

**First Friends Child Assessment Policy**

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**Reviewed by:**

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**Principles:**

First Friends acknowledges the importance of regular assessments for children throughout their life time, beginning at birth and tracking individual development for children.

Children will have many different assessments carried out throughout their Early Years life and Education. These assessments may be held by many different professionals such as Doctors, Health Visitors and Nursery practitioners.

First Friends understand the vital importance in sharing information with other professionals, and with parent/carer consent we will begin to build relationships with other professionals working with our families at the earliest convenience. Assessments may be shared with other professionals where appropriate.

First Friends is aware of the importance of having accurate and up to date assessment information on all children. This will pin point all individual child development according to ages and stages, highlighting any areas for further development or where the child may be at a risk of delay. If any areas of development are highlighted it enables us to put into place any actions needed at the earliest possible point, working with families and other professionals to close any gaps that have been identified.

First Friends acknowledges the key role parents and carers have in their child’s development. We will work closely with all families to ensure consistency for the children. All individual long term goals and targets set for the children will be shared with parents and carers enabling us to work together to achieve goals and any targets that have been set. All parents and carers will be encouraged to engage in activities with their children at home. Advice, suggestions and ideas for activities will also be provided by key persons to further support families.

**Aims and Objectives:**

* We aim to provide all children with accurate and up to date assessments on their individual abilities.
* We aim to work closely with families and other professionals involved providing the best possible outcomes for children.
* We aim to identify any areas of development that may be at risk of delay and have interventions put in place at the earliest possible point.
* We aim to ensure that all children regardless of their individual needs and capabilities thrive and have positive outcomes.
* We aim to support parents and carers to understand their child’s development enabling them to fully support their children away from the setting.

There are a range of assessments that are carried out within the setting:

**Initial Assessments:**

All children will be briefly observed over the first 5 settling in sessions using the EYFS framework while further information is gathered from the parent’s/carers. As of September 2015, a more in depth initial assessment has been obtained to help support key persons outline a more accurate assessment in line with the 2yr progress checks. This will mainly focus on the 3 prime areas of learning initially.

This more in depth initial assessment will help to not only outline any areas that children may need support in their development, but now also accurately outline the areas in which they may be excelling in and that we can offer an extension in our teaching and learning. The two views obtained from both the parents/carers and the key person will then be used to write a 2yr progress check to be shared with the child’s health visitor during their routine assessment between 24-36 months.

If the child has already received their 2yr progress check with the health visiting team the red book needs to be brought to the setting and shared with the child’s key person so that we can support and follow up any areas outlined by the community nursery nurse during the 2yr progress check. These procedures are now in place as information sharing and early intervention is the key to ensuring children have the skills they need to be school ready!

Approximate Time frames:

**5 settling in’s :**

These are completed over five consecutive sessions – unless the child is anxious and/or is only attending 1-2 sessions a week. In this circumstance it may be advised to parents and carers that they attend every day for an hour until the child has settled. If quality observations cannot be obtained in the first five sessions then this will be continued into another five. All children will be assessed individually and not moved on until they are completely comfortable.

 **Parents view initial assessment and baseline:**

This is given immediately to parents and carers with ‘getting to know me’ and other relevant settling in sheets. This is expected to be completed with the support of the key person within the first hour of the settling in process. This will enable the key person to make their assessment alongside it during the child’s second week, if it is deemed that the child is ready for this stage. When both the parents/carers and key person have made their judgements about where the child’s current level of development is at, the child’s baseline assessment will be completed, and next steps will be given to children (see below). Parents and carers will be notified of this and given ways they can help their child progress away from the setting. This should take approximately no more than three weeks depending on the child. The **‘What to expect when’** document will be used to help both parents/carers and key persons to come to an accurate agreement over each child’s individual strengths and difficulties.

**Next steps:**

Using the information from above the children will be set up to three goals called next steps. This will be depending on how quickly the child has settled and their individual abilities. Parents/carers will be notified of these targets and given ideas of ways to support their child at home. Once the child has started the setting next steps will generally be discussed at parent meetings. However if the child progresses and new next steps are needed between parent meetings, parents and carers will be spoken to and information will be provided around the new next steps and how they are able to support their child further at home.

Parents and carers are always encouraged to speak to key persons and other staff if they ever have any queries or would like further information. This can be discussed within the room or a one to one meeting can be requested if the parents/carers feel that it is needed.

**2yr progress check:**

A 2yr progress check will be written if the child is the appropriate age. The information that has been gathered from the ‘first 5 settling in’s’ and the ‘initial assessment’ will be used alongside the key persons professional judgment and their observations of the child to write the 2yr progress check. This information will be gathered over no longer than a six week period of the child starting unless there is an acceptable reason that the assessment is unable to be written at this time. Acceptable reasons may include:

* A cared for child
* A child with a disability
* A child with a learning difficulty
* A child who is suffering from a bereavement
* A child who is experiencing a change in family circumstance

In these circumstances the child may need longer to settle into the setting. However this will be recorded in the child’s online learning journal and key persons are aware that one must be written at the first given opportunity of suitability.

**EExAT:**

At First Friends we use an online system called EExAT. This is an online assessment system that has been specifically developed for the use in early years. EExAT combines tracking, documenting, moderating and reporting children’s learning from birth to five years. This system also has parent and carer involvement built in.

At the heart of the system is a birth to five years Child Development Framework for assessing and tracking attainment and progress based on the EYFS. Evidence of attainment is captured and documented in the ‘evidence bank’ and used to create online ‘learning journals’ which are shared with and contributed to by parents and carers. (www.earlyexcellence.com)

This system not only creates reports for individual children but it also tracks cohort data, enabling the staff to fully assess where child development is within the rooms, and identify where there may be gaps in learning and development, this will identify if any interventions are needed.

**Pupil profiles and pupil reports:**

Individual children will have a ‘pupil profile’, this profile is an overview of all the relevant data for that child that has been inputted by the key person. This data will include the Leuven Scale looking at the child’s well-being and involvement as well as the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL).

Each child will also have a pupil report, this report is a written report that captures key indicators of the child’s age-related development within the areas of learning and development. The context of this report will provide appropriate and meaningful and meaningful information to enable staff to identify, plan for and support significant aspects of children’s learning and development towards the Early Learning Goals.

**One page profile:**

A one page profile is an assessment of where the child is with their development at a particular point. This will generate a ‘cumulative score’ to give a clear indication if the child is on target with their learning and development or if interventions are needed to be put into place.

A baseline is the first data to be inputted and this can be done at any time throughout the year. All other data must be collected in specific time based windows to ensure that their progress and development is documented accordingly and that their cumulative score is accurate. The time based windows are as follows:

* 1st September – 31st December
* 1st January – 30th April
* 1st May – 31st August

For children who have experienced an extended absence from the setting a new base line will be gained upon returning to the setting.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to attend a parents meeting with their child’s key person to discuss their child’s development. Parents and carers will be shown where their child is within all areas of learning. Next steps will be given to parents/carers along with ideas to support their child at home. This is also the ideal time for parents/carers to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding their child.

**2yr progress checks and summative assessments may be postponed if a child has recently experienced a change in family circumstances. Please refer to the ‘A know how guide’**