and planning.

3. Record Keeping:

a. Confidential records will be maintained for each child, which include assessments, observations, portfolios and relevant documentation.

b. Records will be securely stored and accessible only to authorised staff, respecting data protection and privacy regulations.

c. Parents/carers will have access to their child's records and will be encouraged to contribute additional information or observations.

d. Records will be regularly updated to reflect changes in a child's development, interests, and achievements.

4. Communication and Reporting:

a. Regular parent consultations and meetings will be conducted to discuss a child's progress, where appropriate sharing assessment information.

b. Parents will receive written reports that summarise their child's development, progress, and where appropriate next steps.

c. Where applicable, assessments and records will be shared with external professionals e.g. speech therapists, educational psychologists involved in a child's support and transition to other educational settings.

5. Staff Training and Development:

a. Staff members will receive appropriate training and professional development to ensure they understand and implement the assessment and record keeping policy effectively.

b. Training will cover observation techniques, documentation methods, confidentiality, data protection, and effective communication with parents and carers.

c. Staff members will engage in regular reflection and staff discussions to enhance their assessment skills and promote continuous improvement.

Principals in Practice

How do we keep records on children's progress?

We do this in a number of different ways;

- Key person notes- information from initial visits, parent teacher meetings & brief observations of children's progress/ gaps in children's learning
- Portfolio –annotated samples of work, about four per term
- Reviews- a written report summarising the child's progress at the end of the summer term
- Termly tracking- measures children's progress every half term

Who is Responsible?

Key Person

The role of the key person is to help every child settle into nursery and separate from their parents/ carer. They offer a secure relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. Key persons are responsible for being an advocate for their key children and for ensuring that every child's early education and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

Most of the responsibility for maintaining up-to-date records lies with the key person. All members of staff work with all children, and all have a contribution to make to the assessment and records of all children. For certain activities key persons often take a lead when working with their children. This is one way to ensure that the key person spends time with their children after the settling-in period and in a wider range of activities than afforded by story and group times. Such activities include cooking, local visits, looking at portfolios together. Key workers have responsibility for the progress of all the children in their group.

When key children are experiencing difficult events or situations, it is the role of the key person to be professionally curious and think about how these events may impact a child. The key person should think about how to support the child and be an advocate for them.

Evaluation & Planning Meetings

At the end of day evaluation meetings staff share their observations from that day, ensuring key persons are given relevant information about their key children. This is also where staff share their professional knowledge about children's progress and plan for individual children's next steps.

Organisation & Procedures

1. Initial Visit: Parents/ carers and child meet the child's key person, prior to their first day at school. This visit enables staff to start the on-going dialogue we will have with parents about their child. Topics to cover on this visit include: how the settling-in process will work, what the child likes to do, their experience of other children, being in groups, language development etc.

2. End of year review: A report is written once a year, detailing the progress the child has made. For children with additional needs learning aims will be written for that child- this is called an SEND Support Plan (please see page 5 for more information). For children who are moving to primary school or a new nursery, this report will be sent on to their new school to inform the new teacher.

3. Parent/ Carer meeting: Twice a year (autumn & spring terms) the key person meets with parents/ carers to discuss their child's progress. The discussion focuses on what the child has been learning, any concerns and any feedback from home.

4. Monitoring Progress: once a term all staff track the progress of each child against the curriculum. Tracking is used to assess the amount of progress children have made. Children who are not making the progress we expect will be planned into weekly focused activities linked to their area of need. For some children who are not making expected progress this may indicate that they have additional needs or special educational needs. This will be discussed with our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDco) and further assessment or support may be needed (please see SEN support plans).

Observation & Portfolio's

Observations

Staff should make short observations of children in the seven curriculum areas, these should only be used as a prompt for record keeping and should not entail lengthy or time consuming written observations. Staff's first priority is to be available for children ready to play and teach. Observations should be kept in the key person's file.

Portfolios

Generally these may take the form of actual pieces of work or photographs. They should be dated, signed and representative of all areas of the curriculum. Staff should annotate and initial samples to show what aspect of learning they illustrate. These should be regularly shared with parents and carers so that we can all see the child's learning journey. Families may also want to add their own contributions to the portfolios. Staff should aim to contribute about two pieces per half term.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Assessment's

Once a term all staff will make separate and more detailed language assessments which will contribute to the termly review and plans for individual children. If necessary further support will be planned for through weekly and daily planned and unplanned activities.

Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND) Support Plans

Children who have Special Education Needs and/or a Disability (SEND) have more detailed termly reviews, these are called SEND Support Plans. For children with a high level of SEND we may need to set and review plans more often than termly. The SENDCo will support this process and will contribute information, aims and strategies' from external professionals e.g. EP, Physio, SLT. The SENDco will meet with parents once a term, when appropriate to share the new plans and incorporate the parent's feedback and suggestions.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure it remains in line with current best practices, legal requirements, and educational standards.

This assessment and record keeping policy will be implemented across our school, and all staff members will be expected to adhere to its principles and procedures. It is our commitment to support each child's unique journey of learning and development while fostering effective partnerships with families.

Other policies of interest:

Curriculum Policy
SEND policy
All curriculum policies