

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Child's name: _____

Date of birth: _____



Enter the date in the corresponding box when you have filled out the more detailed charts in the Journal and have ticked 'Achieved' for nearly all the items in a Step. Children are likely to be achieving new things in different Steps at any one time, so check backwards and forwards as well.

Child's name:

Date of birth:

Developmental profile

Area of development	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
Personal, social and emotional development							
Communication, language and literacy							
Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy							
Knowledge and understanding of the world							
Physical development							
Creative development							

Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 1



Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 1

Personal, social and emotional development

Close, affectionate relationships with parents and other members of the family are just as important for babies as their basic need for warmth, food and physical care. Feeling emotionally secure is crucial for development. Responding sensitively to your child helps them feel secure and learn to manage and regulate their own emotional state. These 'self-regulation' skills are important, because they help children to calm themselves or settle themselves to sleep.

Cuddling, stroking and massage, are all important ways of comforting, soothing, reassuring and showing love. A few babies are very sensitive to touch, so you need to watch for your baby's reactions and use touch in a way that's pleasing to both of you. Touch is an important way of communicating, and touch games like 'pat-a-cake' can be a good way of playing with babies. Holding your baby in different positions, while you support their head and neck, can also be a fun way of giving them an early experience of using their muscles.

Communication, language and literacy

Babies communicate a lot – they just do it in their own way. They start to use different sorts of cries to tell you whether they're hungry, tired or uncomfortable and are likely to be especially interested in your face and your voice. Sometimes they'll even copy your facial expressions and mouth shapes. It's important to talk with your baby right from the start of life, because they like to watch your face and listen to you. Babies pay particular attention to 'baby-talk', when you talk in short simple sentences, using a lively tone of voice and lots of facial expression and gesture. Repeat things, allow enough time and space for your baby to join in, and talk to your baby about what they're doing and might be thinking – it helps the two of you to develop your relationship and encourages your baby to communicate. This very early communication is the basis from which abilities like reading and writing develop later.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

It may seem as if all that newborn babies do is take food, sleep and cry, but they're learning and developing skills from the moment they're born, and beginning to think about what's going on around them and how what they do has an effect. Even very young babies have a beginning understanding of simple differences in the world, like the difference between one thing and two things.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 1 continued

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Learning about predictable events helps babies feel secure. Established and regular sleeping, feeding and bathing routines help them predict what's going to happen next. To avoid difficulties with settling and sleeping later on, it can be helpful to lay babies down when they are awake at least once a day.

Physical development

Children learn through all their senses. It's good to use touch, vision, hearing, smell and taste in your play together so you can see how your baby responds to different forms of stimulation – for example, look for signs that your baby is hearing different sounds. Babies respond to sound in different ways and it's fun to look out for this – some get more active, wave their arms about or widen their eyes, while others quieten down and stop what they're doing.

Creative development

Quite early on, babies begin to control the movements of their arms and legs, and you can help them to gain this control by playing games that involve these movements. They often enjoy music and rhythmic motion as well. In these early months, creativity is about learning that head, arms and legs, hands and feet can be moved in different ways.

Moving on

Babies don't necessarily master all the things in Step 1 before they start doing things in Step 2. Every child is different and some make progress in one area much more quickly than in others. This applies to all the Steps in this Journal. However, if you have questions you want to ask about this, there's space for you to note it down – for example, if you feel your child is consistently lagging behind in one area. You can then raise it the next time you meet with someone who can discuss it with you.

Every child is an individual, with their own unique set of needs. If illness or other setbacks slow progress down and your baby seems to forget things they've already learned, it doesn't mean that you're not doing enough – you can help them to make progress once these other issues have been resolved.


Use this Journal to record the things that your child does that you'd like to remember and celebrate as time goes by. There are blank pages and spaces to write things down and to add photographs, if that's what you'd like to do. The material is for you to use in whatever way you find most helpful.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Enjoys the company of others				
Copies facial expressions and mouth shapes – for example, sticking out tongue, opening mouth and widening eyes				
Is comforted by touch and people's faces				
Holds eye contact briefly (5 seconds or more)				
Smiles at people				

Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Uses vocalisations – for example, gurgling and cooing to communicate when happy				
Turns eyes and or head towards you when you speak				
Cries to express needs – for example, when hungry, or in discomfort				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows interest in new experiences – for example, when you show a new toy				
Moves hanging rattle or soft toy while moving arms or legs				
Closes hand firmly around finger pressed in palm				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
When lying on back or propped up, moves eyes to follow face or toy moving slowly from side to side, close to face				
Turns eyes and or head towards new sounds				
Is startled by sudden noise				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Turns head to the side when placed on tummy				
Opens mouth to feed when corner of mouth is touched				
Sucking is strong and rhythmic with coordinated swallowing				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Makes different sounds				
Makes movements with arms and legs, which gradually become more controlled				
Looks steadily at things for short periods (5 seconds or more)				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 1

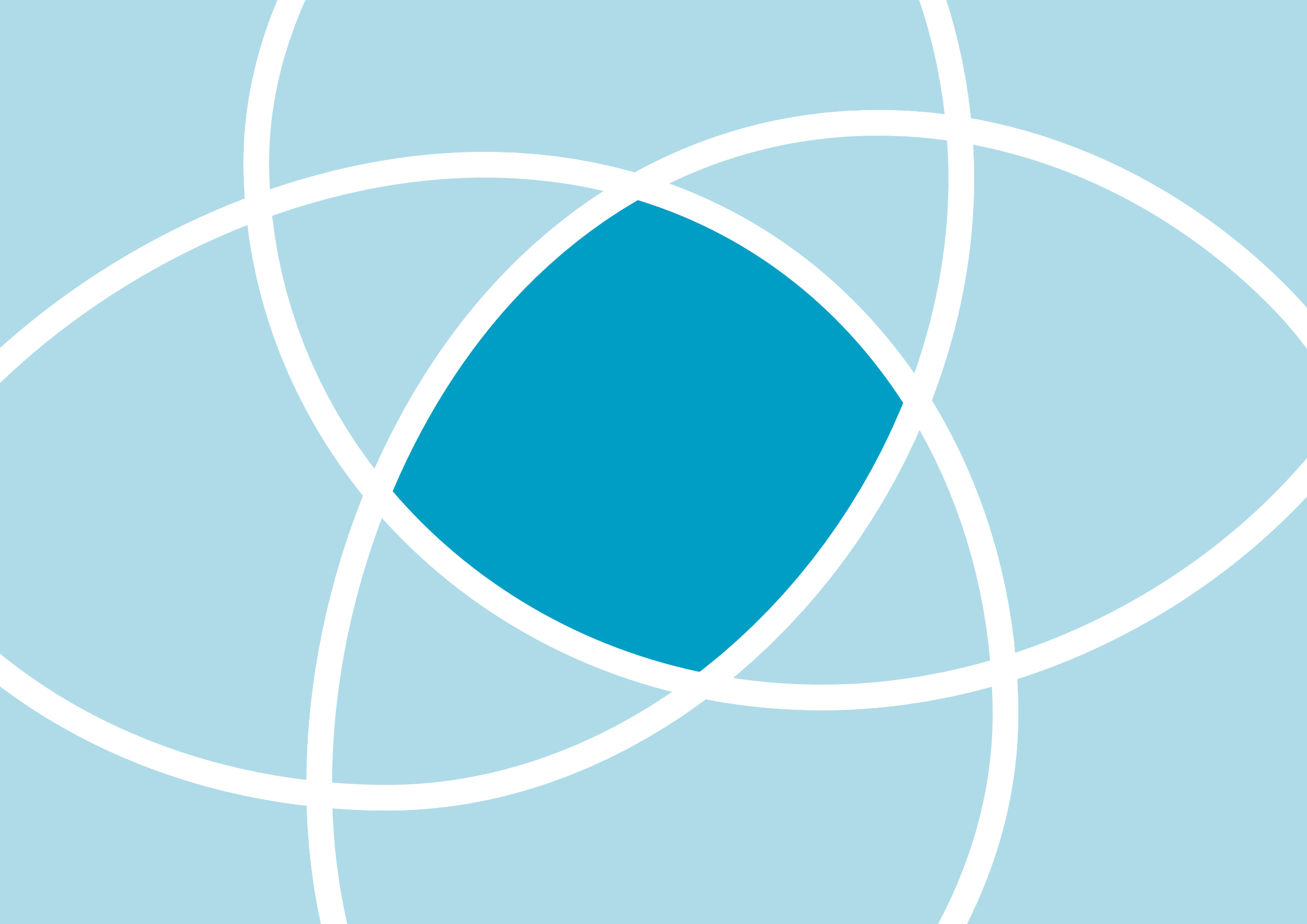
Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 2





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 2

Personal, social and emotional development

Babies in Step 2 begin to express a wider range of emotions. They find ways to show you they're happy or sad, hungry or tired, excited or bored. You can help by responding to all the emotional signals they give – positive and negative. This helps them learn to trust you as a source of affection, comfort and security and to soothe themselves. Some babies settle to sleep more easily at this stage, but many still have unsettled sleeping patterns and wake up in the night. If you would like some help with this, ask someone – for example, your Health Visitor, or GP.

Communication and language

Babies become able to 'talk' in a number of different ways. They're beginning to control their voice and use different sounds to express different things. They start to blow raspberries, to squeal, squeak and grunt, and to chuckle and laugh. They're often especially interested in watching faces. You can encourage them by imitating and responding to what they do. Most babies love to join in simple 'conversations' – you can help by leaving pauses for your baby to use when they reply to you. Learning about taking turns and responding to what you say is important for later communication. Sometimes babies at this stage start to 'coo' when you're playing and 'talking' together. The most helpful thing that you can do is to talk to your baby about everything you're doing together. Using familiar words for regular routines helps them to understand and anticipate events in their world.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

As well as reacting to the different sounds you make, babies are also learning about other sounds and noises. They start to show an interest in familiar sounds in the home and show they're beginning to understand what they mean – for example, they may learn that running water sometimes means a bath is about to happen, and so they may get excited when they hear this sound.

Making these sorts of connections forms the basis of reasoning about the world. Giving children plenty of opportunities for different experiences is important for this early learning about the world.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 2 continued

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Another way that babies in Step 2 explore the world is by holding objects to their mouths. They start to suck their thumbs or fingers and they're likely to start looking around at their surroundings more. You can make what they look at more interesting by using brightly coloured pictures, mobiles and other things to catch their attention.

Continue developing regular feeding and sleeping times to give your baby a sense of security and to help them anticipate what's likely to happen next. Establishing calm routines in the early days, and helping babies to settle themselves to sleep so that they can enjoy their cots or sleeping places, can prevent difficulties later.

Physical development

Babies gradually learn to have better control over their bodies. One of the first things they can control is their neck muscles, so they begin to hold their head steady and turn it to follow sights and sounds. They can also use their hands and arms more purposefully and will start to reach for objects and grasp them. You can help and encourage development by playing with them using toys, like rattles, that fit their grasp and make interesting sounds when shaken.

Creative development

Toys that light up, move or vibrate are likely to be favourites at this stage and they can help babies begin to learn about cause and effect ("When I touch this, it makes a noise"). Remember that when playing with your baby it's important to match your pace to theirs – leave them plenty of time to take their turn. You can help babies strengthen their muscles by holding them while they exercise their arms and legs, or by playing with them on a play-mat so that they can begin to learn how to roll and turn their body.

Moving on

Babies don't necessarily master all the things in Step 2 before they start doing things in Step 3. The Journal simply describes typical patterns of development as new behaviours and skills are learnt.

Remember that all children are individuals and follow their own patterns.


One way to make the material more personal is to add photos and to write down things that have happened or that your child has done that are not covered in the tables. There is space to do this at the end of each Step, on the page called [Special events and achievements](#).

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Gains physical and emotional comfort from 'snuggling in'				
Makes sounds and movements to initiate social interaction				
Recognises and is most responsive to main carer's voice; face brightens, activity increases when familiar carer appears				
Calms from being upset when held, rocked, spoken or sung to with soothing voice				
Maintains eye contact during interactions with a familiar person				
Smiles and makes sounds in response to eye contact				
Responds when talked to – for example, moves arms and legs, changes facial expression, moves body and makes mouth movements				

Communication, language and literacy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Reacts by smiling, looking and moving when you interact				
Makes sounds in response when you talk				
Turns quickly to your voice across the room				
Shows excitement at sound of approaching voices or footsteps				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Can shift visual attention by looking from one object to another and back again				
Uses movement and senses to focus on, reach for and grasp objects				
Looks around a room with interest; visually scans environment for new and interesting objects and events				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows interest in moving pictures and sound – for example, on television				
Shows interest in small objects or the detail of a toy – for example, will gaze at small beads in a rattle				
Reacts with abrupt behaviour change when a face or object disappears suddenly from view				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Able to control head when supported in an upright position; head does not flop forwards or backwards				
When lying on tummy, lifts head up and uses forearms to support				
Closes hand firmly around objects placed in palm				
Puts hands on bottle/breast when feeding				
Sleeps more at night than during the day				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Responds to a range of familiar sounds – for example, music				
Smiles with pleasure at recognisable playthings				
Enjoys playing with hands, fingers, feet and toes				
Explores hands and fingers – for example, watches them, presses hands together, clasps and unclasps hands				
Repeats actions that have an effect – for example, kicking or batting a mobile to create movement including actions to make a sound again, for example, shaking a rattle				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 2

These are the questions we want to ask

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Developmental journal

Step 3





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 3

Personal, social and emotional development

Children begin to show more signs of picking up on other people's behaviour. They respond more clearly to facial expressions and how you talk, and respond more to other people's emotions. Your child may begin to indicate they recognise you by 'greeting' you and by behaving differently when they're with strangers. Children become more active about trying to get your attention and in general they explore the world more.

Children also begin to show more signs of wanting things and express their needs more purposefully. Responding to this and rewarding them is important – it encourages your child to communicate with you and with other people. Often, children in this Step begin to use sounds or gestures more consistently to tell you what they want. Responding encourages them to do this more.

Communication, language and literacy

Children in Step 3 become more active and begin to explore their world. They're more confident about reaching out and grasping things and take more interest in their surroundings. They also begin to recognise objects and people, and to understand how things go together. For example, they may begin to associate a spoon with feeding. Talking with your child about the things they're showing an interest in helps them to learn that things have names. This builds the foundations for language. Even though they're not yet speaking, children are learning a lot about language and communication. It's important to help them by repeating things, talking in simple, clear ways and talking expressively.

Children have already learnt a lot about the sounds of language by listening to people talking. As they move through Step 3, they begin to use more speech-like sounds themselves. Some children find it hard to remember things from sound alone, so you could start using simple picture books and name the objects, people or animals in the pictures.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

It's easy for children to get frustrated when their wish to do things is out of step with what they are able to do. You can help by matching the things around them to their ability level, and reassuring them and giving them something easier to do if they get frustrated. Children in this Step learn a lot when you help them to do things they can't easily do by themselves, but can manage with a little support from you. As well as giving them experience of success, this helps them to prepare for new and different challenges in the future. You may also need to give your child physical support – if they're struggling to stay sitting upright, they won't be able to concentrate on anything else.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 3 continued

Knowledge and understanding of the world

One of the important things you can do now is to share experiences with your child. Point to things, talk about what they're doing and talk while you play with a toy together – this all helps the two of you focus attention on the same things. Once your child can follow your pointing or look where you're looking, encourage this. Some parents find that using gestures and signs is a good way of communicating. Use whatever works well to build two-way conversation with your child – for example, if they like to imitate you, encourage this.

Physical development

Children at this point in development are gaining more control over their hands, arms, legs and feet. They're able to hold objects and turn them round while they look at them. They're more precise when they reach for things and grasp them and may be able to start putting pieces of food in their mouth.

Creative development

Although children are making sense of the world about them right from the moment they are born, it's more obvious now that they're noticing things and thinking about them. You may see your baby staring intently at something interesting, like a television programme or an unfamiliar person. You can help by talking about what they're looking at.

It's exciting when children start to babble, linking speech sounds together and saying things like 'ba-ba'. Encourage your child by copying their babble sounds back and then introducing new ones for them to try – for example, copy your baby's 'ba-ba' and then try 'da-da'.

Moving on

You may like to add some notes about how your child is developing as a person, about their emerging personality, to the material recorded in tables. It can be interesting later on to look back at how you saw your child when they were younger.


And don't forget you can make the whole Journal more personal by recording anything special that has been happening in your child's life in the [Special events and achievements](#) section.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows pleasure at being tickled and other physical games				
Laughs and gurgles				
Shows emotional responses to other people's emotions – for example, smiles when smiled at and becomes distressed if hears another child crying				
Likes cuddles and being held; calms, snuggles in, smiles, gazes at carer's face or strokes carer's skin				
Shows pleasure at return of familiar carer				
Shows distress if physically restrained – for example, cries when held still for injection or medication				

Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Looks intently at person talking				
Vocalises back when talked to (making own sounds) especially to familiar adult and when a smiling face is used				
Smiles and becomes animated in response to a familiar person, sometimes making sounds				
Stops responding if speaker turns away				
Enjoys listening to nursery rhymes				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Persistently and deliberately reaches out for toys				
Plays with and explores objects by touching them, looking at them, bringing them to the mouth and listening to the sounds they make				
Plays with objects by banging and shaking				
Notices changes in groupings of objects, images and sounds				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows anticipation and enjoyment of familiar caring routines and simple games – for example, sucks or licks lips in response to sounds of preparation for feeding or gets excited upon seeing spoon or a familiar toy				
Lifts arms in anticipation of being picked up				
Anticipates food routines with interest				
Anticipates repeated sounds, sights and actions				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Rolls over from front to back, from back to front				
When lying on back, lifts legs into vertical position and grasps feet				
Can lift head and chest and support self with straight arms and flat hands when lying on tummy				
Explores objects with mouth, often picking up an object and holding it to the mouth				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Imitates adults – for example, tries to move hands or object after watching adult				
Arm and leg movements become smoother and more continuous, no longer so sudden and jerky				
Moves rhythmically to music				
Feels and plays with toys and everyday objects of different textures – for example, smooth, rough, soft, furry and sticky				
Makes sounds for pleasure – for example, vocalises with tuneful voice for minutes at a time to self when lying in cot or at play				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 3

These are the questions we want to ask

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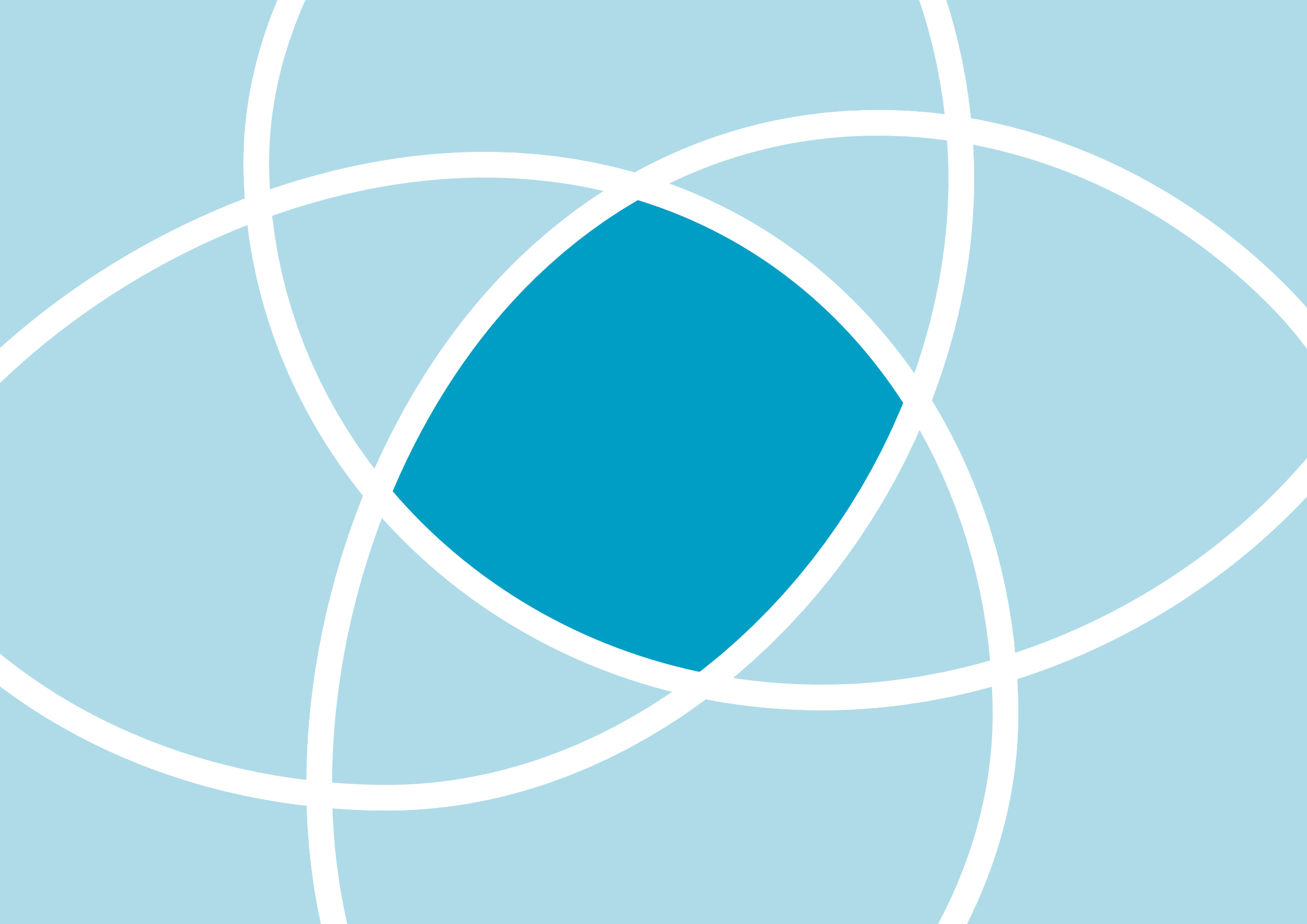
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Developmental journal

Step 4





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 4

Personal, social and emotional development

Children start joining in more with games that you play together – for example, bouncing on your knees to favourite songs or rhymes. Games like these are good, because they help children learn about routines and to anticipate what might happen next. A key part of building a secure relationship is good emotional communication. Your child needs to learn that you can be relied on for comfort, for sympathy and general understanding of their ups and downs. Being sensitive and responsive to your child's needs and how they express them is important.

Communication, language, and literacy

Children are keener to communicate and they're on the way to learning to talk. As well as using more recognisable speech sounds, they point, nod and shake their heads. They make more effort to communicate and if they're not understood straight away, they repeat what they 'say' to get their message across. For some children, this is a frustrating time. You can help by saying what you think your child is trying to say. Using short, simple sentences shows children how thoughts can be put into words.

Children begin to combine sounds, too – they string sounds together and make short 'sentences' of sounds or longer strings of babble that begin to sound more like speech. Your child may start to use particular sounds to mean particular things – for example, when they want a drink. These 'sounds for things' are the first steps towards words and are a great achievement.

Your child is also likely to start copying sounds and movements that you make and this can be the basis of fun games together. You'll find they enjoy watching your face and can copy lip movements. Remember that any games using speech sounds help children to hear all the sounds in words and this in turn helps them to learn to talk, and lays foundations for reading and writing.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

One of the reasons why children want to communicate more is that their thinking and understanding have developed. You can help by introducing toys and activities that bring more variety and new challenges, remembering that young children need things that stretch them a bit, but not too much. Giving plenty of success and praise encourages children to develop their abilities and to be adventurous in tackling new things. In Step 4, children often benefit from lots of repetition – what seems boring to us is new learning for them, and repetition helps to consolidate learning. Children learn a surprising amount through observation as well, so give your child plenty of opportunity to watch you and other people going about your everyday lives. You may also notice that your child's memory is improving and that they're recognising people and things for the first time.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 4 continued

Knowledge and understanding of the world

As well as staying awake for longer periods, children become able to sustain attention on activities for longer. They're able to concentrate on things and are more observant of the people and events around them. Your child will probably start to look at you to see how you react to things like sudden noises, or the things that they do, like banging a toy on a table. As well as responding clearly, it's good to talk about the things that you're both attending to. This helps your child develop an awareness of other people's thoughts and feelings, as well as making connections between events, words and consequences.

Because of their new interest in you and what you think, this is an important time to show your child how pleased you are whenever they learn something new.

Physical development

Around about this time, children can get around more efficiently on the floor by crawling and they start to pull themselves up to stand. As your child becomes more mobile, making your home safe and 'child-friendly' is a priority. You can help them develop by holding them up and supporting them, while they practise moving. Children also become more able to pick up objects and do new things with them. It's a good time to introduce toys with new features that offer new possibilities and challenges.

Creative development

Children are learning a lot about the wider world and about the things in it. They're beginning to understand that objects exist even when they can't be seen. Before, it was as if 'out of sight' was 'out of mind', but now children start to find objects that are hidden, so you can play peek-a-boo and hiding games, which are especially interesting to children at this stage of development.

This is a good time to introduce pretend games, like 'feeding teddy' – even if to begin with, children can't do the actions for themselves. As they get better at doing things, children get especially interested in the results of their own actions – for example, they may have fun putting one thing on another and then pushing it over. Choosing appropriate toys, and joining in yourself, helps children get the most out of this sort of creative game.

Moving on


Children often make progress in one area faster than they do in others, so keep looking back at earlier Steps and forward to some of the things described in Step 5, to see how your child is progressing.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows attachment to special people				
Is wary of strangers				
Smiles at image of self in mirror; shows a developing understanding and awareness of themselves				
Plays an active role in conversation-like exchanges				
Makes own sounds when talked to, especially when a smiling face is used by parent				
Adapts to caregiving routines – for example, complies with nappy-changing				
Moves arms and legs, changes facial expression and laughs in anticipation of being lifted				

Communication, language and literacy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Begins to copy the 'ups and downs' of speech (intonation) and the sounds of voices				
Begins to babble by repeating a series of the same sounds (reduplicated babble) – for example, 'ba-ba-ba', 'ma-ma-ma'				
Begins to develop and use some consonant sounds – for example, 'g', 'm', 'p', 'd'				
Begins to develop and use vowel sounds – for example, 'aa'				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Uses voice or gesture to attract attention				
Uses voice or gesture to refuse – for example, by pushing object away, shaking head				
Handles book, turning several pages				
Can release toy from grasp if attention distracted				

Knowledge and understanding of the world

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Reacts to familiar sounds or sights by changes in behaviour – for example, extends arms and legs, smiles, searches with eyes when hears the vacuum cleaner, running bath, footsteps				
Shows interest in toys and other things that incorporate technology				
Plays with objects, by banging, shaking, turning them around in their hands				
Watches toy being hidden and tries to find it				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Sits unsupported on the floor				
When sitting, can lean forward to pick up small toys				
Passes toys from one hand to the other				
Pulls to standing, holding on to furniture or person for support				
Can move from a sitting position to hands and knees (crawl position)				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Discovers mark-making, noticing – for example, that trailing a finger through spilt juice changes it				
Likes listening to music, rattles and other sound-making toys				
Shows interest in moving pictures and sound – for example, on a television				
Enjoys action rhymes and games				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 4

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Developmental journal

Step 5





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 5

Personal, social and emotional development

Your child's attachment to you is likely to move forward. You'll begin to notice that they behave differently towards strangers and may even show anxiety when strangers appear or when you have to leave them for a while. Giving your child comfort and support helps them to cope with these new feelings. It also helps them to learn that you can be relied on to return, even if you're out of sight for a while. Don't let them get too distressed if you have to leave them; this can make it more difficult for them to become more independent later on.

Communication, language and literacy

Children in Step 5 start to use language for all sorts of purposes. They begin to use their own 'sounds/words' for things and clearly understand simple things that you say to them. They can point to pictures of objects when you say their names, so this is a good time to introduce simple picture books, if you haven't already done so. Your child will continue to learn a lot from hearing you and other people talking about what they're experiencing – about what they're seeing, hearing, feeling and doing.

As well as starting to use a few recognisable words, children use gestures and particular sounds to communicate. Although helping and encouraging them to learn to talk is important, it's communication – getting the message across – that's the key thing. Use whatever works best for you and your child – words, signs or gestures – and continue to praise their efforts and successes. Continue using listening and speech sound games for words and sounds – they really help.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Your child will probably also start to be more expressive, using different tones of voice to call you and to ask, tell or refuse. When your child starts to say 'no', daily life gets more difficult, but it's also a positive sign that they're ready to take some control over their life. Children in this Step can sometimes be 'difficult', and get frustrated by things that they want to do but can't or shouldn't do. Having interesting toys and activities available to use as distractions can help to overcome some of these difficulties.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 5 continued

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children in this Step think about more than what's in front of them. They're aware when something is missing or when they want something that's not in sight. Again, this is where communication comes in. Responding to what your child is trying to express – for example, when they want something – shows them how useful it is to communicate.

Physical development

Children become much more mobile. You can help your child strengthen their muscles and develop their physical skills by playing active games with them. It's important to make their play spaces safe and to provide a stimulating environment that encourages them to explore.

Creative development

Picture books are enjoyed by most children in Step 5, especially when you look at them together. Books can help your child learn the names for categories of things as well as objects and people, because they can now recognise different groups of things like cars, cats and cushions. Looking at books with children is a great way for them to learn, as they remember things that they see and hear more easily than things that they just hear.

Moving on


Children don't always make progress at the same speed. Sometimes they need to 'consolidate' their learning and it may seem as if they're not moving forward at all. This is only a worry if it goes on for a long time, and it doesn't seem as if they are improving the skills that they already have. Don't forget that illness, or big changes in family life can also lead to 'plateaus' (flat spots) in development.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Likes to be close to adult and may cry and try to follow (by looking, reaching or crawling) when familiar adult leaves room				
Seeks to gain attention in a variety of ways, drawing others into social interaction				
Builds relationships with special people – for example, by showing affection or holding your attention by vocalising				
Shows stranger anxiety				
Points to draw other people's attention to things of interest				
Shows interest in the activities of others and responds differently to children and adults – for example, may be more interested in watching children than adults or may pay more attention when children talk to them				


Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Responds to own name by turning or looking up at speaker when name is called				
Recognises some family names such as Mummy, Daddy, names of siblings or family pets and will turn to look when the name is said Make a list				
Follows with gaze when an adult directs attention to an object by looking and pointing – for example, when an adult points to a dog and says “Look at the dog” and your child looks at the dog				
Begins to point to objects and people, using index finger				



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Asks for favourite games using words or gestures – for example, playing peek-a-boo, saying “Boo” or hiding face in hands Make a list				
Imitates the voices of others, especially the vowels and ‘ups and downs’ of speech (intonation)				
Babbles, using varied consonants and vowels – for example, ‘baga’, ‘maba’				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Enjoys finding their nose, eyes or tummy as part of naming games				
Anticipates what will happen next – for example, expects to be fed if placed in high chair and may become distressed if the expected routine doesn't happen				
Struggles to get objects that are out of reach and pulls a mat towards them to make a toy or object come closer				
Stays absorbed in activities and can ignore distractions for at least 30 seconds				
Removes pieces from inset puzzle and large pegs from pegboard				

Knowledge and understanding of the world



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows excitement during turn-taking games such as peek-a-boo – for example, claps hands as their turn gets closer				
Enjoys picture books and simple stories				
Looks towards the floor when object is dropped by other people and looks for objects they drop themselves				
Begins to understand cause and effect and will repeat actions in order to repeat the effects				
Understands the meaning of some sounds – for example, hears a telephone ring and looks at the telephone				

Physical development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Crawls, bottom shuffles or rolls continuously to move around				
Throws toys or objects deliberately				
Opens mouth for spoon				
Holds own bottle or sipper cup				
Enjoys splashing water when being washed				
Actively cooperates with nappy changing (lies still, helps hold legs up)				
Starts to communicate urination, bowel movement				
Picks up small objects between thumb and fingers				
Stretches out with one hand to grasp toy if offered				

Creative development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Enjoys making noises or movements spontaneously				
Enjoys making marks in damp sand, paste or paint				
Holds pen or crayon using the whole hand and dots, or makes line on paper				
Expresses emotion through the movement of fingers, hands, arms and body				
Imitates and improvises actions they have observed – for example, clapping or waving				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 5

These are the questions we want to ask

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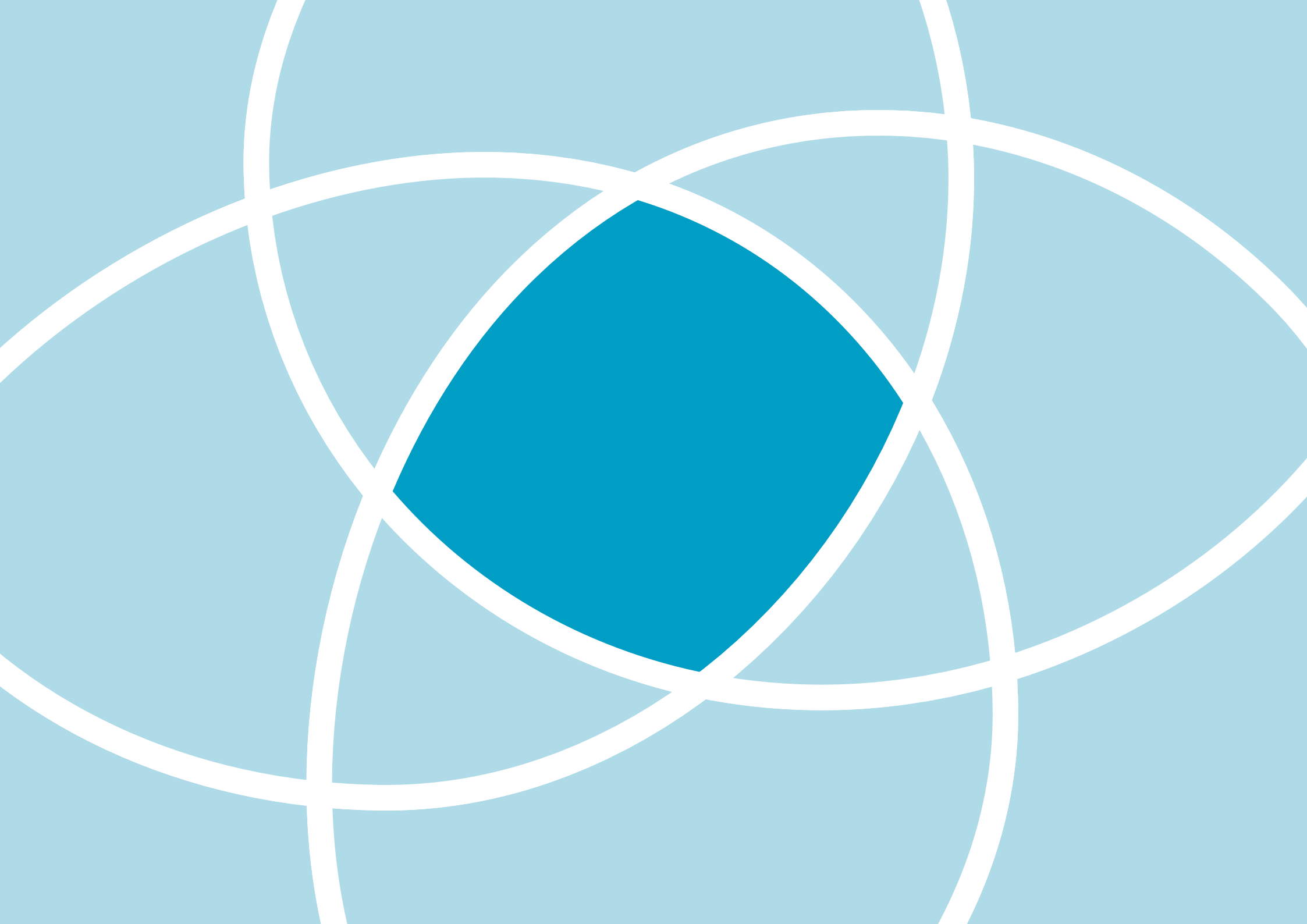
Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 6





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 6

Personal, social and emotional development

Children become more sociable towards other children, begin to show interest in what they're doing and try to join in. There's a lot of new learning involved here – how to be gentle with other people, how to take turns and so on. You'll probably need to keep a close eye on your child during first encounters, to help them learn the rules of playing together. You may also need to help them learn to communicate with their playmates – for example, by showing them how to ask for things, rather than grabbing them.

Many children develop a strong attachment to a particular soft toy or blanket and cuddle it when then they feel tired or unhappy. This is their way of learning to comfort themselves, without relying on you to do it. Don't take such signs as rejection – your child will still need you to be there for them when they get really upset!

Your child's growing independence may also mean they become more wilful. They may 'play up' at mealtimes and sleeping difficulties can become a real issue. Regular routines can help your child continue to learn that life is predictable and that there are particular times when particular things happen. It's important to set clear boundaries and stick to them to help children learn to behave in ways that are socially acceptable.

Children begin to feed themselves with a spoon (a messy business, but very important for their self-confidence). It's time to introduce your child to other practical skills like brushing teeth, washing and dressing, as well.

Communication, language and literacy

Plenty of talk about things that a child is interested in helps to build up their store of words. They're likely to be interested in copying your words, sometimes just to try out new sounds and are beginning to learn how words can be put together. Soon children begin to use these new skills to express more complicated ideas and wishes. Generally, children are better at understanding language than speaking it, so it will help if you try to match what you say to what your child can understand. In this Step, children still understand simple, short sentences best.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 6 continued

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Lots of new skills emerge as children make progress through Step 6. 'Reading' a book by turning the pages, building with blocks, putting things together and taking them apart all show your child's growing curiosity and expanding interests. You can help by providing new sets of toys from the kitchen cupboard and elsewhere – pots, pans, empty plastic tubs, wooden spoons. Children develop longer attention spans, but there are also likely to be times when they find it hard to maintain their interest. It's important not to push them when they're finding it hard to stay interested in something. Equally, it's important to encourage and praise them when they're doing well. Self-motivation is growing fast and you can help by making sure your child has plenty of experience of success.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Learning by watching other people is becoming more important and children begin to learn about language by listening to you talking with other people. Playing with another child who is at a similar level of development and ability can also be very helpful – as can television. Many children's TV programmes have good picture content to help children understand the language being used – they're good ways of hearing a lot of language being used. Reading picture books together, encouraging your child to point to pictures and playing picture-matching games also continue to be good ways to help children learn words.

Physical development

During this Step, many children begin to walk and talk. Being able to walk gives children many more opportunities to explore. Being able to talk gives them many more ways to say what they think and feel, and for you to help them use language to learn. It's important to arrange your house so that your child has plenty of opportunities to walk about and explore safely, so they can make the most of their new skills. Time outside to exercise is good, too, and helps children learn more about the world.

Creative development

Children are beginning to understand what it means to pretend. Children enjoy 'feeding dolly/teddy' together, and these sorts of games help them to learn more about caring for themselves and other people. Other sorts of imaginative play, like playing with toy farm animals or toy cars, are good ways of developing creativity.

Moving on


This is a time when children are especially eager for new experiences, and it's a good time to give them plenty of experience of the world outside as well as giving them plenty of things to do at home.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Clings to special person and hides face when feeling scared or overwhelmed				
Gets distressed and anxious if left somewhere without their familiar adult				
Looks to familiar adult to check if not sure about something – for example, looks at you to check your reaction if a stranger tries to pick them up				
Uses other person to help achieve a goal – for example, to get an object that's out of reach or activate a wind-up toy				
Uses familiar adult for 'emotional refuelling' when feeling tired, stressed or frustrated – for example, stops playing to have a cuddle or sits quietly snuggled in on your lap for a few minutes				
Uses comfort toy or object to calm self				


Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Responds to simple, familiar language in context – for example, runs to the door when an adult holds their keys and says “It’s time to go”				
Takes part in simple conversation with adult, focusing on the here and now or frequent events that are about to happen – for example, meals or bath time				
Uses approximately five words without prompting Make a list				



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Voice starts to have the tone and rhythm (patterns and stresses of familiar phrases) of the language spoken at home even though individual words may not be clear				
Uses 'symbolic' sounds, for example, 'brmm brmm' for toy car in play Make a list				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows an awareness of number names by enjoying action rhymes and songs that relate to their experience of numbers				
Laughs at 'odd' things – for example, putting shoe on head				
Experiments – for example, if a puzzle piece doesn't fit in one hole, tries it in another				
Links ideas in play in simple combinations – for example, puts doll in car then pushes car along				
Understands opening and closing – for example, a box with a hinged lid or flap				

Knowledge and understanding of the world




	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Knows there are different ways to play with different toys – for example, that a ball is for rolling or throwing, a car is for pushing and blocks are for posting				
Interested in things that go together – for example, cup and saucer or parts of a puzzle				
Realises one object can act as a container for another – for example, puts smaller objects inside bigger ones and removes them again				
Can imitate sounds or gestures that are not part of their repertoire – for example, watches an adult carefully and then imitates something they have not done before				
Recognises favourite toys, games and activities – for example, sees character in favourite book and brings same toy for you to play with				

Physical development




	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Pulls self up to standing against furniture and can lower self back down again				
Walks around furniture lifting one foot and stepping sideways (cruising)				
Walks with one or both hands held by adult				
Takes first few steps; feet wide apart, uneven steps, arms raised for balance				
Crawls upstairs				
Builds tower of two blocks				
Grasps finger foods and brings them to mouth				
Attempts to use spoon; can guide towards mouth but food often falls off				

Physical development continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Holds an object in each hand and brings them together in the middle – for example, holds two blocks and bangs them together				
Holds pen or crayon using a whole hand (palmar) grasp and scribbles with different strokes				
Co-operates with drying hands				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Moves whole body to sounds they enjoy – for example, music or a regular beat				
Responds to words and interactive rhymes – for example, joins in with 'Clap Hands'				
Anticipates actions, tickles and so on from sounds and tunes of songs and rhymes – for example, giggles at the end of 'Round and Round the Garden' waiting for the tickle to come				
Engages in simple pretend play with soft toys – for example, hugs and kisses teddy or pretends to be asleep (covers self with a blanket and closes eyes)				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 6

These are the questions we want to ask

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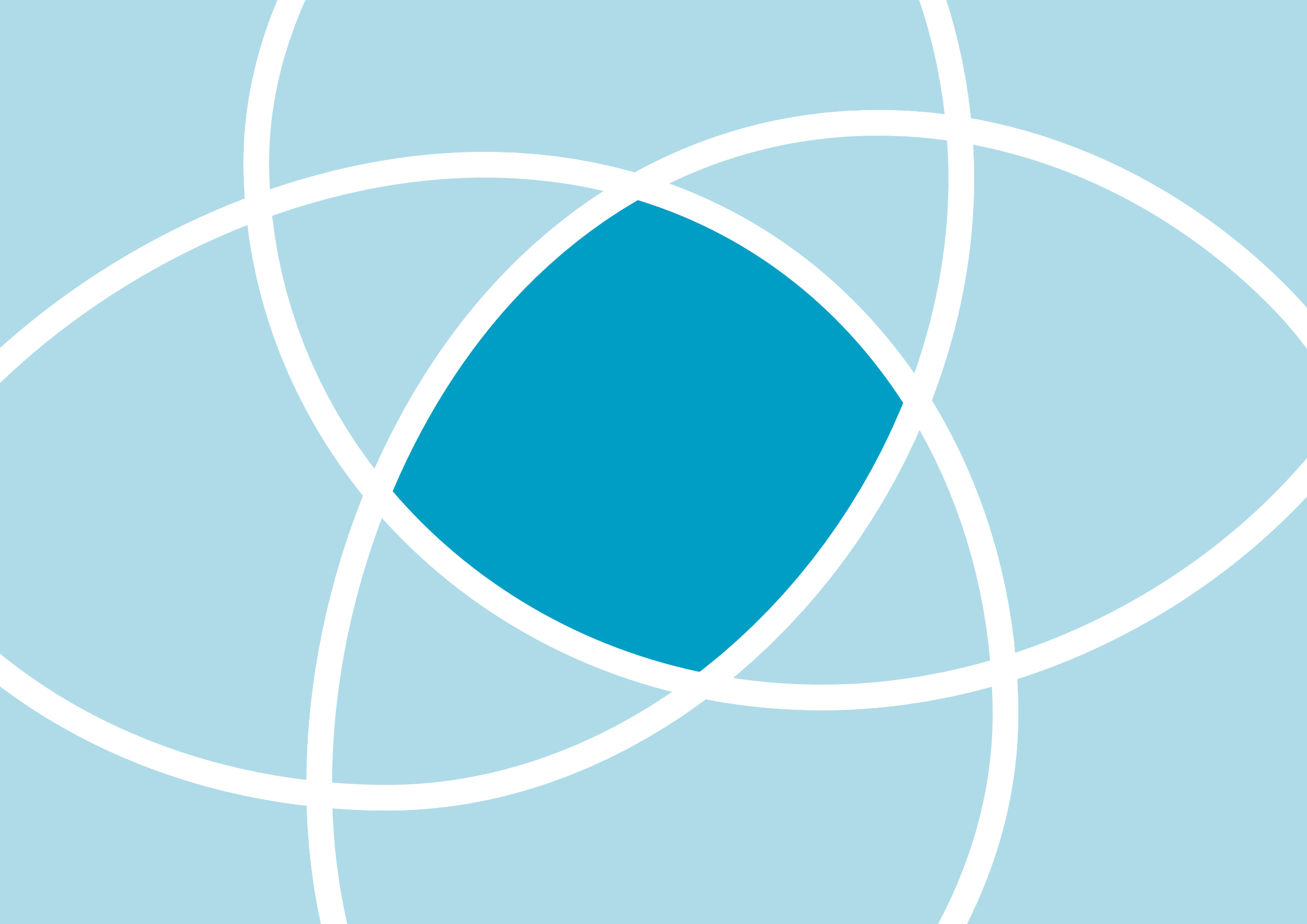
Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 7





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 7

Personal, social and emotional development

Children at this stage of development express their emotions and needs more clearly in words. It's important to respond, showing that you understand what they're thinking and feeling, as this helps children manage what are sometimes strong new feelings. You may find your child now understands if you ask when you're not sure what they're trying to say to you. Gestures and signs help.

Children are learning to play games with other people, so this is an important time for them to learn about consideration for other people. You can help by encouraging simple co-operative games that involve taking turns. Picture card games can be fun and help with learning the names for things as well. You can also encourage co-operation with other children by providing plenty of toys and other things to play with. Sharing is a difficult idea for children to learn and having two of a favourite toy helps to avoid squabbles! You can help by showing how to give and take. Relationships with brothers and sisters become more important now, because children learn from and with other children a lot more from this point forward.

Communication, language and literacy

Children have now got the idea that things have names and so this is the time you may see a 'vocabulary spurt' when children want to know the names for everything. Not all children show this sudden interest and for some, it happens a bit later, in Step 8 or 9. As well as learning lots of new names for things, children often also learn a few action words that they combine with names to make simple sentences like 'milk allgone' or 'dolly sleepy'. You can help them develop this ability by expanding what they say and repeating it back to them as part of the conversation. For example, you might say "Yes, the milk has all gone" or "That's right, dolly's sleepy and wants to go to bed".

Once your child has learnt a name like 'dog', you may find they start to call all furry, four-legged animals 'dog'. This is a good sign – they're thinking about things that go together, and if you help them, they'll soon sort out which animals are dogs and which are cats! Children sometimes find it hard to learn to say some words clearly, so any games that help them to practise talking are good.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 7 continued

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

As well as starting to put words together, children get better at putting actions together. For example, they start to learn the order in which to get dressed, or how to put different parts of a toy together. Your child may be able to copy you when you build a tower of two or three blocks. As they get more able to use their hands and fingers, children enjoy playing with toys that have smaller parts, and pieces that fit together. They still use their mouths sometimes to explore things, so you still need to watch what they're doing carefully. You may notice that your child is beginning to show a preference for one of their hands when doing some things – for example, using a spoon.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

In this Step, children are interested in objects that make sounds or react in different ways. Books with flaps to lift up and textures to feel as you read them together become particularly interesting. Attention spans are improving, giving more scope for activities that last a bit longer. You may also notice that your child's memory is developing – they begin to recognise things and remember what to do with them.

Creative development

Because of all the new things they can do, children's play becomes more complicated and you can introduce new ideas for them to build in. Feeding dolly turns into getting dolly out of bed, getting her washed and dressed, and then giving her breakfast. This is an important way for children to learn more about taking care of themselves. You can begin to use simple instructions to help your child learn. At first, link telling with showing them how to do things – this makes it easier for them to understand.

Physical development

When your child has learnt to walk, they can learn new things like climbing stairs, running and kicking a ball. It's worth fitting some 'letting off steam' activities into your child's day. Follow these with 'quietening down' times, like reading a picture book together, because some children need help to calm down after being very active. There are likely to be times when your child is not very co-operative because of their growing independence, or sometimes because they are frustrated. Offering a favourite, familiar activity can be a good way of heading off these difficulties before they become issues.

Moving on

Helping your child to get on with other people, both children and adults, is an important feature of this Step, and this can help them later on to make the most of learning from being with other people.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Initiates interaction with other children				
Responds to a small number of boundaries, with encouragement and support				
Is aware of other people's feelings – for example, looks concerned if hears crying, or looks excited if hears a familiar happy voice				
Explores new toys and environments, but looks back to you regularly to 'check in'				
Reacts to an audience – for example, repeats an activity or action which is received positively by a smile, or which is laughed at, applauded or cheered				

Communication, language and literacy




	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Understands and follows simple instructions in context – for example, “Give me the ball” or “Kiss Daddy night-night”				
Recognises and will identify many objects and pictures (by pointing) when asked questions – for example, “Where’s the ball?”				
Identifies simple body parts on self by pointing at them – for example, hair, eyes, ears and nose				
Points to body parts on other people – for example, Mum’s nose or Grandad’s eyes				
Uses words to comment on what’s happening – for example, says “Bird” if they see one in the garden				
Copies familiar expressions – for example, “Oh dear” or “All fall down”				
Enjoys nursery rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows understanding that things exist, even when out of sight				
Shows awareness of difference between big and small things				
Says some counting words randomly				
Fits shapes into spaces on inset boards or jigsaw puzzles				
Enjoys filling and emptying containers				
Can turn knobs and remove easy screw lid				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Actively explores objects using all senses – for example, links together different ways of handling objects; shaking, hitting, looking, feeling, tasting, mouthing, pulling, turning and poking				
Shows increasingly persistent search for objects, even when hidden				
Enjoys playing with objects of different sizes that go together – for example, stacking cups				
Remembers where objects belong				
Matches shape of piece to hole – for example, in posting box or shape sorter				

Physical development




	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Walks with shorter steps and legs closer together, no longer needs to hold arms up for balance				
Walks upstairs holding hand of adult				
Comes downstairs backwards on knees (crawling)				
Builds a tower with three blocks				
Develops own likes and dislikes in food and drink and may refuse disliked food or drink				
Accepts new textures and tastes – for example, larger pieces of food and increasing variety				
Tolerates use of toothpaste and brush				
Clearly communicates wet or soiled nappy or pants				

Physical development continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows awareness of what a potty or toilet is used for				
Removes socks				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Explores and experiments with a range of media – for example, paint, dough, paper, music-making objects				
Makes simple patterns with crayons; imitates crayon strokes				
Enjoys water play				
Enjoys action games that involve standing, sitting, turning				
Imitates adult activities – for example, sweeping, reading a book				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 7

Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 8





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 8

Personal, social and emotional development

Children now have much more of a sense of their separate identity as people and they clearly recognise the different people in their life – they may recognise familiar faces in photographs and know their own name.

They often show a lot more positive affection towards the people they love. However, this goes along with growing independence and so it can be a difficult time. Children sometimes find it very hard to deal with life when they can't do things for themselves, or can't have what they want, and these sorts of frustrations bring strong emotion. Sometimes this may be expressed as hostility towards other people. It's important that you help your child to learn how to handle these powerful feelings in an acceptable way. You'll need to give comfort and emotional support at such times, as well as clear messages about what is and what is not acceptable.

Self-help in daily life (feeding, washing and dressing) is something that can be encouraged and rewarded, one step at a time. For this sort of learning, and for many other areas too, you can help by offering just enough support for your child to experience success. Success builds self-confidence and a wish to achieve more and helps children feel good about doing things for themselves. During this Step, children can feed themselves, some of the time. You can help motivate them by giving them a lot of variety in their food, while making sure that they can handle it, either with fingers or a spoon.

Communication, language and literacy

Children begin to put words together into short 'sentences', often using signs or gestures as well. Sometimes it can be hard to understand what they mean, because they're just starting to learn how sentences are built. You can help them learn the rules by repeating back to them what they say in a more 'correct' or complete way. For example, if your child says "Put dere", you could say "Yes, put it in there", stressing the different words. Use a positive tone – confirming that you agree with what they've said and you're giving them an opportunity to learn from hearing you say it. It helps if you continue to match the level of what you say to what your child can understand and use plenty of rhythm and intonation.

Children learn a lot by listening to and watching other people, so it's important to give them plenty of experiences that encourage them to do this.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 8 continued

Problem-solving and reasoning

Children's growing understanding and thinking means that play can get more varied and complicated. Your child's attention span is increasing and so they're able to tackle more challenging activities. Simple shape-fitting puzzles with a few large pieces help children to use fingers and hands. Playing with toy plates, cups and pretend food is fun during this Step and your child can learn a lot from games like this, where daily activities are acted out. These sorts of games also help children to learn by playing with brothers, sisters and friends.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Your child's thinking about the world is progressing all the time. One way this shows itself is in putting things into categories and learning the names for groups of things. Sorting games, like putting things into boxes (all the blue ones go here and all the red ones go over here), can be an enjoyable way of encouraging this and talking about how things are the 'same' and 'different' also helps. Going to your local library to get new picture books can help you give your child more opportunities to learn.

Physical development

Most children are now more mobile around the house and outdoors, but if your child is still learning, make sure that they can see and get to plenty of interesting toys and activities – this will encourage them to move.

Creative development

'Home-made', personal books, using family photographs with 2 and 3 word 'sentences' are fun to make together and can be very helpful. Reading books about your family, together, can help your child with joining words together – many children learn to read the words quickly.

Moving on


Your child may now be ready to play with other children in a toddler group or some other kind of pre-school group. This will help them learn social skills and give them more chances to learn by watching other children play. Your child may be clingy for the first few times in a new setting, but this is part of learning that you can be trusted to go away and return for them later. If you're considering leaving your child in the care of someone else for the first time, don't rush into leaving them until they're ready. Children need you there at first, for reassurance. Then try leaving for a short time, to get your child used to the idea and to learn that you will come back.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Can tolerate brief separations from special people				
Helps with dressing – for example, holds out arm for sleeve or foot for shoe				
Uses a familiar adult as a secure base from which to explore independently in new environments – for example, ventures away to play and interact with others, but returns for a cuddle if becomes anxious				
Expresses emotions and seeks reaction – for example, to minor injury				
Starts to share and ‘give and take’				
Responds to other people’s pleasure and distress; shows empathy				

Communication, language and literacy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Can say many different words and is learning new words almost every day				
Begins to combine words into simple sentences, usually two words at first				
Begins to use words to refer to people and things that are not present				
Sings along with favourite action rhymes (although words may not be clear)				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Can tell the difference between quantities, recognising that a group of objects is more than one object				
Can organise and categorise objects – for example, putting all red things and all blue things in separate piles				
Uses blocks to create simple structures and arrangements				

Knowledge and understanding of the world

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Matches objects with parts that fit together – for example, puts lid on teapot				
Understands simple cause and effect – for example, straightens up a tower of blocks if it starts to wobble				
Plays ball cooperatively with an adult – for example, may kick or roll the ball back and forth				
Understands and follows stories read to them; has favourite stories and characters				
Develops a curiosity about things and processes				
Is interested in pushing and pulling things, and builds simple structures				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Gets onto child's chair without assistance, either backwards or sideways				
Holds cup with both hands and drinks without much spilling				
Brushes own hair				
Is aware of where clothes are kept – for example, outdoor coat and shoes by the door				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Is expressive through physical actions and sounds				
Enjoys repeating patterns of play				
Joins in with rhymes or songs				
Has favourite materials, lights, music and aromas				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 8

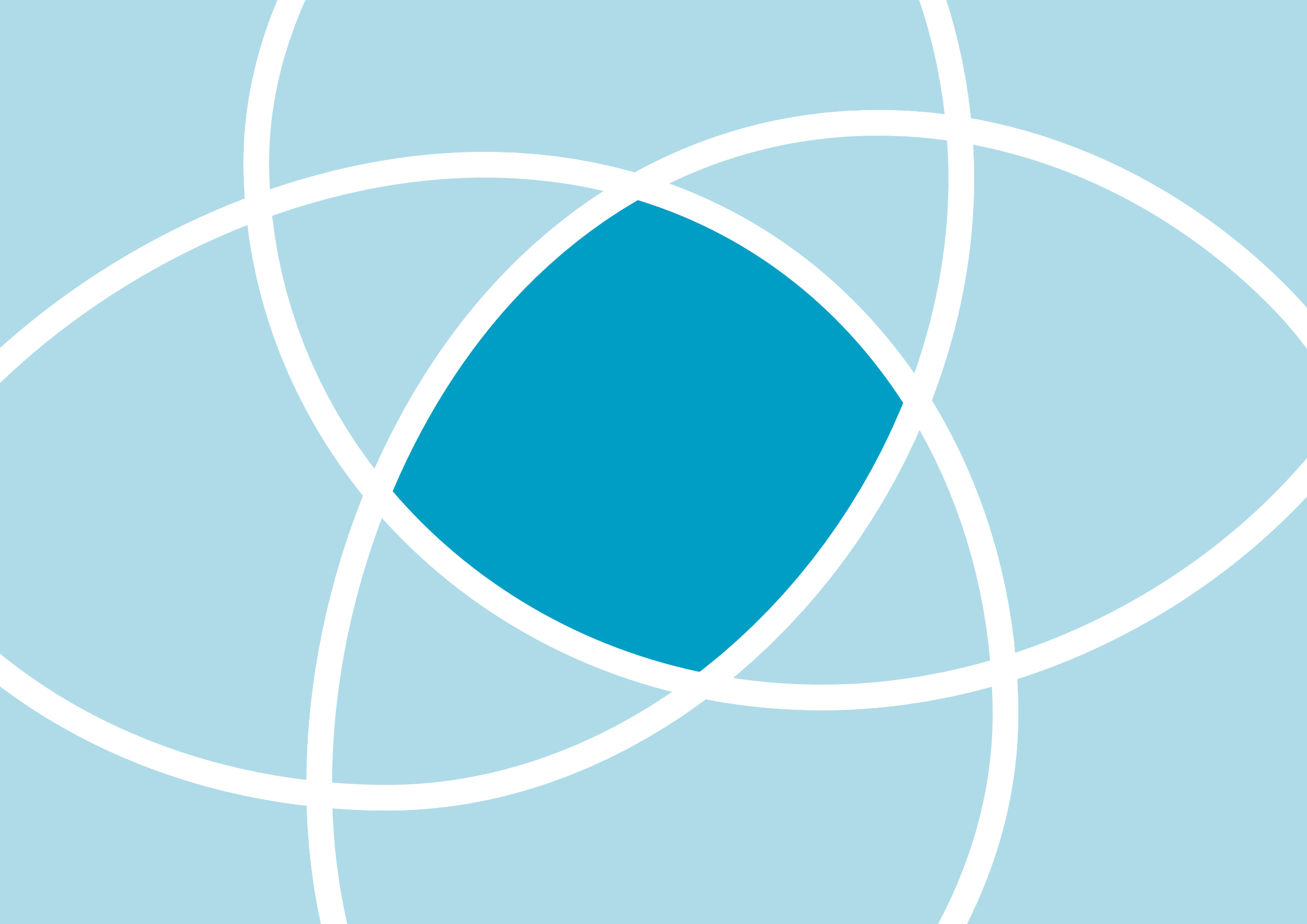
Early Support

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Developmental journal

Step 9





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 9

Personal, social and emotional development

Your child will now be experiencing a wide range of emotions and will try to express them. Sometimes it's hard to work out what they're feeling from what they say and do, so it's important to show warmth and affection as you encourage them to put their feelings into words. Children typically find out around this time that they can 'pretend' about things that they've done or have not done, just as they can pretend in play. This is another sign of their growing independence, so in some ways it's a positive thing, but you need to help them learn what's right and wrong in this area!

Self-help skills are an important focus as well. Children begin to take part in dressing themselves, washing, drinking and eating. They also begin to join in with simple domestic jobs like tidying toys, setting the table etc.

Communication, language and literacy

In this Step, children learn new words every day and talk much more. They're getting better at putting short sentences together and at putting ideas into words. Your child will pick up new words from what you say, so lots of talk about what you're doing together continues to be important. Reading to your child from picture storybooks helps them to understand about words because the pictures provide visual support. By now, your child may be able to point at a picture of a horse when you ask "Where's the horse?"

Children's early speech is often quite unclear – they find it hard to say some sounds and they get other sounds wrong. You can help your child speak more clearly by getting them to copy how you say words. Try to make sure there's not too much background noise, so that they can hear what you say easily, without getting distracted. Games that involve picking up differences in speech sounds, like "Where's the cat?", and "Where's the hat?" encourage listening and speaking. Children can usually make sense of a lot more than they can express, so it's important to step up the level of what you say, to match their growing understanding.

You can now have real conversations with your child. They find out that 'why' and 'how' are useful words, and if you give them answers at a level they can understand, their curiosity grows. Their memory is improving as well, and this lets them talk about what happened yesterday, or about things that are not in front of them or people in the family that are not at home. It's worth deliberately bringing these sorts of topics into your conversation, so that your child can practise this important aspect of thinking and talking.

Learning some reading skills can begin now, too. Cards with words on can be used to show the link to words in the picture books that you're using. Reading, and building skills that lead to reading, can give a real boost to your child's language abilities. It can also help them to improve the clarity of their speech.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 9 continued

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Children at this stage of development are better at remembering how to do things in daily life – so when you say “Brush dolly’s hair”, they’re more likely to know what to do. You can encourage this by commenting on things that happen regularly in their life – for example, “It’ll be time for a bath soon.” Children are also more aware of changes to routine. You can build on these developing abilities by playing hiding games or by putting familiar things in unexpected places in a jokey way – for example, you could put a sock on their hand. Children very much enjoy little homemade books like ‘My favourite toys’ or ‘I went to the zoo’. These don’t need to be smart – cutting out pictures from magazines or making drawings, and sticking them into a book that you make by stapling together some sheets of paper works well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children become more curious about other people and more sensitive to their feelings. Watching and copying what other people do is an important way for them to learn. You can encourage this by making opportunities for your child to play with other children. Playing with water and sand are good activities for children playing together and they help young children learn about how to co-operate. Of course, you’ll need to keep an eye on this sort of play, so that you can intervene to help sort out any difficulties! Try to do this in a way that helps your child build their social skills. It’s also valuable for children to watch you doing things with other adults and, where appropriate, to be included – for example, watching television together. Programmes that engage your child’s interest and introduce a range of topics can be an important stimulus for learning.

Physical development

Your child will be becoming more aware of the signals their body gives them about the need to have a drink, to eat and to go to the toilet, so this is a good time to start toilet training. Around this time, children also start to be more adventurous in their play. They start to push and pull things, and generally to be much more physically active.

Creative development

Children become more interested in drawing and enjoy expressing themselves in this way. You can join in by doing simple drawings with them, while talking about what you’re doing. You could start introducing some letters as well – for example, by printing their name and spelling it out. It’s a long time before your child will be writing, but like most other things, you can help to build a foundation, by introducing the idea early on.

Moving on


Going to playgroup or play school with other children of the same general level of development can benefit your child enormously. Children can experience a wider range of play activities in a playgroup than it is easy to provide at home and they learn a great deal from each other. They also learn a lot about play, about the behaviour that’s expected and about self-help skills.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Demonstrates sense of self as an individual – for example, wants to do things independently, says “No” to adult, and so on				
Is caring towards others				
Understands that some things are theirs, some things are shared, and some things belong to other people				
Wants to help with dress and hygiene routines				
Notices similarities and differences that connect them to, and distinguish them from, others				
Actively draws others into social interaction				

Communication, language and literacy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Repeats words or phrases from familiar stories				
Begins to make little 'sentences' by joining three words together – for example, 'Daddy gone work' Make a list				
Uses words to ask for help – for example, when washing hands or going to the toilet				
Recognises and joins in with songs and actions – for example, 'The Wheels on the Bus'				
Fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme, story or game – for example, 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a...' 				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Carries out simple everyday sequences – for example, pouring cereal into bowl and adding milk, or putting toothpaste onto brush				
Selects a small number of objects from a group when asked – for example, ‘please give me one’, ‘please give me two’				
Tries to work out problems by thinking first – for example, how to switch something on or how to get something that’s out of reach				

Knowledge and understanding of the world

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
<p>Hands a toy to an adult for assistance when unable to get it to work; sees adult as someone who can help</p>				
<p>Operates mechanical toys – for example, turns the knob on a wind-up toy or pulls back on a friction car</p>				
<p>Spends time in groups of other children engaged in own play, but watching the other children</p>				
<p>Imitates everyday actions in pretend play – for example, brushing doll's hair, making beds, tasting food, cleaning dolls' house, getting in the car, shopping and so on</p>				
<p>Makes pretend sequences – for example, pouring pretend tea then drinking, washing then drying a doll, getting in the car and going to work</p>				
<p>Engages in symbolic play – for example, pretends a banana is a telephone</p>				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Runs safely on whole foot, stopping and starting with ease and avoiding obstacles				
Squats with steadiness to rest or play with object on the ground, rises to feet without using hands				
Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers no longer using whole hand grasp				
Turns pages in a book one at a time				
Feeds self competently with spoon				
Drinks well without spilling				
Puts on hat and slip-on shoes				
Unzips front zipper on coat or jacket				
Indicates need for toilet by behaviour – for example, dancing movements or holding self				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Creates and experiments with blocks, colours and marks				
Builds a tower of up to six blocks				
Threads large beads onto firm cord, stick or pipe cleaner				
Puts words together to make simple sentences				
Likes to put objects together – for example, put cups on saucers, spoon in a bowl, doll in bed				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 9

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Step 10





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 10

Personal, social and emotional development

The boundaries of the world are expanding, although your child will still appreciate you being there as a source of security – particularly in new situations. Children are brave explorers and they're often unaware of the dangers around them, so they need to be watched carefully, as they can now open doors and wander off. They're curious about people and will often 'people watch' and imitate other people's behaviour. By the time they reach this Step, children are growing more and more independent, particularly with feeding, dressing and toileting, and will defend their own space and toys, and their right to do things in their own way. This means they may need help and encouragement to adjust their behaviour to fit in with other people – for example, when playing with friends. You may now be able to start to involve your child in everyday routines out in the wider world like putting shopping in the supermarket trolley, or paying at the till. It's helpful to match such tasks to your child's ability, so that they get plenty of positive rewards when they join in.

Children sometimes get angry and frustrated when they can't communicate what they want to say. They may also be jealous for your attention when it's not on them. At the same time, they're likely to show more affection and concern for other people – for example, going to get an adult if another child is upset, or offering a cuddle or pat on the back if someone else is crying.

Communication, language and literacy

Children begin to use longer sentences and experiment with putting words together in different ways. Sometimes they say things that don't obey the rules, like "Daddy goed to work" or "There are lots of sheeps". This is a good sign, because it shows they're trying to work out what the 'rules' are. So it's not very encouraging to say they're 'wrong' – it's better to repeat back to them what they've just said, but in the 'correct' form – for example "That's right, Daddy's gone to work" or "Yes, there are lots of sheep in that field".

Reading books together helps your child to understand and use words in sentences correctly, over time. Homemade books with short sentences that use words and sentences, at the right level for your child's understanding, and which match their own use of language help to 'personalise' reading activities at this level of development.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 10 *continued*

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

If they are encouraged in a positive way, children love to join in simple activities like washing up, making sandwiches, helping to mend things and so on. These all provide opportunities for them to listen to other people and learn about how these things are done. You might like to introduce them to visual ways of presenting routines, like charts and timetables. It may also be the time to begin to help them understand ideas about time – for example, by starting to use time words by saying “Your egg will be done in a minute” or “It’ll be time for bed in half an hour” and showing how clocks are used.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children’s ability to focus their attention on things for longer periods is increasing. You can help by finding activities that take more time. However, your child may find it hard to shift attention when you want them to, so you may need to be patient when you want them to finish something. Some children also want everything always to be done in the same order – this expresses a wish to control things around them. Sometimes the world can seem very complicated to a young child and order and predictability help them feel more secure, as well as providing good opportunities to learn. If your child is going to a pre-school group, you may find they want things to be done in the same way there and at home.

Physical development

Mobile children need plenty of exercise and lots of opportunity to develop their bodies and movement skills. Many young children are very energetic and they run around, kick balls and go climbing. This brings new risks, so you will need to help them to stay within their ‘safety zone’. Family outings are a good way to provide lots of different learning opportunities.

Creative development

Children use daily routines as part of their own play, even when there’s no adult around to imitate – for example, they may set up a tea party for their toy animals and dolls. Your child’s imagination and creativity is growing and you can help them to explore ‘pretend play’ with toys and with props, like dressing-up clothes. When your child tries to walk like an elephant, join in by becoming an elephant, too. Imagination games and telling stories help, while paints, dough, stickers, drawing and cutting all encourage creative work. Messy play with water and sand is a good outlet for children’s energy and gives them other ways of learning, using different senses. Most pre-school settings provide a wide range of opportunities to explore pretend play, with many other children around to copy and learn from.

Moving on


Your child may be confrontational when what they want isn’t the same as what you want. How you handle these small conflicts can stop them turning into big issues. Achieving a balance between your wishes and those of your child is important. Children need to learn self-control and not just to be controlled by you. Learning to wait is often an important issue for young children, and you need to be sensitive to how long your child can realistically be expected to wait. Lots of praise for self-discipline is very effective.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Responds positively to a variety of familiar adults				
Shows affection towards other children and younger siblings				
Maintains attachments with special people – for example, shows affection, prefers them for interaction and uses them for comfort and security				
Shows understanding of some rules and routines				
Uses others as sources of information by asking questions				
Makes choices that involve challenge, when adults ensure their safety				

Communication, language and literacy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them when communicating with other people				
Understands more complex sentences – for example, “Put your toys away and we’ll read a book”				
Begins to say ‘sentences’ of several words – for example, “Me no go home” Make a list				
Shows sustained interest in picture books				
Tries to repeat many things adults say, either saying the actual word or making a close match – for example, says “Um-beya” for ‘umbrella’ Make a list				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Has some understanding of 1 and 2, especially when the number is important for them				
Creates and experiments with symbols and marks				
Uses some number language – for example, ‘more’ and ‘a lot’				
Recites some number names in correct sequence				
Knows that a group of things changes in quantity when something is added or taken away				
Notices simple shapes and patterns in pictures				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Matches sets of identical objects; understands the idea of 'the same'				
Begins to develop sense of time; understands terms such as 'later', 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday'				
Understands simple explanations and reasons given by others				
Understands size differences (big, small and so on) – for example, selects the big or small object or picture when asked				
Shares books with adult or other child, making 'comments' about the events and pictures				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Climbs confidently and is beginning to use nursery play climbing equipment				
Can kick a large ball				
Shows control in holding and using hammers, books and mark-making tools				
Builds a tower of up to seven blocks				
Fits small shapes and objects into holes during posting activities				
Takes off loose coat or shirt when undone				

Creative development continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Draws simple recognizable shapes – for example, sun, tree				
Imitates drawing simple shapes – for example, circle, square				
Can name two or three colours				
Joins in singing favourite songs				
Creates different sounds by banging, shaking, tapping or blowing				
Plays with dough, makes different shapes and will tell you what they have made				
Plays dressing-up games				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 10

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Step 11





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 11

Personal, social and emotional development

In this Step, children become better able to accept being apart from you for longer periods of time. This is affected by how much experience they have had of other people looking after them, but it's going to be a big part of their life soon. You can help by continuing to build a secure relationship with them. This means expressing your positive feelings for them, praising them for things they do that you value, being consistent in doing what you say you will do, and generally letting them trust you as a reliable and loving person. It also means taking their thoughts and feelings seriously. Children at this stage of development often have fears and worries that seem silly to adults, but are very real for them. If they feel that they can trust you to listen, it helps to give them confidence in you as an ally through all the challenges that lie ahead.

Communication, language and literacy

Although your child may also still be using signs and gestures, in general, in this Step, children are expanding their use of language and talking in longer sentences. They may be using words like 'and' to join ideas together, and words like 'the' and 'he' to mark what they're talking about more clearly. You can continue to foster this with plenty of talk, 'personalised' reading books and games, new storybooks and nursery rhymes. You may still need to help children out sometimes, by repeating what they say in the correct form. But in general, they understand much more of what you and other people say, and you can have longer and more complicated conversations. Your child is probably also finding out that language can be used to assert independence. 'No' is a useful word when you're a child! Finding ways of talking through differences of opinion is important, because it can help your child to think things through for themselves later on.

Reading is a valuable way for children to improve their language, because it makes use of their visual skills. It's also a way for children to broaden their understanding of how things go together in sequence. Learning to do things in the right order is important in many areas of life. Stories are one way that children learn this. You can help by playing games, putting things in the wrong order so that they spot it, or asking them what comes next. Children like to play with toy figures and 'acting-out' everyday sequences of events, such as going out shopping.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 11 continued

Problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy

Although school is still some way off, you can help to prepare your child for the sorts of things that they will be doing by introducing simple number games and drawing and painting, as well as continuing with activities that involve recognising sounds, letters and words. Being able to follow instructions is another important skill that they'll need. Children learn about classroom routines at pre-school or nursery – this is very important preparation for going to school.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Your child's confidence and ability to play with other children and relate to other adults and strangers is growing. It's an important step forward when they begin to work out what other people are thinking and feeling. Talking about your own thoughts and feelings can help with this, and talking about what they may be thinking or feeling is good, too. Your child is likely to develop some close friendships now and this is another valuable way for them to learn social skills. Building good relationships with brothers and sisters continues to be important – creative activities like cutting and sticking, or using clay, allow children of different ages and abilities to have fun together.

Physical development

Outdoor activities that develop physical skills in a safe environment are important at this stage of development. Your child will probably be happy for quite long periods using playground equipment, especially if there are other children or adults around who join in. Learning to take some risks, but doing so safely, is something that you can help with.

Creative development

Children in Step 11 play with things like bricks and other construction toys in more elaborate ways. You can help by joining in and suggesting ways in which the constructions can be extended and played with. Your child will begin to be able to play pretend games now – hide-and-seek is fun.

Moving on


Putting on and taking off shoes and coats, toileting, hand washing and eating are all likely to still need plenty of practice. As with many other things, rewarding small steps in the right direction is the key to helping children make progress.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Seeks out others to share experiences				
Able to share and take turns to some extent, but also selfish at times				
Recognises self in mirror or photo – for example, if looks in mirror and sees dirt or food on face, tries to wipe it off, or points to self in photo when asked				
Demonstrates concern for others when they are upset – for example, offers favourite toy, pats arm or back, offers cuddle and so on				
Takes pleasure in personal hygiene including toileting				
Pulls up own trousers, and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom				
Can undo large buttons and Velcro fasteners				
Participates and helps with familiar routines with help from adults – for example, dusting, setting table or putting away toys				


Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows understanding of prepositions 'in', and 'on' – for example, carries out action "Put dolly in the box" or selects a picture correctly				
Uses plurals – for example, 'cats' Make a list				
Uses possessives – for example, 'the boy's teddy' Make a list				



Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
<p>Uses pronouns correctly – for example, 'I', 'me' and 'you'</p> <p>Make a list</p>			
<p>Listens eagerly to stories and requests favourites over and over again</p>			
<p>Joins in with stories and poems, one-to-one and also in small groups</p>			
<p>Holds books the correct way up and turns pages</p>			

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Will imitate unfamiliar ways of behaving when these seem appropriate to them – for example, takes off shoes and socks to join in ‘feet painting’ at nursery if sees other children doing this				
Uses and understands the logic of ‘if... then’ – for example, ‘If I stand on a step, then I can reach the toy’, ‘If I eat my sandwich, then I can have some chocolate pudding’ and so on				
Notices deliberate mistake in story telling or rhyme				

Knowledge and understanding of the world



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows curiosity about the world by asking questions and looking intently at objects, events and people				
Joins in with learning activities led by more able partner and can imitate some actions after they have seen them demonstrated				
Shows some understanding of quantity – for example, ‘Take one biscuit’, ‘There are many blocks’				
Is more organised, gathering together the toys they want to play with before starting play – for example, getting the doll and the tea set before starting to play tea-parties or getting the train and tracks and setting them out before playing trains				
Includes another child in their play sequence and may talk to them as they do so – for example, gives child a cup to drink from				

Knowledge and understanding of the world continued


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Seeks to learn basic skills in turning on and operating some ICT equipment				
Enjoys playing with small-world models such as a farm, a garage, or a train track				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Walks downstairs, two feet to each step while carrying a toy				
Negotiates obstacles when pushing toys				
Can stand momentarily on one foot when shown				
Can catch a large ball				
Makes snips in paper with child scissors				
Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts and bolts				
Writes an 'X' form and a horizontal line				
Eats individual pieces of food from tub or box with lid				
Helps dry self after washing				
Usually able to control bowel with occasional accidents				
Waits to be wiped after using toilet or potty				

Creative development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Engages in imaginative play and role-play based on own experiences – for example, 'driving a car'				
Shows an interest in the way musical instruments sound				
Enjoys using a range of blowing toys – for example, whistles, bubble blowers				
Begins to make-believe by pretending				
Builds stories around toys – for example, farm animals climbing an armchair 'cliff' and having to be rescued				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 11

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Step 12





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 12

Personal, social and emotional development

This Step can often be a challenging time for both parents and children. It's because children are getting a stronger sense of their own abilities and, understandably, want to use them as much as possible. This can lead to conflicts between growing independence and the need to understand risks, limits and boundaries. This may come out as stubbornness, negativity or anger when frustrated, but these are also positive signs of a child's motivation. So, it is important to keep showing your child that you care about them and that you can help them to deal with these new challenges.

Communication, language and literacy

Language flowers in children during Step 12. They not only learn many new words, but they're also talking about the past and the future, whereas before, much of their talk was about the here and now. As well as speaking in longer and more complex sentences, they may also talk to themselves while they're doing things. There's nothing wrong with this, in fact it's a good sign that they're using language more now to make sense of their experience.

Your child is likely to be taking more interest in stories, ones that you tell, as well as ones that you read to them from books, and they'll be getting used to the idea that books have stories in them and the concept of reading.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

With your child's developing mental capacities comes an increasing ability to think about how to approach more complicated situations where solutions aren't immediately obvious, like fitting shapes into simple jigsaw puzzles, putting together plastic bricks and threading beads. Although they have been building the foundations for understanding number concepts since they were born, it's at this stage of development that children start to really think about ideas like counting and adding up. Giving them appropriate materials to support this is important – for example, a pot of buttons, or small coloured blocks.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 12 *continued*

Knowledge and understanding of the world

This is also a time when children's fears can increase as they begin to appreciate more about the wider world. 'Why?' is likely to be a common question, and giving explanations at a level that your child can understand helps to reinforce your role as someone who can help them to learn. Your child is likely to become more curious about how things work, so it's helpful to give them toys and other objects that have parts that can be taken apart and put back together again. It's also a time when children can practise operating some household equipment, with your support to ensure safety – for example, the Hoover.

Physical development

Children are becoming more independent and more confident about tackling physical challenges and learning new motor skills. Playground equipment, bikes and trikes and ball games are all active pursuits that help this learning, as well as contributing to general health and fitness. But children still tire easily and need help with pacing themselves and with 'wind-down' or quiet times. They also need your help with assessing risks so that they are aware of the limits to their abilities and don't over-reach themselves. For many children, swimming and water games are particularly enjoyable and, of course, they're good for general fitness.

Creative development

At this point in their development, children make much more use of materials like paints, play dough, cutting and sticking, and crayons, and become a lot more ambitious about what they attempt. They are also developing their imagination, and this shows in their fantasy play. It's good to introduce new toys and materials that encourage children to use these new abilities, and also to join in yourself, so that you can share new experiences and sometimes, show your child what's possible.

Fantasy play with other children, like dressing-up games and 'home corner' play, is an excellent way for children to explore different roles and practices. It's good to make sure that there are enough 'props' available to support this kind of play.

Moving on

One of the key things that are learned during this stage is to understand that other people's feelings need to be taken into account. This forms the basis for sharing and cooperating, which become increasingly important from now on.


Talking with your child about thoughts and feelings helps them to gain this sort of understanding, and sorting out conflicts with friends and siblings helps too. You may need to offer guidance in these situations so that your child can develop their own ways of dealing with the challenges that come with learning to get on well with other people.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows independence in selecting and carrying out activities				
Uses adults as sources of knowledge, comfort and shared activities				
Forms a special friendship with another child				
Understands they have to share (for example, toys) but might not always be willing to do so				
Is sometimes stubborn or negative and reacts with annoyance to frustration				
Asks for toilet using voice, gesture or action – for example, leads adult to toilet and asks verbally or makes a sign				
Pulls down own pants when using the toilet				
Enjoys responsibility of carrying out small tasks such as carrying a bag for Mum				

Communication, language and literacy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Begins to use sentences involving several words				
Understands use of objects – for example, “What do we use to cut things with?”				
Can retell a simple past event in correct order – for example, went down slide and hurt finger				
Can give information about own life and favourite things				
Uses a range of tenses – for example, ‘play’, ‘playing’, ‘will play’ and ‘played’ Make a list				



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Answers questions more fully, providing more than one piece of information Make a list				
Takes part in 'reading' by filling in words and phrases				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Uses some number names accurately in play				
Recognises groups with one, two or three objects				
Compares two groups of objects, saying correctly when they have the same number				
Shows an interest in shape and space by playing with shapes or making arrangements with objects				
Can describe the shapes of objects – for example, round and tall				

Knowledge and understanding of the world



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows curiosity about why things happen and how things work				
Puts three pictures in correct order to represent a sequence in a familiar activity or story				
Uses various construction materials; is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity)				
Shows awareness of danger – for example, is careful on playground equipment				
Looks at books independently				

Physical development

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Rides tricycle, using pedals				
Able to blow – for example, candles or when cooling food				
Cuts paper with scissors				
Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control				
Helps wash self and own hair				
Brushes own teeth with help				
Blows nose when tissue is held up				
Flushes toilet with help				

Creative development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Is interested in and describes the texture of things, – for example, 'rough', 'smooth'				
Explores colour and knows the difference between some colours				
Draws person with head and one or two other features or parts				
Enjoys joining in with dancing and ring games				
Sings a few familiar songs				
Imitates and creates movement in response to music				
Notices what adults do, imitating what is observed and then doing it spontaneously when the adult is not there				
Can put sequences of movements together				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 12

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Step 13





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 13

Personal, social and emotional development

Relationships with other people, especially 'significant others' like parents, carers, and brothers and sisters, become more important for children in this Step. They seem to care more about the people that matter to them, and more prepared to fit in with what other people want to do and how they want to do it. It's around this time that children start to model their behaviour on what other people do – usually people to whom they feel close. You can encourage your child to join in with family jobs around the house, like tidying up, and to take pride in self-care routines by offering your support and praise when they get things right.

If your child is spending time in an early years setting, fitting in with the routines of the setting gives another opportunity for this sort of learning, but it's not always easy for a young child to adapt to a different set of expectations. It's very common for children to be tired and irritable after spending time in an early years setting, especially during the first few months. This is partly a reflection of the challenge of being with a lot of relatively unfamiliar people, without the support of their main attachment figure(s). Settling into a new environment like this is a real achievement for a child.

Communication, language and literacy

Talking, reading and writing all begin to join up with one other at this stage of development. Children begin to recognise their name when written, and to 'crack the code' that links letters and words with meanings that up to now have come mainly through speech. You can help this transition into reading and then writing by making sure that when you share picture books with your child and make marks on paper with them, you have fun together.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Learning about numbers and counting is also an enjoyable part of learning. At this point in their development, children often get particularly interested in the similarities and differences between things, and playing grouping and counting games together is a fun way to encourage important new learning.

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 13 *continued*

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children become much better able to talk about their growing knowledge, and more interested in hearing explanations for things they don't yet understand. They're taking in more 'facts' about the world through books, magazines and television. They are also keen to learn about more complicated and interesting objects through 'hands-on experience' – not just toys. So it's good to provide a range of materials and objects to play with that work in different ways for different purposes – for example, an egg whisk, a torch, an old alarm clock or tape recorder and other household objects.

This is also a time when children can begin to learn from computers, using age-appropriate games and learning resources.

Physical development

By the time they get to this Step, children are quite skilled, and need plenty of opportunity to exercise and keep fit. This means making time for activities outside as well as inside, and giving children a chance to use a range of different equipment. Some children enjoy organised sessions at leisure centres or other places where children of similar levels of development can benefit from being with trained people and using more specialised equipment. But this is also just about letting off steam and having fun.

Creative development

Children begin to take a greater interest in other people's creative products – for example, stories, pictures, films, music and photographs. Encouraging your child to express their own creativity is important, if they seem to become over-critical of their own work and to lose motivation as a result. Making little books of short pieces of writing that you help with, illustrated with photos and drawings made by your child, can be a very good way for your child to explore their thoughts and feelings. Providing plenty of materials of different types, like paint, clay and paper shapes, will help your child find out which things they prefer to work with.

Moving on


The time has come when you can have real conversations, not just about the here and now, but also about past events and future plans, hopes and fears. Simply finding time to talk is one of the best ways to continue to build a good relationship with your child and to help them to meet the challenges that they will face as they grow older.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows care and concern for others, for living things and the environment				
Is more outgoing towards strangers and more confident in new social situations – for example, playgroup, but may be anxious at first				
More independent in self-care; takes pride in appearance				
Is curious about others and will modify behaviour to fit in with what others are doing – for example, removing shoes and socks before going on slide after seeing others doing this				
Puts arms into open-fronted coat or shirt when held up				
Hangs up own coat				
Maintains attention, concentrates, and sits quietly when appropriate				
Has an awareness and pride in self as having own identity and abilities				

Personal, social and emotional development continued


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Appreciates the need for hygiene				
Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines				
Can express wishes and needs clearly and understands when these are not immediately met				
Complies with social expectations				
Often actively seeks sharing and fairness				
Welcomes and values praise for achievements				
Identifies with own immediate family, relations and family friends				
Understands that own actions affect other people – for example, becomes upset or tries to comfort another child when they realise they have upset them				

Communication, language and literacy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Produces more than half of the consonant sounds accurately				
Produces almost all vowel sounds accurately				
Uses language to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next in a familiar situation				
Begins to use language for pretending				
Can recognise familiar signs – for example, advertising logos				
Can copy some letters of the alphabet Make a list				

Communication, language and literacy continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Begins to link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet Make a list				
Retells stories in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories such as 'Once upon a time'				
Knows that information can be retrieved from computers				
Makes attempts at reading familiar words in picture books				


Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Counts out up to six objects from a larger group				



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Begins to count beyond 10				
Begin to represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper or pictures				
Recognises numerals 1 to 5				
Says and uses number names in order in familiar contexts				
Counts reliably up to ten everyday objects				
Uses language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers				
Finds one more or one less than a number from one to ten				
Selects a particular named shape				
Puts three items in the right order by length or height				
Puts two items in the right order by weight or capacity				

Knowledge and understanding of the world


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Concentrates and listens for more than ten minutes in adult-led activities that they enjoy				
Can remember three or four items shown on a list – for example, a picture shopping list of apples, oranges and bananas				
Knows how to operate simple equipment				
Comments and asks questions about where they live and the natural world				
Shows interest in different occupations and ways of life				
Looks closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change				
Builds and constructs with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources and adapting their work where necessary				
Uses ICT to perform simple functions, such as selecting a channel on the TV remote control				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Negotiates space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles				
Travels around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment				
Walks upstairs using alternating feet, one foot per step				
Shows increasing control over an object in pushing, patting, throwing, catching or kicking it				
Can build tower of ten or more cubes				
Beginning to use a knife for spreading				
Uses taps on hand basin				

Physical development continued


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control				
Eats a healthy range of foodstuffs				
Begins to take responsibility for self-care in washing and teeth cleaning				
Reliably dry and clean during the day				

Creative development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Develops preferences for forms of expression				
Understands that they can use lines to enclose a space, and then begins to use these shapes to represent objects				
Sings and makes up simple songs				
Taps out simple repeated rhythms and makes some up				
Uses available resources to create props to support role-play				
Talks about personal intentions, describing what they are trying to do				
Expresses and communicates their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a range of materials, suitable tools, imagination and role-play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments				

Creative development continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Chooses particular colours to use for a purpose				
Has a repertoire of songs and dances				
Plays alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme				

Special events and achievements

Developmental Journal · Step 13

Early Support

Helping every child succeed

Developmental journal

Step 14





Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 14

Personal, social and emotional development

By the time children reach Step 14, they have become aware of themselves as a unique individual, with their own thoughts, feelings and preferences. They're aware that other people have their own personalities, wishes and needs, and that there are many different ways in which people live their lives.

The next step is to learn to respect these differences and appreciate the value of other people's ways of doing things, at the same time as feeling part of one's own family and community. It's also about learning the social skills to join in with others in play and constructive activities – skills that are best learned in small groups of children at similar levels of ability, with adult support.

Children's growing emotional maturity also means that they are better able to put their feelings into words. Talking with other people about the good and bad things that they experience continues to help children feel secure in their special relationships.

Communication, language and literacy

Children at Step 14 are fluent communicators and usually fluent speakers, although some may use sign language or technology to help them get what they want to say across. They use reasonably well-formed sentences and can put together quite long narratives about the things they've done. They're also asking a lot of 'How?', 'Why?' and 'What?' questions, often asking about the names of things and what unfamiliar words mean. They have an understanding of the way that written words relate to spoken words and are taking their first steps towards reading for themselves. They're often also very interested in writing, and it's good to play enjoyable games with them that involve writing down letters and words.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Children passing through Step 14 are capable of thinking about how to tackle simple problems, before launching into them. They spend time planning what to do, and this is evident in their play, which becomes more complex and involves objects that are used in a number of different ways.

Number concepts are now firmer, and children begin to understand how number plays an important part in everyday life – for example when using money, cooking or sharing things out. Understanding of time improves, and children often find it easier to wait for short periods of time because they now know what 'five minutes' means!

Developmental Journal

A summary of development during Step 14 *continued*

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children's ability to find out about the world for themselves increases daily, as they gain more understanding of the ways in which they can investigate and explore. They become more competent at using different approaches and sources for learning for themselves, but still benefit from the help of more able children or adults working with them.

Physical development

As well as developing their running, jumping and climbing skills, for which they need plenty of chances to play on a variety of equipment, children in Step 14 are also improving their skills at doing more intricate things with their hands.

Their emotional maturity and motivation for independence can be fostered by encouragement in self-help skills around hygiene, clothing and feeding. These skills are also important for entry into school and early years settings.

Creative development

Children's growing capability to plan ahead and think creatively means that they are now able to tackle more complex creative projects, which may take several sessions to complete. These may include, for example, a piece of artwork that they work on from time to time, or a story in pretend play that they return to with siblings or with friends. Making opportunities for these sorts of extended projects, and providing the props and materials that may be needed, will help your child to get the most out of this important part of their life.

Creative play can also be a way in which children are able to express and work through the emotional challenges that they face in their lives, since it is often difficult for children to put these into words. Talking with children about what their creative works mean for them can give you better insight into their concerns and worries.

Moving on

Step 14 is the final Step in this Journal and it sets out a broad range of abilities that children acquire. The purpose of the earlier Steps is to describe and celebrate all the learning and achievement that enables children to reach this point. At the end of this section, you can read the Early Learning Goals from the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are the standard materials used in early years settings to describe development from this point.

Personal, social and emotional development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Works as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that there need to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups of people, including adults and children, to work together harmoniously				
Dresses and undresses independently and manages their own personal hygiene				
Selects and uses activities and resources independently				
Has a positive self-image, and shows that they are comfortable with themselves				
Understands that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs, which need to be treated with respect				
Understands that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect				


Personal, social and emotional development continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Is confident and skilled in seeking comfort, reassurance and help from special people				
Positively values playing with other children and joins in shared play				
Is aware of own strengths and weaknesses				
Can describe self in positive terms and talk about abilities				
Enjoys talking about past experiences, the present and future plans				



Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
<p>Produces some consonant blends (for example, 'tr' in tree, 'bl' in blue)</p> <p>Make a list</p>			
<p>Can pick out the first sound in a word</p> <p>Make a list</p>			
<p>Can pick out words that rhyme</p> <p>Make a list</p>			

Communication, language and literacy continued


	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Shows an understanding of the elements of stories – for example, main character, sequence of events and story beginnings and endings				
Writes own names and other things – for example, labels and captions				
Begins to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation				
Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed				

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Counts aloud in ones, twos, fives or tens				
Finds the total number of items in two groups by counting all of them				
Shares objects into equal groups and counts how many in each group				
Matches sets of objects to numerals that represent the number of objects				
Sorts familiar objects to identify their similarities and differences, making choices and justifying decisions				
Uses familiar objects and common shapes to create and recreate patterns and build models				
Use language such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' or 'lighter' to compare quantities				
Uses everyday words to describe position – for example, 'above', 'beside', 'behind'				


Knowledge and understanding of the world continued

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Asks "Why?" frequently and considers replies				
Explains own knowledge and understanding, and asks appropriate questions of others				
Selects the tools and techniques they need to shape, assemble and join materials they are using				
Finds out about and identifies the uses of everyday technology, and uses information and communication technology, and programmable toys, to support their learning				
Makes short-term future plans				
Finds out about their environment, and talks about the features that they like and dislike				
Begins to know about their culture and beliefs and those of other people				

Physical development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Travels around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment with confidence				
Shows increasing accuracy in throwing, catching and kicking a ball				
Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control				
Recognises the importance of keeping healthy, and those things which contribute to this				
Understands need for variety in food				
Takes responsibility for self-care in washing, teeth cleaning				

	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Responds to comments and questions, talking about their creations				
Understands that different media can be combined to create new effects				
Experiments to create different textures				
Creates constructions, collages, painting and drawings				
Uses ideas involving fitting, overlapping, in, out, enclosure, grids and sun-like shapes				
Recognises and explores how sounds can be changed, sings simple songs from memory, recognises repeated sounds and sound patterns and matches movements to music				

Creative development



	Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often	Notes
Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play				
Plays cooperatively as part of a group to act out a narrative				
Imaginary play involves lots of detail and several linked actions – for example, getting undressed, bathed, dressed in nightclothes and having a bedtime drink				

Special events and achievements

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Personal, social and emotional development

Notes

Continue to be interested, excited and motivated to learn

Be confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in a familiar group

Maintain attention, concentrate, and sit quietly when appropriate

Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate

Have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings, and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others

Have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people

Form good relationships with adults and peers

Work as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that there needs to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups of people, including adults and children, to work together harmoniously

Understand what is right, what is wrong, and why

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Personal, social and emotional development continued

Notes

Consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others

Dress and undress independently and manage their own personal hygiene

Select and use activities and resources independently

Understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Communication, language and literacy

Notes

Interact with others, negotiating plans and activities and taking turns in conversation

Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and readily turn to it in their play and learning

Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or action

Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems

Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meanings and sounds of new words

Speak clearly and audibly with confidence and control and show awareness of the listener

Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences

Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events

Hear and say sounds in words in the order in which they occur

Link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Communication, language and literacy continued

Notes

Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words

Explore and experiment with sounds, words and texts

Retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories

Read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently

Know that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom

Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events and openings, and how information can be found in non-fiction texts to answer questions about where, who, why and how

Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words

Attempt writing for different purposes, using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions

Write their own names and other things such as labels and captions, and begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation

Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Notes

Say and use number names in order in familiar contexts

Count reliably up to ten everyday objects

Recognise numerals 1 to 9

Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems

In practical activities and discussion, begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting

Use language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers

Find one more or one less than a number from one to ten

Begin to relate addition to combining two groups of objects and subtraction to 'taking away'

Use language such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' or 'lighter' to compare quantities

Talk about, recognise and recreate simple patterns

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy *continued*

Notes

Use language such as 'circle' or 'bigger' to describe the shape and size of solids and flat shapes

Use everyday words to describe position

Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Knowledge and understanding of the world

Notes

Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate

Find out about, and identify, some features of living things, objects and events they observe

Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change

Ask questions about why things happen and how things work

Build and construct with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources and adapting their work where necessary

Select the tools and techniques they need to shape, assemble and join materials they are using

Find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning

Find out about past and present events in their own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Knowledge and understanding of the world continued

Notes

Observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world

Find out about their environment, and talk about those features they like and dislike

Begin to know about their cultures and beliefs and those of other people

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Physical development

Notes

Move with confidence, imagination and in safety

Move with control and coordination

Travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment

Show awareness of space, of themselves and of others

Recognise the importance of keeping healthy, and those things which contribute to this

Recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active

Use a range of small and large equipment

Handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control

Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals



Creative development

Notes

Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel

Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role-play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments

Explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions

Recognise and explore how sounds can be changed, sing simple songs from memory, recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and match movements to music

Use their imagination in art and design, music, dance, imaginative and role-play and stories