

Agenda Item	19.
Report No	ECAS 58/14

Early Years Assessments

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

The Early Years Collaborative stretch aims include the goal that 85% of children will achieve their expected developmental milestones at 27-30 months, 90% will achieve them by the time they enter Primary 1 and 90% will have reached the expected developmental milestones and learning outcome by the end of P4. This has prompted a review of the assessment frameworks being used in Highland for all preschool children.

1. Background

- 1.1 The development of young children is monitored and where appropriate assessed, within the universal health service, at various stages. At each of these points a judgement is made as to whether the child should be identified as being on 'core' or 'additional' support by the Health Visitor.
- 1.2 When a child enters preschool provision at age 3, it is important that any concerns are passed on to this setting and for the child's development to continue to be monitored.
- 1.3 Where there are concerns about a child's development, a more detailed assessment or specialist intervention may be planned and actioned through a proportionate child's plan in line with the Highland Practice Model.
- 1.4 The Early Year's Collaborative have provided 4 stretch aims, three of which relate directly to child development;
 - 85% of children to reach all of the expected developmental milestones by the time of the child's 27-30 month health review by December 2016
 - 90% of children to reach all of the expected developmental milestones by the time the child starts primary school, by December 2017.
 - 90% of children to reach all of the expected developmental milestones and learning outcomes by the time by the end of P4, by December 2021.

2. Current Position In Highland

- 2.1 The universal child health reviews are a core element of the Child Health Programme. The reviews provide an opportunity to work with parents to assess children's wellbeing, provide age appropriate health promotion advice, build parenting capacity, identify needs for support and facilitate easy access to effective interventions.
- 2.2 Currently, the recommendation for core universal contacts is
 - Antenatal contact
 - First visit at 10-14 days
 - 6-8 week contact

- 3-4 month contact
- 12-15 month contact
- 27-30 month contact

- 2.3 There are three aspects to these core contacts; a) assessing the child's well-being, which may include the well-being of the main carer and identifying any additional interventions required; b) reviewing the allocated Health Plan Indicator c) information giving
- 2.4 For each of these contacts, there is a Core Care Plan. These care plans are based on the SHANARI well-being indicators and prompt the professional to assess the child's well-being across all 7 areas. There is then the opportunity to add any additional information before summarising the assessment and detailing further actions
- 2.5 The Health Plan Indicator (HPI) is a measure of the assessed need for each child. Currently the indicator determines if the need is for the **Core** (universal) service or **Additional** services should additional support or services be indicated. Guidance to assist practitioners to allocate the HPI is being revised at a national level.
- 2.6 Health visitors provide a range of health and parenting information to all parents on a range of topics. There is a defined list of recommended leaflets given at different stages of a child's life to accompany the range of topics. This 'Information Trail' is regularly updated and available on the For Highland Children's website.
- 2.7 In Highland, assessment of need has been based around the SHANARI well-being indicators and it is considered important that any screening tools reflect this.
- 2.8 There are several recognised 'off the shelf' screening tools used by health boards across Scotland. However, following a review, it was felt that no single tool provided the holistic approach to well-being that fitted with the Highland Practice Model.
- 2.9 It has been decided that there should be a staged model for assessment which will include a first level SHANARI-based core contact form, and a suite of recommended second level assessment tools where an additional need is suspected. These currently include assessment using the My World Triangle framework and the Schedule of Growing Skills 2. It is now intended to agree further additional second level tools that will provide further assessment. It is also agreed that there should be a staged model of intervention ranging from interventions that can be undertaken by parents, to those requiring the input of a specialist practitioner (See **Appendix 1**).

3. 27-30 month Review

- 3.1 The 27-30 month review is a core review and so offered to all children, regardless of their circumstances. Parents are notified of this review by an automatic mailing from the Child Health Surveillance Programme and advised to contact their health visitor to arrange an appointment. This is followed up by a letter from their health visiting team.
- 3.2 Uptake of the review varies across Highland. Figures from ISD indicate that 68.9% of children received this review during the period from Oct to Dec 2013. This lower than expected uptake could be related to the percentage of parents who are back at work by the time their child reaches this age. Our aim would be to work towards achieving 100% uptake of this review, which will be enabled with the planned increase in health visitor capacity funded by Highland Council and the Scottish Government.
- 3.3 The current 27 – 30 month core care plan (See **Appendix 2**) guides practitioners and parents to assess all the SHANARI well-being indicators, using a series of prompt

questions about a child's activities and abilities, in a similar process to the nursery developmental overviews. This allows a recognisable and integrated approach to child developmental assessment across both early years and education.

- 3.4 The 27-30 month contact also includes an assessment of the carer's mental well-being, which is increasingly being linked to a child's developmental achievement.
- 3.5 We believe that this integrated and holistic approach is the correct methodology to be adopted. Because there is no consistency in approach across Scotland however, there is a risk that by using a detailed holistic approach, the achievement level of Highland's children may compare reflect a higher standard than other parts of Scotland, where fewer domains are assessed and consequently fewer developmental issues identified.
- 3.6 Using the Early Years Collaborative improvement methodology testing is ongoing to refine the core care plan, the guidance for practitioners, referral pathways and mechanisms to improve uptake.

4. Nursery Developmental Overviews

- 4.1 The final part in the range of tools being developed in the preschool stages involves two separate profiles providing an overview of the milestones expected that children will achieve by age 3 and age 4 (**Appendix 3**).
- 4.2 These overviews have been developed by a multi-agency team of professionals over several years. They have been trialled with preschool centres and also with parents, with very positive feedback and during session 2013-14, training was provided for all early years' staff, on the use of the overviews.
- 4.3 They were used in all early years settings last session and have provided a practical and effective system of measuring children's development just before they enter Primary 1 as well as being a tool for identifying developmental issues when a child enters nursery as a three year old, if these haven't been identified before.
- 4.4 There has not been a system in place previously in Highland, to give an overview of the development of all pre-school children and no consistent approach that would then link with the assessment and monitoring tools already available to continue to track the development of children in school.
- 4.5 As with the other early years assessments, a range of strategies can be used within the staged approach to address any identified concerns that arise from the use of the Developmental Overviews. Strategies employed to address the concern can be identified along with an appropriate timescale for intervention and review, level of success and next steps, e.g. differentiating activities, making changes to the environment, etc.
- 4.6 A key benefit of the Developmental Overviews is that it provides a focus for discussion and joint planning with parents and with the link Health Visitor as Named Person.
- 4.7 While appropriate intervention strategies are likely to address the majority of concerns, some children will require a more individualised response and this may result in the development of a child's plan. Children's needs should always be identified in terms of strengths and pressures, with the overview helping to inform this process and support a request for input from other services, alongside the Child's Plan, where required.

- 4.8 By June 2014, 4 year old overviews were completed for all children transferring to primary 1. Highland is currently the only authority to have an overview of a range of milestones of ALL 4 year olds, as they enter school. This has provided a vital link in the process of monitoring and tracking the progress of children.
- 4.9 Having this information has also enabled strategic planning of early years staff development, and has supported a more seem-less transition into school and a more efficient and effective allocation of support and intervention for children as they start Primary 1 by providing clear developmental information for P1 teachers on all new pupils.

5. Ongoing Actions

- 5.1 Work is continuing to test processes around the uptake and effectiveness of the 27-30 month review process.
- 5.2 Similar development will be required to ensure that the 12-15 month review enables early detection of additional needs which can then be addressed prior to the 27-30 month review.
- 5.3 There is now a need to ensure the full involvement of parents/carers with the Developmental Overviews and other tools used to identify and assess need at an early stage, so that they are always involved in supporting appropriate interventions.
- 5.4 In August 2014, only 80% of the completed Overviews were passed on to schools and so work is ongoing to identify how to ensure that they are always used at transition
- 5.5 All of the early years assessment tools need now to be embedded within a staged process of intervention, with clear interventions to support need at all levels being available for parents and professionals at an early stage.

6. Implications

- 6.1 **Resources:** The preventative early years investment agreed by the Highland Council, alongside additional funding for Health Visitors from the Scottish Government, provides the means to achieve these assessment processes. There may be additional resource demands associated with the P4 stretch aim.
- 6.2 **Equalities:** By seeking to ensure that more children achieve all of their developmental milestones, we seek to reduce inequalities across all subsequent life stages.
- 6.3 There are no **Legal, Risk, Climate Change/Carbon Clever, Rural or Gaelic** implications arising from this report.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the work being undertaken towards measurement and achievement of the Early Years Collaborative stretch aims.

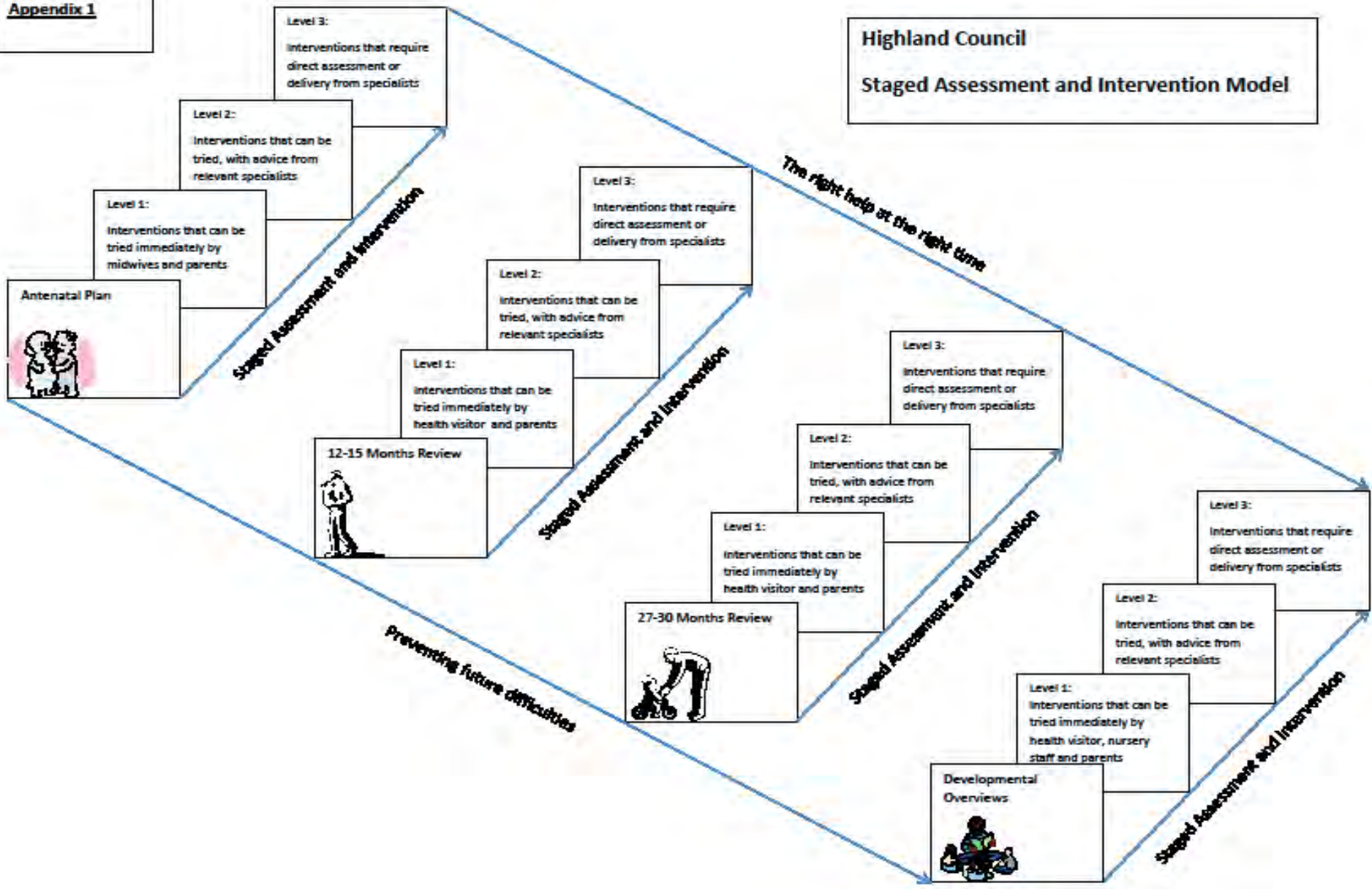
Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 3 November 2014

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Appendix 1

**Highland Council
Staged Assessment and Intervention Model**



Appendix 2

Child's Core Care Plan 27-30 month contact Test of change 4C version	Child's name
	DOB
	CHI
	(OR USE LABEL)

Where seen:	
Persons present:	
Parental concerns about the child	
Height	Weight
Information sharing discussed	Yes/No
Permission to share with preschool	Yes/No
CHSP form completed	Yes/No
Adult well-being scale completed	Mother/Father/Neither

Well-being indicator		Y/N		Y/N
Safe	Carers aware of accident prevention		Child appears aware of dangers	
	Child actively explores		Housing safety issues addressed	
	Family relationships are supportive		Carers in good health	
	Additional comments:			
Healthy	Carers aware of healthy diet, including fluid intake		No concerns about vision	
	Eats well and will try new foods		No concerns about hearing	
	Constipation prevention discussed		Immunisations up to date	
	Child feeds self with spoon		Carer aware of minor ailment treatments	
	Child can drink from non-spouted cup holding with 2 hands		Carers aware of dental health issues	
	Good sleep pattern		Registered & attends a dentist	
	Additional comments:			
Achieving	Carer aware of own role in language development		Can understand simple instructions	
	Child interested in books & rhymes		Early imaginative play - aware of function of objects	
	Has about 50 clear words and learning new words every day		Showing interest in using potty/toilet appropriately	
	Beginning to put two words together		Child starting to recognise and be active in daily routines	
	Uses words for actions not just for objects/people		Child able to wait for needs to be met	
	Additional comments:			

Nurtured	Carers sensitive and responsive		Excited if hears happy voice, concerned at crying	
	Explores new situations but looks for reassurance/cuddle if anxious		Can interact with carer using an object or activity	
	Can sustain attention in activity with an adult		Follows most requests that are understood	
	Can stop an activity or pay attention when called on		Eye contact between carers and child	
	Additional comments:			
Active	Walks and runs without falling over		Can manage simple fine motor tasks	
	Jumps, both feet together, off the ground		Beginning to balance blocks to make small towers	
	Pushes along with feet on sit astride toy		Plays alongside other children each doing separate activity	
	Active outside the home			
	Additional comments:			
Included	Accessing social play opportunities		Comfortable in social situations, able to socialise	
	Beginning to be independent		Family or other support network available	
	Additional comments:			
Additional information				
Summary & Analysis				
Health Plan Indicator				
Proposed Preschool Centre				
Signature			Date & Time	

Appendix 3: Overview of Early (3 year old) Pre-school Skills

Secure

Emerging

Area of Concern (please leave blank)

MOVEMENT	COORDINATION	ROUTINES	SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL	PLAY - IMAGINATION	UNDERSTANDING	EXPRESSION
Explores playground equipment, outside environment	Explores new toys to see what they can do	Removes and puts on coat; *may need help for fastenings	Generally separates easily from caregivers	Uses large boxes as cars, Houses etc in play with other children	Understand when we talk about people not present; Mummy's gone shopping	Can express needs and wants using phrases/ 4 to 5 word sentences
Goes up steps, alternating feet, may alternate coming down, may hold rail	Makes marks on paper to 'make a picture' and can sometimes tell about it. Can paint using a brush	Can change shoes *may need help for fastenings and correct feet	Is aware when others are distressed although may be 'thrown' by it; responds positively to other's happiness	Cooperates with other children in play; joins in chasing games, group of children playing	Can follow two part instruction - no visual cues/ outside a routine; 'get your shoes & sit on the chair'	Approaches adults and children, makes contact; smiles and says 'hello' and 'Bye Bye *in appropriate situation
Climbs up and slides down, *may need encouragement/help	Eats, using a spoon and fork and can drink from a cup	Can make choices from 2 or 3 possibilities	Comes to an adult when needing help, when upset or situation is not 'safe'	Joins in cooking/ sand/ water activities; pouring, mixing, kneading	Knows familiar action rhymes, songs & rhymes and can fill in missing words or actions	Talks about pictures/ stories in their own words and can link to own experiences
Can move forwards and backwards and moves around avoiding collisions	Can pour sand/ water/ milk from one container to another	Attempts to do up zips and buttons	Often likes to play with 'friends', is affectionate towards them and familiar adults	Plays 'Pretend' and fantasy games	Can take turns in a conversation that someone else has started	Tells others what to do; 'don't do that', 'give it to me', 'it's mine'
Can run, avoiding obstacles and turning corners	Can snip with scissors, screw up paper for collage	Can sit with the group and participate in social snack	Expresses emotion - clear facial expressions; argues with words not just actions	Imaginative play extends to sequences; washing, dressing, feeding doll/teddy	Can tell simple news and respond to 'What?' 'Where?' questions	Able to use pronouns (I, he) plurals and some 'ing' words
Can balance on one foot for 3 seconds; able to hop with one hand held	Can thread beads/ reels on a lace with stiffened end	Can focus on a task: e.g. Helps to set the table	Understands concept of 'mine' and 'his/hers' in a play context	Shares a picture book with an adult for 5 mins	Points to detail in pictures; Where's the dog's tail? - big pig?	Is usually intelligible to new or unfamiliar listeners
Can focus on partner, catch with two hands and kick a large ball	Can fit Duplo, Sticklebricks etc together	Can go to the toilet by themselves	Listens to and responds to other children, with talk, during play	Can make a simple model from 'junk' playdough, bricks	In a small group, listens and attends to simple stories, with pictures	Uses some positional word; in, on, up, down, under
Can jump off last step, may want to hold hand	Can screw objects together / take off simple lids	Can wash and dry hands without supervision	Can share toys and take turns when encouraged	Imitates play of other children and adults	Understands in, on, under, down, up, big, little	Can ask questions: 'Who?', 'What's that for?'
Can ride a trike or bike with stabilisers, learning to steer	Can roll playdough into balls	Stops playing, helps to tidy up to they were playing with; puts in the right boxes	Developing self-conscious emotions; guilt, pride, embarrassment	Actively participates in group game; Farmer wants wife, duck, goose	Recognises objects by how they are used; Which one do you drink from?	Is usually fluent
Can throw a small ball to an adult, while looking at the adult	Can pick up and place pieces in a simple interlocking jigsaw	Can shift attention from one activity to another	Developing a sense of humour	Begins to dress up using props: hat, wand, tools, shoes	Aware of time in relation to events; after lunch, at the weekend	Can use p b m n w h t d and all vowel sounds and some of s f k g

The developmental skills described are not designed to be used as part of a formal assessment and generally they should all be observable within the weekly routine of the setting. Write any additional comments or observations, if needed, on a separate sheet and attach to the overview.

The overviews could be completed on an on-going basis throughout the course of the year. The four year old Overview must be completed by the end of May. Use of the three year old overview is optional but it would be particularly useful to complete should there be pre-existing concerns about a child's development.

Name of Child		Date of Birth:
Name of Centre:		

When a concern or challenge is identified through the use of the overviews, information should be discussed with the support structure within the setting (Childhood Practice Manager/Head Teacher/Support for Learning Teacher/Principal Teacher Pre-school Education) and shared with parents/carers and the Link Health Visitor.

Shared with:		Date:
Shared with: (parent/carer)		Date:
Shared with: (HV)		Date:
Shared by:		Date:

Credits:

Referral Guidelines for Education Nurseries and Schools: Speech and Language Therapy Service, *NHS Highland, 2008*
 Gross Motor Development: Women & Children's Physiotherapy Services, *NHS Highland, 2007*
 I still can't tie my shoelaces.....: *NHS Quality Improvement Scotland, 2008*
 Play Steps: *Highland Council Psychological Services, 2011*
 Elizabeth Morris, Director at Child Learning and Development Advisory Centre, (*formally School of Emotional Literacy*)
 Ann Locke and Maggie Beech: 1991

Overview of Pre-school (4 year old) Skills

Secure

Emerging

Area of Concern (please leave blank)

MOVEMENT	COORDINATION	ROUTINES	SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL	PLAY - IMAGINATION	UNDERSTANDING	EXPRESSION
Able to walk on tiptoes or heels, when asked, or along a line, 1 foot in front of the other	Handles crayons and brushes with reasonable control	Changes own shoes <i>placing on correct feet</i> ; Fastens and unfastens Velcro	Developing stable friendships	Shows imagination during small world play, sequencing events and stories	Follows 3 instructions to carry out an activity without visual cues	Uses well-formed sentences; may have some grammatical immaturities; 'falled'
Goes up and down steps with alternating feet, one foot on each step	Can draw using straight and curved lines	Dresses and undresses by themselves except for difficult fastenings	Generally cooperates with playmates and beginning to be able to negotiate	Takes turns and shares toys with other children	Listens and appropriately joins in talk about current activity with adults and other children	Easily understood although may still be some immaturities in speech sounds: eg: r, th, ch
Explores playground equipment. Uses slides and swings, may need a 'starter push'	Cuts along straight lines and beginning to cut around a shape	Generally gets clothes the right way out and round for dressing	Attempts to comfort playmates who are upset or hurt	Plays board game in small group : adult supported	Understands concepts like biggest, more, just one	Can describe an event in reasonable order
Jumps high with feet together, lands with more control from step	Can copy or continue a pattern using coloured beads, cubes, shapes	Helps to set table, serve and participate in social snack	Able to talk about the feelings of characters in stories: cross, scared, happy	Draws or paints recognisable pictures without prompting	Shows understanding of story by simple question or commenting	Uses language to gain information and give own ideas
Kicks a large ball with some accuracy	Can fit together pieces to construct models, layouts; Duplo, Popids, train track...	Helps adults clearing up and tidying nursery	Responds to unfamiliar adult with speech	In group play takes on different roles: doctor, shopkeeper, parent...	Understands position and adjectives: eg: behind, long, between	Starts, takes turns and stops, in longer conversations
Throw a small ball with some accuracy, catches large ball with 2 hands	Draws person showing some details	Accepts unpredicted changes to daily routines	Aware of more complex humour, laughs at jokes that are told	Adapts objects as props in imaginative play	Can follow spoken instructions without having to stop and look at the speaker	Uses more pronouns: 'I', 'me', 'my', 'mine', 'you', 'yours', 'he', 'she'
Able to balance on one foot, minimal body sway	Pours liquids with little spilling	Goes to the toilet and washes hands independently	Follows rules and likes pleasing others	Engages in make believe fantasy role play using dressing up, actions and different voices	Understands and follows instructions: first... next... last	Can sequence 3 to 4 pictures/photos logically and talk through the story
Hops on one foot or hops forward one step without other foot touching the ground	Completes jigsaws with 12 plus pieces	Can wipe/ blow own nose	Developing a sense of fairness	Uses and adapt the ideas of other children and adults in creative & imaginative play	Understands Why/How, Who, What happened questions	Asks questions starting with: Can...? Does...? Why...
Runs and changes direction smoothly, reciprocal/ swinging arm movements	Hand dominance developing	Can focus on a game, activity until completed and then move onto next one	Becoming aware of other children's emotions	Uses imagination to create and play with models eg: Duplo	Beginning to understand more abstract words: if... maybe... might...	Beginning to use plurals but may use 'mouses' etc
Pedals a tricycle including steering	Uses a fork and spoon and beginning to use knife to spread	Asks for help when needed	Developing self confidence	Is able to choose and plan play activities?	Aware of time in relation to daily routine: tonight, tomorrow	Can tell own name and age

The developmental skills described are not designed to be used as part of a formal assessment and generally they should all be observable within the weekly routine of the setting. Write any additional comments or observations, if needed, on a separate sheet and attach to the overview.

The overviews could be completed on an on-going basis throughout the course of the year. The four year old Overview must be completed by the end of May. Use of the three year old overview is optional but it would be particularly useful to complete should there be pre-existing concerns about a child's development.

Name of Child		Date of Birth:
Name of Centre:		

When a concern or challenge is identified through the use of the overviews, information should be discussed with the support structure within the setting (Childhood Practice Manager/Head Teacher/Support for Learning Teacher/Principal Teacher Pre-school Education) and shared with parents/carers and the Link Health Visitor.

Shared with:		Date:
Shared with: (parent/carer)		Date:
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