

Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping Policy

Experience in the early years should build on what children already know and can already do. Observation, assessment and record keeping are an important part of the educational process which begins as soon as the child starts at Knockbreda Nursery School. At Knockbreda Nursery School we value working closely with parents, as they are the child's first and most enduring educators. The information which parents share with us in during the Induction process (including the play and stay sessions, August teacher meeting and during the first few weeks of the settling in period) is crucial in forming a basis for further learning, assessment and observation.

Observation

Observation involves watching children closely and then noting down what is seen and heard in order to:

- gain a detailed understanding of the child
- plan for children's needs and interests, including specialist advice and support when required
- plan for progression and differentiation
- inform curricular planning
- share the child's development with parents/carers
- provide information on transfer to the next stage of education
- give staff a greater insight into how children learn

Observations are made by adults, who are involved with the child, including: parents/carers, nursery staff, students and other professionals (e.g. health visitor, speech therapist, physiotherapist and educational psychologist) as well as the children themselves.

Anecdotal observations are recorded on post it notes and filed in the child's observation file. All children have the opportunity to act as a Special Helper once per term and during this week the Class Teacher will focus her observations primarily on this pupil. This focused observation allows target areas for development to be identified and this information is used to inform termly reports and to build up a detailed picture of the child's development over time. Class Teachers use an iPad app to record their pupil observations.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of reflecting, analysing and making a judgement on a child's learning. At Knockbreda Nursery School an initial assessment is based on information from the home setting shared by parents/carers with staff through the Induction process, in addition to information from other settings and agencies (e.g. playgroups, speech and language therapist, health visitor ad others)

Staff use a combination of formative and summative assessment – formative assessment where the emphasis is on planning the next stages to be taken by the child, and summative assessment, which provides a snapshot of the child's achievements and abilities at a particular stage.

Formative assessment is the regular recording of children's learning experiences, which informs appropriate planning to allow for progression in learning. This information also provides evidence for summative assessment, namely targets set at parent teacher meetings during each term and a termly written report.

Each term, parents/carers are invited to share their child's profile – when the children start in September parents/carers complete an initial checklist of information they wish to share, via the All About Me booklet, Development Booklet and Pupil Consent Booklet. Parents/carers are encouraged to reflect on their child's progress at the end of the year through discussion of the Pre-School Transition Report.

Record Keeping

Staff keep a variety of records including emergency contacts, addresses, parental consent for outings, video and photographs, information on health and safety, and individual records of learning.

All children are regularly and continually observed and assessed and notes are kept in individual pupil sections in the Class Assessment File which contribute to a record of development and learning over time. These anecdotal records are ongoing and inform planning throughout the year. Records cover all aspects of a child's development, including all six areas of learning in the Pre School curriculum guidance:

1. Personal, Social & Emotional Development.
2. Language Development.
3. Early Mathematical Experiences.
4. World Around Us.
5. Physical Development and Movement.
6. The Arts.

Staff will take photographic evidence to accompany the observations that are made and each child will receive these photographs in the form of a portfolio at the end of the year as a personal record of their time at Knockbreda Nursery School.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the school's policy review schedule.