

Standards Unit

Linking theory to practice: observation

Teacher and trainer handbook 5:
conclusions and recommendations

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Foreword

The Standards Unit

We are committed to the following principles which underpin all our work:

- We will recognise and celebrate excellence in the post-16 sector.
- We will recognise and celebrate diversity.
- We will be open and participative in our approaches to development.
- We will recognise barriers to excellence and be supportive of those working in challenging contexts.
- We will challenge underperformance.

Success for All is a partnership between the DfES Standards Unit and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Standards Unit leads on Themes 2 and 3 and the LSC on Themes 1 and 4:

- Theme 1 – meeting needs, improving choice
- Theme 2 – putting teaching, training and learning at the heart of what we do
- Theme 3 – developing the leaders, teachers, training and support staff of the future
- Theme 4 – developing a framework for quality and success.

The Standards Unit was set up in January 2003 to embed excellence in teaching, training and learning and to modernise and upgrade the sector's workforce. It acts as a catalyst, selecting priority curriculum areas for action and harnessing the work of partners to improve quality in the post-16 learning and skills sector – in FE and sixth form colleges, sixth forms in schools, work-based learning, adult and community learning and the prison service.

The Unit's staff includes officials and expert practitioners seconded from colleges and other providers and the inspectorates. This core team is supported by call-off consultants, whose expert knowledge enables delivery in a range of areas. The work of the central team is supported by nine regional offices who are crucial to the national dissemination of the teaching and learning resources and the delivery of step improvements across the country. The Unit selects curriculum areas because of their importance to the economy and social inclusion and because inspection outcomes show there is room for improvement

To support the improvements required, the Standards Unit is also providing national free training in coaching for teachers and trainers who have been nominated as Subject Learning Coaches by their managers. The programme is designed to provide professional training for Subject Learning Coaches so that they can work confidently with colleagues to further improve teaching, training and learning in their subject area. It is a new and exciting programme which is being embedded through subject networks, where Subject

Learning Coaches from different backgrounds meet to share best practice and develop their coaching skills. If you would like to know more about becoming a Subject Learning Coach, why don't you speak to your Standards Unit Regional Director or look at www.successforall.gov.uk.



This health and social care resource will be a valuable reference in network meetings when Subject Learning Coaches are discussing the health and social care curriculum. We hope you will find this a useful resource and we look forward to receiving your comments and feedback.

Jane Williams
Director of Teaching and Learning
Head of Standards Unit

Introduction

The seven teacher and trainer handbooks are linked to the seven learner observation booklets. The booklets are designed for learners undertaking a level 3 qualification in early years. On completion of the first six booklets, the learners will have developed the skills and understanding essential to complete an observation to professional standards. The seventh booklet is an extension of Booklet 3 – methods of observation. Three of the methods are dealt with in more depth and detail.

Working as an early years practitioner is a very important profession. It is a privilege to be responsible for supporting children as they become confident and well balanced individuals, able to take their place in society. It takes many skills to provide a firm foundation for the future of a child. The most important are the ability to make objective observations, draw appropriate conclusions and prepare plans to encourage each child to achieve his or her full potential. Encourage your learners to be unobtrusive observers of children and they will learn much that will help them to develop these essential skills.

Effective observation is a sophisticated skill essential for working in a variety of early years health and social care settings. Observation skills are applicable through all vocational sectors and work-based learning environments. Rigorous observation processes demand many high level skills including recording, reviewing, monitoring, interpretation and evaluation.

The teacher and trainer handbooks provide ideas, resources and guidance to assist you in planning and organising learning. The handbooks aim to stimulate ideas to help you to improve teaching and learning but are not definitive guides. The seven teacher and trainer handbooks link to the learner observation booklets and may be used flexibly to meet the needs of individual learners. You may decide to use individual sessions for other programmes. For example, Handbook 6 would work well as part of an induction programme for most courses.

Throughout this handbook we refer to the following publications: *Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* and *Birth to Three Matters* – both DfES publications, produced by Sure Start.

NOTE

Guidance notes for teachers and trainers and a specimen scheme of work may be found in Handbook 1. The appendix of this handbook deals with how to adapt the resources for health and social care. The Teacher and trainer key skills handbook shows key skills mapped to the activities in Booklets 1–7c.

The seven teacher and trainer handbooks support each of the following learner observation booklets:

Handbook 1

How to develop good observation skills

Handbook 2

How to plan and record observations

Handbook 3

How to choose methods of observation

Handbook 4a

How to make sense of your observations

Part 1: Interpreting your observations – milestones and norms

Handbook 4b

How to make sense of your observations

Part 1: Interpreting your observations – theorists and expert opinion

Handbook 5

How to make sense of your observations

Part 2: Conclusions and recommendations

Handbook 6

How to use references and bibliographies

Handbook 7a

Supplement to Booklet 3: methods – checklists

Handbook 7b

Supplement to Booklet 3: methods – graphs and charts

Handbook 7c

Supplement to Booklet 3: methods – time and event sampling

Each handbook is subdivided into three sections:

1. Session plan.
2. Activities.
3. Resources.

Interpreting your observations

Session plan Part 2: conclusions and recommendations

What you will need to do for this session:

- Read this handbook and copy relevant pages for your learners as handouts.
- Read learner observation Booklet 5.
- Photocopy enough copies of Booklet 5 for your learners.
- Read through the awarding body's guidelines/criteria for the grading of observations.
- Remember to identify any potential barriers to individual learning. Build in plans to enable each learner to achieve success. Where possible, work with a colleague specialising in language, literacy and number (LLN) ensuring learners are able to **acquire** the skills (LLN) or **apply** the skills (key skills) to meet individual need.

The resources you will need for this session:

- Booklet 5.
- This teacher or trainer handbook for instructions for activities.

- Observation teacher and trainer key skills handbook.
- Resources (handouts and OHTs) from the back of this handbook.
- *Birth to Three Matters, Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* and *Key Stage One* curriculum information as reference for areas of development.

The session:

- Introduction.
- Step 3 conclusions.
- Writing conclusions.
- Making recommendations.
- Summary statements for conclusions and recommendations.
- Completing observations.
- Review and consolidation, and **How did I do?**
- Teacher or trainer evaluation.

Programme	Teacher or trainer:
Unit: Observation	Length of session: 120 minutes
Topic: Conclusions and recommendations	Room:
Date:	Number on register:

Aim: Enable learners to draw conclusions and make recommendations that will inform future plans for the child's development.

Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners will be able to:

- draw conclusions;
- make clear and realistic recommendations;
- complete observation reports.

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
5 minutes	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Introduce the aims and objectives of the session.</p> <p>Recap on previous sessions and booklets using a variety of methods to include all learners, for example, quizzes, posters and presentations.</p> <p>Give out Handout 1 (p. 18), previous learning from Booklet 4b.</p> <p>Ask learners to complete Handout 1 individually.</p>	<p>Discuss content of session.</p> <p>Discuss previous session and recap on Booklets 1–4b.</p> <p>Complete Handout 1 individually.</p> <p>Discuss in large group.</p>	<p>Booklets 1, 2, 3, 4a, 4b.</p> <p>Handout 1.</p> <p>OHT 1 (from session 4a).</p>	<p>Learners are clear about aims and objectives of the session.</p> <p>Learners demonstrate the depth of their learning to date.</p>

Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
<p>Discuss in large group.</p> <p>Give out Booklet 5. Give learners a few minutes to look through Booklet 5.</p> <p>Link – recap on four steps (teacher or trainer Handbook 4a, p. 23) – OHT 1.</p>			
<p>25 minutes</p> <p>Step 3 – Conclusions</p> <p>Use pp. 2–3 of Booklet 5 – conclusions and personal learning checklist.</p> <p>Using pp. 2–4 of Booklet 5, provide an overview of what should be included in the personal learning section of observations.</p> <p>Introduce Activity 1, (Booklet 5, p. 4) personal learning.</p> <p>Split the learners into pairs or ask them to work individually on the activity.</p> <p>Ask learners to use the observation that they have been developing from previous sessions.</p> <p>Circulate between the groups, questioning learners to assess learning/understanding.</p> <p>Feedback and discussion.</p> <p>Record key points on flipchart/whiteboard.</p>	<p>Listen to teacher or trainer explanation.</p> <p>Discuss personal learning and requirements of observation using pp. 2–3 of Booklet 5.</p> <p>Read pp. 3–4 of Booklet 5 for examples of personal learning.</p> <p>Complete Activity 1 (Booklet 5, p. 4) on personal learning.</p> <p>Feedback and discussion.</p> <p>Record key points.</p>	<p>Booklet 5. Flipchart/ whiteboard.</p>	<p>Learners understand how to write conclusions effectively including personal learning.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
40 minutes	<p>Writing conclusions</p> <p>Discuss awarding body guidelines/criteria for grading of observations if appropriate.</p> <p>Working in pairs, ask learners to discuss the conclusions of one of the two completed observations (Handouts 3 and 4, pp. 20–27) and then complete Handout 2 p. 19.</p> <p>Feedback and discussion</p>	<p>Discuss awarding body guidelines/criteria for grading observations if appropriate.</p> <p>Discuss one of the two observations – Handouts 3 and 4, pp. 20–27.</p> <p>Complete Handout 2 (p. 19)</p> <p>Feedback</p>	<p>Awarding body guidelines, if appropriate.</p> <p>Handouts 2–4.</p>	<p>Learners understand awarding body guidelines/criteria for grading observation.</p> <p>Learners understand how to write conclusions.</p> <p>Learners are able to write appropriate conclusions and recommendations.</p>
15 minutes	<p>Making recommendations</p> <p>Recap on planning cycle – Sessions 1 and 4, OHT 1 (p. 32)</p> <p>Step 3 – recommendations</p> <p>Use Handout 5 and OHT 2 (p. 28) recommendations and guidelines, and Handout 6–8 (guidelines) (pp. 29–31)</p> <p>Discuss OHTs and handouts linking them to observation work to date.</p> <p>Link with steps 1 and 2 from Session 4, teacher and trainer Handbook 4b – linking theories to findings</p> <p>Ask learners to read through p. 5 of Booklet 5: making recommendations.</p> <p>In pairs, ask learners to complete Activities 2a and 2b, pp. 6–7 of Booklet 5.</p>	<p>Recap on planning cycle and objective observations.</p> <p>Discuss OHT 1 – p. 32 of this handbook, linking to work completed to date.</p> <p>Complete Activities 2a and 2b, pp. 6–7 of Booklet 5: making recommendations.</p> <p>Discuss and feed back.</p> <p>Record key points.</p>	<p>OHT 1, Handout 6, 7, 8.</p> <p>Flipchart/whiteboard.</p>	<p>Learners demonstrate what they have remembered from sessions 1–4</p> <p>Learners are able to make appropriate recommendations.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
	<p>Discuss and feed back.</p> <p>Record key points on flipchart/whiteboard.</p>			
5 minutes	<p>Summary statements for conclusions and recommendations</p> <p>Ask learners to complete Activity 3 on p. 8 of Booklet 5 to test and consolidate learning.</p> <p>Feed back.</p> <p>Record key points.</p>	<p>Complete Activity 3, Booklet 5, p. 8.</p> <p>Record key points.</p>		Learners demonstrate their understanding of things to include in their conclusions, comprising personal learning and recommendations
25 minutes	<p>Completing observations</p> <p>Using observations that learners have been developing in the workplace, learners are to work individually to complete their conclusion, personal learning and recommendations in their own observation.</p> <p>Circulate, supporting learners in completing the activity.</p> <p>If learners have not completed by the end of the session, set as homework.</p> <p>Set a date for the submission of the observation.</p>	<p>Complete conclusion, personal learning and recommendations for workplace observation.</p> <p>Complete for homework if necessary.</p>	<p>Learner observations.</p> <p>Textbooks.</p>	Learners demonstrate how to complete observations by adding conclusions, personal learning and recommendations to the observation they have completed in the workplace.

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
5 minutes	<p>Review and consolidation</p> <p>Glossary – learners fill in new words or terms and discuss their meaning.</p> <p>Complete Activity 4, p. 9.</p> <p>How did I do?</p> <p>Ask learners to complete Activity 5 p. 11 to check and consolidate learning.</p> <p>Recap and evaluation.</p> <p>Check that the aims and objectives of session have been met.</p>	<p>Complete pp. 9–10 of Booklet 5.</p> <p>Any questions?</p>	Booklet 5.	<p>Learners identify what they have learned so far and areas needing further development.</p> <p>Learners demonstrate an understanding of new words and terms used throughout the session.</p>
After the session	Complete teacher or trainer evaluation using p. 15			

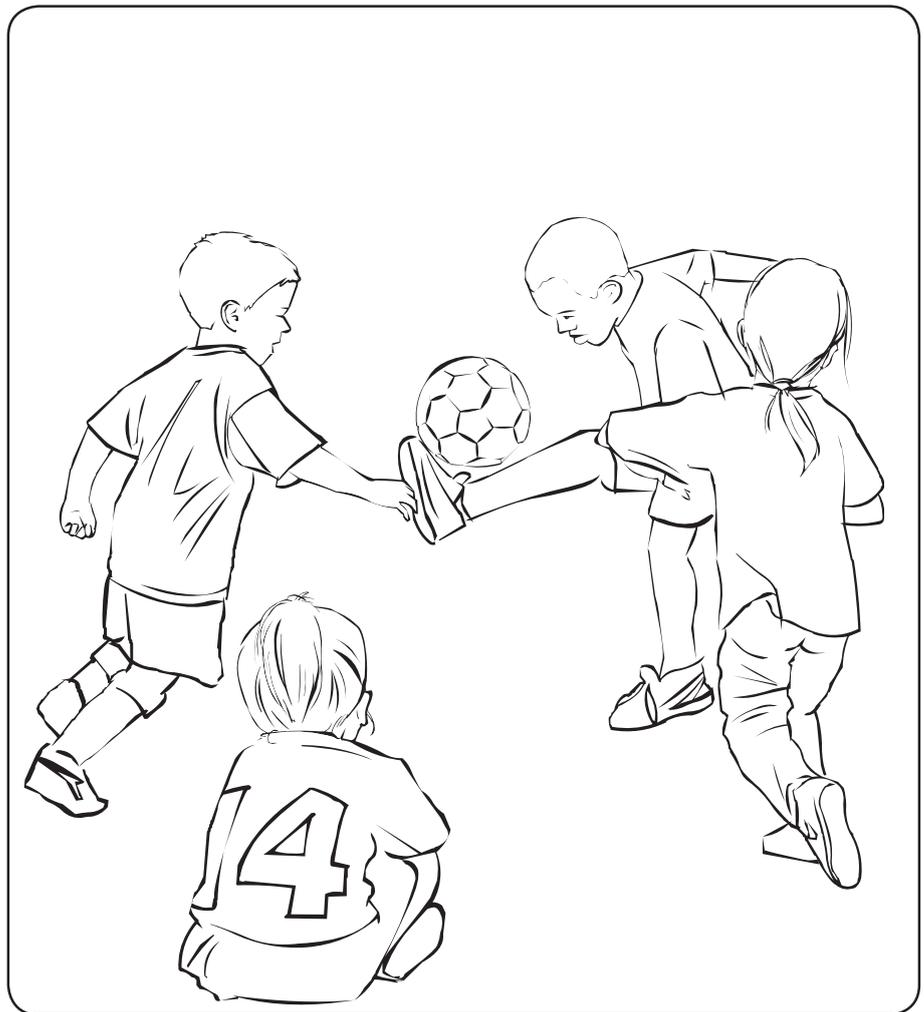
Teacher or trainer evaluation

Identifying the needs of all learners (differentiation)	How the needs of all learners will be met (achieving differentiation)
The following range of particular needs exist (these will have been identified during the learners' initial assessment): <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	The needs of particular learners will be met in the following ways: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Review of: a) what went well <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Review of: b) what went less well and how to improve it <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Review of: c) were the needs of all learners met? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Resources

Booklet 5

Conclusions and recommendations



Confirm previous learning from Booklet 4b

The main purpose for doing an observation is:

When planning an observation, three things that I should do are:

I must always maintain confidentiality because:

It is important to include the current views of theorists and experts because:

Handout 2

Further practice opportunities for drawing conclusions

There are two observation reports on Handouts 3 and 4. These are the work of learners who have given permission for them to be used.

Look at their conclusions and recommendations and compare them to the criteria in the checklists in Booklet 5.

My view of the conclusions and recommendations:

Discuss your views with your teacher or trainer.

Observation 1: dressing up

Date: 2 April 2004

Method: Narrative (Individual)

Start time: 2.15p. m.

Finish time: 2.33p. m.

Adults present: 1 EYP

Permission sought from: Supervisor

Setting: Infant school Year R

Immediate context: in the role-play area of the classroom

First name, gender and age of observed child: Elizabeth, female, 4 years 11 months

Brief description of child observed including any factors relevant to the aim of the observation: Elizabeth often plays with Graine and they are good friends.

Aim: to observe a child engaged in free play.

Objectives: to assess the opportunities for development and learning through free play.

Observation record:

Elizabeth is at the dressing-up box. She is on her knees looking through the clothes.

E ➔ Self: "Where's my dress I'm going to wear? (confused expression) I saw it here. It's got blue on. I need to find it to be the fairy."

She picks up a pair of gold wings and puts them on the floor beside her. She pulls out the blue silk dress. She puts the dress on by putting her feet through it and pulling it up, then putting her arms into the sleeves.

She looks round at Graine.

E ➔ G: "Please can you do the back up?"

G ➔ E: "OK. Turn round then. "

Elizabeth goes back to the box and finds a headband with a bow at the front. She puts it on her head. She puts the wings on over her dress.

E → G: "Look at me. I'm a fairy in the story."
 She tiptoes around the area and twirls around.
 Elizabeth and Graine laugh. The EYP comes over.

EYP → E: "Hello fairy Elizabeth. Can you do magic?"

E → Self: "Magic um um ..." (She looks around and sees a wooden spoon.) "WAND!"
 Elizabeth waves the wand around Graine and the EYP.

E → G and EYP: "Now you're my horses to take me to the ball like Cinderella!"

Graine goes outside, and the EYP and Elizabeth continue to play together.

KEY: E = Elizabeth
 G = Graine
 EYP = Early Years Practitioner

Evaluation and assessment

"Imagination is the ability to form mental images, or concepts of objects not present, or that do not exist" (Beaver et al, 2001, p. 118). Elizabeth has a picture in her head of what a fairy should look like. She is imagining herself as a fairy. She is trying to feel what it is like to be fairy.

According to Beaver et al, "children create new, sometimes unique, characters and situations in their play [...] role-play enables children to discover, enquire, organise and make sense of their environment... all this can be done in a safe environment because they can opt out of the play anytime" (Beaver et al, 2001, p. 119). Graine opts out of the play when she goes outside, but Elizabeth feels safe with the EYP and keeps on pretending. The role-play area is always there and Elizabeth knows it well. In her play she is making sense of her ideas about fairies and magic.

By using her imagination in role-play and by playing with Graine, co-operating for a little while in the play, Elizabeth is achieving an early learning goal for creative development (DfEE, 2000, p. 124) and she shows she can "express and communicate her ideas by using ... role-play" which is another early learning goal for creative development (DfEE, 2000, p. 126).

Elizabeth is also able to "Select and use activities and resources independently". (DfEE, 2000, p. 40) which is an early learning goal for the area of learning personal, social and emotional development.

There is also evidence of communication, language and literacy when Elizabeth shows that she can "interact with others, negotiating plans and activities ..." (DfEE, 2000, p. 48) and "use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences and use talk to organise, sequence and clarify ideas" (DfEE, 2000 p. 58)

Handout 3

Also, according to Beaver et al (2001, p. 153) at three years, “children talk to themselves during play; this is to plan and order their play, which is evidence of children using language to think”. Elizabeth is thinking out loud at the beginning of the observation when she tells herself what she needs and what she is going to do.

Elizabeth’s play links to Jerome Bruner’s stages of cognitive development. He says that “Children aged 1–7 years are in the Iconic stage ... this is when children store information using images which may be based on smell, hearing or touch ...” (Tassoni et al, 2002, p. 197). Elizabeth must have seen a picture in a book or a video of a fairy and she is remembering it very clearly when she picks out the clothes and behaves as she thinks a fairy would.

Conclusion

Elizabeth uses her imagination throughout the play. She already knows what character she wants to be and what dress she wants from the box. She is being creative, because she is choosing the dressing-up clothes to make her look like that character, which is a fairy.

She knows what a fairy looks like because she is remembering stories and videos that have fairies in them. She pretends to be the fairy and acts as she thinks a fairy should, by tiptoeing and twirling. She knows fairies do magic with a wand, so she makes the wooden spoon a symbol and uses it. She talks as if she is a fairy when she tells Graine and the EYP that they are her horses.

Elizabeth talks to Graine and to the EYP. She also talks to herself at the beginning when she is looking for the clothes.

Personal learning

I found it very interesting to watch the way Elizabeth was involved in her play and how putting on the dressing-up clothes helped her to imagine. I also realised how much learning there can be in an activity like this and how Elizabeth was guiding her own development through what she was interested in. The adult was helping her develop her ideas, but Elizabeth was in control.

Recommendations

Elizabeth enjoyed dressing up and the imaginary play. Her play could be extended by adding some items to the dressing-up box, perhaps a piece of cloth that could be a cloak and some tinsel. She might like to make a magic wand to use or a book of magic spells, which would encourage her to do some emergent writing.

Bibliography

Beaver, M. et al (2001) *Babies and Young Children: Diploma in Child Care and Education*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.

Tassoni, P. et al (2002) *Diploma in Child Care and Education*. Oxford: Heinemann.

DfEE (2000) *Foundation Stage Profile Handbook*. London: QCA publications.

Handout 4

Observation 2: outdoor play

Date: 5 May 2004

Method: Tracking (Individual child)

Start time: 2.05 p. m.

Finish Time: 2.20 p. m.

Adults present: 1 EYP

Permission sought from: Supervisor

Setting: Nursery class

Immediate context: in the outdoor area of the nursery class

First name, gender and age of observed child: Olivia, female, 4 years 11 months

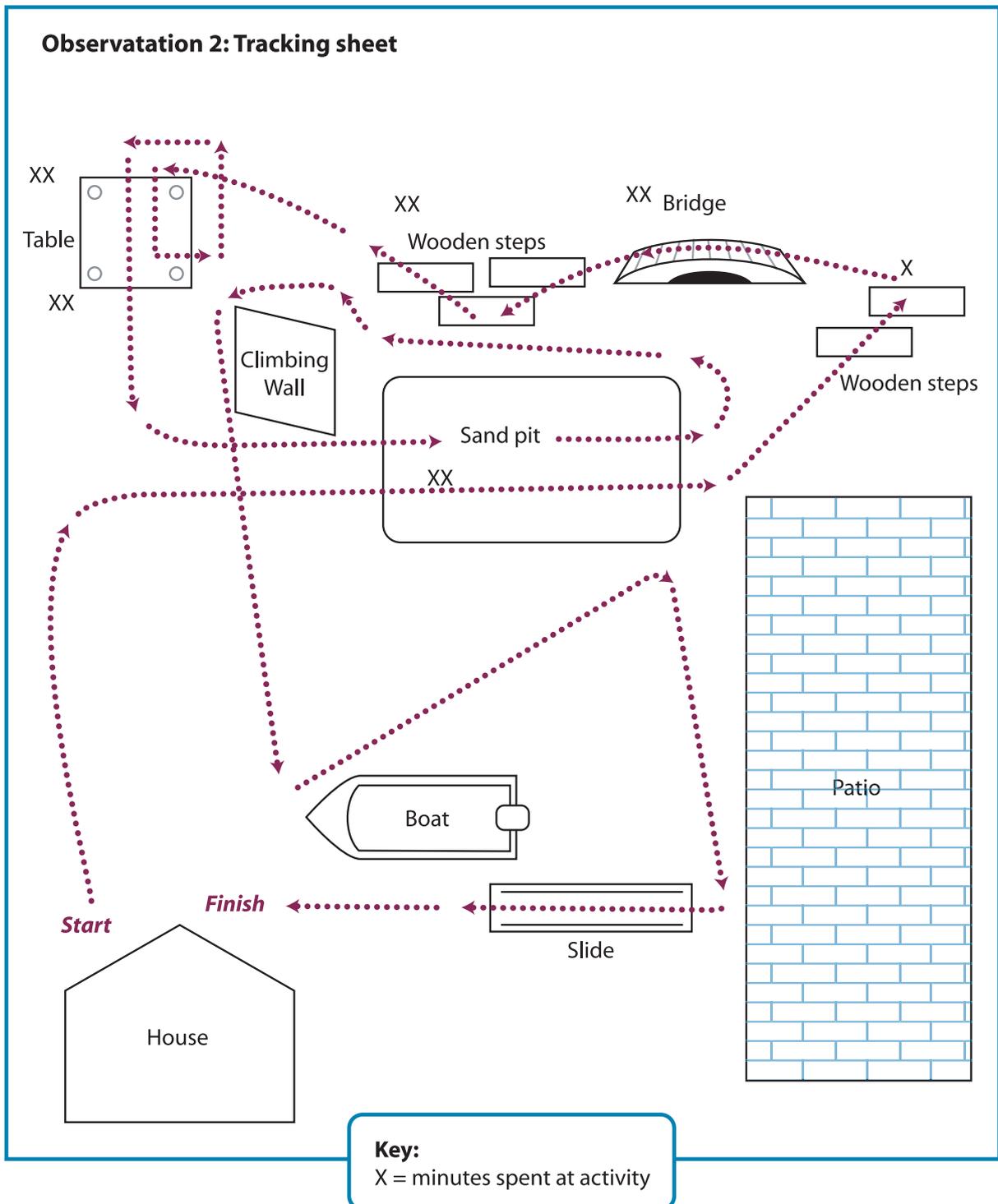
Brief description of child observed, including any factors relevant to the aim of the observation: Olivia comes to nursery class every afternoon. She is friendly and outgoing and likes to play with the other children.

Aim: to observe a child playing outside.

Objectives: to assess the child's physical development in gross motor skills.

Observation 2: tracking sheet

Garden activity for snapshot observation



Evaluation and assessment

Tassoni et al says that, at 4 years, “children are able to run and change direction” (Tassoni et al, 2002, p. 168). Throughout this observation, Olivia was running about and changing direction every now and again. She was very confident in running and in jumping, showing that she has locomotive skills. She was achieving the early learning goal “to move with confidence, imagination and in safety” as well as the stepping stone “jump off an object and land appropriately” (DfEE, 2000, p. 104). She also was able to “move with control and co-ordination and travel around and over balancing and climbing equipment” (DFEE,2000, p. 106).

According to Beaver et al, at 4 years, a child “climbs trees, ladders, play equipment” and “is confident at climbing over and through apparatus.” Olivia showed she was able to do this when she climbed on and over a small table. Also, when she climbed up onto the table, she put one foot in front of the other which demonstrates the milestone “walks or runs up and down stairs, putting one foot on each step” (Beaver et al, 2001, p. 191).

When she walked across the table, Olivia showed she could balance. Tassoni says “the ability to balance comes with age as the body learns to coordinate its movements with the information being received by the central nervous system”(Tassoni et al, 2002, p. 163). Walking across the table did not require a great deal of balance and Olivia was able to coordinate her movements with confidence.

Olivia was playing on her own during this observation, although she did show interest in what the other children and the adult were doing in the house. However, she did not join in. She seemed to want to keep moving. She appeared to be enjoying the space and

opportunity to move around which reflects what the *Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* says, “effective physical development helps children develop a positive sense of well-being” (DfEE, 2000, p. 100).

Beaver et al says that “physical development is influenced relatively more by biology and maturation... However, in all areas of development, stimulation and learning are essential” (Beaver et al, 2001, p. 112). The outdoor area of the setting provides many opportunities that Olivia and the other children enjoy. Through their play they are able to learn new skills and practise existing ones.

This observation of Olivia demonstrates that she can achieve the milestones given for her age in the textbooks. It must be remembered that milestones provide a guide, but are not fixed measures of what a child should achieve at a particular age. It is important to emphasise that all children develop at different rates and it is difficult to assess what the norm actually is, as there are no hard-and-fast measures against which a child can be judged ... the use of normative measures does, however, provide a broad framework, which is helpful to workers in making assessments of children’s progress (O’Hagan and Smith, 1999, p. 2). This observation can be used as a check of Olivia’s physical development for a record and for planning.

Friedrich Froebel considered outdoor play to be important. He “pioneered an approach to early childhood learning that emphasised the importance of providing children with a wide range of experiences to enable them to develop an understanding of themselves and the world around them” (Beaver et al, 2001, p. 379). Being outside gave Olivia the opportunity to be aware of her own body and find out what she could do with it. She

Handout 4

was free to challenge herself to carry out the activities offered by the various pieces of equipment that she chose to use. She could also use them as she wanted and she was in control. She would not only be developing her physical skills, but would also be exploring concepts like 'fast' and 'up' and 'along'. The practitioners have planned the outdoors so that it offers opportunities that are age- and stage- appropriate.

Margaret McMillan realised that fresh air and exercise are important to children's health and wellbeing, and she founded open-air schools where play was the main approach because "she believed in access to a wide variety of materials through free play and emphasised that children could not learn if undernourished or deprived in any other way" (Tassoni et al, 2002, p. 368). Nowadays, good practice would be for children to be able to spend at least 50 per cent of their time outside. Children of nursery-school age are still encouraged to run freely between the indoor and outdoor environment, and fresh air is still seen as a vital ingredient in early education (Curtis, 1998, p. 10). In this setting, the children can do everything outside that they can do inside and can choose to go out soon after the beginning of the session and stay out as long as they like. They can go out even when it rains!

Conclusion

Olivia was very active throughout the observation and used three main gross motor skills – running, jumping and climbing. She showed she could balance when she walked across the table. She ran between the pieces of equipment and the other children so she could steer herself. She knows the garden well and all the equipment, so she was very confident.

She spent most of the time running around

and tended to run round in a sort of circle.

She climbed across the wooden steps by putting one hand out to reach the pole, then her foot. She showed a lot of confidence doing this. She jumped off the last step with both feet together.

She was able to climb over the climbing table. She put one foot in front of the other until she got to the top. She walked across the top. She then climbed down the other side the same way she got up. She did this a few times.

At one point she stood still, watching what the other children were doing. She seemed to be having a rest and did not join their play.

She ran to the house and stood there looking at the children and the adults who were there. She was there about a minute. Then she continued to run around.

Personal learning

I have learned another method of observing children that gave useful information about Olivia's physical development. The advantages of the tracking method were that I could follow Olivia and see what equipment she liked and how she used it. It showed me what skills she had and what she is able to manage without help. I was able to time her and see how long she spent on each thing. Having the plan made beforehand made it easy to plot the path.

I can see that this is a useful method for finding out what children enjoy and what they can do so you can plan different opportunities to develop their skills further or introduce new equipment to encourage new skills. I can see from the plan that there is scope to increase the range of opportunities for outdoor play provision for gross motor skills.

The disadvantages were that I found it hard to keep up when Olivia was running around with all the other children around as well. The problem was that I was not able to see Olivia practising a very wide range of gross motor skills – only the ones she chose to use. For instance, I did not observe her skipping, throwing, catching or using the bikes. I would need to do another observation and perhaps set up some activities that need these skills.

I have learnt much about the Pioneers and how they thought children benefited from playing freely outside. I am interested to see that their theories are still around and that they still influence the way we organise settings and set up play. There is much in the news about children not getting enough exercise and so it is important to try to give them plenty of opportunities for physical play. I think it is best for this to be outside so you need a big outdoor area.

It is very important to plan opportunities for vigorous physical play so that children like Olivia can develop their potential in this area as much as in all the other areas of development. I have seen how much Olivia enjoyed her time outside and realise that she benefited a great deal from it. She used a lot of energy in her play and was concentrating on what she was doing. I think that, as a practitioner, I need to try to encourage children to enjoy being outside and make exercise a part of their routine.

Recommendations

In the setting there is a lot of equipment for Olivia and all the other children to use that develops gross motor skills. I would talk to the children about how to use it safely and give them some guidance on ways to climb and run so that they do not hurt themselves or the other children.

I would like to provide some resources for Olivia and the other children to use to make their own equipment. They could use some planks of wood and some plastic crates to make a 'bridge' that they could walk across. I would need to be around to check it was safe, but they would enjoy planning and playing on it themselves. They might develop some imaginative play, based on the bridge idea. I might be able to suggest ways they might set challenges for themselves and include other gross motor skills.

With permission, I could also take some photos of the children using the equipment for a display. I could make some captions that explain the physical development and some of the things children say about what they are doing. When parents come into the nursery, they would then be able to understand the value of outdoor play and the learning that is going on. These photos could also be used to make a book with the children, which they could look at by themselves or with an adult. It might encourage them to discuss their skills and the importance of exercise and a healthy lifestyle

Bibliography

- Beaver, M. et al (2001) *Babies and Young Children: Diploma in Child Care and Education*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.
- Curtis, A. (1998) *A Curriculum for the Pre-school Child*. London: Routledge.
- O'Hagan, M. and Smith, M. (1999) *Early Years Child Care & Education: Key Issues*. London: Bailliere Tindall.
- Tassoni, P. et al (2002) *Diploma in Child Care and Education*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- DfEE (2000) *Foundation Stage Profile Handbook*. London: QCA Publications.

Recommendations

You should:

- identify and state what you have observed;
- provide two practical suggestions to support the child's development;
- explain how to meet the needs of the child and how to help him or her to make progress;
- identify other professionals who may support development;
- explain how you will implement the recommendations by:
 - describing the activity plan or new routine;
 - identifying the necessary resources;
 - describing the role of staff and other adults;
- identify where your plan fits into the planning cycle;
- ensure that the plan is appropriate for the age and stage of the child's development;
- avoid criticising the workplace/staff/other adult(s).

Guidelines – *Birth to Three Matters*

- a strong child
- a skilful communicator
- a competent learner
- a healthy child

Source: *Sure Start – Birth to Three Matters: A Framework to Support Children in their Earliest Years*.
London: DfEE Publications.

***Foundation Stage Profile* – curriculum guidance**

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- mathematical development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development

Source: *Sure Start – Foundation Stage Profile Handbook 2002*.
Early years productions, London: QCA Publications.

Key Stage One – curriculum guidance

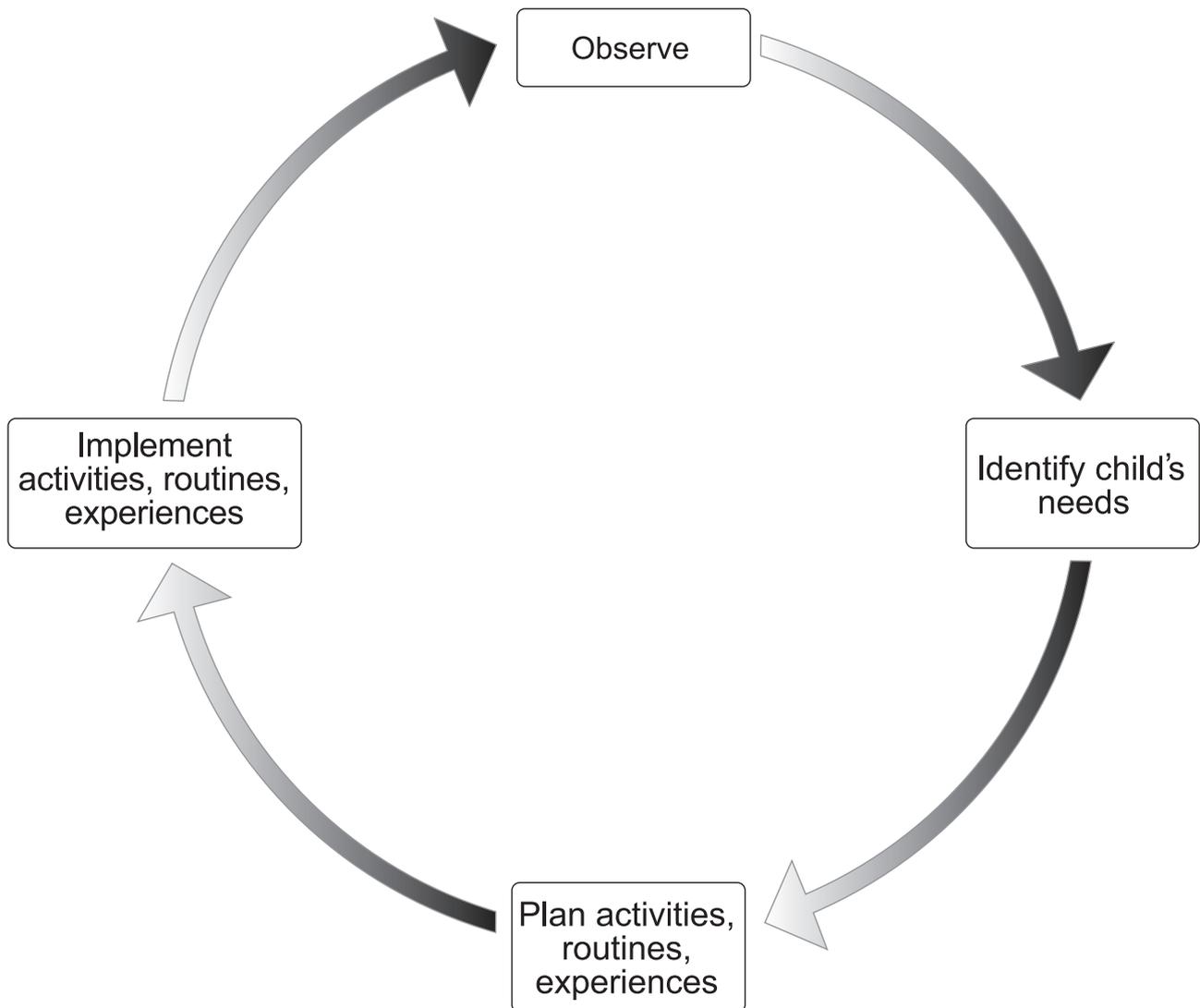
The National Curriculum, taught to all pupils, is made up of units, known as Key Stages. Years 1 and 2 of primary school are Key Stage 1, and Years 3–6 make up Key Stage 2. The compulsory National Curriculum subjects are the same for both of these Key Stages:

- English
- mathematics
- science
- design and technology
- information and communication technology (ICT)
- history
- geography
- art and design
- music
- physical education

Schools also have to teach religious education, and they are advised to teach personal, social and health education and citizenship.

Source: *The National Curriculum*

The planning cycle



Adapting sessions 4a, 4b and 5 for health and social care

Below you will find some suggested adaptations for activities included in the session plans.

These sessions require some adaptation for learners studying health and social care.

This is however an ideal opportunity to adapt the resources to develop an understanding of how observation skills are integral to the care planning process.

You may decide to change the emphasis of these sessions to include the caring process – assess, plan, implement, record and evaluate – and how objective observation skills are central to this process.

Below are some ideas as to how to do this.

If you have decided to focus on the care planning process you could follow the suggestions below.

Step 1 – Assessment

What you do

The aim is to identify significant needs observed and begin to make recommendations for care planning.

Group

- Introduce the learners to the five care planning stages and discuss:
 - assessment;
 - planning;
 - implementation;
 - recording;
 - evaluating.

- Learners should look at their previous completed case study exercises in their pairs and identify significant needs, and what information gathering methods from the previous session they could use to develop a better understanding.
- The groups should be mixed up, so that everybody has the opportunity to look at new case studies. Learners should then discuss and complete the previous activity with a new case study.
- Mix the groups again to identify more needs.
- Circulate around the groups to check understanding and extend learning through individual questioning.

Step 2 – Planning

Theorists, pioneers and experts

You may find that many of the theorists that have been provided with the resources are useful for your learners. You may also feel that you should supplement this with other theorists such as Wolf Wolfensberger, (normalisation/social role valorisation), Roper, Logan and Tierney (activities of living), Irving Goffman (institutionalisation), Carl Rogers (self-concept), Abraham Maslow (hierarchy of needs) amongst others.

What you do

Group

- Explain the importance of carefully considering the views of theorists to help understand the needs and requirements of clients/service users.
- You may wish to lead a discussion considering all of the different theories/opinions and how they relate to each other.
- Encourage learners to be constructively critical, explaining that, as their knowledge and experience grows, so will their confidence and ability to effectively compare and contrast different perspectives effectively.
- Check understanding and provide guidance on work to be done as personal research in the learner's own time.

Step 3 – Implementation

Activity

What you do

The aim is to use the identified assessment of need to begin to support clients to meet needs by formulating a care plan.

Group

- Ask learners to think back to 'aspects of self' or 'activities of living' identified in Session 1.
- For each case study there should now be a collection of identified needs. Ask the learners to group these needs according to which 'aspects of self' or 'activities of living' they most closely relate.

- Learners should identify who should be involved in planning care (ensure the client is at the top of the list!).
- Learners should identify a way of meeting that need and write a description of:
 - a goal;
 - how that goal will be achieved.
- Ask the groups to combine and discuss their 'care plan'.
- Pairs should feed back to the large group and discuss the issues raised.

Steps 4 and Step 5 – Recording/evaluation

What you do

Group

- Review the work done previously concerning objectivity in record keeping.
- Link this to the process of review and evaluation (how subjective comments can negatively affect the effectiveness of the process).
- Identify how evaluation is a form of assessment and note that the process is a cyclical one.
- Identify who should be involved in the evaluation process (ensure the client is at the top of the list).
- Sum up by drawing learners attention to how all of the care planning process revolves around and relies upon objective observation.

Welcome to the observation booklet

REMEMBER

This booklet is not designed as a distance learning resource. The work of the learners should be discussed with the teacher or trainer and appropriate feedback should be provided.

This booklet is designed for you and your learners to use in one or all of the following ways:

- As part of a taught session.
- For learners to complete in their own time.
- As part of a taught session and as part of learners' private or independent study time.

The booklets are designed to have the covers colour-coded as follows:

- Booklet 1: red
- Booklet 2: orange
- Booklet 3: yellow
- Booklets 4a and 4b: green
- Booklet 5: blue
- Booklet 6: purple
- Booklets 7a, 7b and 7c: pink

Instructions

- Photocopy the cover on A4 paper of the correct colour.
- Photocopy the booklet pages on A4 paper in the order they are provided here.
- Collate the cover and the pages, staple them using a long arm stapler and fold in the middle to produce your A5 booklet.

