**Childhood developmental milestones**

Kirby, A. (2012) 'Childhood developmental milestones'. Newport: Dyscovery Centre, University of Wales.

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| **Age****Years** | **Language & Reading Development** | **Physical & Motor Development** | **Social & Emotional Development** | **Cognitive Development** | **Red flags** |
| **4** | * Uses correct grammar most of the time.
* Can recognise rhymes
* Can sit and listen to a story for 5 minutes
* Infantile substitutions in speech
* Understands number/space concepts- e.g. on/over/under
 | Gross motor* Dressing self unaided (except tying shoelaces)
* Uses whole body to kick ball forcibly
* Catches large ball between extended arms
* Jumps vertically with both feet leaving the floor
* Goes down stairs one foot per step

Fine motor* Can copy and draw a cross, horizontal and vertical line
* Can button and unbutton own clothing
* Can thread beads
* Can cut paper with scissors
 | * Can play with other children and taking turns
* Observing others in play
 | * Asks lots of questions
* Gives first and last name
* Can repeat three digits correctly – three times e.g. six-eight-nine
* Counts up to 20
* Can watch a TV programme or DVD for 10 minutes
 | * No pointing
* Little or no speech
* Hard for others to understand speech
* Difficulty running/climbing
* Dribbling
* Difficulty with nursery rhymes
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| **5** | * Engages appropriately in conversations
* Use “would” or “could” appropriately
* Able to identify and name all uppercase and lowercase letters
* Use sentences containing at least 7 or 8 words
* Use past tense more consistently
* Describes objects.
* Speech fluent with few infantile substitutions
 | Gross motor* Riding a bicycle with training wheels
* Can walk along a narrow line heel to toe
* Climbs play equipment
* Able to jump to a height of about 30cm
* Can go up and down stairs alternating feet
* Show improvements in running and jumping
* Can catch a large ball with their hands
* Can attend to toilet needs without much help

Fine motor* Cutting across a page with scissors
* Copies their own name
* Colour within the lines
* Can hold a pen or pencil in tripod or equivalent grip
* Can cut and stick
* Can copy basic 2D shapes (e.g. square, triangle, diamond)
* Can use a knife to spread jam/butter etc
* Brushes teeth( but may need reminding)
 | * Choosing friends and co-operating in play
* Prefer playing in small groups
* Protect younger children
* Show respect for other people’s property
* Play well without the need for constant adult supervision
* Understand the nature of giving and receiving
* Can turn take
* Separates from mother easily.
* Gives appropriate eye contact- e.g. when being spoken to
* Sitting at the table for ten minutes
 | * Uses imagination to create stories
* Can match colours
* Can listen to a story for ten minutes
* Can name the 7 days in a week
* Has a vocabulary of over 2000 words.
* Can recognise numerals at least 1-5
* When asked is able to say their own name and address.
 | * Deterioration in motor function e.g. walking, running
* Not turn taking, playing with other children
* Not counting up to 10
* Not able to do rhyming songs
* Limited vocabulary
* Can’t sit still compared with other children of similar age.
* Aggressive behaviour
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| **6** | * Talks fluently
* Can understand more complex grammatical rules
* Can read and write to some degree
* Can learn how to do things through the use of language
* Can use language to work through scenarios and problems
 | Gross motor* Able to control speed when running and avoid collision
* Can jump down several steps
* Can kick a football up to 6m away
* Can throw a ball with accuracy
* Able to stand and balance on one foot for at least 3 seconds.
* Walk heel-to-toe in a straight line
* Dress and undress without help
* Brushes own hair well
* Ride a bike without stabilisers
* Catch and bounce a small ball 4-6 times

Fine motor* Tying shoelaces
* Using a knife and fork correctly
* Drawing a diamond
* Can draw a person
* cuts out shapes well using scissors
* Can open and close a zip
* Writes their first and last name
 | * Expresses awareness of others feelings
* Enjoys imaginative play with other children
* Can be selfish or overly competitive
* May still have tantrum behaviours
* Get upset when criticised by others
 | * Are inquisitive
* Have the ability to see other’s perspectives
* More emphasis on quantity rather than quality of work
* Enjoy starting tasks but these are not always completed
* Can distinguish reality from something that is made up
* Can give reasons
* Can follow directions
* Can do addition and subtraction of single digits
 | * Can’t copy shapes
* Spelling errors for one syllable words
* Difficulty turn taking
* Speech not fluent
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| **7** | * Can describe points of similarity between two objects
* Should understand opposite analogies easily (e.g. black-white, big-small, beginning-end)
* Should be able to read aloud to some extent
* Able to use an increasing number of words and understand more concepts
 | Gross motor* Is able to ride a bicycle without training wheels
* Can walk along a thin line
* Can do a somersault or forward roll
* Is able to catch skilfully using one hand
* Is able to throw skilfully using one hand
* Able to plan movements
* Has an awareness of direction and distance
* Shows improvements in hand-eye coordination

Fine motor* Is able to cut using a knife
* Is able to draw a diagonal line
 | * Can wait their turn during an activity
* Desires to be perfect and is self-critical
* Starts to look for independence
* Moods can fluctuate
* Have more of an awareness of their own emotions.
* Worries about not being liked by others
* Tends to complain more often
* Shows strong emotional reactions
* Worries more - may have low self-confidence
* Is a better loser and is less likely to place blame
 | * Is able to understand the rules of a game
* Has a reasonable attention span (20 minutes)
* Uses serious logical thinking - can be thoughtful and reflective
* Can tell the time (including quarter of an hour) with ease
* Knows the days, months and seasons.
* Able to solve more complex problems
* Is able to understand the difference between right and wrong
* Can understand at least 3 separate instructions within a command
* Can remember which hand is left and which is right
* Knows of and can explain the uses of a number of objects
* Has a short term memory repetition of at least 3 numbers
 | * Not reading aloud to others with fluency.
* Not able to do syllable breakdown
* Obsessional behaviour
* Limited interaction with other children
* Difficulty with motor tasks- gross or fine motor- not catching/ throwing accurately/ not copying shapes accurately
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| **8** | * Can converse at an almost adult level
* Can read with confidence and fluency
* Reading may be a major interest
* Can use complex sentences with ease
* Has established all sounds used in speech
* Have control over aspects of reading aloud such as rate, pitch and volume
* Can follow more complex commands
 | Gross motor* Can bathe themselves
* Can pour a drink without spilling
* Need to be physically active every day (approx. 30 mins)

Fine motor* Use a ruler
 | * Emotions change quickly
* Impatient - finds waiting for special events torturous
* Makes friends easily; develops close friends of same sex
* Favours group play, clubs and team sports - wants to feel part of a group
* More influenced by peer pressure
* Has a strong need for love and understanding - especially from mother
* Can be helpful, cheerful and pleasant as well as rude, bossy, and selfish
* May be quite sensitive and overly dramatic
* Can be obsessed with and motivated by money
* Can keep secrets
* Can articulate their feelings
* Usually enjoy school – don’t enjoy being absent from school
* Is possessive of their belongings
 | * Can sit and concentrate for 15-20 minutes
* Seeks to understand the reasons for things
* Begins to feel competent in skills and have preferences for some activities and subjects
* Thinking is organised and logical
* Begins to recognise concept of reversibility (4 + 2 = 6 and 6 – 2 = 4)
* Can do some simple division and multiplication
 | * Difficulties using scissor /rulers
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| **9** | * likes to talk and share ideas
 | Gross motor* Can help make a snack or drink for him or herself

Fine motor* Can use a computer keyboard
 | * Has a best friend
* May experience wide mood swings
* May be critical of self and others
* often dislikes the opposite sex intensely
* Puts great importance on fairness - for self and others
* Responsible - can be depended upon and trusted
 | * Writes stories
* May use physical complaints to avoid unpleasant tasks
 | * Finds writing difficult
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| **10** | * Reads to learn (rather than learning to read)
 | Gross motor* Interested in own strength - boys enjoy wrestling
* Has both skill and stamina for gross motor activities such as biking, skating, and team sports

Fine motor* Can use a can opener
* Capable of fine hand and finger movements
* Draws with great detail
* Uses tools, such as a hammer or small garden tools, fairly well
 | * Still certain that own beliefs are correct and are universally shared.
* Disposition is generally happy, sometimes silly
* Respectful and affectionate toward both parents
* Fears which were previously bothersome are now minimal
* May anger quickly but expression of anger
* differs according to the situation
* Friendships are quite important - friends are of the same sex
* Enjoys socialising in clubs and group activities
 | * Can buy something in a shop and handle money
* Has a strong desire to complete tasks may persist with an activity until exhausted
* Memorises and recites facts - but may not show deep understanding
* Keeps train of thought and will continue work even after interruptions
* Able to use a dictionary
* Critical thinking starting to emerge
* Developing a conscience but not yet consistently able to tell right from wrong
* Aware of time but needs help to plan time in a practical way
* Can do percentages
 | * Writing not fluent, and easy for others to read
* Frequent spelling errors

Difficulty remaining in seat in class* Aggression to others in unstructured settings
* Few friends
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| **11** | Good keyboard skills on computer | * Can make a snack
 | * Self care- wash brush teeth
* Help lay and clear the table
* Starts to realise that others may hold beliefs different from own
* Displays anger physically-fights, slams doors, kicks
* Away from home, behaviour is well mannered and quite helpful
* Friendships are still important but with more quarrels than before
* May have one “best friend”
 | * Can write a story competently beginning to be aware of right and wrong (versus good and bad)
* Can sits at the table for 30 minutes
* Can work independently doing homework
* Able to use logic in arguments and apply logic to specific, concrete situations
* Combines oral, visual, and written material in school reports
* Shows improvements in ability to make decisions-
* Can do simple word maths problems
* Can understand concept of fractions- whole/half/quarter
* Can start to combine two shapes to make a new shape
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