

## Early Reading Connects – Evaluation grid

A good place to start is to think about what you are doing now to encourage the babies and children who attend your setting to love words, stories and reading. Think about how you support their families (mums, dads, grandparents and other carers) in encouraging them to love reading. Use the grid below to chart where you are now and then think about the best way forward. The grid is based on the four guiding themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage and covers a wide range of settings so some of the statements below will not be appropriate for all settings.

### How to use the audit

Read the statement

Highlight/tick the activity that you are already doing

Highlight in a different colour the activities that you think you may be able to develop next -

We have used the term 'practitioners', which can mean either you as an individual or you and all your colleagues in your setting

Area of focus	Developing	Establishing (all the developing criteria for each area plus...)	Enhancing (all the earlier criteria for each area plus...)
<b>1. A Unique Child</b>			
1a) Child development	Practitioners are learning that certain stories, nursery rhymes, songs and books are more suited to younger babies or toddlers.	Practitioners know that babies and children go through stages of development and that different books etc are needed at different times.	Practitioners are skilled at choosing suitable books, rhymes, etc for a wide range of children according to their needs.
1b) Children's interests	Practitioners take babies' and children's interests into account when buying and sharing books.	Practitioners are confident about matching books to children's and babies' interests.	Practitioners run reading activities and events that are based on the children's interests.

1c) Cultural diversity	Practitioners label objects in English and the key languages used by the children's families.	Practitioners provide dual language books in English and the key languages used by the children's families and select stories that reflect the children's backgrounds and abilities.	Practitioners run book-sharing sessions for families of children learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) and those who they consider may have additional needs.
1d) Children with special educational needs	Practitioners recognise that some children have special educational needs and have some awareness of how these might impact upon children's language development as well as access to and enjoyment of books.	Practitioners are confident in how to personalise their provision to support the language and reading development of children with special educational needs and how to support their mums and dads in this area.	Families of children with special educational needs are actively encouraged to attend inclusive book sharing sessions where individual needs are catered for. Families are provided with booklists which are specific to their child's needs.
<b>2. Positive relationships with parents</b>			
2a) Effective communication	Practitioners recognise the value of the speaking, reading and writing activities that already go on in the children's homes and support families in seeing the importance of sharing books with their children.	Practitioners talk to families about suitable books and how to share stories, songs and rhymes, and play word games with their children as part of everyday activities, like bathtime.	Practitioners provide outreach support for families encouraging them to share books and stories and demonstrating book sharing activities where appropriate. Families can borrow resources after the session to take home.
2b) Supporting families in sharing books and other reading material with their children	Families feel welcome to come and share a book or a story with their child.	Families are supported in how to share stories engagingly and how to use everyday print around them to encourage an interest in words as part of daily routine like shopping or travelling on the bus.	Practitioners run activities for families showing how to share stories and use the print environment with their children to help develop language and a love of stories and books.
2c) Supporting dads/male carers	Practitioners know that dads and male carers may need extra encouragement to come into the setting and share play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.	Practitioners make sure their setting is welcoming to dads by making it father friendly and encouraging dads to share play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.	Practitioners provide outreach support for dads so that they take part in activities that encourage them to share play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.

2d) Supporting young mums and dads	Practitioners know that young mums and dads may need extra encouragement to come into the setting and engage with sharing play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.	Practitioners make sure their setting is welcoming to young mums and dads and that they are encouraged to engage with sharing play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.	Practitioners provide outreach support for young mums and dads so that they are supported in sharing play, rhymes, song and stories with their children.
2e) Adult basic skills provision	Practitioners understand that some mums and dads may have difficulties with their basic reading and writing skills, and remember this when communicating with them.	Practitioners know where mums and dads can get support with their reading and writing, if needed.	Practitioners are confident to link mums and dads to the local network of adult basic skills providers and family learning services, if appropriate.
<b>3. An enabling environment - inside and outside</b>			
3a) Training	Practitioners have attended training about how to encourage babies and children to develop their language skills and love books through interactive story telling, play and book sharing activities.	Practitioners <b>use</b> what they have learned about how to encourage babies and children to develop their language skills and love books through interactive story telling, play and book sharing activities in their setting.	Practitioners have attended training about how to support mums and dads in storytelling and in encouraging their babies and children to develop their language skills and love books. They <b>use</b> this training to help engage families. Practitioners have accessed Every Child A Talker training.
3b) Promoting reading	Some books that interest the children are displayed and there are reading opportunities for the children both inside and outside the setting.	There is a good range of imaginatively displayed books that interest the children, as well as some stimulating environmental print.	There is a wide range of books, reading materials and story sacks displayed invitingly; some of these are routinely taken into the outdoors. Materials are lent out to families for at-home reading.
3c) Reading/storytelling area	There is a comfortable story/reading area for children to use.	There is a comfortable story/reading area with interesting features and staff actively encourage children to use it.	There is a comfortable story/reading area which families are encouraged to use and which is regularly updated and changed. There may be more than one story area e.g. girls/boys, solo/group reading.

3d) Community links	Practitioners are aware of local facilities and how they could support the children's development.	Practitioners sometimes make use of local facilities to support the children's development.	Practitioners regularly make use of local facilities to support the children's development and engage families in these activities, encouraging them to make use of local facilities independently.
3e) Local library links	Practitioners know where the local library is and are beginning to make links.	There are good links with the local library. The local children's librarian supports practitioners in selecting good books to share with children.	The setting arranges visits to the local library for its children and their families for reading-related events and activities and families and children are encouraged to join the library.
3f) Reading events	Practitioners are aware of national reading events.	Practitioners organise or take part in events to celebrate World Book Day and National Children's Book Week.	Practitioners involve families in a range of events including World Book Day activities and National Children's Book Week .
<b>4. Learning and development</b>			
4a) Whole-setting strategy	Promoting a love of words, stories and reading is <b>included</b> in the setting's learning and development plan.	Promoting a love of words, stories and reading is <b>an important part of</b> the setting's learning and development plan.	Promoting a love of words, stories and reading is <b>central</b> to the setting's learning and development plan.
4b) Practitioner understanding	Practitioners understand the importance of developing babies' and children's love of language and stories. They recognise that speaking and listening is key to language development and reading.	Practitioners work together to develop an ethos in their setting that promotes the importance of developing babies and children's love of stories and language. They recognise that language development needs to be integrated into everyday activities.	The importance of developing babies and children's love of words, stories and reading as a key tool for learning and development is embedded within the ethos of the setting as part of day-to-day activities. Practitioners also model for parents how this can be done in the home.
4c) Observational skills	Practitioners know how to observe babies and children and their early language and reading behaviours	Practitioners observe the early language and reading behaviours of babies and children and use their findings to plan how best to support them in the future.	Practitioners use observations and assessments of language and reading development regularly/ in a more structured way/ at set times to evaluate and plan for progress and development.

4d) Reading activity	Practitioners talk about reading and books in daily interactions with babies and children.	Practitioners are involved in interactive book sharing and storytelling with babies and children on a daily basis.	Practitioners actively involve the children in making books that are inspired by their own experiences; mums and dads are encouraged to make similar books with their children at home.
4e) Word development	Practitioners read a variety of materials to children individually and in groups and draw attention to particular words and sounds.	Practitioners draw children's attention to words by pointing out and reading out loud environmental print (e.g. signs), name labels, key words in books, text and email messages etc.	Practitioners encourage children's interest in conveying messages through print by demonstrating the process of writing, e.g. writing a child's dictated birthday message on a card, or labelling a painting or model with the child's own words.
4f) Transition	Your setting has links with local primary schools and has some understanding of the schools' reading for pleasure strategies .	Your setting has effective links with local primary schools and has good understanding of the schools' reading for pleasure strategies. The transition process is eased by, for example, the setting sharing information about the child's favourite books with the new school.	Your setting has well-developed links with local primary schools reading for pleasure strategies and incorporates elements of them into its learning and development work. At the transition stage you share information about the children's language and reading development and parental involvement.