

Early Childhood Observation and Assessment Policy and Procedure

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Policy Statement:

Observation and assessment is an important part of good educational practice and reflects the Steiner Waldorf philosophy and educational approach of viewing the child as a unique, active and developing human being. Good teaching practice occurs when the self-reflective teacher also regularly appraises and assesses his/her own teaching as well as the progress of each individual child, supported and affirmed by both colleagues and parents/carers of the child. Assessment for the very young child is based on the adult's knowledge of child development, and in line with the statutory regulation, also has regard of the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children from birth to 5 years. It is related to long, medium and short term planning.

The person who compiles the assessment/reports etc, is known in Steiner Waldorf terms as the Kindergarten 'teacher' or 'practitioner.' This person is the same as the EYFS 'key person.' We are aware however, that in order to properly meet the individual needs of each child and to properly observe and assess their learning and development, each key person should be attentive to around 8-10 children in the group. Therefore the kindergarten assistant will work with us to observe and share information with the kindergarten teacher on a regular basis. (Please also refer to: 'Key workers in the SDSS Early Childhood Department' document.)

Procedure:

Initial Meeting

On entry to the kindergarten, there is a meeting with parents to establish background information, including a brief biography forming a picture of the child. This is entered on the form, which includes questions relating to the EYFS Progress check 2-3 years if applicable.

Shared Observation

Adults in contact with the child on a daily basis observe their development and progress and make notes in the child's file. These on-going observations, drawings etc., as well as any contributions and observations from parents/carers, contribute to the summative report. The child profile could also form part of this formative assessment process.

The in-depth yearly conversation with parents.

This in depth conversation is shared with parents every year and celebrates the child's individual experiences, growth and development through the year. It may take the form of notes, observations and actions taken by staff in relation to the child's developmental progress, as well as planning to support their development in the kindergarten, with due regard to others in the group and the rhythm and routine of the day. Parents are asked to contribute to the conversation, so that a real 'picture' of the child emerges and can be shared together. Out of this, suggestions may be made as to ways of supporting the child's learning and development in the home as well as at school.

End of year reporting for 5 & 6 year olds and the EYFS Profile.

A short written report is given to the parents when the child is 5 and 6. (Please refer to 'Yearly Report' proforma.) The areas of learning and development will reflect the EYFS in line with statutory requirements, apart from the areas from which our school is exempt (please refer to our Exemption documents) Each child has a Steiner Waldorf/ EYFS Child profile which is completed every year in the Autumn and Summer term.

Child Study

A more detailed study may sometimes be undertaken of individual children which is shared between all teaching staff, parents may be asked to contribute to the study.

Special Needs

There may be times when the child may need some extra support if there are questions around their learning and development, language and communication, or in any other area. We ask parents to give consent in order that we may share information with other agencies, or the school/ kindergarten SENCO, Eurythmy therapist, speech therapist, school doctor etc. Parents will always be informed and consulted should this be necessary.

Transition to Class 1

Before entering class 1, a summative assessment is completed against specific Steiner Waldorf developmental milestones. The child's kindergarten teacher contributes to the bulk of this assessment, and others may also contribute, such as the school doctor and other adults who may observe the child. The parents can also contribute to this. This is shared with the new teacher, and a picture of the child is also shared in the lower school faculty meeting at the school.

Compliance:

EYFS Guidelines.

References:

'Working with Parents: Guidelines for the in depth yearly parent conversation' doc.

Initial assessment profile for 3 year olds starting kindergarten doc& Yearly Report doc.

The Steiner Waldorf /EYFS profile doc

Exemptions document from the current EYFS profile and ELG's.

Key Workers in the SDSS Early Childhood Department.

School readiness checklist document