

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning are a key element in the early year's foundation stage. They detail the ways in which children learn from their environment, experiences and activities. When completing the 'All About Me' document and summarising an individual child's learning and development use the questions and ideas below as guidance as well as referring to [Development Matters](#).

Playing and exploring	Active Learning	Creativity and critical thinking
<p>Finding out and exploring What am I curious about? What experiences do I prefer? How do I use all of my senses to explore the world around me? How do I engage with open-ended activities? Am I able to play by myself and extend my play using different materials without the support of an adult? Do I return to this play throughout the day or week?</p> <p>Playing with what I know Do I act out experiences with others or alone? What roles do I like to take on in pretend play indoors and outdoors? How do I use objects to support my play? e.g. a brick for a phone? What examples can you give? Do I use ideas from home, books and / or stories in my play?</p> <p>Being willing to 'have a go' Do I like to try new ideas or stay with something I am familiar with? Am I adventurous and happy to explore? Do you see me keep on trying when things get difficult? Do I work best with an adult or am I happy to explore activities independently?</p> <p>Key words Motivation, curious, fascination, concentration, persistence, engage, determination, pretend, act, interest, initiate, seek, try, challenge, preference, take risks, familiarity, have a go, can do.</p>	<p>Being involved and concentrating Do I show high levels of focus when playing with things that interest me? Am I able to keep focused on a self-initiated activity without being distracted? Do I show fascination and high levels of energy in my play? Do I use my observations skills to notice detail, similarities and differences in things I am interested in?</p> <p>Keeping on trying Do I show persistence even when I find things difficult? Do I enjoy challenges and am able to rebound from setbacks? Do I like to do things for myself and be given time to problem solve before adults helps me? Do I like to reflect with adults about what I have learnt from challenging and new experiences? What strategies do I use when things don't go to plan? Do I concentrate, try different approaches, persist, solve problem, and have new ideas?</p> <p>Enjoying achieving what I set out to do Do I show satisfaction with what I have done; Do I want to show / tell people about my achievements? How do I show enjoyment and pride in mastering a new skill and achievement? Am I motivated to try something new and/ or achieve things for myself rather than for rewards or praise?</p> <p>Key words: Energy, fascination, motivated, persistent, challenge, concentrate, satisfied, initiate, deeply involved, curious, learnt, maintained focus, paid attention, not distracted, recovered, changed, reflective, accomplished, achieved</p>	<p>Having their own ideas Do I have my own ideas rather than follow what someone else has done? Do I ask questions (verbally and non-verbally)? How do I approach challenges and problem solving? Am I able to find new ways to do things? Do I like to explain my thinking and talk about my ideas? Do I use thinking words such as 'ideas, make sense, idea, figure out, plan, find out, tried, trying to we could... let's try...'?</p> <p>Making links Do I use my previous experiences to support my learning and play? Do I try out and test new ideas? Do I make predictions and look for patterns?</p> <p>Choosing ways to do things Do I change my strategy when needed? Am I reflective on how well my activity is going? Do I describe the challenges I encounter and suggest ways to solve the problem? Do I talk about what I am doing, how I plan to do it, what worked well and what I would do differently next time? Can I make my own decisions? Do I plan and develop my ideas? Do I challenge and extend my own learning?</p> <p>Key words Plan, decide, predict, review, adapt, test, patterns, think, link, problem solve, ideas, interests, initiate, challenge, thought, wondered, described, created, met a challenge, explored new ways to do things, cause and effect, developed ideas, decision, achieved.</p>