

A Know How Guide: Working with Under 2's (August 2024)

Learning & development	Assessment	Safeguarding & welfare
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction p.2• Giving every child the best start in life p.3• Creating an emotional environment p.5• Creating a physical environment p.6-7• Creating a creative environment p.8• Importance of play p.9• Characteristics of effective learning p.10-11• The areas of learning & development p.12• The prime areas p.13-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early speech & language chart p.12• Observational checkpoints p.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific requirements:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Paediatric first aid p.26- Key person p.26- Staff:child ratios p.27- Food and drink p.27- Food and drink facilities p.28- Sleeping arrangements p.29- Toilets and intimate hygiene p.30- Baby room p.30 <div data-bbox="1373 1043 1666 1198" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">Baby and toddler safety p.29</div>

Links to more articles and research p.31-32

Introduction:

“Environments for children under 3 years of age are possibly the most challenging to organise... The environment needs to address the developing needs of children under 3. It should include physical challenge, opportunities for social interaction and an atmosphere which encourages language development, especially listening. Every setting needs a ‘listening space’, where babies and young children can hear themselves and others talk, thus encouraging children to talk.”

Ann Clare

Creating a learning environment for babies and toddlers (2012:p.60)

“The child’s experience must always be central to the thinking of every practitioner. • Babies, toddlers, and young children thrive when they are loved and well cared for. • High-quality care is consistent. Every practitioner needs to enjoy spending time with young children. • Effective practitioners are responsive to children and babies. They notice when a baby looks towards them and gurgles and respond with pleasure. • Practitioners understand that toddlers are learning to be independent, so they will sometimes get frustrated. • Practitioners know that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.”

Development matters (2023: p.9)

[Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115444/development-matters-2023.pdf)

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Birchfield Prepcare Day Nursery

Canopy Nursery

Earlyworld Nursery

Katie’s Kids Nursery

The Ark Day Nursery

Giving every child the best start in life



A loving, secure and reliable relationship with a parent or carer supports a child's:



emotional wellbeing



brain development



language development and ability to learn



capacity to form and maintain positive relationships with others

[Health matters: giving every child the best start in life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Aims and learning outcomes

- Understanding of and what impacts on Early Brain Development
- Understanding of key principles of the Solihull Approach
- Understanding of how these principles can be applied to practice

To find out more about early brain development, book onto our termly online training session 'Best beginnings: the Solihull Approach for under 1's'. Further details can be found at: [CPD Early Years and Schools | Shropshire Learning Gateway \(shropshireg.net\)](https://www.shropshireg.net/cpd-early-years-and-schools)

Creating an enabling emotional environment:

Key points	
The people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within each room, nurturing, calming, sympathetic and caring staff always keep the children in mind. • Well-qualified and reflective staff (including a mixture of newly qualified and experienced staff) actively engage in their own learning to further improve the outcomes for the children. • A strong, well-established Key Person approach and buddy system is evident. • Leaders and staff understand the importance of attachment and so where possible, the child's Key Person undertakes most of the child's care routines. • Regular opportunities for the parents / carers as well as the young children to meet each other and the staff, are organised prior to the child starting the setting. • The parents / carers are introduced to their child's Key Person during a home visit, as well as in the setting, before the child starts at the setting.
The space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral, soft coloured walls and soft furnishings create a calming environment, with small cosy spaces for the young children to watch from, relax and play. Suggestions include a tepee, a den, large cushions and beanbags, a low futon, or mats of different textures. • A mixture of natural light and soft lighting such as fairy lights, create a cosy and homely environment. • A large, carpeted floor offers space for the adults and babies to play together, along with a settee for the adults to share stories and bottle feed the babies.
The resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral coloured display boards celebrate the children's learning and development. • Photographs of the children's families are displayed at the child's height, along with a selection of mirrors, to ensure the young children can see themselves and their families within the environment. • A cosy and inviting nappy changing area and sleep room is inviting for both babies and adults. • Babies' comforters are stored and offered when required. • Collect stories for and make books about the babies and toddlers interests.

[Birth To 5 Matters – Guidance by the sector, for the sector](#)

Creating a physical environment:

Key points	
The people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment which invites responses from babies and adults e.g., touching, smiling, smelling, feeling, listening. • Share favourite stories, songs, rhymes, or music as babies are settling to sleep or at other quiet times. • Enable and allow babies to sleep when they need to and wake up from naps naturally. • Keep the environment quiet and calm, so that babies can attend to the voices and natural sounds around them. • Plan to take account of the individual cultural and feeding needs of young babies in their group. • Ensure mealtime seating allows young children to have their feet firmly on the floor or footrest. This aids stability and upper trunk control supporting hand-to-mouth co-ordination.
The space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the nappy changing and dressing area pleasant to be in for both babies and adults and relationship building. • Create cosy, quiet place for babies to be calm both indoors and outdoors. • Provide low adult chairs or a settee that support practitioners when they are bottle feeding babies and which also allow children to climb up onto their laps. • Create sufficient safe space for babies to move, roll, stretch and explore*. • Limit the time young babies spend in seats and other “containers” as this prevents physical development.
The resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make play resources accessible on shelves and open containers for children to reach and fetch independently. • Provide resources including picture books and stories that focus on a range of emotions. • Place mirrors where babies can see their own reflection. Talk with them about what they see. • Provide resources and spaces that stimulate babies’ interests and reflect their home. • Provide toys and open-ended play experiences that match the play interests and styles of individual babies. • Provide large cushions, tunnels, slopes and low-level steps or platforms to stimulate and challenge toddlers. • Provide sturdy push-along carts, wheeled toys and pull-along toys indoors and out for pushing and pulling.

[Birth To 5 Matters – Guidance by the sector, for the sector](#)

*[How to keep your baby or toddler active - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Physical activity for early years (birth – 5 years)

Active children are healthy, happy,
school ready and sleep better



BUILDS
RELATIONSHIPS
& SOCIAL SKILLS



MAINTAINS
HEALTH &
WEIGHT



CONTRIBUTES TO
BRAIN DEVELOPMENT
& LEARNING



IMPROVES
SLEEP



DEVELOPS
MUSCLES
& BONES



ENCOURAGES
MOVEMENT
& CO-ORDINATION

Every movement counts

Aim for at least
180
Minutes
per day
for children 1-5 years



PLAYGROUND



JUMP



CLIMB



MESSY PLAY



THROW/CATCH



SKIP

Under-1s
at least
30 minutes
across the day



OBJECT PLAY



DANCE



GAMES



PLAY



TUMMY TIME



SWIM



WALK



SCOOT



BIKE

Get Strong. Move More. Break up inactivity

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

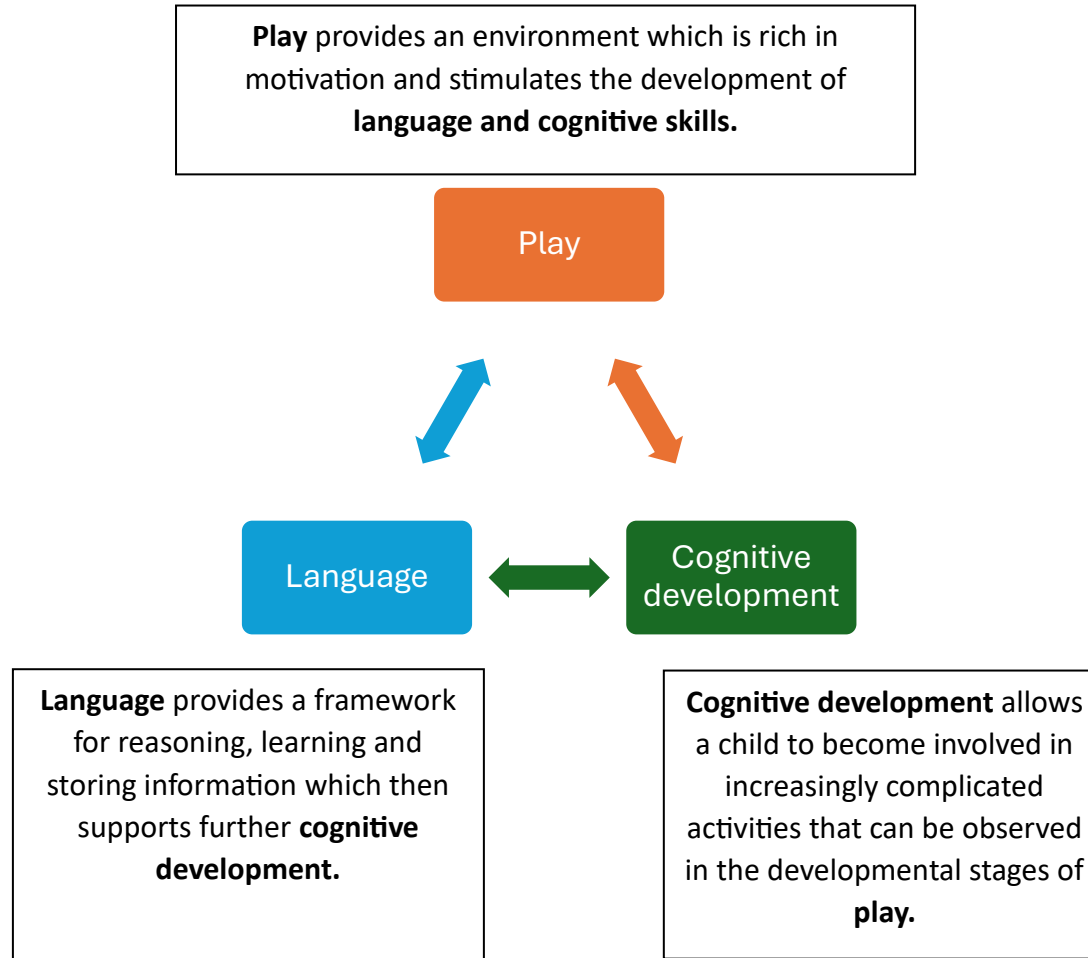
[UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Creating a creative environment:

Key points	
The people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend to how babies and young children are using their whole body in sensing, exploring, and experimenting with space, texture, sounds, rhythms, materials, and tools. • Welcome the ways in which babies and children arrange, combine, transform, group, and sequence materials that are both natural and manmade. • Notice the ways in which babies react to other babies and adults and the world that surrounds them. • Tune into and sensitively respond to babies and children’s expressive and communicative actions. • Make marks together with babies and toddlers using a range of appropriate materials and tools.
The space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that babies experience the natural world around them. Provide spaces that give young babies different views of their surroundings e.g., under a tree, looking at flowers and bushes. • Create a rich environment that enables babies and children to use all their senses. • Choose and select with intention the materials and tools available to young children. • Create the time and the space that will ensure that children can engage in depth with a diverse range of materials.
The resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for children to explore sound with drums, other instruments, kitchen pans and wooden spoons or upcycled resources. • Provide a range of everyday and natural objects to explore such as in treasure baskets, for sitting babies. • Offer ‘heuristic’* play with sets of simple natural and household objects for toddlers to manipulate, investigate, explore, and find out what they can make them do. • Provide babies and children with a range of experiences to feed their imaginative potential e.g. stories, images, music, natural and urban experiences, social encounters (mealtimes, shopping, visitors). • Give children large sheets of paper, trays of gloop, paint, soil etc. to make marks collaboratively. <p><i>*Exploratory play with everyday items, often arranged for mobile babies and toddlers to freely explore groups of objects.</i></p>

[Birth To 5 Matters – Guidance by the sector, for the sector](#)

The importance of play:



<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/educators-and-professionals/>

The characteristics of effective learning:

“In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners **must** reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are: **play and exploring** – children investigate and experience things and ‘have-a-go’; **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements; **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.”

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421222/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_for_childminders.pdf)

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421222/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_for_group_and_school_providers.pdf)

6-month-old baby	Playing & exploring	Active learning	Creating & thinking critically
Babies will be learning to:	Realise that their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them.	Show goal related behaviour. For example, reaching out and keep trying to grasp a favourite toy.	Concentrate on achieving something that is important to them.
Examples of how to support this:	Encourage babies’ exploration of the world around them. Suggestions: investigating the feel of their key person’s hair or reaching for a blanket in their cot. Offer treasure baskets for babies to explore, outdoors and inside.	Provide resources to encourage babies to reach for and explore objects. <i>At 6 months the baby will reach with one hand for an object, then pass the object from hand to hand, and take everything to their mouth.*</i>	Provide adequate, clean floor space for babies to experience tummy-time and to practice rolling over. <i>For example, rolling from their front to their back (5-6 months) and usually back to front (around 6-7 months).*</i>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421222/Development_Matters_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

*Sheridan, M., Sharma, A. and Cockerill, H. (2014) *From birth to five years – children’s developmental progress (4th edition)*

The characteristics of effective learning:

12-month-old baby	Playing & exploring	Active learning	Creating & thinking critically
Babies will be learning to:	Realise that their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them.	Show goal related behaviour. For example, babies may pull themselves up by using the edges of a low table to reach for a toy on top of the table.	Concentrate on achieving something that is important to them. <i>Points with index finger at objects of interest. Holds two toy bricks, one in each hand with tripod grasp, and bangs together to make noise.*</i>
Examples of how to support this:	Offer open-ended resources [heuristic play] like large smooth shells and pebbles etc. for babies to play freely with, outdoors and inside.	Provide furniture and boxes at the right height to encourage babies to pull themselves up and reach for objects. <i>Walks around furniture lifting one foot and stepping sideways.*</i>	Help babies to find their own ideas by providing open-ended resources that can be used in many ways. Children need consistent routines and plenty of time so that play is not constantly interrupted.

18-month-old toddler	Playing & exploring	Active learning	Creating & thinking critically
Babies will be learning to:	Realise that their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them.	Show goal related behaviour. For example, toddlers might turn a storage box upside down so they can stand on it and reach for an object.	Concentrate on achieving something that is important to them. They are increasingly able to control their attention and ignore distractions.
Examples of how to support this:	Offer open-ended resources [heuristic play] like large smooth shells, pebbles, blocks and lengths of fabric for toddlers to play freely with, outdoors and inside.	Opportunities to play and explore freely, indoors, and outside, are fun. They also help young children to develop their selfregulation as they enjoy hands-on learning and sometimes talk about what they are doing.	Offer children many different experiences and opportunities to play freely and to explore and investigate. Make time and space for children to become deeply involved in imaginative play, indoors and outside.

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

*Sheridan, M., Sharma, A. and Cockerill, H. (2014) *From birth to five years – children’s developmental progress (4th edition)*

The areas of learning and development:

1.3/1.4 There are seven areas of learning and development that set out what childminders / *providers* **must** teach the children in their settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

1.4/1.5 Three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas. These are the prime areas: • Communication and language • Physical development • Personal, social and emotional development

1.5/1.6 Childminders / *providers* **must** also support children in four specific areas, which help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm. The specific areas are: • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the world • Expressive arts and design Educational Programmes

1.6/1.7 The educational programmes are high level curriculum summaries which set out what should be taught in settings for each area of learning. They **must** involve activities and experiences that enable children to learn and develop, as set out under each of the seven areas of learning.

1.7/1.8 Childminders / *providers* should be ambitious for all children. To do this, they **must** consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care. They **must** use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Childminders / *providers* working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_for_childminders.pdf)

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616223/Statutory_framework_for_the_early_years_foundation_stage_for_group_and_school_providers.pdf)

Prime area: personal, social and emotional development:

EYFS statutory educational programme:

Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm, and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Find ways to calm themselves, through being calmed and comforted by their key person.</p>	<p>When settling a baby or toddler into nursery, the top priority is for the key person to develop a strong and loving relationship with the young child.</p> <p>Learn from the family about what they do to soothe their child and what to look out for – for example, a baby who scratches at their head when they are getting tired. Find out what calms a baby – rocking, cuddling or singing.</p> <p>Make sure babies and toddlers can get hold of their comfort object when they need it.</p> <p>Explain to parents that once babies establish ‘object permanence’ they become more aware of the presence or absence of their parents. This makes separations much more distressing and difficult between 6-24 months.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: personal, social and emotional development:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Establish their sense of self.</p>	<p>Babies develop a sense of self by interacting with others, and by exploring their bodies and objects around them, inside and outdoors.</p> <p>Be positive and interested in what babies do as they develop their confidence in trying new things.</p> <p>Help toddlers and young children to make informed choices from a limited range of options. Suggestion: enable children to choose which song to sing from a set of four song cards, by pointing. Enable children to choose whether they want milk or water at snack time.</p> <p>Support children as they find their own different ways to manage feelings of sadness when their parents leave them. Some children may need to hold onto a special object from home to feel strong and confident in the setting. Some might need to snuggle in and be comforted by their key person. Some might get busy straight away in their favourite play or with another child they feel close to.</p> <p>Babies develop a sense of self by interacting with others, and by exploring their bodies and objects around them, inside and outdoors.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: personal, social and emotional development:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Express preferences and decisions. They also try new things and start establishing their autonomy.</p> <p>Engage with others through gestures, gaze and talk. Use that engagement to achieve a goal. For example, gesture towards their cup to say they want a drink.</p> <p>Find ways of managing transitions, for example from their parent to their key person.</p> <p>Thrive as they develop self-assurance.</p>	<p>Be positive and interested in what babies do as they develop their confidence in trying new things.</p> <p>Help toddlers and young children to make informed choices from a limited range of options. Suggestion: enable children to choose which song to sing from a set of four song cards, by pointing. Enable children to choose whether they want milk or water at snack time.</p> <p>Support children as they find their own different ways to manage feelings of sadness when their parents leave them. Some children may need to hold onto a special object from home to feel strong and confident in the setting. Some might need to snuggle in and be comforted by their key person. Some might get busy straight away in their favourite play or with another child they feel close to. Young children need to feel secure as they manage difficult emotions. Provide consistent and predictable routines, with flexibility when needed.</p> <p>Provide consistent, warm, and responsive care. At first centre this on the key person. In time, children can develop positive relationships with other adults. When the key person is not available, make sure that someone familiar provides comfort and support, and carries out intimate care routines.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: personal, social and emotional development:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Look back as they crawl or walk away from their key person. Look for clues about how to respond to something interesting.</p> <p>Play with increasing confidence on their own and alongside other children, because they know their key person is nearby and available.</p> <p>Feel confident when taken out around the local neighbourhood and enjoy exploring new places with their key person.</p> <p>Feel strong enough to express a range of emotions. Grow in independence, rejecting help (“me do it”). Sometimes this leads to feelings of frustration and tantrums.</p>	<p>Acknowledge babies’ and toddlers’ brief need for reassurance as they move away from their key person. Encourage babies and toddlers to explore, indoors and outdoors. Help them to become more independent by smiling and looking encouraging, for example when a baby keeps crawling towards a rattle.</p> <p>Arrange resources inside and outdoors to encourage babies’ and toddler’s growing independence and self-confidence. Suggestion: Treasure Basket play allows babies who can sit up to choose what to play with.</p> <p>Store [age and stage appropriate] resources so that babies and toddlers can access them freely, without always needing help.</p> <p>Help children to feel emotionally safe with a key person and, gradually, with other members of staff. Show warmth and affection, combined with clear and appropriate boundaries and routines.</p> <p>Help all children to feel they are valued, and they belong.</p> <p>Support children to find ways into the play and friendship groups of others.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: communication and language:

EYFS statutory educational programme:

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Turn towards familiar sounds. They are startled by loud noises and accurately locate the source of a familiar person’s voice, such as their key person or parent.</p> <p>Gaze at faces, copying facial expressions and movements like sticking out their tongue. Make eye contact for longer periods.</p> <p>Watch someone’s face as they talk.</p>	<p>Babies and toddlers thrive when you show a genuine interest in them, join in and respond warmly.</p> <p>Using exaggerated intonation and a sing-song voice (infant -directed speech) helps babies to tune in to language.</p> <p>Regularly using the babies and toddlers’ names helps them to pay attention to what the practitioner is saying for example: “Chloe, have some milk.” It is important to minimise background noise, so do not have music playing all the time.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: communication and language:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Copy what adults do, taking 'turns in' conversations (through babbling) and activities. Tries to copy adult speech and lip movements.</p> <p>Enjoy singing, music and toys that make sounds.</p> <p>Recognise and are calmed by a familiar and friendly voice.</p> <p>Listen and respond to a simple instruction.</p> <p>Make sounds to get attention in different ways (for example, crying when hungry or unhappy, making gurgling sounds, laughing, cooing or babbling).</p> <p>Babble, using sounds like 'baba', 'mamama'.</p> <p>Use gesture like waving and pointing to communicate.</p> <p>Reach or point to something they want while making sounds.</p>	<p>Babies love singing and music. Sing a range of songs and play a wide range of different types of music. Move with babies to music.</p> <p>Babies and toddlers love action rhymes and games like 'Peepo'. As they begin to join in with the words and the actions, they are developing their attention and listening. Allow babies time to anticipate words and actions in favourite songs.</p> <p>Take time and 'tune in' to the messages babies are giving you through their vocalisations, body language and gestures.</p> <p>When babies and toddlers are holding and playing with objects, say what they are doing for example, "You've got a ball," and "Shake the rattle."</p> <p>Where you can, give meaning to the baby's gestures and pointing for example: "Oh, I see, you want the teddy."</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: communication and language:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Copy your gestures and words.</p> <p>Constantly babble and use single words during play.</p> <p>Use intonation, pitch and changing volume when ‘talking’.</p> <p>Understand single words in context – ‘cup’, ‘milk’, ‘daddy’.</p> <p>Understand frequently used words such as ‘all gone’, ‘no’ and ‘byebye’.</p> <p>Understand single instructions like “give to nanny” or “stop”.</p> <p>Recognise and point to objects if asked about them.</p>	<p>Chat with babies and toddlers all the time but be careful not to overwhelm them with talk. Allow babies and toddlers to take the lead and then respond to their communications.</p> <p>Wait for the baby to speak or communicate with a sound or a look first – so that they are leading the conversation. When responding, expand on what has been said (for example, add a word). If a baby says “bottle”, you could say “milk bottle.” In a natural way, use the same word repeatedly in different contexts: “Look, a bottle of milk – oh you have finished your bottle.” Adding a word while a toddler is playing gives them the model of an expanded phrase. It also keeps the conversation on their topic of interest. Suggestion: if they say “bag”, you could say: “Yes, daddy’s bag.”</p> <p>You can help babies with their understanding by using gestures and context. Suggestion: point to the cup and say “cup”.</p> <p>Talking about what you are doing helps babies learn language in context. Suggestion: “I’m pouring out your milk into the cup”.</p> <p>Singing, action rhymes and sharing books give children rich opportunities to understand new words.</p> <p>Play with groups of objects [age / stage appropriate]. Make sure you name things whilst playing and talk about what you are doing.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Prime area: communication and language:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Generally, focus on an activity of their own choice and find it difficult to be directed by an adult.</p> <p>Listen to other people’s talk with interest but can easily be distracted by other things.</p> <p>Make themselves understood and can become frustrated when they cannot.</p> <p>Developing pretend play: ‘putting the baby to sleep’ or ‘driving the car to the shops’.</p> <p>Listen to simple stories and understand what is happening, with the help of the pictures.</p>	<p>Help toddlers to focus their attention by using their name: “Fatima, put your coat on”.</p> <p>You can help toddlers listen and pay attention by using gestures like pointing and facial expressions.</p> <p>You can help toddlers who are having tantrums by being calm and reassuring. Help toddlers to express what’s angering them by suggesting words to describe their emotions, like ‘sad’ or ‘angry’. You can help further by explaining in simple terms why you think they may be feeling that emotion.</p> <p>Allow plenty of time to have conversations together, rather than busily rushing from one activity to the next.</p> <p>Share picture books every day with children.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Early Speech and Language Development Chart

Name

Date of birth

Stage and age	Attention and listening	Understanding of language	Speech Sounds And Talk	Social skills and use of language
0-11 months The Early Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turns towards a familiar sound Startled by loud sounds Watches face when someone talks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises parent's voice Understands frequently used words such as "all gone", "no", "bye-bye" Stops and looks when hears own name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates in a variety of ways - gurgling, crying, babbling Plays with speech sounds (bababa) > 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaches out and points Makes vocal sounds to get attention Tries to copy adult speech and lip movement Takes turns in conversations using babble Senses different emotions in carers voice and responds differently (quietening, laughing, smiling etc) > 12
8-20 months First Word User	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locates source of voice with accuracy Pays attention to dominant stimulus Enjoys music and singing Concentrates intently on an object or activity of own choosing, for increasing periods of time. > 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives named objects to adult (book, apple, car) Understands simple instructions ("kiss Mummy", "where's your nose", "stop") Recognises and points to objects, or pictures in books if asked > 18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babbling in strings of connected but different sounds ba-ba-no-no-go-go Reaches out or points to objects while making speech sounds Uses around 10 single words although they may not be clear > 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses gestures such as waving and pointing with eye gaze to make requests and share interests Plays alone but likes to be near familiar adult Responds to words and interactive rhymes such as "clap hands" Uses simple pretend play e.g. feeding teddy > 20
16-27 months Combiner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to an adult talking and briefly shifts attention from something they are doing to the speaker Recognises and responds appropriately to many familiar sounds e.g. a knock on the door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands 200-500 single words Understands simple instructions, containing 2 key words without clues > 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses up to 50 words Begins to combine two or three simple words > 36 Begins to ask simple questions ("where's my drink?") Can be understood by familiar adult > 36 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend play developing with toys (feeding a doll or talking on telephone) Follow adult body language including pointing, gesture and facial expression
22-36 months Early sentence user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories Single channelled attention, can shift to a different task if attention is first gained by adult > 36 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands who, what, where questions (but not why) Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture e.g. "who's jumping" Demonstrates understanding of the language linked to early concepts including 'in/on/under', 'big/little' > 36 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses a wide range of words including descriptive language, time, space and function/action Links 4-5 words together Able to use pronouns (me, him, she) Able to use prepositions (in on under) Starting to use word endings ('ing', 's') Can be mostly understood by strangers > 48 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can take several turns in a conversation but jumps from topic to topic Expresses emotion to adults and peers using words not just actions Has some favourite stories, songs and rhymes Uses language to share ideas and experiences Interested in others play and will join in > 36
30-50 months Later sentence user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys listening to stories Can shift attention between listening to others and doing own activity without adult prompt. Anticipates and joins in with familiar actions and phrases in rhymes and stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands use of objects ("what do we use to cut things?") Shows understanding of prepositions (behind, in front) Aware of time in terms of today, yesterday, tomorrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses talk to connect ideas and explain what is happening Asks lots of why questions Can retell a simple past event in correct order Using more complex sentences > 48 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands turn-taking as well as sharing with adults and peers Initiates conversations Enjoys playing with peers Able to argue with adults or peers if they disagree – uses words not just actions
40 -60 months Skilled Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustains attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with comments, questions or actions Maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly when appropriate Two channelled attention- can listen and do at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to follow a simple story without pictures Understands questions containing sequencing words (what did you do after tea?) > 60 Understands and enjoys rhyme Laughs at simple jokes Understands adjectives (soft, hard etc) Demonstrates understanding of how and why questions by giving explanations > 72 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easily understood by adults and peers Mostly uses well formed sentences Uses complex linking words appropriately, ('and', 'then', 'because') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chooses own friends Generally co operative with playmates Able to plan construction and make believe play activities Takes longer turns in conversations Maintains theme/topic of conversation Uses language to organise sequence and clarify thinking Introduces a storyline to their play

Confidence:

Whole group ☺ ☹ ☹ ☹ Small group ☺ ☹ ☹ Key person/familiar group ☺ ☹ ☹ One to one ☺ ☹ ☹ One to one (unfamiliar) ☺ ☹ ☹ At home ☺ ☹ ☹

Mike Ridley –Chairman
Jo Chambers – Chief Executive

Shropshire Community
Health NHS Trust
Children's and Specialist Services
SLT Pre-school referral Form/SLT/Masters/referral forms/Review January 2011



[seld-with-logos.pdf \(shropshirelg.net\)](http://seld-with-logos.pdf)

Prime area: physical development:

EYFS statutory educational programme:

Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child’s strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness through tummy time**, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination, and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Lift their head while lying on their front. Push their chest up with straight arms. Roll over: from front to back, then back to front. Enjoy moving when outdoors and inside.</p> <p>Sit without support.</p> <p>Begin to crawl in different ways and directions.</p> <p>Pull themselves upright and bouncing in preparation for walking.</p>	<p>Some babies need constant physical contact, attention, and physical intimacy. Respond warmly and patiently to them.</p> <p>Provide adequate, clean floor space for babies to experience tummy time** and back time. Offer this frequently throughout the day so that they can develop their gross motor skills (kicking, waving, rolling, and reaching).</p> <p>Encourage babies to sit on you, climb over you, and rock, bounce or sway with you.</p> <p>Notice, cherish and applaud the physical achievements of babies and toddlers.</p> <p>Give babies time to move freely during care routines, like nappy changing.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

**What is tummy time and how does it help baby development? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zm2wrij6>

Prime area: physical development:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Reach out for objects as co-ordination develops.</p> <p>Pass things from one hand to the other. Let go of things and hand them to another person or drop them.</p> <p>Gradually gain control of their whole body through continual practice of large movements, such as waving, kicking, rolling, crawling, and walking.</p> <p>Fit themselves into spaces, like tunnels, dens, and large boxes.</p> <p>Builds tower of 3 cubes (by 18 months).***</p> <p>Walks up and downstairs with help (by 18 months).***</p>	<p>Use every day, open-ended materials to support overall coordination. Suggestions: sponges and cloths to hold, squash and throw, or wet and squeeze.</p> <p>Provide a range of surfaces and materials for babies to explore, stimulating touch and all the senses.</p> <p>Provide a wide range of opportunities for children to move throughout the day: indoors and outside, alone or with others, with and without apparatus. Include risky play, as appropriate.</p> <p>Join in with children’s movement play when invited and if it is appropriate, to show different ways of moving and engaging with the resources.</p> <p>Offer outdoor play every day for at least 45 minutes. Include lots of opportunities for children to move freely and explore their surroundings like a slope, a large hole, puddles or a sandpit.</p> <p>Provide materials and equipment that support physical development – both large and small motor skills. Encourage children to use materials flexibly and combine them in different ways. Check that children’s clothing and footwear are not too tight or too large.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

****Sheridan. M., Sharma, A. and Cockerill, H. (2014) From birth to five years – children’s developmental progress (4th edition)*

Prime area: physical development:

Babies and toddlers will be learning to:	Examples of how to support this:
<p>Use large and small motor skills to do things independently.</p> <p>Show an increasing desire to be independent, such as wanting to feed themselves and dress or undress. <i>Assists with dressing and undressing, taking off shoes, socks and hat, but seldom able to replace (18 months).***</i></p> <p>Start eating independently. <i>Holds spoon and gets food safely to mouth, although may play with food (18 months).***</i></p> <p>Develop manipulation and control.</p> <p>Explore different materials and tools.</p>	<p>Provide babies and toddlers with lots of opportunities to feed themselves. Be patient, do not rush and take time to talk about what they are doing and why.</p> <p>At meal and snack times, encourage babies and toddlers to try a range of foods as they become more independent eaters. Encourage young children’s personal decision-making by offering real choices – water or milk, for example.</p> <p>Provide different types of paper for children to tear, make marks on and print on.</p> <p>Provide lots of different things for young children to grasp, hold and explore, like clay, finger paint, spoons, brushes, shells.</p> <p>Note: Look out for children who find it difficult to sit comfortably on chairs. They may need help to develop their core muscles. You can help them by encouraging them to scoot on sit-down trikes without pedals and jump on soft-play equipment.</p>

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

***Sheridan. M., Sharma, A. and Cockerill, H. (2014) *From birth to five years – children’s developmental progress (4th edition)*

Assessment checkpoints within the prime areas:

6 months observational checkpoints:

Communication & language	Does the baby respond to familiar voices, turn to their own name and 'take turns' in conversations with babbling? Is the baby using speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults?
Personal, social & emotional development	Does the baby respond to their name and respond to the emotions in your voice?
Physical development	Does the baby move with ease and enjoyment?

12 months observational checkpoints:

Communication & language	Does the baby 'take turns' by babbling and using single words? Does the baby point to things and use gestures to show things to adults and share interests? Is the baby beginning to use single words mummum, dada, tete (teddy)? Can the baby choose between two objects: "do you want the ball or the car"?
Personal, social & emotional development	Does the baby start to be shy around strangers and show preferences for certain people and toys?
Physical development	Can the baby pull to stand from a sitting position and sit down? Can the baby pick up something small with their first finger and thumb (such as a piece of string)?

18 months observational checkpoints:

Communication & language	Is the toddler listening and responding to a simple instruction like: "put on your shoes"? Is the toddler using a range of adult like speech patterns (jargon; gibberish) and at least 20 clear words? Does the toddler understand lots of different single words and some two-word phrases, such as "give me" or "shoes on"? Can the toddler say around 10 words? (They may not all be clear.)
Personal, social & emotional development	Is the toddler increasingly curious about their world and wanting to explore it and be noticed by you?

[Development Matters - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Specific welfare requirements for under 2's:

Paediatric First Aid:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
3.34 At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be always on the premises and available when children are present and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. PFA training must be renewed every three years and be relevant for people caring for young children and babies.	3.29 At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate must be always on the premises and available when children are present and must accompany children on outings. The certificate must be for a full course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex A. PFA training must be renewed every three years and be relevant for people caring for young children and babies.

Key person:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
3.38 Each child must be assigned a key person. In childminding settings, the key person is the childminder, or can be an assistant where appropriate. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They should also help families and engage with more specialist support if appropriate.	3.34 Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

N.B. Sharing information about care needs:

Communication is key to helping to settle a baby who is new to your setting as well as building a partnership with the baby's parents / carers. Some settings complete a daily diary to share information on how they have addressed the baby's care needs that day; for example, the food and drink consumed by the baby, the number of naps and what the baby's nappies were like. This information **does not** need to be handwritten in a diary; it can be recorded on a chart and the information shared with the parents / carers at the end of the day

Specific welfare requirements for under 2's (cont.):

Staff:child ratios:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.42 At any one time, childminders (whether providing the childminding on domestic or non-domestic premises) may care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight. This includes the childminder's own children and any other children for whom they are responsible, such as those being fostered.</p> <p>3.43 Of these six children: • A maximum of three may be young children (i.e. a child is a young child until 1st September following his or her fifth birthday). • There should only be one child under the age of one.</p>	<p>3.40 For children aged under two: • There must be at least one member of staff for every three children. • At least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification and be suitably experienced in working with children under two. • At least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification. • At least half of all staff must have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies. • Where there is a room for under two-year-olds, the member of staff in charge of that room must, in the judgement of the provider, have suitable experience of working with under twos.</p>

Food and drink:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.54 Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before a child is admitted to the setting the childminder must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. Fresh drinking water must always be available and accessible to children. Childminders must record and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs.</p>	<p>3.55 Where children are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, and food allergies that the child has, and any special health requirements. Fresh drinking water must always be available and accessible to children. Providers must record and act on information from parents and carers about a child's dietary needs.</p>

Specific welfare requirements for under 2's (cont.):

Food and drink facilities:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.55 There must be an area adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, if necessary, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food. Childminders must be confident that they, or any assistants responsible for preparing and handling food, are competent to do so. Section 4 of 'Example menus for early years settings in England' includes guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels, which childminders and assistants preparing food will find helpful in ensuring that children are kept safe.</p>	<p>3.56 There must be an area adequately equipped to provide healthy meals, snacks and drinks for children as necessary. There must be suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food for children, if necessary, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food. Providers must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so. All staff involved in preparing and handling food must receive training in food hygiene. Section 4 of 'Example menus for early years settings in England' includes guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels, which staff preparing food will find helpful in ensuring that children are kept safe.</p>

Further information on feeding and weaning can be found at:

- [Sterilising baby bottles - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [How to make up baby formula - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [Bottle feeding advice - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [Bottle feeding leaflet \(unicef.org.uk\)](https://www.unicef.org.uk)
- [Your baby's first solid foods - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Specific welfare requirements for under 2's (cont.):

Sleeping arrangements:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.69 Sleeping children must be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that cots and bedding are in good condition and suited to the age of the child, and that babies are placed down to sleep safely in line with the latest government safety guidance: Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS (www.nhs.uk) Childminders may also find it helpful to read NHS advice on safety of sleeping children: Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS (www.nhs.uk).</p>	<p>3.69 Sleeping children must be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that cots and bedding are in good condition and suited to the age of the child, and that babies are placed down to sleep safely in line with the latest government safety guidance: Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS (www.nhs.uk) Practitioners may also find it helpful to read NHS advice on safety of sleeping children: Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - NHS (www.nhs.uk).</p>

- [Car seats and SIDS - The Lullaby Trust](#)
- [Lullaby Trust publications - The Lullaby Trust](#)
- [Sleep and night time resources - Baby Friendly Initiative \(unicef.org.uk\)](#)

Additional hazards:

- Travel seats and buggies
- Self-feeding cushions [Urgent safety alert issued for baby self-feeding pillows \(capt.org.uk\)](#)
- Hanging things
- Training wires and cords
- Ventilation and temperature
- Things that could blow into the cot / bed
- Burns from lights or toys

[Baby and toddler safety - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sudden-infant-death-syndrome/)

Specific welfare requirements for under 2's (cont.):

Toilets and intimate hygiene:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders (publishing.service.gov.uk)	Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.70 Childminders must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available. • There are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies. • There is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and any other necessary items. 	<p>3.71 Providers must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available - there should usually be separate toilet facilities for adults. • There are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies. • There is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and any other necessary items.

- [Potty training: how to start & best age to potty train - ERIC](#)
- [Preventing and controlling infections - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421222/Preventing_and_controlling_infections.pdf) Further information on the disposal of soiled nappies.

Baby room:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)
<p>3.70 There should be a separate baby room for children under the age of two. However, providers must ensure that children in a baby room have contact with older children and are moved into the older age group when appropriate.</p>

Links to more articles and research:

[BBC Tiny Happy People](#) Help to develop children's language skills, with simple activities and play ideas to help babies and young children learn.

[Best Books for babies 0-12 months | BookTrust](#); [Best Books for 1-year-olds | BookTrust](#); [Best Books for 2-year-olds | BookTrust](#) Suggested books for children aged 0-2 years of age.

[First 1001 Days Movement response to the Start for Life Vision - Parent-Infant Foundation](#) The Start for Life Review paved the way for a clear universal offer in every local area including health visiting, midwifery, breastfeeding and mental health support, as well as welcoming hubs where families can access services.

[Froebel Trust | Elinor Goldschmied & treasure baskets](#) Learn how treasure baskets can be used to support young children in their exploration of the world and multi-sensory development.

[Froebel-Trust-PDF-Research-Highlight-Book-One.pdf](#) Nursery attachments and the role of the key person.

[Help for early years providers - Department for Education](#) Guidance for people who work in early years, from the Department for Education.

<https://www.communityplaythings.co.uk/learning-library/training-resources/what-happens-in-the-baby-room> Information about the enabling environment for the under 2's.

[Movement Provision guidance Nurture and Thrive.pdf \(walthamforest.gov.uk\)](#) Suggested experiences and resources that supports a baby's movement development in the baby room.

[Parental engagement | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#) Parental engagement approaches have, on average, a positive impact of five months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. There is extensive evidence on the positive impact of parental engagement approaches.

[Physical development in early childhood - Early Education \(early-education.org.uk\)](#) Exploring the importance of physicality at this crucial point in a child's development.

[The Baby Buddy app \(bestbeginnings.org.uk\)](#) Baby Buddy's self-care tools are based on the latest research and evidence and provides trusted information to support and empower Mums, Dads and caregivers, building their knowledge and confidence.

