

Two Observational Tasks for 2004/5



Foundation Stage Profile

Supporting the moderation
of
practitioners' judgements

What are these tasks and what are they for?

The LEA has a statutory duty to ensure that the judgements made by practitioners are both accurate and reliable. One way to achieve this is through helping colleagues share their understanding of the scale points within the various aspects of the Foundation Stage Profile. A successful meeting was held last year where teachers shared their understanding of scale points within Communication, Language and Literacy and Physical Development. These two activities are intended to help you share your understanding of the various scale points and assist the LEA in fulfilling its statutory duty.

In most cases practitioners will be able to make judgements in relation to the various scale points within the Foundation Stage Profile from their knowledge of each child as s/he develops through on-going teaching and learning. It is not necessary or indeed desirable to use set tasks in order to make the majority of your judgements. Other contributors will also be involved in the assessment process i.e. the child's parents or carers, the child and records from previous settings. Class teachers should also include the observations made by learning support assistants and nursery nurses etc.

It is when colleagues require additional information to support their on-going judgements that it is often helpful to carry out one or two more formal observations of the children in specific contexts in order to 'fill in the gaps'. It is important, however, to remember that these planned observational assessments should still be seen by the children as part of normal curriculum provision.

Both of the activities, 'TRAVELLING THROUGH THE JUNGLE', and 'PARTY TIME', have been taken from the examples included in the Profile handbook. However feedback from earlier meetings has been taken on board and this year the exact context in which the observations can be carried out is left to the teacher's discretion.

The titles of the tasks should be treated as suggestions. Provided the tasks you observe are planned around the identified scale points it does not matter what context is used.

Whilst they have been chosen primarily because they help to assess Physical and Mathematical Development other judgements relating to different scale points of the Profile are possible.

When should I plan to carry out the tasks and how many groups of children do I need to observe?

The tasks have been provided this term to allow time for them to be planned as 'on-going' activities into your Autumn and/or Spring term topics. The outcomes of these activities will form the basis of the moderation meeting in the summer term. The half-day (afternoon) session for clusters A1, B1, A2, B2, A3 and B3 (see appendix A) will be held on Tuesday April 19th 2005. The half-day arranged for clusters A4, B4, A5, B5, A6, B6, A7 and B7 will be held on Tuesday April 26th 2005. Both of the meetings will be advertised in the 'Continuing Professional Development Programme' booklet. **The venue for these statutory meetings will be the Quality Hotel, River Way, Wigan.**

This year only cluster groups A1 to A7 will again receive a half-day visit from their moderator. There will again be an opportunity for all colleagues to meet with their moderator during the Autumn term to discuss the Profile.

For moderation purposes it is only necessary to observe one or two groups of children as they carry out a task. By completing these two tasks, the related observation forms and recording judgements about individual children you will also be generating further examples to extend your portfolio of evidence in support of your school's judgement making process.

How should the two prescribed tasks be carried out?

The guidance below was compiled following discussions with colleagues. It would be viewed as good practice to:

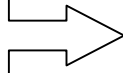
- restrict the number of children to be observed to a maximum of 6, although a group of 4 is more manageable
- vary the 'make up' of the groups from time to time e.g. by attainment and/or friendship groups
- recognise that it is also acceptable to 'join in' the activity by posing questions to probe children's thinking without actually 'giving the answers' e.g. "Tell me what you are doing .. ." "Why have you done it that way?" It is also acceptable, if necessary, to remind children about any aspects of the task that have been set.
- moderate/share the approach taken by another adult e.g. arranging for a teaching assistant to observe the class teacher carrying out the observation first
- ensure that the task has been planned into a meaningful context e.g. through the use of a story or linked to the current theme
- consider the use of a grid to record further observations of children undertaking the same task/activity
- include additional evidence where possible through the use of photographs, tape recordings, actual examples of children's work, outcomes of parental consultations etc.
- view the task as a potential learning opportunity when it is clear that no further information would be gleaned and provide opportunities for children to experience further success through appropriate support but do not record further outcomes of achievement after the initial assessment was terminated.

Feedback from previous moderation meetings indicates that carrying out an observation with a second group of children often helps the teacher to observe with a greater insight and respond to children's comments more effectively.

It is not necessary to use the recording format included in this booklet. A range of versions can be found in the LEA's, 'Early Years Curriculum Development for the Foundation Stage, Assessment, Recording and Reporting' guidance. Whichever approach is adopted it is important that there is clarity regarding the actual judgements made and the evidence used to identify a scale point/s within an aspect of the Foundation Stage Profile.

Moderation Task C

Possible focus:



TRAVELLING THROUGH THE JUNGLE/GOING ON A BEAR HUNT/.....

Key scale points:

Physical Development:

- PD 4 Moves with confidence, imagination and in safety. Travels around, under over and through balancing and climbing equipment. Shows awareness of space, of themselves and others.
- PD 6 Uses small and large equipment, showing a range of basic skills.

Links to other areas of learning:

Creative Development:

- CD 6 Recognises and explores how sounds can be changed. Recognises repeated sounds and sound patterns and matches movement to music

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- DA 4 Dresses and undresses independently and manages own personal hygiene.

Resources:

- hall time or use of grassed area
- range of large PE and outdoor play equipment, such as benches (logs), mats (leaves), a tunnel (hole in the jungle floor), movement tables (piles of stones/rocks), low beam or upturned bench (fallen trees/logs) etc. to create a jungle environment
- percussion instrument

Outline of activity: Whole class or large group activity

Explain to the children that, as they get changed, they are going to turn into a jungle animal or mini-beast. Show them the imaginary jungle habitat that has been created by the range of equipment.

Explain that you want them to pretend to be different creatures, choosing one that they might find in the jungle. Recap quickly what they know about the creatures before they move to their chosen area of the jungle.

Remind the children that it is important to show what they know about their creature by the way in which they move across the various logs and leaves etc. They should also think about the speed at which they travel to reflect how their creature moves.

Tell them that occasionally they will be warned of any dangerous animals that appear and that when they hear the sound (demonstrate the noise produced by the percussion instrument) they must stay very still so that the dangerous animal will not see them. "I don't want you to get eaten!"

Introducing the activity to the children – stating the learning objective and the success criteria

"You are going to turn magically into a mini-beast or jungle creature. Show me how well you can move like your chosen creature and how you can stay very still when there is danger."

Assessment opportunities:

Physical Development

- ❖ Do the children move with confidence and imagination in safety?
- ❖ Do they demonstrate spatial awareness for themselves and others around them?
- ❖ Are they able to move around, under, over and through large equipment?

PD 4 and PD 6

Creative Development

- ❖ Are they able to adapt their movement in response to the percussion instrument?

CD 6

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- ❖ Are the children able to dress and undress independently?

DA 4

A case study

Curriculum context:

We recapped the work we had done on the topic of mini-beasts/creatures and our visit to the local farm. We spent a fair bit of time discussing how we could pretend to be various animals and how we would have to move. The children decided on a group of creatures that we could be and how we could create a 'jungle habitat' using the various pieces of P.E. equipment.

How the activity was introduced and the success criteria made clear:

Before we left for the hall I reminded the children of our earlier discussion and how we had agreed to be one of four chosen jungle animals. I helped them to recall the various vocabulary associated with how our animals would move e.g. the scuttling spider, the slithering worm, the marching ants, the floating butterfly etc. I demonstrated how the tambourine would be used to announce that the hungry bird was flying close by and that they would have to stay completely still in order not to be seen and possibly even get eaten!"

Brief outline of adapted activity:

They decided where in the jungle they would begin e.g. amongst the leaves, on/under the logs etc. They moved around until they heard the big bird swoop down from the treetops. Some hid, others remained perfectly still. On two or three occasions I asked a child to demonstrate how s/he had been moving around. We played a guessing game to see if the other children could guess the various creatures.

Observations – what the child/children said and did:

Harry started by saying, "I'm going to the long grass." He hopped skilfully showing lots of imagination in his movements. He croaked as he moved mimicking the sound of a frog. Occasionally he lost his balance a little and bumped into one or two other animals. Despite this he was able to use most of the large and small pieces of apparatus quite well (**PD 4**). He dressed himself quite quickly without the need for any assistance.

Frankie and Benny: They decided to work together as a pair of ants. They knew that they had to copy each other's movements because '*Ants march one behind the other don't they.*' Both children made good use of the space available and the various obstacles (**PD 6**) and hiding places although Benny wobbled once or twice when he was off the ground. They reacted very quickly to the sound of the tambourine and the arrival of the hungry bird. Frankie still struggles to put his socks on when challenged to do it quickly.

Samantha wanted to be a long slithery worm. She excelled at slithering across the recently polished floor between the various bits of the habitat (**PD 4**). On hearing the sound she froze immediately and was able to maintain her position very well indeed until the 'all clear' was given. Samantha is often spotted helping other children to fasten their shoes (**DA 4**). She never forgets to wash her hands before eating her lunch and rinses her cup after morning snack (**DA 4**).

Cordelia took a while to 'get going'. She seemed oblivious of the movement of others around her and occasionally 'trod' on the smaller creatures as she moved rapidly through the jungle. Her speed made it difficult for her to stop quickly when she was told that the hungry bird was nearby.

Overview

All the children demonstrated a degree of imagination in their initial movements (**PD 6**). Harry often became fixed on one idea, was helped when others (**PD 4,6**) were asked to demonstrate how they were moving through the jungle. This enabled him to show increased confidence as the lesson progressed. Most of the children showed good spatial awareness though Cordelia sometimes had to be reminded that other creatures were also moving around the jungle and that she had bumped into a number of them already. For a short while after each reminder she did manage to control her movements but then tended to forget as her imagination took over once again.



Record of observations

Observer

Date:

Curriculum context:

How the activity was introduced and the success criteria made clear:

Brief outline of adapted activity:

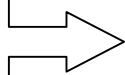
Observations – what the child/children said and did:



Observer

Moderation Task D

Possible Focus:



CELEBRATING/THE PARTY/THE PICNIC.....

Key scale points:

Mathematical Development:

- C 6 In practical activities and discussion, begins to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting.
- C8 Uses developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.

Links to other areas of learning:

Physical Development:

PD 7 Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with basic control.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

ED 5 Has a developing awareness of own needs, views and feelings and is sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others and manages own personal hygiene.

SD 4 Works as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing fairly.

Communication, Language and Literacy

LCT 6 Interacts with others in a variety of contexts, negotiating plans and activities and taking turns in conversation.

Resources:

- range of fruit
- suitable knives for children to use whilst under supervision
- drinks (already in containers) or perhaps jugs with beakers
- biscuits/snack bars etc. if permitted by school policy
- food appropriate to a particular celebration e.g. mangos, samosas, Diwali sweets, rice etc.

Outline of activity: Small group

This activity is designed to extend the learning involved in snack time. It goes beyond the activity of children independently acquiring their own refreshments. The children work together deciding how to share out the food and drink fairly. If items such as fruit need to be cut then obviously adult supervision will be required for safety purposes. If necessary, occasional prompts would be allowed providing that the children's independence is not unduly affected. Questions such as, "What do we need to do first?" do not provide too much support. Questions such as, "How many plates do you think we need?" would not remove the need for the children to solve the problems they encounter. Providing insufficient resources e.g. plates or beakers would allow the children to demonstrate their ability to calculate.

Possibly, given an appropriate time of year, the activity could be retitled, The Picnic or The Party or.....

Introducing the activity to the children – stating the learning objective and the success criteria

“Today I would like you to share out the food and drink. You will need to think about how you’re going to do this. I want to see if you can share them fairly so that everyone gets the same amount.”

Assessment opportunities:

Mathematical Development

- ❖ Do the children use vocabulary such as, ‘how many’, ‘more’, ‘makes’, ‘add’ and ‘altogether’?
- ❖ Do they solve or attempt to solve any problems they encounter? Do they respond to the practitioner’s questions, if used? Do they explore ways of sharing out the various food/drinks etc?

C 6 and C 8

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- ❖ Are the children able to listen to the ideas or the suggestions of others?
- ❖ Do they work well together to solve problems?

ED 5 and SD 4

Communication, Language and Literacy

- ❖ Do they interact with each other, negotiating plans and taking turns in conversation?

LCT 6

Physical Development

Do they handle tools and objects safely and with basic control?

PD 7

A case study

Curriculum context:

The children had become very interested in our work on Diwali as part of a topic to extend their awareness of other faiths. We decided to plan a party to celebrate the festival.

How the activity was introduced and the success criteria made clear:

I told a group of children that I was very busy and that I would be grateful if they could help me prepare the food and drink for our party. "I know that you are good at counting and it will only be fair if everybody has the same. Talk to your partner about how we can make sure that everybody gets the same size drink and the same amount of food, before we start the party."

Brief outline of adapted activity:

- I asked six children to work in pairs with each pair preparing food and drink for ten children in the class. Each pair was asked to work together to sort out and share drinks, samosas and Diwali sweets for their group of ten.
- I used an abacus to show them how, if they worked in pairs, they could prepare the food and drink for the whole class.
- I asked them to sit down and talk to their partner before we started.
- I made sure that each pair had too many cups but not enough samosas etc. hoping that this would present a situation where the children would begin to use language such as add and subtract whilst trying to solve their problems.

Observations – what the child/children said and did:

Hamish told **Henry** to count the cups and he would find out how many samosas they had. "I think that there are eleven cups here, that's too many." Hamish told him to put one away (C 6). Hamish then started to count out the samosas but found out that he did not have enough. "I need some more." He could not work out how many more were required without help from Henry. Eventually, after matching the cups and the samosas they agreed that they needed five more. (C 8). Hamish and Henry worked well together, talking confidently about the task and listening to each other quite well. (SD 4 and LCT 6).

Tom and **Geri** found it hard to work together and each set about their task almost in silence. Even when I reminded them that they were asked to work as a team they tended to merely listen to Hamish and Henry. They eventually ended up with ten plates and nine samosas. They did however handle the all the items safely and with a degree of control (PD 7). Geri became concerned that one of his friends had not got the same number of samosas and finally announced that he needed one more. (C 6)

Cindie and **Ella** sat down to talk about the task and decided who was going to 'count' the plates and cups and who would 'share' the food (ED 5 and SD 4). Cindie quickly realised that she had 'one too many plates' after using 1:1 correspondence. "We don't need this one" she said. (C 6) Ella asked, "Should I wash my hands first?" before quickly starting to match the correct number of sweets to each plate, then announcing that she needed 'five more' if everybody was going to get two each. (C 8) Cindie dropped a plate (two or three times) but fortunately it did not break.

Overview

All except Cindie handled the items safely and with an appropriate degree of control. All except Tom responded well to any prompts I thought necessary. I was pleased that they remembered the importance of clean hands when they were handling food. Clearly Tom and Geri need further opportunities to develop their ability to collaborate with other children.



Record of observations

Observer

Date:

CELEBRATING...../THE PARTY/THE PICNIC.....

Curriculum context:

How the activity was introduced and the success criteria made clear:

Brief outline of adapted activity:

Observations – what the child/children said and did:



Observer