

Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre - Assessment for learning policy

Rationale

We assess children in the early years because it is a key tool in enhancing children's learning. "Research shows that the more knowledge the adult has of the child, the better matched their support and the more effective the subsequent learning." REPEY 2002 We aim to use our professional knowledge and expertise to assess what is valuable, particularly in terms of predicting later outcomes for children, rather than what is easily assessable.

Aims

We aim to work effectively to assess children both formatively (ongoing assessment) and summatively (a statement at any one point in time). We aim to provide accurate information to:

- Plan children's learning and learning environment;
- Provide accountability to parents and to outside agencies;
- Inform a dialogue with parents;
- Support effective transition; and
- Inform strategic planning through the centre evaluation and improvement planning process.

Guidelines

Practitioners should:

- Observe as part of their ongoing work rather than setting up assessment activities;
- Observe a balance of adult directed and child-initiated learning so as to provide an accurate picture;
- Make longer (learning stories) and shorter observations, photographs and work samples.
- Annotate and summarise what this evidence tells us about the child's learning and development;
- Record significant achievement and reflect what the child can do, rather than what they can't;
- Use assessment to plan to support children's learning and development – activities, adult interactions and changes to the learning environment;
- Involve parents and children in the assessment process, particularly recording their views in the 'learning diaries';
- Share learning diaries and summative statements through which we plan 'next steps' with parents regularly and as part of the parent consultation process;

February 2012

Review February 2014