



Colyton Caterpillars Early Education Children's Assessment and Learning Policy

This policy was agreed by trustees/staff:	
Date of last review:	May 2026
Date of next review:	May 2027
Reviewed by:	K.Clode

Assessment in the EYFS is carried out in many different ways to ensure the whole child is assessed, not just one aspect. These assessments include:

- Home information sheets (nursery)
- Significant samples of children's work/achievements (learning journey folders)
- Reporting to parents
- Photographs
- Observations
- Next steps
- Half termly reports
- Transition document
- 1 & 2 year checks

Any assessments performed need to take into account each child as an individual and help them to progress in the same way. Assessments also need to be manageable for the staff involved so they can be maintained on a daily/weekly/termly/yearly basis.

- **All about me forms:** parents are asked certain questions to give the Nursery team an idea of the child, his/her abilities, likes, dislikes etc. This is the beginning of the assessment procedure for the child and will form part of the larger picture that will develop once the child is in school. This first assessment also assists the Nursery team in settling the child in during the early part of their nursery education.
- **Significant samples of work:** each term, in Nursery one sample of children's writing/drawing, cutting and a painting should be collected, dated and annotated with any comments that children make, by staff, and kept in their Learning Journeys. Photos should also be collected as records of children's achievements over time. Numerous pieces of work are not required, just a small sample/photocopy of those pieces which really signal an achievement for that child. The journey of learning to write their names must also be captured termly. In Reception the learning Journey is used to capture children's independent learning achievements to document progress over time.

- **Reporting to parents:** there are parent conferences in the autumn and summer terms and those parents who wish to, can come and discuss their children's progress with staff. However, staff also have regular day-to-day contact, and therefore any problems that arise can be rectified on a daily basis. Parents are always encouraged to come to staff and discuss their child's progress.
- **Photographs:** are taken of children on an ongoing basis to catalogue their achievements i.e. good models, art work etc. These need to be annotated by staff in the child's Learning Journey to give a context to their learning.

SEND:

All assessments and work undertaken to assess children in the EYFS is fully inclusive and children can access it at their own developmental level. We do however, also identify and assess children for a variety of SEND needs, in order to provide early support and intervention. The most common SEND need in our EYFS however is social communication needs/speech and language delay. We work towards early identification at Caterpillars and support both parents and children to access the support they need for advice, so they can make the accelerated progress required to close the gap. In EYFS we work closely with a range of other professionals (outside agencies). These include:

- Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)
- Child Development Team (CDT)
- Social Communication Assessment Pathway (SOCA)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Educational Psychologist (EP)
- Special Educational Needs Assessment Service (SENAS) for EHCP's

To ensure that our use of assessment is as meaningful and useful as possible, we place great emphasis on achieving accurate and reliable judgements. Staff as a whole are supported in realising this through a number of internal and external opportunities.

Physical development

The nursery environment will encourage improving the skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development has two very important areas:

- **Helping children to gain the confidence in what they can do**
- **Helping children to gain a positive sense of well-being and be healthy**

In order to give all children the best opportunities to develop their physical skills, practitioners should:

- Plan activities which challenge children in terms of their physical development.
- Provide enough space both indoors and out to allow children to explore their physical skills in a safe and secure environment.

- Provide activities which motivate, support, and develop children.
- Provide time and opportunities for children with physical delays or impairments to develop their physical skills.
- Introduce the language of movement to children, alongside their actions.

Early Years Experience Will:

- A) Ensure that statutory requirements are met in providing, safe, suitable, well planned indoor and outdoor provision.
- B) Give children plenty of time and support to explore, experiment and refine movements and skills (fine and gross motor).
- C) Support other areas of learning through the prime area of Physical Development.
- D) Broaden children's perspectives and enhance their understanding of the world through all their senses.
- E) Build on children's developing skills to promote confidence in their own abilities, and a growing independence.
- F) Provide opportunities for regular and frequent physical activity, both indoors and out.
- G) Encourage growing self-confidence and self-esteem.
- H) Promote collaboration in outdoor play and sharing of resources available.
- I) Offer a wide range of stimuli for movement, e.g. action songs/rhymes, stories, large equipment/apparatus etc.
- J) Introduce the vocabulary of movement and the words of instruction which accompany it.
- K) Teach directly those skills which are required where appropriate, such as getting onto the pole (climbing frame), pedalling a bike, throwing a ball, holding a pencil.
- L) Challenge stereotypes which occur and ensure equal access to physical provision regardless of gender or ability.
- M) Support children to develop their fine motor and gross motor skills in parallel.

Provision will include:

- A wealth of resources encouraging children's fine and gross motor development across the whole curriculum e.g. pegs, construction toys, scissors, a range of writing/drawing/painting implements, threading beads, sewing cards, puzzles, bikes, parachute etc.
- A well planned and organised indoor and outdoor curriculum provided during every session.
- 5 times a week P.E session for all children (PE teacher)
- Adults providing appropriate intervention, and encouragement, to help children gain confidence and improve their skills.
- A variety of outdoor toys, including equipment requiring co-operation and collaboration between children.
- Opportunities to practice and become more independent in their self-help skills.
- Sand and water, encouraging pouring, filling etc.
- Music teacher in the under 2's room

- A range of fine motor activities and tools e.g. threading, mark making implements, scissors, hole punches etc.

The provider will recognise that physical learning occurs at all times, and across all areas of the Foundation Curriculum, hence its placement as a prime area of learning. It cannot, and should not be separated into distinct areas.

Children who have a physical developmental delay will have additional support in school (inclusion) in line with advice from OT or physiotherapy. Programmes will be followed on an individual basis, after staff training (if required).

Communication and language

The nursery environment will provide and stimulate children with rich language experiences. This will encourage them to listen and participate in all nursery activities and discussion and build on the language that children bring to school. The curriculum will incorporate communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in all areas of the early years.

Early Years experience will:

- Enable children to talk together in pairs or small groups without a member of staff or other adult being present e.g. during role play, providing opportunities to develop spoken English.
- Encourage questioning/describing/reviewing and clarifying e.g. during group times.
- Encourage children to listen to others e.g. Circle time.
- Encourage children to take turns during discussions.
- Provide children with individual opportunities for regular conversations with teachers/adults e.g. recalling events and explaining demands.
- Ensure that each child is given the opportunity to contribute at his/her own level in a variety of situations e.g. regardless of ability/home language. Children with specific language needs will be supported in their own appropriate way.
- Generate discussion and give children opportunities to predict and analyse outcomes, through problem solving situations within all areas of the nursery curriculum.
- Provide situations for children to use and experience another language e.g. stories and listening to other children.
- Give children opportunities to speak, listen and understand in a variety of ways e.g. role play situations, giving orders, negotiating etc.
- Provide children with continuously building language experiences to increase their vocabulary e.g. adult role models giving support, negotiation.
- Close team work between, where appropriate, bilingual workers, speech therapists and/or members of staff
- Implement the advice or strategies recommended for individuals to support their language development.

- Support those children with speech and language problems and implement their support programs to ensure optimum progression.

Provisions will include:

A language rich environment offering many experiences encouraging spontaneous speech.

- Use of speech and language support as part of daily provision.
- A reading area where children can share books with adults and peers and retell familiar stories. The area should also include a tape recorder with taped stories and accompanying books.
- Stimulating displays to encourage discussion and response.
- A role-play area to encourage the secure practice of language and its uses.
- Adults present to support children with their language acquisition.
- Daily group times to promote questioning and discussion as well as encouraging turn taking.
- A finding-out, sand/water area (nursery) to promote discussion, prediction and description coming from the investigative process.
- General nursery occurrences that give rise to spontaneous discussion and naming of things, brought about by day to day interaction within the nursery e.g. when spilling paint, going to the toilet, seeing bulbs sprouting.

The provider should anticipate and ensure all opportunities to promote speaking, listening and understanding are met across all areas of the Early Years Curriculum wherever possible.

Maths

The nursery environment will encourage the development of mathematical language and the fundamental concepts involved within it. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking/noticing patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures, to make sense of the world around them. Mathematical understanding should be developed through stories, songs, games and both structured and imaginative play.

Visual maths will be taught throughout Nursery and Reception. The principle resource used to enhance visualisation in maths will be NUMICON.

Early Years experience will:

- Encourage an emergent sense of number, shape, space and measures using mathematical opportunities in the environment (small group times in Nursery/maths focussed session).
- Develop the child's sense of pattern and organisation.
- Provide real opportunities (practical activities) for sorting through everyday, meaningful and useful activities e.g. tidying up or replacing equipment.

- Plan to support the fundamental links between counting and matching through matching activities e.g. laying a table for four.
- Through observations and experimentation develop an awareness of comparison e.g. more/less, tall/short, big/little etc. leading to exploration of estimation and measurement and the use of mental imagery.
- Provide opportunities for counting.
- Encourage a sense of order e.g. 1-5, big-small, dark-light.
- Promote a sense of shape, space and size in all curriculum areas e.g. movement, modelling etc.
- Assist children in gaining an understanding of conservation/variance i.e. recognising that string is the same length straight or bent and that four buttons are four buttons regardless of shape or pattern.
- Aim to give children the confidence to make suggestions, guess, use any words that seem appropriate and just have a go!
- Recognise the link between the development of manipulative skills and social skills and the understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Make good use of opportunities to talk “mathematically” as children play, or take part in normal daily activities.
- Encourage connections to be made across their learning i.e. adapting things learnt to different situations.

Provision will include:

- Water and sand equipment: including bottles, funnels, containers of different sizes, cylinders, measuring jugs, moulds, buckets and spades.
- Threading equipment: including string, beads, reels, and sewing.
- Numbers: cards, magnetic, peg, beanbags, posters.
- Matching and sorting: including a variety resources e.g. materials and textiles, stones, colour counters and objects, shapes and sorting trays to enable sorting as well as addition, subtraction and problem solving.
- Weighing and measuring: including scales (for play and cooking) spoons, counters, various weighing resources.
- Puzzles and matching games.
- Numicon
- Magnetic numbers and number cards
- Puzzles and board games.
- A designated maths area both indoors and out.
- NUMICON

Mathematical opportunities will be utilised through all areas of the curriculum e.g. in regular cooking sessions and role-play, both indoors and outdoors.