

6

Collecting meaningful evidence

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Chapter Objectives

- To understand the various forms of evidence that enable practitioners to make informed judgements about individual children's stages of development and plan for appropriate next steps for learning.



This chapter explores the importance of accessing and recording evidence of children's learning and skills as a way of helping practitioners effectively meet the needs of children in their care. It considers the many forms of evidence that can be collected and the range of partners that contribute to the ongoing holistic records of children's achievement and learning. It explores how evidence can be used to inform parents of their child's progress and assist practitioners in planning for future learning. Discussion will also be included to understand how practitioners link with other agencies that are part of the children's workforce. The literature draws on key early years research, such as the EPPE report, in understanding the rationale for making ongoing pupil observation to inform records of achievement.

Why collect evidence?

If we are to meet individual needs we have to make an accurate and holistic assessment of what children can do. From the day they are born, assessments are made that detail personal statistics about the



Figure 6.1 Photograph of the Red Book

baby that make every child unique. Records will be made about important physical assessment, such as gender and size, that inform their individual record. This data is now recorded in one document known as a red book (Figure 6.1) that includes important guidance to support new parents in understanding children's milestones and stages of development. The red book also lists ongoing medical records and immunisations that children will require in the early years of their life.

Individual records are regularly updated by health professionals who have contact with the child and carer. These could include health visitors, doctors, childminders and pre-school workers. This evidence will form the earliest record of development as children move on to early years settings. Once evidence is gathered it is used in a number of ways to contribute to organisation and aspects of teaching and learning. Professionals are responsible for collecting and collating regular and ongoing assessments of children's learning and performance in order to plan for the next steps.

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Providers must ensure that practitioners are observing children and responding appropriately to help them make progress from birth towards the early learning goals. (DCSF 2008c: 2. 2.19)

Children's records, or learning journeys as they are now known, need to be regularly reviewed and updated in order to maximise every opportunity to support children in meeting the five outcomes of *Every Child Matters* (DFES 2004). These learning journeys offer a meaningful record of evidence that will inform the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), a summative assessment report which is completed at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Practitioners will need to;

- Review the information that has been collected and note any gaps in learning or skills.
- Make holistic assessment of a child's progress and development.
- Draw planning points together; it is important that long-term as well as short-term changes are recorded.

There should also be planned opportunity to review and discuss children's records with the team, who should:

- Review all records where possible once per half-term and a minimum of once per term.
- Review assessment records more frequently if staffing ratios allow more regular assessments to be undertaken.
- Ensure that assessments are moderated to check the quality and parity of team decisions.



Reflective Activity

Think about the kind of evidence you can collect that will offer a broad range of information about children's holistic development. Where will it come from and what should it tell you about the unique child?

(Continued)

- Insert evidence into a learning journey document; make sure you clearly annotate any photographs or children's work to show their achievement and stage of development.
- Plan the next steps for personalised learning and development in each area of learning.

Key Point

- Plan for weekly team discussions to share evidence, and display the timetable in a central place.

Effective practice and joined-up working

The overarching aim of the new EYFS framework is to help young children achieve the five outcomes of the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) agenda. The EYFS promotes a holistic approach to the process of making assessments of children. The document has been organised to strengthen partnerships with parents and children's services, and it communicates the importance of multi-agency working. Multi-agency working underpins the *Every Child Matters* agenda and informs the principles and practice of the EYFS.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) enables effective communication between the various agencies involved with children who have additional needs, or a child about whom there are concerns. (DCSF 2008c: 2.14)

Ensuring that effective practice is achieved in the context of working with other professionals and agencies that are outside the setting is one of the key principles in the new curriculum documentation. Anning and Edwards (Palaiologou 2008) speak of a 'joined-up approach, by professionals who work together as part of a multi-agency team. The desire to make sure that children are accessing the support, protection and care they are entitled to is also clearly defined in the Children Act 2004.

Similarities exist between the New Zealand approach to early years education and the EYFS framework in the UK. One example of this

can be seen in the approach to achieving effective joined-up working between education and health. The term 'educare' is now embedded in current policy in the UK early years ethos and refers to provision that endows education and care with equal status. It underpins the importance of the professional working within a multi-agency framework, thus building close links with alternative agencies of the children's workforce. This joined-up approach between agencies is now clearly embedded in New Zealand. Since 2003, the Ministry of Education have developed positive strategies to achieve integrated working between health, education and social care (Farquhar 2003).

Importance is placed on continuity and communication with all agencies that are involved with children and families. Steps can be taken to ensure that effective partnership working is achieved at key points of transition. It is important that practitioners should:

- Establish visits between pre-school and early years settings to build links and establish familiar practice and routines.
- Develop meaningful recording formats that gather essential information in preparation for the point of transition.
- Hold regular cluster meetings with pre-school provision; share curriculum content and approach to learning, information formats, and record keeping structures.
- Hold joint training sessions to focus on key areas of defined training needs and sharing innovative practice.

Central to all effective partnership working is the 'Common Core of Skills and Knowledge' (CWDC 2007), which supports all practitioners in creating a joined up workforce to deliver the five outcomes of *Every Child Matters*:

- Being healthy.
- Staying safe.
- Enjoying and achieving.
- Achieving economic well-being.
- Making a positive contribution.

The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge includes clear statements, which define key skills that are required by professionals when collecting information about children and young people, in order to successfully deliver the five outcomes. Under the second heading of the Common Core Skills entitled 'Child and Young Person' is a section dedicated to the role of observation and judgement. It is suggested that in order to work effectively in a professional role with children and young people we need to be competent and confident in the following specific skills:

- Understand that babies, children and young people see and experience the world in different ways.
- Observe a child or young person's behaviour, understand its context, and notice any unexpected changes.
- Record observations in an appropriate manner.
- Evaluate each situation, taking into consideration individuals and their circumstances and development issues.
- Make considered decisions on whether concerns can be addressed by providing or signposting additional sources of information or advice.
- Be able to recognise the signs of a possible developmental delay.
- Listen actively and respond to concerns expressed about developmental or behavioural changes.
- Be able to support children and young people with a developmental difficulty or disability, and understand that their families, parents and carers will also need support and reassurance.
- Where you feel support is needed, know when to take action yourself and when to refer to managers, supervisors or other relevant professionals.
- Be able to distinguish between fact and opinion. (Palaiologou 2008)

Although not exhaustive, the above list offers a comprehensive checklist of the essential skills of the early years professional. It aims to highlight the important role of the practitioner in making early identification and assessment of children's needs.

So what kinds of evidence do we collect at the earliest point of transition into settings? When parents first seek places for early years provision, they are usually asked to complete an application form with targeted questions about their child, such as date of birth, home address, place of birth, names of parents or carers, and names of other siblings. Information about personal interests, likes and dislikes is also collected, which can then inform planning and teaching.

Home visits

One of the first forms of evidence and communication that is made between settings and new admissions will be accessed during a home visit. This is prior to admission, when one or more members of the early years team visit the child in their own home. Information that is recorded here will be through discussion with the parent or carer and will contribute to the child's future personal record of achievement or learning journey. Many settings create their own documentation in preparation for such visits in order to gather the meaningful information they require. This evidence is filed as part of the personal record of achievement and used as a point of reference by the team of practitioners working with the child and the family.

Figure 6.2 shows an example of a typical format with suggested headings to enable practitioners to gather key information at home visits and during the transition period.

Admissions and points of transition

New admissions usually enter settings through an organised transition period, when both the child and the parent will be invited to visit for short periods of time. It is a further opportunity for informal discussion and provides another access point for greater information about the child's unique experiences and skills. Often information is shared that offers a more holistic picture of the child. Together they may talk about home and family structures. Perhaps a new baby or a recent family bereavement will impact upon children's ability to make a smooth transition into the setting or present longer-term implications for learning. This will require personalised action plans and need to be shared with the team to provide appropriate support for the child and family.

Record of Home Visit and Transition Week One

Home visit	Questions and prompts	
Name: Home Language:		
Date: Observation Any Additional Information	About the child: Are they interested in our presence? Do they stay close to parent/carer? Is the child relaxed, animated, shy etc. Relationship with parent/carer	Do they have good mobility and balance? Are they able to play independently? Do they use language effectively? What do they enjoy doing? Any specific needs?
Transition week		
Date:		
Observation and Comments	Action and Next Steps	Signature
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		

Figure 6.2 Format for home visit and week one transition

When children arrive from earlier pre-school experiences, their record of learning and development should be forwarded to the next provider. This will enable practitioners to plan for personalised need and identify the next steps in learning. These should be carefully matched to accurate records of what children can already do.

Parents or carers of children who arrive in the UK from other countries or simply relocate in the UK, will be required to present records of health or prior educational assessment if their children have attended pre-school settings such as childminders, playgroups or nursery. Difficulty is often experienced however when children arrive in the UK from other countries, as a result of language barriers, cultural differences, or the quality and usefulness of the available records. To ensure that children's needs are met, it is imperative that accurate records showing date of birth and health checks are available to settings, and this is a key point of practice for multi-agency working across the children's services.

Practitioners will frequently need to work with professionals from other agencies to meet needs and use their knowledge and advice to provide children's social care. (DCSF 2008a: 10)

In school settings, a number of 'admission places' are set aside for priority places; these are often accessed by children who are part of disadvantaged families or may already be involved with other children's services, such as health or social services. The number of available priority places is determined by numbers on roll and is currently allocated as three places for every 26 children. If families are known to children's services, there should be detailed records of the nature of their involvement, outlining any support that has been provided, which are then forwarded to the next setting. It is usually the head teacher or setting manager who is given initial access to this information, and it is essential that this be shared with the early years team. This good practice enables them to prepare for personalised future learning and development and to plan for continuity built upon earlier assessment. The team will also begin to establish early links with parents and carers in order to forge positive partnerships. Evidence is collected from a range of partners involved with the child. These will include parents and carers, early years practitioners senior management, siblings, extended family members, wider school staff such as lunchtime organisers, crossing patrol attendant, etc.

Parent partnerships

It is important that a number of people contribute to the learning journey, as this offers a more holistic range of evidence about the child from different perspectives. Parents are seen as first educators in children's lives, and their contribution to their children's future is recognised by those in early education. The overall responsibility for collecting evidence of children's learning should be a shared effort from a range of partners. Luff (Palaiologou 2008) believes that observation, collecting and documentation should have a supportive role in children's learning and in the professionals' practice. It should not be simply a paper exercise, but must add to the value of an educational programme and be beneficial to children's assessment (cited in Palaiologou 2008).

Parental involvement therefore should be far more than signing a consent form or accepting an invitation to a parents' evening. Their involvement should be given a high profile and seen as a key part in the overall effectiveness of gathering evidence of their child's development. It is thought that engaging them in initial discussions when observations are designed is a useful strategy to both equip and empower parents to take a responsible role in the overall responsibility of children's care and education. Early years research has shown that when parents are involved in early years practice and activities from the start of the observation process, there is greater chance of achieving close collaboration – they can become helpful collaborators (Sylva et al. 2004).

So how are these kinds of partnerships achieved? We firmly believe that, in order to establish effective partnership practice, expectations of success should be high. But it is equally important for practitioners, parents and carers to be realistic and ready to accept different levels of partnership working. Try as we may, sometimes achieving high-level partnership working, for all children in our care, may be less successful than we had initially hoped. Parents present settings with unique personal circumstances and have varied expectations for both their children's learning and their personal involvement. It is important that practitioners respect and recognise this individuality and, whenever possible, design creative parent partnerships that match their needs as well as supporting the shared interest in their child.

An essential quality of professional practice in the children's workforce is to have the desire, determination and passion to work effectively in partnership with parents. Through our vocation, we choose

to improve the lives of children in our care, and accepting anything less than high standards for practice should never be a conscious part of our vision.

In 2003, the Ministry of New Zealand introduced their new approach to early childhood education, which was defined as from birth to 5 or 6 years of age. They believed that building partnerships between schools and families was more than just simply listening to each other. They termed it 'A joint construction of outcomes and pathways' (Farquhar 2003).

To establish clear partnership ethos and working, it is essential that parents be treated with respect from the earliest meeting. Positive partnership working is achieved through clear channels of communication that enable information sharing to be achieved. Parents should be informed not only of their child's well-being and progress, but also of future events in the setting and any important changes to provision. This should be a two-way process; they, too, need to be able to pass information to the setting and know it will be acknowledged and respected.

To engage parents in the process of observation in the home environment, it is essential that practitioners support them in understanding the objectives of this process. We should not assume that they will have a good understanding of the purpose of making observations of their children at play – why should they? It is our responsibility to guide and support them not only in learning how to make quality observation, but also, and more importantly, to understand why observation and assessment are so important. This can be achieved through a series of planned induction meetings between the parent or carer and the setting. Specific information about observation can be shared in an understandable and non-threatening way, and it will focus upon:

- Sharing clear information as to the purpose of observation. What is it for? Why is it important to daily practice? How will it benefit the educational programme?
- How does observation assist practitioners in meeting children's needs and how does it inform future activities?
- Parents need very clear guidelines as to what to observe and how to record their observations; share examples of the formats we suggest they could use. Model the practice of observing and recording.

- We as practitioners need to be aware of meeting the needs of those parents who may have low level literacy skills, have English as an additional language, or lack confidence in recording. Place alternative methods of making observation their way, such as the use of cameras and video clips.
- We need to clearly communicate their right to access all observations made on their child; their involvement is their choice, and they have the right to withdraw at any time.

Sometimes practitioners are sceptical about the information they gain from parents, as the latter often perceive children in a different way from how practitioners see them in settings. This information, however, is of great importance, as it presents key information about holistic development and gives us invaluable information about how they behave in the home environment. Parents need to be assured that practitioners recognise that they are the ones who know their children best. Below is an example of how one practitioner approached a parent for ideas and advice about their child.



Case Study: Children's centre, Sam, aged 3 years and 7 months

Read the following case study and think about the importance of making accurate pupil assessment that is informed through ongoing observation of a pupil's learning and communication with parents and carers.

After observing Sam for several weeks, I was concerned about the development of his speech and language. Sam was always running after the other children and shouting loudly at them. When I gained eye contact and engaged in conversation with him, his answers were mostly incoherent and loud. I decided to speak with his mum about my observations, and she subsequently informed me that Sam had an uncle who was deaf.

As a result of this conversation, I suggested that we refer Sam to the Speech and Language Therapy Service. Once he was assessed, both his parents and the school were presented with a report of their findings. Sam's results showed that he did indeed have below-average hearing. A language programme was put in place for him and he is now making good progress. If I had not approached Sam's mum, I am in no doubt that he would still be having problems and his ability to make good progress would have been seriously affected.

- Why do you think Mum had not noticed a possible issue here?
- What could you have done if Mum had not been willing to recognise that there may be a problem?

One of the earliest and best-known studies of parental involvement was made at Pen Green Early Excellence Centre in 1995. Parental involvement was encouraged by recording development at home in diaries and by using video cameras. As a result of this project, key findings about both the willingness of parents to be involved and the overall quality and effectiveness of their observations in supporting their practice were recorded:

- Some parents made insightful observations of children playing that informed nursery staff planning. Others simply recorded amusing incidents or family events such as weddings, birthday parties, etc.
- Many parents initially went for quantity rather than quality – parents were also eager for feedback, resulting in hours of video footage to be covered and unsustainable demands on staff.

It was decided that a number of strategies should be taken to improve the level of evidence and how parents make observations. Steps were taken to hold training sessions to assist parents in finding a focus for their observations and engaging parents and staff in a shared conceptual framework – ‘a framework for thinking’. Staff believed that the way forward was to develop a shared language that could be used to discuss the ways children learn and review how adults can effectively intervene to support and extend learning (cited in Whalley 2008). Through this approach, parents are involved at the outset and are encouraged to take greater ownership of the process. It shows that they are valued contributors to the learning process and offers opportunity to raise their self-esteem and status.

Play underpins all development and learning for young children. Most children play spontaneously, although some may need adult support, and it is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. (DCSF 2008c: 1.17)

As a way of structuring this ‘framework for thinking’, we have included a suggested format that could be used to achieve successful parent observation. We wanted to design something that would be

Would you like to share with us the things that you and your child like doing together.

Reading - Milly likes to tell us a story from her books. She tells us one then we read to her.

Singing - Milly loves singing + music. - more than TV!

Gardening - Milly loves playing in the garden with Fred. She loves snails - she calls them 'speecy!' She helps me weed + growing seeds etc.

Painting - Milly loves writing with everything. She pretends to make 'lists' etc!

Playing - 'making tea'




Figure 6.3 Completed parent assessment format

simple to use and offer parents the opportunity to share aspects of their important experiences with their children. This was introduced in a nursery setting with overwhelming response from parents. Once the idea was clearly communicated, parents could access templates independently from the parents' display board, and completed forms were replaced in a similar way on a daily basis (Figure 6.3).

Taking decisions upon the information you want to collect and how to record it should be discussed with the whole team. When planning for observation, it is crucial that, in order to make quality and meaningful observations of children's learning and skills, the purpose of observing and how to do it need to be clearly understood by all those involved. Once agreed, it is the responsibility of the whole team to gather this information and contribute to the children's records. The final result should be collaborative, and not a single-effort product.

Effective teamwork in collecting evidence

Effective practitioners place the needs of the children at the forefront of their practice. However, it is of equal importance to achieve and sustain quality provision, and the needs of the team should also be given close consideration. When organising ways to collect evidence,

it is essential that individual team members and respective roles be considered. The early years workforce brings a varied range of members; teacher, nursery nurse, and learning support assistant are but a few of the most familiar, and each presents a specific job description, with defined working hours and conditions. The task of managing such diverse teams requires considerable professional skill, demanding diplomacy, tact and understanding to establish the strategies and routines that meet the needs of the team.

Key decisions will need to be made as to how and when the team will access the information. Will observations be scheduled on weekly rotas to ensure that they happen? Often practitioners understand the importance of making and using observation to inform their assessment, but unless these are clearly planned for, other things take priority and opportunity to observe can be sidelined. Another important consideration for team consensus and clarity is in respect to their intentions for sharing and storing evidence. They need to explore and agree manageable structures for collecting and filing evidence, and timetable regular weekly opportunity to share key findings.

Key Points

- Always share ideas for new proformas or record keeping with the whole team prior to putting them into practice.
- How can we accommodate practitioners who may work part-time hours and have difficulty in attending weekly meetings? Many ideas have been tried and adapted by practitioners. It is through regular evaluation of practice by the whole team that the most successful methods are finally agreed. Some examples of good practice could be:
 - Jotting down notes in a notepad or on Post-it notes, which are placed into a central record-keeping document.
 - Using an evaluation box at the bottom of planning sheets to record any key points for learning; these are then shared at team discussion time.
 - Practitioners coding observations in a particular way to highlight the most important points to be noted.

This allows practitioners to have equal knowledge of children's levels of learning and skills, in order to plan well-informed next steps for their learning and make specific improvements for educational provision.

It is important that team members feel able to express their views and share their opinions, regardless of their status or team role. Making observation and taking judgements based upon the evidence we collect is a skilled process, but one that can be supported through effective training and mentoring. Just as children have individual personalities and skills, so, too, do the members of every team. Recognising individual skills and competencies, as well as supporting areas for development, has important implications not only for effective leadership of early years teams, but also for the provision of regular training opportunities matched to practitioner need:

- Whole-team training, focused training in how to observe and make assessments, and regular induction to support new team members.
- Important that they train together; this can be achieved through nominating training events linked to yearly, whole-school development planning.
- Carefully designed job descriptions, clearly outlining responsibilities; attending weekly team meetings; making observation; record keeping; and training and continued professional development.

Key Point

- At the start of each year, identify diary dates for team meetings and appraisals to review practice and share ideas.

Collecting the evidence

The role of the observation process for children and the educational programme should be to improve the quality, care and education that children receive, and to develop and enhance professional practice. Observations help practitioners to understand and reflect on the overarching and finer details of the educational programme, and, most importantly, they inform practitioners' understanding of the children in their care. An observation of learning can be made in any context or activity in which the child is engaged. Many observations of development are noticed quite incidentally as practitioners and parents go about their busy day, and do not always need to be planned. Recording information should therefore be simple, manageable

and inform children's individual learning journeys. Childminders speak of having less opportunity to actively record observations but instead rely heavily on the verbal feedback they share with parents and carers on a day-to-day basis. Parents are, however, given a detailed written record of learning and development at the point of exit.

The Te Whariki approach to early years education in New Zealand presents an integrated approach that weaves observation into daily classroom activity. Margaret Carr also speaks about using observation to develop learning communities and using learning stories as a way of weaving this cultural ethos into daily practice (Carr 2001).

We believe that the concept of learning stories as explained by Margaret Carr presents some interesting and useful ideas that can be adapted quite easily to inform our own suggested early years assessment-learning. Her thoughts provide a successful, personalised approach to collecting evidence that draws upon a broad client base and interprets the evidence in a very creative and meaningful way.

The following section offers simple ideas for making and recording observation of learning. They are best suited to early years settings that involve a team of practitioners able to contribute to the whole process of assessment.

Catch as you can

These observations of children's learning are most easily recorded by scribbled evidence on Post-it notes, which are then transferred to their personal records of achievement. They can be collected at incidental times of any day when practitioners notice a child displaying an aspect of skill or learning. The most important thing to remember is to include the child's name and the date the observation was made. Further discussion about this information can take place at a later date to determine what achievement it may indicate and how to define the next steps (Figure 6.4).

Photographs

Seizing the moment and capturing children in action learning is great evidence of their achievement and skills. Photographs offer

Catch as you can observation

Date:

Name of child:

Look Listen Note: Observed learning:

Links to Development Matters:

Next steps:

Signature

Figure 6.4 Catch as you can recording format

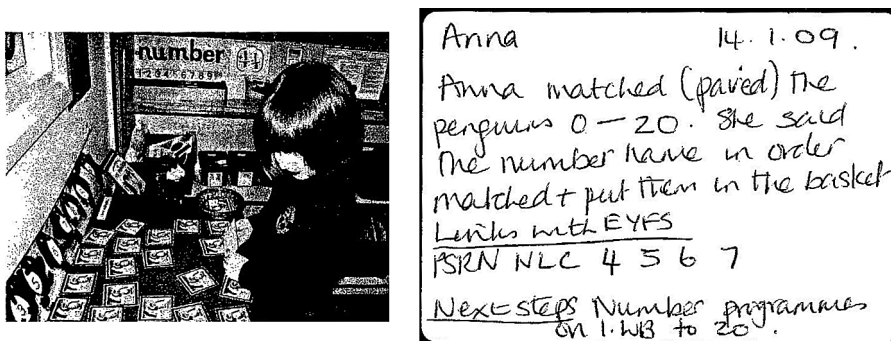


Figure 6.5 Photograph and annotated notes about Anna

accurate evidence of learning, which again should be dated and annotated, linking to the areas of learning and development in the EYFS, to show the specific learning that was achieved and the next steps (Figure 6.5).

Adult-focused or participant observations

These are usually recorded on a specific paper format, which defines the activity and learning objective. The information will record children's ability to meet the success criteria and in some cases take the learning to a further level. Such observations will be recorded during adult-led learning experiences or where the adult is playing alongside children in child-initiated play. Again it is essential that key information features on these records, including name, date, any specific learning needs, how learning was demonstrated, and suggested next steps for learning (Figure 6.6).

Parent and carer observations

Parents' and carers' contributions and their own assessment of their child's learning and development are equally important. Information from parents is often shared through direct conversation with practitioners, either informally day to day or at organised parent evenings. Many settings create simple recorded formats, which parents can complete and contribute to, about their involvement in their child's learning experience that again inform the 'learning journey'. A great example of parental involvement is using a 'Wow Wall' (Figures 6.7 and 6.8) as a focused display where parents are invited to record aspects of their child's achievements and make contributions to the display. This is also discussed in Chapter 8.

Children's self-assessments

Children should be given the opportunity to contribute to personal assessment and talk about their learning. Methods for successfully doing this are explained in greater detail in Chapter 5.



Key Point

- Make observation meaningful and manageable and timetable opportunities for making observation on your weekly timetable.

The underpinning rationale for observation and good record keeping is to enable early years teams, parents and children themselves to

Adult-Focused Observation

Activity:		Area of Learning:	
Date:		Cross-Curricular Links:	
Learning Challenge:			
Group Names:	Assessment Outcome:	Comments:	Next Steps:
Signature:			

Figure 6.6 Example of adult-focused format

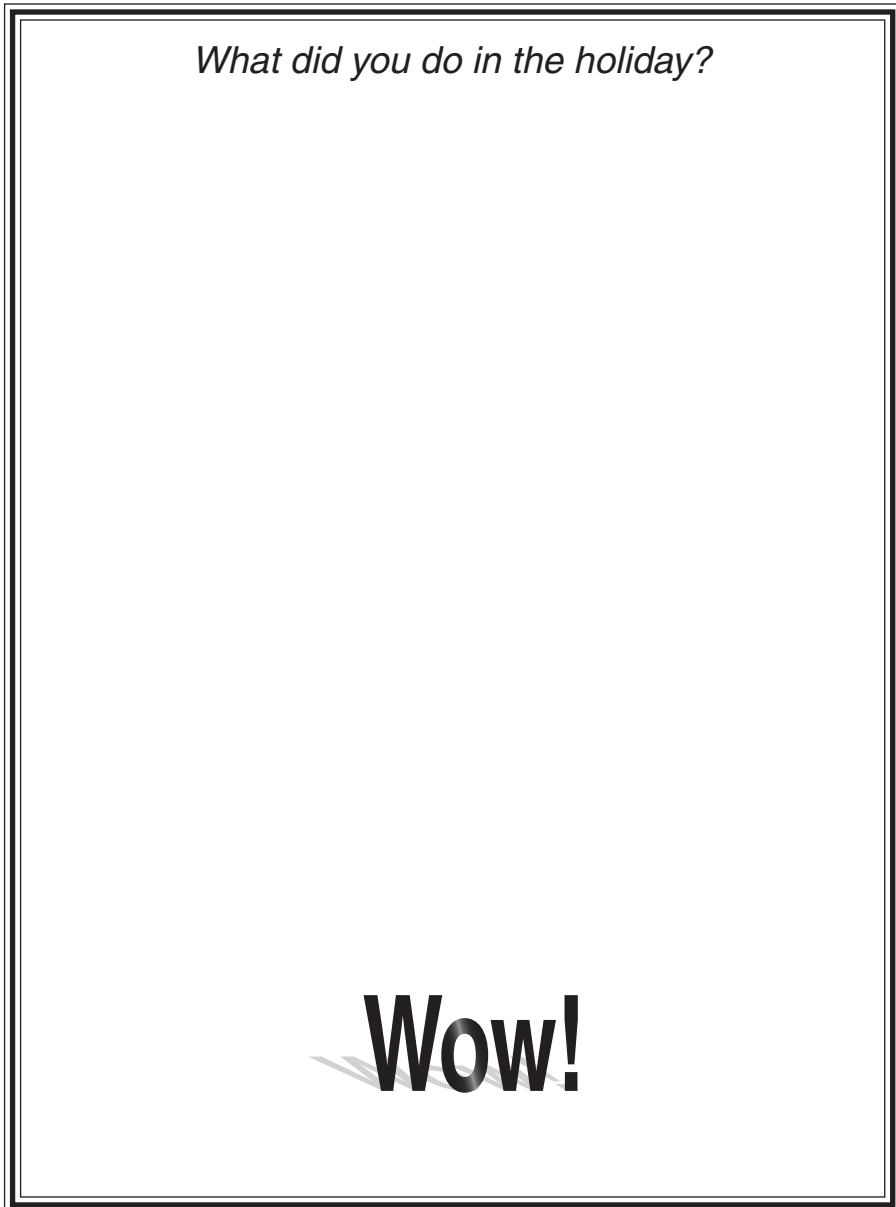


Figure 6.7 Blank format for WOW wall

monitor progress and also to indicate specific points of evidence to inform the educational programme. Good record keeping should be a continuous process that will provide evidence to support assessment and the wider educational provision. Many forms of record keeping are evident in practice, and include electronic records, such as spreadsheets and proformas, practitioner tick lists, scribbled notes, and



Figure 6.8 Photograph of WOW parent wall display board

numerous other creative forms of meaningful teacher assessments. So how, then, do accurate and meaningful records support our practice?

- They assist teams in meeting personalised provision for all children in order that they can experience developmental areas suggested by the EYFS.
- They help the team ensure continuity in early years practice.
- In sharing evidence, practitioners are encouraged to explore new and more creative pedagogies or experiences that will further enrich the educational programme.
- They provide evidence of communication with parents, other professionals and authorities.
- They encourage practitioners to be reflective in the way they support children and evaluative of their own performance.

Drummond (2003) believes that the role of professionals is to recognise the ultimate responsibility of their privileged position, to monitor the effects of their work, and to ensure that their good intentions

for children are realised. We are in total agreement with this and consistently urge students to make regular reflection on their own learning, giving it equal importance to that of the children in their care (Drummond 2003, cited in Palaiologou 2008).

Further Reading

Hutchin, V. (1999) *Right From the Start. Effective Planning and Assessment in the Early Years*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

- This offers an easy-to-read guide to making assessment of children's learning. It presents a range of simple, yet useful formats for collecting evidence.

Fisher, J. (2004) *Starting from the Child*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Gives meaningful examples of case study scenarios to support suggestions for effective practice.

Carr, M. (2001) *Assessment in Early Childhood Settings: Learning Stories*. London: Paul Chapman.

- An engaging text that will present food for thought about the concept of learning journeys as a tool for organising individual children's assessment.

Useful Websites

www.wiredforhealth.co.uk

- Up-to-date information on key aspects of children's health and well-being.

www.familylearning.org.uk

- Important site to review when considering elements of working with families.

www.peal.org.uk

- Lots of useful information about parents as partners in their children's learning.