



Developmental Overviews

Guidance Note

Developmental overviews have been created by a multi-agency group of professionals from a variety of services within Shetland. The collaborative approach allows professionals to share their insights and expertise. A multi-agency perspective also facilitates early identification of any areas of concern around a child's development. The information from developmental overviews can be used to support universal and targeted approaches.

Aim of Developmental Overviews

Developmental overviews are a valuable tool for observing and supporting children's development. Developmental overviews are snapshots that help practitioners understand a child's current stage of development and plan appropriate next steps.

By observing and recording developmental progress, practitioners can identify any areas of concern or where a child may need additional support.

Developmental overviews should help to provide a well-rounded, cohesive picture of children's development and highlight any areas for further consideration. It should also support discussions between home, early learning and childcare settings and other professionals if required.

Information from the overviews should be used to reflect and plan for high quality interactions, experiences and spaces within early learning and childcare settings.

Content of Overviews

There are two developmental overviews:

- 3 year old developmental overview
- 4 year old developmental overview

Each overview is divided into different columns. The statements in each column have been developed with professionals.

The columns are:

- Movement
- Co-ordination
- Routines
- Social and Emotional
- Play and Imagination
- Understanding Language
- Using Language

Child Development

Child development is a unique process, with each child progressing at their own pace. These developmental milestones provide a general guide for expected progress however it is important to recognise that each child may reach these milestones at different times.

Realising the Ambition, p. 23, says:

“Development is not a race or an endurance contest. We will always be doing the right thing if we are aware of each child’s development and are providing interactions and opportunities that match the needs of the child. We also need to be mindful of the fundamental role of the parent or carer as the care-giver and as the child’s first educator.”

Using the Developmental Overviews

The skills on the overviews should be observed through natural adult/child interactions, through playing and talking together. There is no need to set up specific tasks/activities for children to complete in order for a skill to be observed. For some skills, information may be gathered from home or elsewhere e.g. if there are no pedal bikes and trikes in the setting.

When a child transitions to the setting, practitioners should spend at least 4 weeks getting to know the child through observing and playing and talking together. Practitioners should then begin to fill in the developmental overview.

Completing the Developmental Overviews

Early learning and childcare settings should complete the developmental overviews collaboratively and through professional dialogue together.

Developmental overviews should be a working document and used on an ongoing basis.