

## Assessment and Observation Policy – Early Years April 2019

**Reviewed by:** Beate Guertler-Green

**Reviewed:** April 2019

**Next review:** April 2020

**Related Policies:**

SEND policy

Admissions Policy

School Readiness Policy

**Endorsement**

Full endorsement is given to this policy by:

**Name:** Claudia Goodbrandt

**Position:** Cambridge Steiner School Trustee

**Signed** 

Date: 27/04/2019

This Policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of assessment and observation in the Early Years Department at Cambridge Steiner School.

Observation and assessment is an important part of good educational practice and reflects the Steiner Waldorf philosophy and educational approach to understanding the child as a unique, active and developing human being. We recognize that regular self-reflecting and assessing of teaching methods together with monitoring progress of each individual child, enable the evaluation of teaching practices and guarantee high standards. This is supported and affirmed by both colleagues and parents and forms an integral part in each teacher's planning.

Our assessment for the very young child is based on the teacher's knowledge of child development, which is based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner as well as present scientific research. It is in line with statutory regulation and is oriented on the mile stones outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for children from birth to 5. It is related to long, medium and short term planning of supporting a child's development. We take guidance from the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship for setting appropriate goals in a Steiner Waldorf setting.

All staff (teachers, assistants, volunteers and supply staff) contribute to the observation and assessment of a child. The person who compiles the assessment/reports etc., is known in Steiner Waldorf terms as the kindergarten 'teacher' or 'practitioner'. This person is the same as the EYFS 'Key person'. The kindergarten Teacher holds the overall responsibility for the children in their group. We recognise that in order to properly meet the individual needs of each child and to sufficiently observe and assess their learning and development, it is important to allocate an individual key worker. The key worker will share information with the teacher on a regular basis. Parents are provided with their child's key worker's name, and whenever possible the teacher and key worker together feed back to the parents in consultations etc.

The regular assessment of each child's healthy and age appropriate development rests upon the following procedures:

**Initial Meeting:**

On entry to the kindergarten the kindergarten teacher meets with the parents to establish background information, including a brief biography forming a picture of the child. This is entered on the Initial Profile form, which includes questions relating to the EYFS PROGRESS CHECK (2-3 yrs) if applicable.

**Shared Observation:**

All members of the kindergarten staff, who are in contact with a child on a daily basis, observe the child's development and make notes. These records of on-going observations together with photos, a child's drawings and activities as well as any contributions by a parent/carer and a child's own comments where applicable, contribute to the summative report. A child profile (does this need more explanation?) could also form part of this formative assessment process.

**Baseline check:**

Practitioners will complete a baseline check for each child within the first few weeks of joining the kindergarten, unless the practitioner has received a baseline check from a previous setting. The baseline check is intended to pick up any areas where support may be necessary as early as possible. An assessment will be made by the teacher in conjunction with the school SENDCo, should any support be needed and a plan created for the appropriate measures in line with the school's SEND policy. If a child joins from another setting any development summaries are requested by the Admissions Officer and shared with the practitioner. If a baseline check is received, the practitioner will assess it against own observations and complete a new one, should the observations differ considerably. These checks create a starting point against which progress can be effectively measured. The Baseline assessments are shared with the parents and they are invited to contribute to gain a more complete picture of the child.

**Learning and Development Plan**

(The learning development plan records observations and actions taken by the staff in relation to the child's progress as well as planning to support their development in the kindergarten, with due regard to the others in the group, and the rhythm and routine of the day.)

The Learning Development plan records observations and actions taken concerning a child's progress. It also lays out all planning that is necessary to support a child's development in the kindergarten. All actions are carefully considered with due regard to the other children in the group as well as the rhythm and routine of the day.

**End of year reporting for 2, 3 and 4 year olds**

Observations and achievement of developmental milestones are usually shared at the end of the year during a meeting with the parents/carers. Parents will be asked to contribute and suggestions may be made by the practitioner to support the child's learning and development at home. (Perhaps add something like: A meeting can be arranged any time as and when necessary?)

**5 year old checks (Screening movement journey)**

This takes place in the Summer Term. The children's motor coordination, balance, spatial orientation and lateral dominance are assessed through a guided movement sequence led by their teacher. Their

fine motor skills, attention and representational skills are assessed through a drawing exercise. The SENDco works closely with the kindergarten teacher to develop a picture of possible learning needs and makes recommendations on differentiation to meet those needs. This will be discussed with parents and if appropriate a One Page Profile or Learning Plan developed.

### **End of Year reporting for 5 year olds and the EYFS Profile**

The EYFS Profile Document is used to record the child's progress in all areas of learning and development in line with statutory requirements. Contributions from parents are added to the profile document.

A verbal report is given to parents on a child's progress against the Early Learning Goals and the assessment scales.

### **End of Year Reporting for 6 year olds**

At the end of a child's years in kindergarten a summative report is written for the parents and also passed on to the child's next teacher or school. A special celebration marks the 'journey to school' and the child and parents will be given a portfolio, which highlights the child's achievements during their time in the kindergarten. This contains drawings, paintings, a photo book giving snapshots of the child's experiences, as well as the child's project work (e.g. a needle case, weaving and skipping rope etc.).

### **Child Study**

A more detailed study may be undertaken for an individual child, which all teaching staff contribute to. Parents are informed when this is taking place.

### **Special Needs**

There may be times where a child needs extra support if there are questions around learning and development, language support or any other area. Parents will be consulted and have input into any plans to support the child's needs and the SENDCo coordinates support with the child's teacher, speech therapist, school doctor etc.

### **Transition to Class 1**

The Screening Movement Journey is repeated - outcomes are recorded by the SENDCo. Observations assess progress, inform planning. All findings are passed on and discussed with the Class 1 teacher. The Future Class 1 teacher visits the kindergartens to observe the children that are transitioning. The Future Class 1 Teacher either participates in or leads Sunbeam group sessions during the summer term.

A verbal picture of the child is also shared with the new teacher and with the school faculty group. The kindergarten teacher writes a final report at the end of the year. All written information is passed onto the child's new teacher.

The kindergarten teacher continues to be available for discussion about the children during the child's journey throughout the school. All faculty staff contribute to child study for example and proactively support each other.

Children leaving our school to join another school will be supported in this transition. Prospective teachers may be invited to visit the child in our kindergarten to share information and create a better picture of the child.