Cambridgeshire Primary Headteachers
Curriculum in the early years

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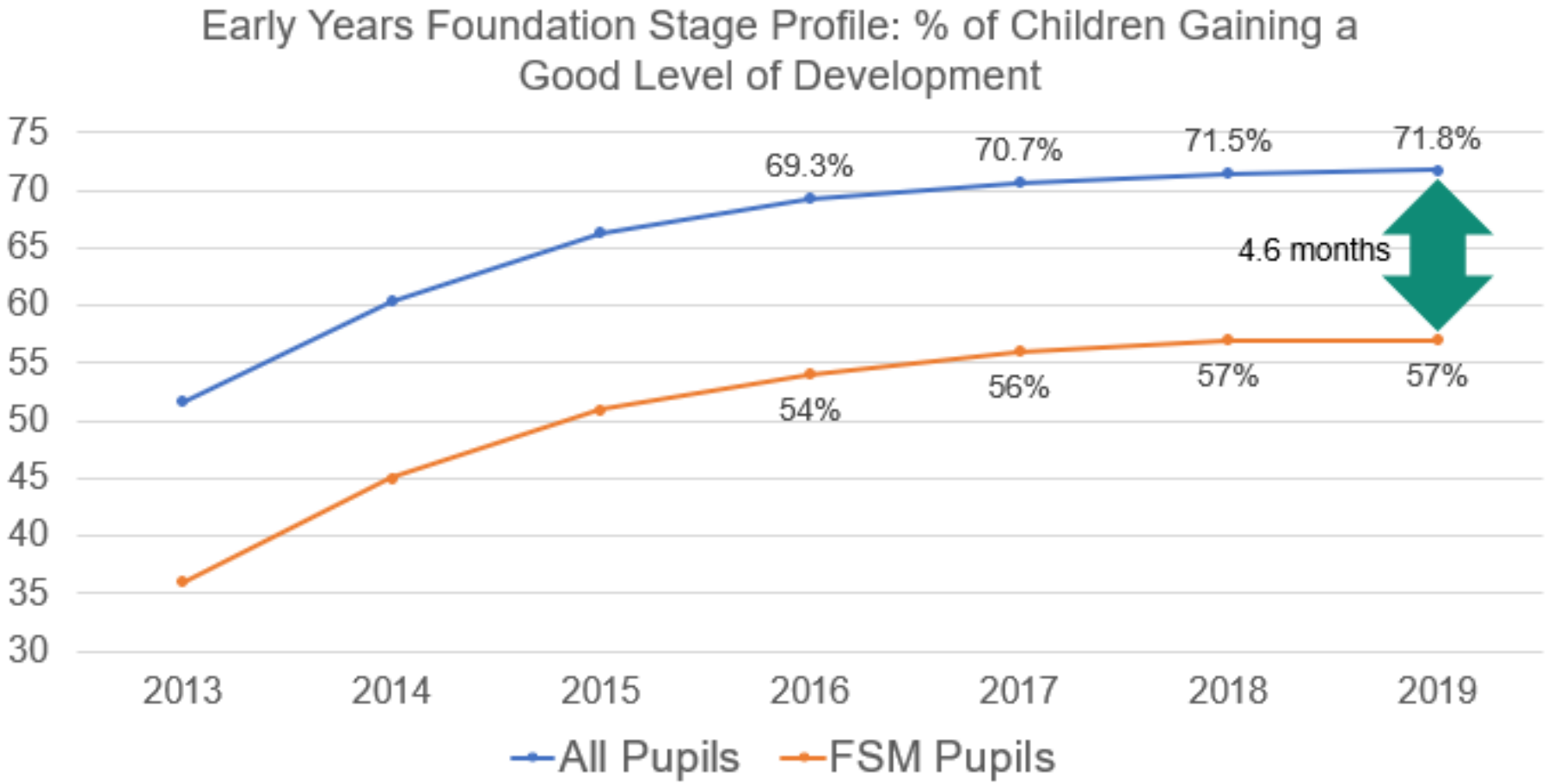
10.50am-12.20pm

Disadvantage: **child poverty**

- It's not just about early years
- We need a bigger change
- BUT there <u>are</u> things we can do now

Educational Outcomes Pre-Pandemic



2019 EYs Disadvantage gap = 4.6 month

It was the first year the disadvantage gap grew

(EPI, 2020)

Children with SEND

Children with SEND are 10 to 15 months behind other children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, according to the Education Policy Institute's annual report.

Gaps double

- The 4.6 month gap doubles by the end of primary, and doubles again by the end of secondary schooling

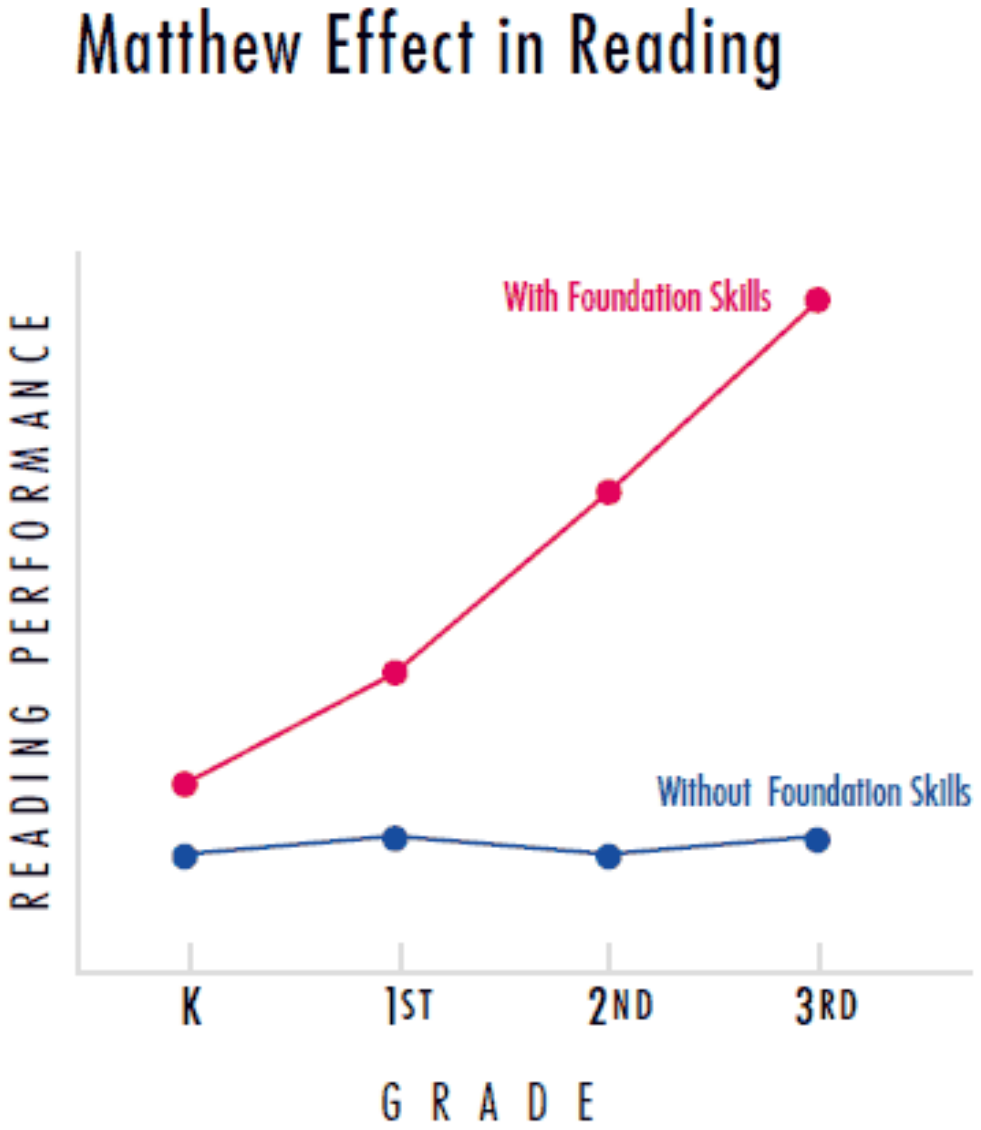

Mirror

Why?

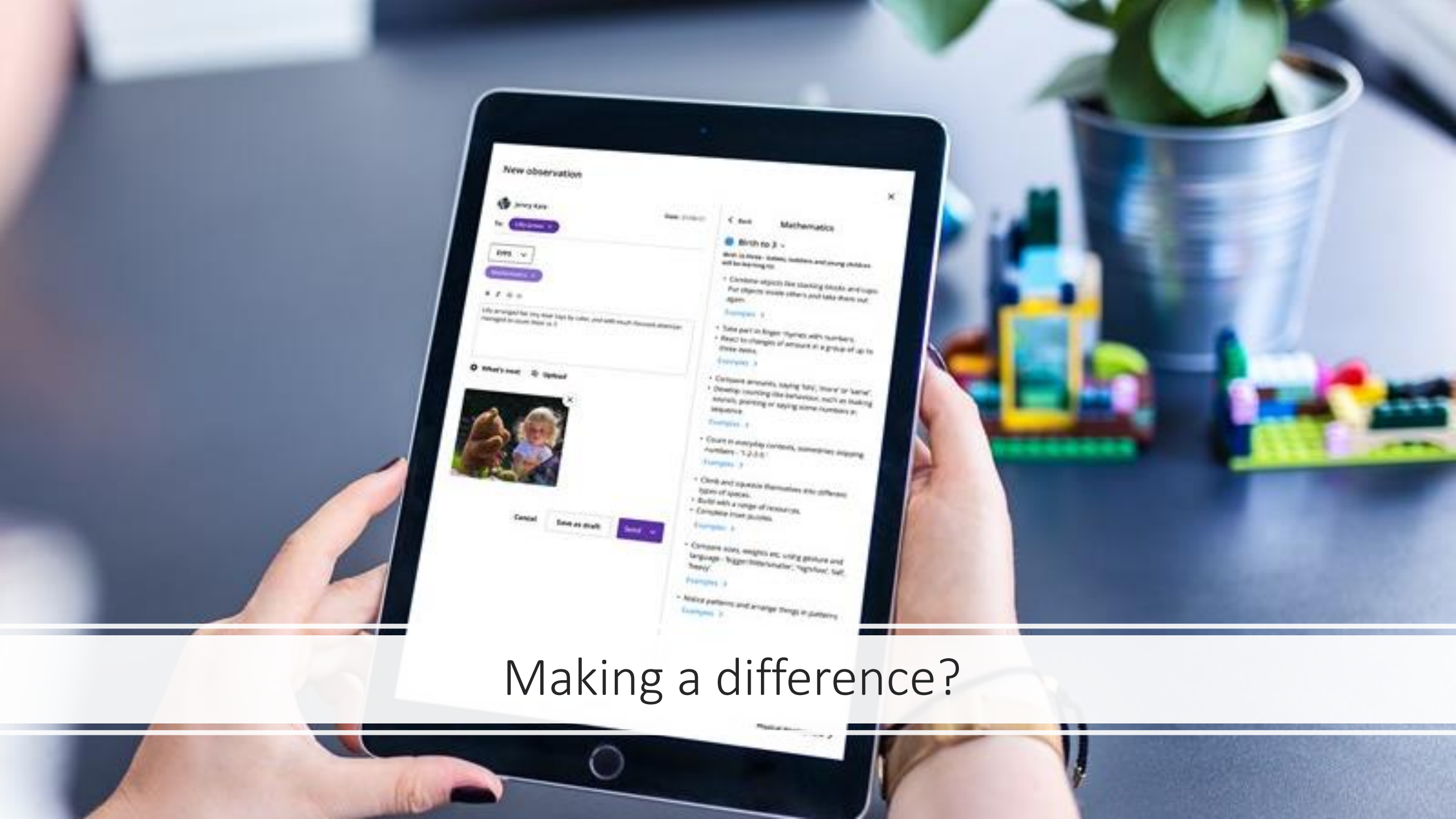
- *"The concept of Matthew effects springs from findings that individuals who have advantageous early educational experiences are able to utilize new educational experiences more efficiently*"

p381 Reading Research Quarterly, xxi/4

With thanks to Megan Dixon



How do we make a difference?



Making a difference?

Making a difference?

- Shared book reading and wordless picture books

Sh

Share attention

Be at the child's level. Pay attention to what they are focused on.

R

Respond

Follow the child's lead. Respond to their non-verbal and verbal communications. You could make a brief comment on what they can see, hear or feel.

E

Expand

Repeat what the child says and build on it by adding more words to turn it into a sentence.

C

Conversation

Have extended back and forth interactions. Give children time to listen, process and reply.

The importance of language development

The challenge

‘Preschool settings are often dominated by teacher talk and this talk has been criticized as being overly directive and unresponsive, often focusing on procedural or management information which is associated with restricted and less complex language use by the children.’

The challenge

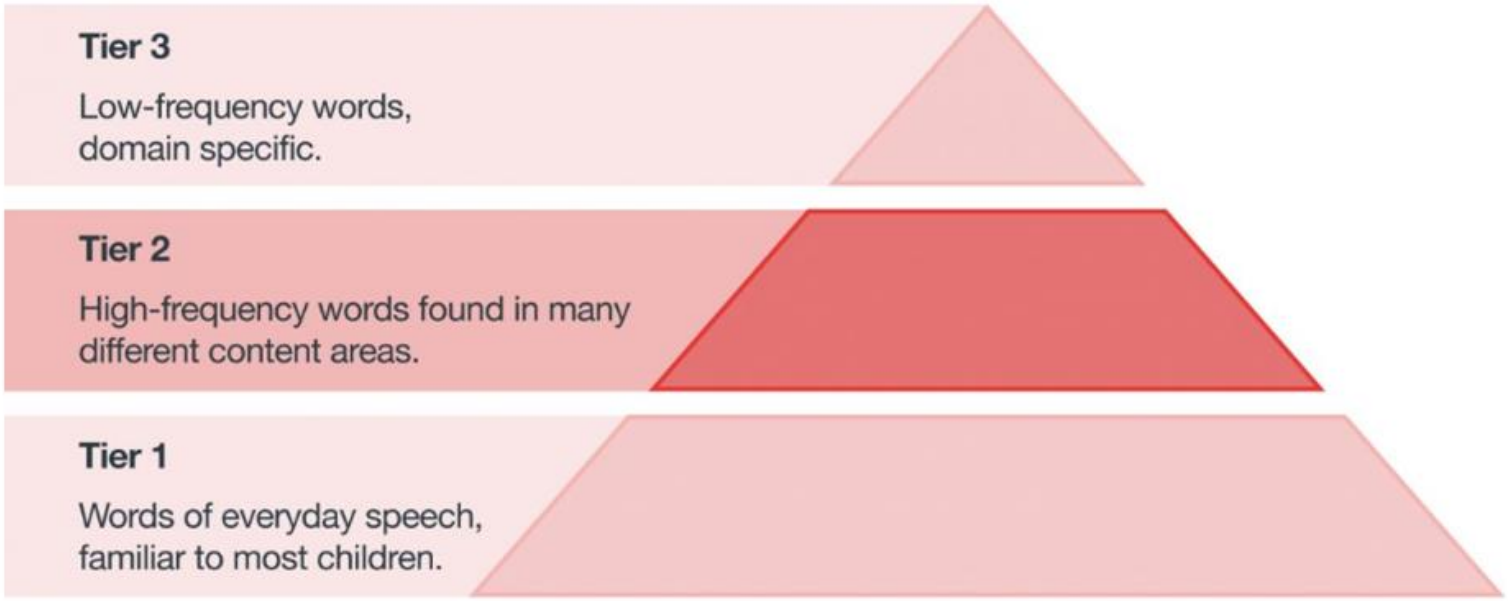
‘In contrast, where children receive frequent examples of language models, development is enhanced.’

Supporting early oral language skills for English language learners in inner city preschool provision

A broader and richer vocabulary

- providing children with a rich language environment (implicit approaches) as well as directly extending children's vocabulary (explicit approaches);
- carefully selecting high-frequency words for explicit teaching (see Figure 1);
- developing the number of words children know (breadth) and their understanding of relationships between words and the contexts in which words can be used (depth); and
- providing multiple opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary.[8–10]

Which words to teach explicitly....



Annoy
Assist
Brief
Concerned
Create
Dangerous
Delighted
Difficult
Edible
Enormous
Except
Fancy
Impossible
Locate
Patient
Protect
Recall
Repeat
Separate
Supplies
Useful
Visible

Box 1: High quality interactions—it's harder than it looks

Multiple frameworks exist to help structure high quality interactions.

Guided interaction occurs when an adult and child collaborate on a task and the adult's strategies are highly tuned to the child's capabilities and motivations.[13] The adult is responsive to the child's intentions, focuses on spontaneous learning, and provides opportunities for the child's feedback. Discussion is a key feature of this approach and the use of a variety of questions helps to develop and extend children's thinking.

Types of questions to develop reasoning

Question type	Example
Evidence	How do you know Winnie-the-Pooh got stuck in the rabbit hole?
Reasons/theory	Why did Winnie-the-Pooh get stuck in the rabbit hole?
Counterfactual suggestion	What would have happened if Winnie-the-Pooh had not eaten the honey?
False belief	What does Winnie-the-Pooh think has happened to stop him getting out?
Future hypothetical suggestion	What could Winnie-the-Pooh do next?

Education Endowment Foundation

EEF Early Years Toolkit

Toolkit Strands	Cost	Evidence	Impact
Early numeracy approaches Very high impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence	£		+6
Earlier starting age Very high impact for very high cost based on moderate evidence	£ £ £ £ £		+6
Communication and language approaches Very high impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence	£		+6
Self-regulation strategies High impact for very low cost based on limited evidence	£		+5
Play-based learning High impact for very low cost based on very limited evidence	£		+5
Early literacy approaches Moderate impact for very low cost based on moderate evidence	£		+4

Communication and language approaches used in the early years include:

- **reading aloud** to children and discussing books,
- explicitly extending children's **spoken vocabulary** by introducing them to new words in context, and
- drawing attention to **letters and sounds.**

They also include approaches more directly aimed at **developing thinking** and understanding through language, such as 'sustained shared thinking' or 'guided interaction'.

Curriculum sequencing?

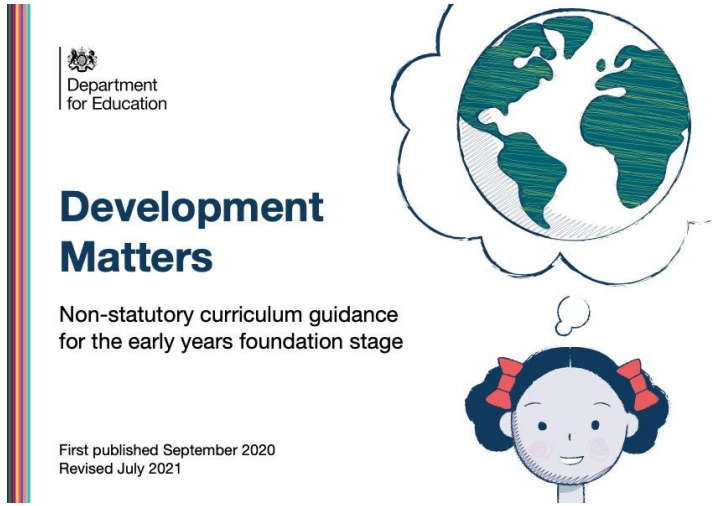
Early years: When should we start teaching writing?

Expecting children to engage in writing when their communication skills are not developed is futile, says Julian Grenier

Julian Grenier
21st March 2020 at 8:02am

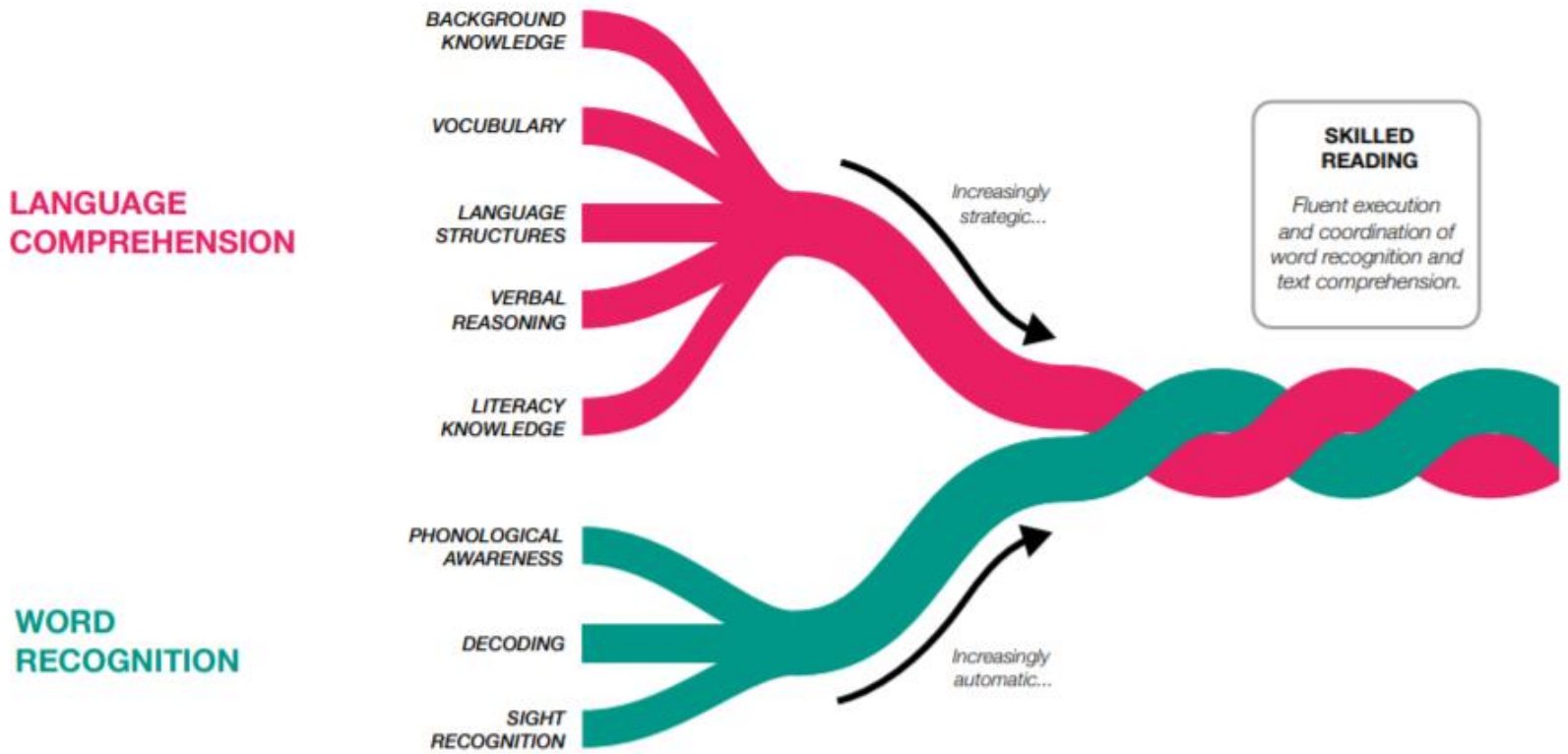
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.



The example of early reading

Figure 4: Scarborough's Reading Rope[21]—the many strands of skilled reading



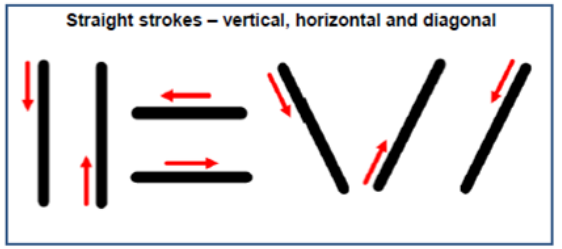
Preparing for handwriting

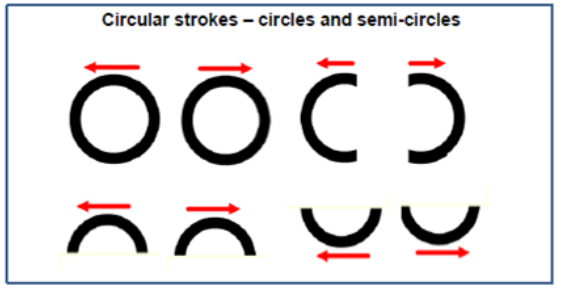
The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

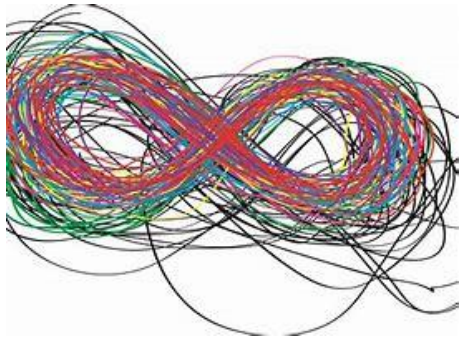
Pre-Handwriting – Developmental Continuum

Fine Motor Skills	Scissor Skills	Pre-writing Skills
Can use two hands together, e.g. to open lids on jars	Is able to hold scissors appropriately	Scribbles randomly on paper
Uses a dominant hand and an assist hand during activities	Is able to open and close scissors using a controlled action	Scribbles spontaneously in different directions, e.g. straight line, circle
Is able to control and manipulate small tools effectively	Is able to hold the paper and make random cuts	Imitates simple marks after watching an adult, e.g. diagonal line
Uses tripod grasp for more intricate tasks, e.g. picking up small items	Is able to cut in a straight line	Copies simple shapes that involve one movement, e.g. circle
Uses tripod grasp to manipulate small objects, e.g. rolling play-doh balls	Is able to cut out simple shapes	Imitates shapes that involve multiple movements, e.g. □ X
Uses tripod grasp to accurately put things together, e.g. threading	Is able to cut along curved lines, e.g. circles	Child copies shapes that have multiple movements, e.g. □ X
Gets faster at tasks they have practised, e.g. posting coins into a slot	Is able to cut out more complicated shapes with straight and curved lines	Child has an understanding of movement concepts, e.g. up, down, around

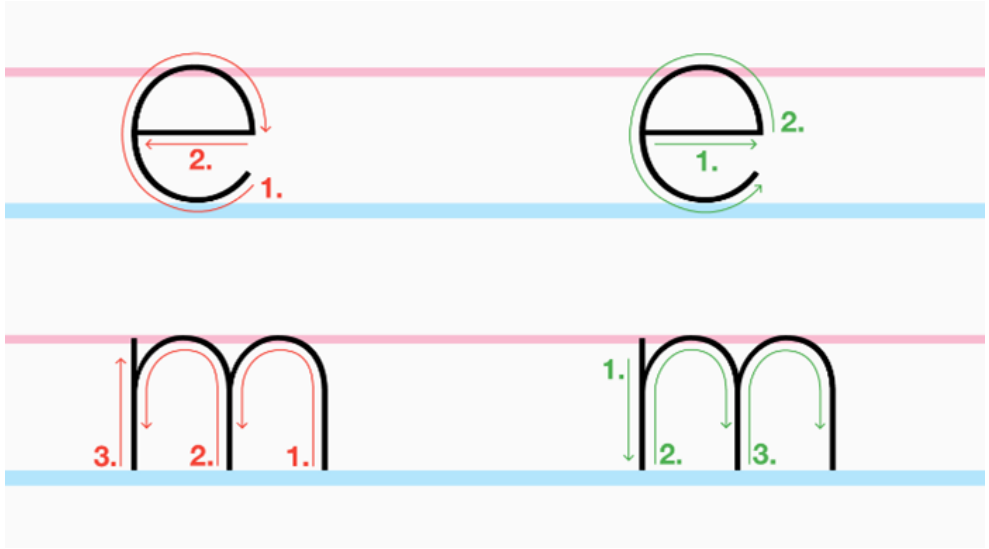
Child is ready for handwriting instruction







Handwriting - process and product



Handwriting

- Achieving good results in the end of key stage assessments is of crucial importance to schools. Consequently, there is considerable pressure on practitioners to ‘get children writing’ whether or not they are developmentally ready. One casualty of this pressure is the effect on learning and practising the movements for each letter family. Many children enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum with letters incorrectly formed.

- Source: https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/handwriting/help-for-teachers/development-of-handwriting-in-the-eyfs/

Early maths

‘Developing a sound understanding of mathematics when we are young is essential. Children’s early mathematical understanding is strongly associated with their later school achievement. It has, therefore, a major impact on young people’s educational progress and life outcomes.’

EEF Guidance Report

IMPROVING MATHEMATICS IN THE EARLY YEARS AND KEY STAGE 1

Guidance Report

Education Endowment Foundation

Education Endowment Foundation

IMPROVING MATHEMATICS IN THE EARLY YEARS AND KEY STAGE 1

Summary of recommendations

1 Develop practitioners'understanding of how children learn mathematics

- Professional development should be used to raise the quality of practitioner' knowledge of mathematics, of children's mathematical development and of effective mathematical pedagogy.
- Developmental progressions show us how children typically learn mathematical concepts and can inform teaching.
- Practitioners should be aware that developing a secure grasp of early mathematical ideas takes time, and specific skills may emerge in different orders.
- The development of self-regulation and metacognitive skills are linked to successful learning in early mathematics.

2 Dedicate time for children to learn mathematics and integrate mathematics throughout the day

- Dedicate time to focus on mathematics each day.
- Explore mathematics through different contexts, including storybooks, puzzles, songs, rhymes, puppet play, and games.
- Make the most of moments throughout the day to highlight and use mathematics, for example, in daily routines, play activities, and other curriculum areas.
- Seize chances to reinforce mathematical vocabulary.
- Create opportunities for extended discussion of mathematical ideas with children.

3 Use manipulatives and representations to develop understanding

- Manipulatives and representations can be powerful tools for supporting young children to engage with mathematical ideas.
- Ensure that children understand the links between the manipulatives and the mathematical ideas they represent.
- Ensure that there is a clear rationale for using a particular manipulative or representation to teach a specific mathematical concept.
- Encourage children to represent problems in their own way, for example with drawings and marks.
- Use manipulatives and representations to encourage discussion about mathematics.
- Encourage children to use their fingers—an important manipulative for children.

4 Ensure that teaching builds on what children already know

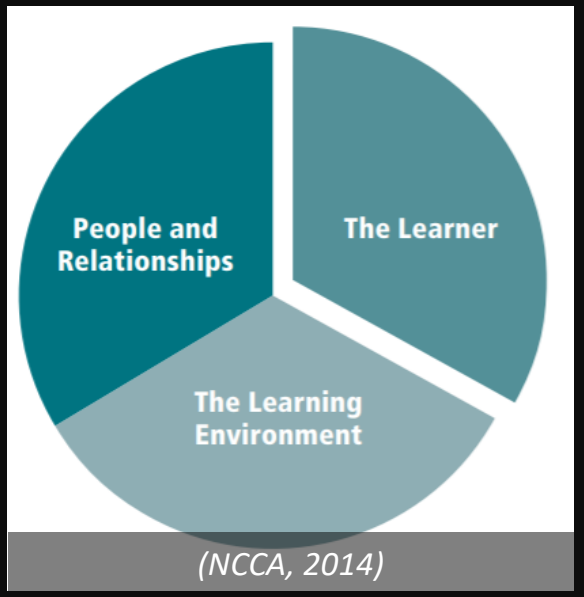
- It is important to assess what children do, and do not, know in order to extend learning for all children.
- A variety of methods should be used to assess children's mathematical understanding, and practitioners should check what children know in a variety of contexts
- Carefully listen to children's responses and consider the right questions to ask to reveal understanding.
- Information collected should be used to inform next steps for teaching. Developmental progressions can be useful in informing decisions around what a child should learn next.

5 Use high quality targeted support to help all children learn mathematics

- High quality targeted support can provide effective extra support for children.
- Small-group support is more likely to be effective when:
- children with the greatest needs are supported by the most experienced staff;
- training, support and resources are provided for staff using targeted activities;
- sessions are brief and regular; and
- explicit connections are made between targeted support and everyday activities or teaching.
- Using an approach or programme that is evidence-based and has been independently evaluated is a good starting point.

Sensitive, supportive relationships are vital for young children learning maths

- *staff knowing children well;*
- *fostering a culture that supports children's curiosity, thinking and problem solving;*
- *providing engaging, appropriate, cognitively challenging activities.*



(NCCA, 2014)

Mathematical development

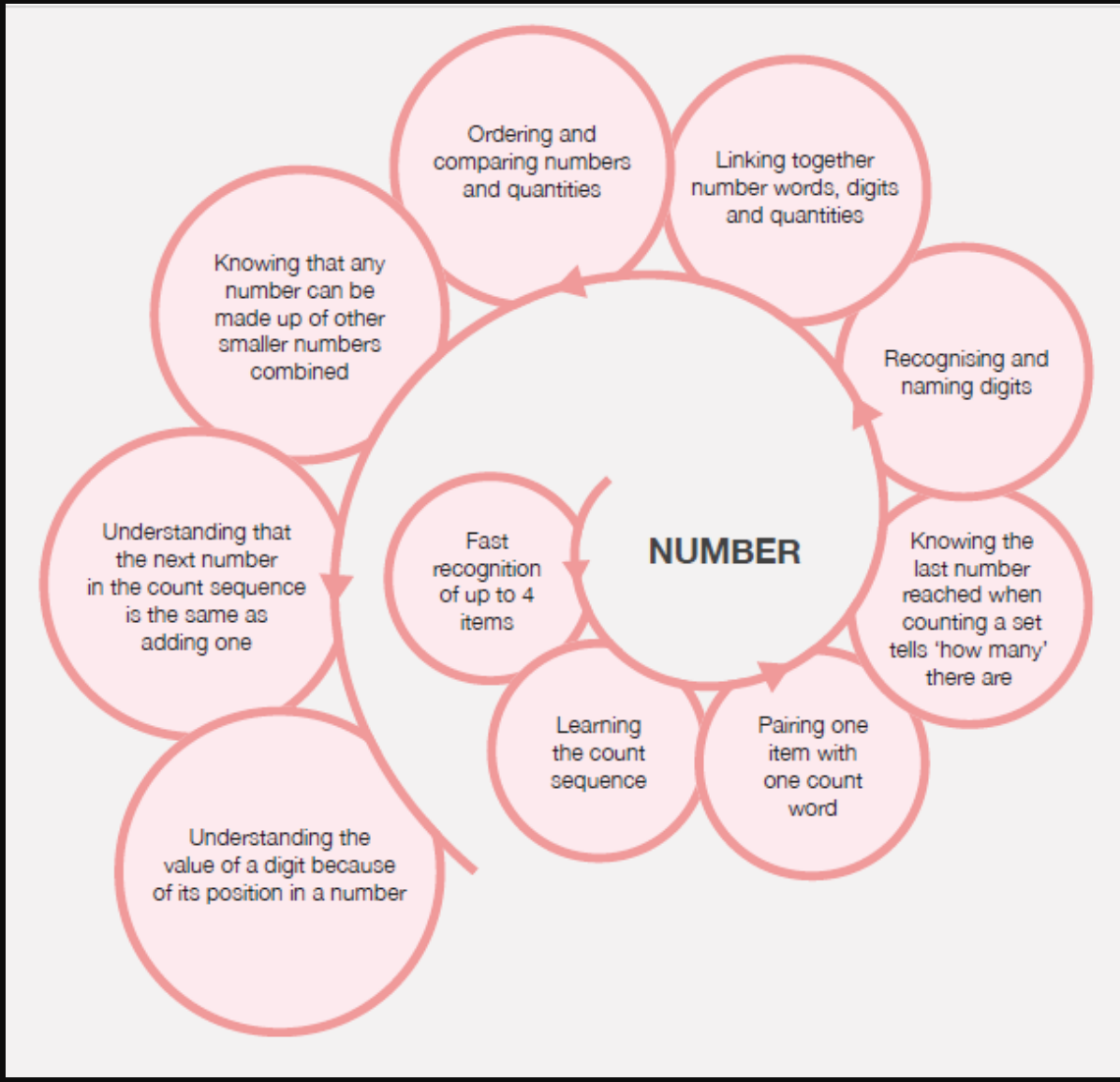
- Mathematical development is complex; developing a secure grasp of early mathematical ideas takes time.
- Important to be aware that even if children are engaging successfully in mathematical activities they may yet have a full grasp of the underlying concepts.
- Additionally, children may appear to have understood an idea in one context yet do not demonstrate that knowledge in a different context.
- Research has identified possible paths children may follow known as ***'Developmental progressions'.***

Developmental progressions

- A developmental progression is a sequence of learning that provides practitioners with information about the steps along a developmental path.
- It is important that practitioners are aware of the typical development of key mathematical skills and concepts.
- ***"This knowledge will help you recognise the kinds of learning experiences that will make these ideas real for children and how to make them fun without losing the important concepts under the glitter and the glue."*** *(Early Math Collaborative, 2014)*

Developmental progressions

- **CAUTION!**
- *development is not linear*
- *skills may develop in parallel*
- *individual children may move through the spiral in different orders*
- *there is considerable overlap in development*



The importance of a top-level curriculum plan: the example of maths

Clements and Sarama (2018, p. 2) agree that much of young children's spontaneous play is mathematical, and that 'teachers can build on such experiences'.

But 'teachable moments alone are far from adequate … it is unrealistic for any teacher to see opportunities for multiple children to build multiple concepts consistently over the year' (Clements and Sarama, 2018, p. 3).

3 & 4-year-olds will be learning to:

Fast recognition of up to 3 objects, without having to count them individually (‘subitising’).

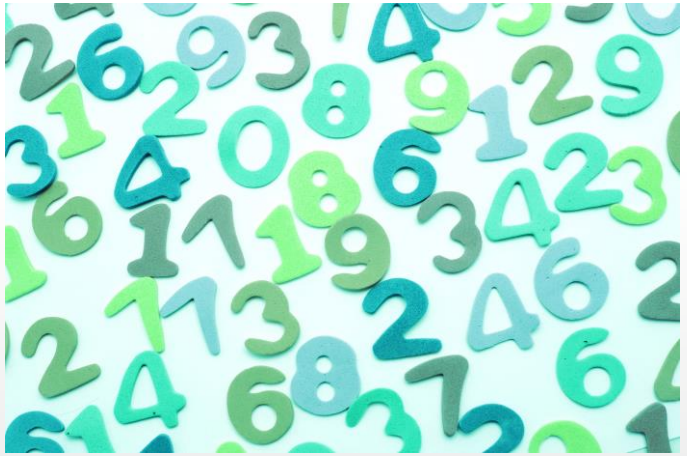
Recite numbers past 5.

Say one number for each item in order: 1,2,3,4,5.

Know that the last number reached when counting a small set of objects tells you how many there are in total (‘cardinal principle’).

Show ‘finger numbers’ up to 5.

Link numerals and amounts: for example, showing the right number of objects to match the numeral, up to 5.



Denis wants to count

2 points to bear in mind

The updated Development Matters puts a stronger emphasis on curriculum planning.

Balance: the planned curriculum, and responding to children's exploration and play

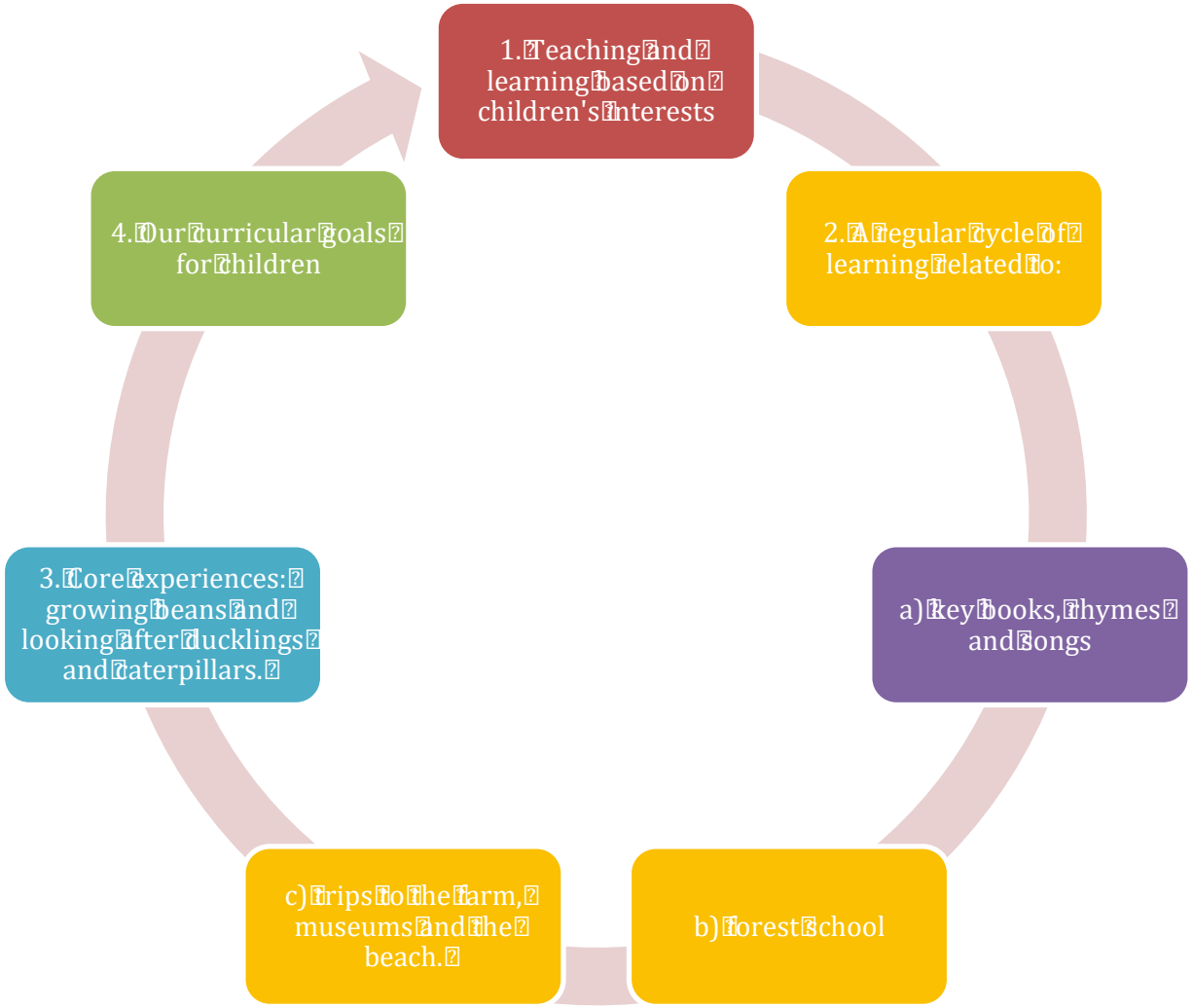
The evidence suggests:

freely chosen play is important for motivation.	play that's supported by scaffolding is a powerful way for children to learn

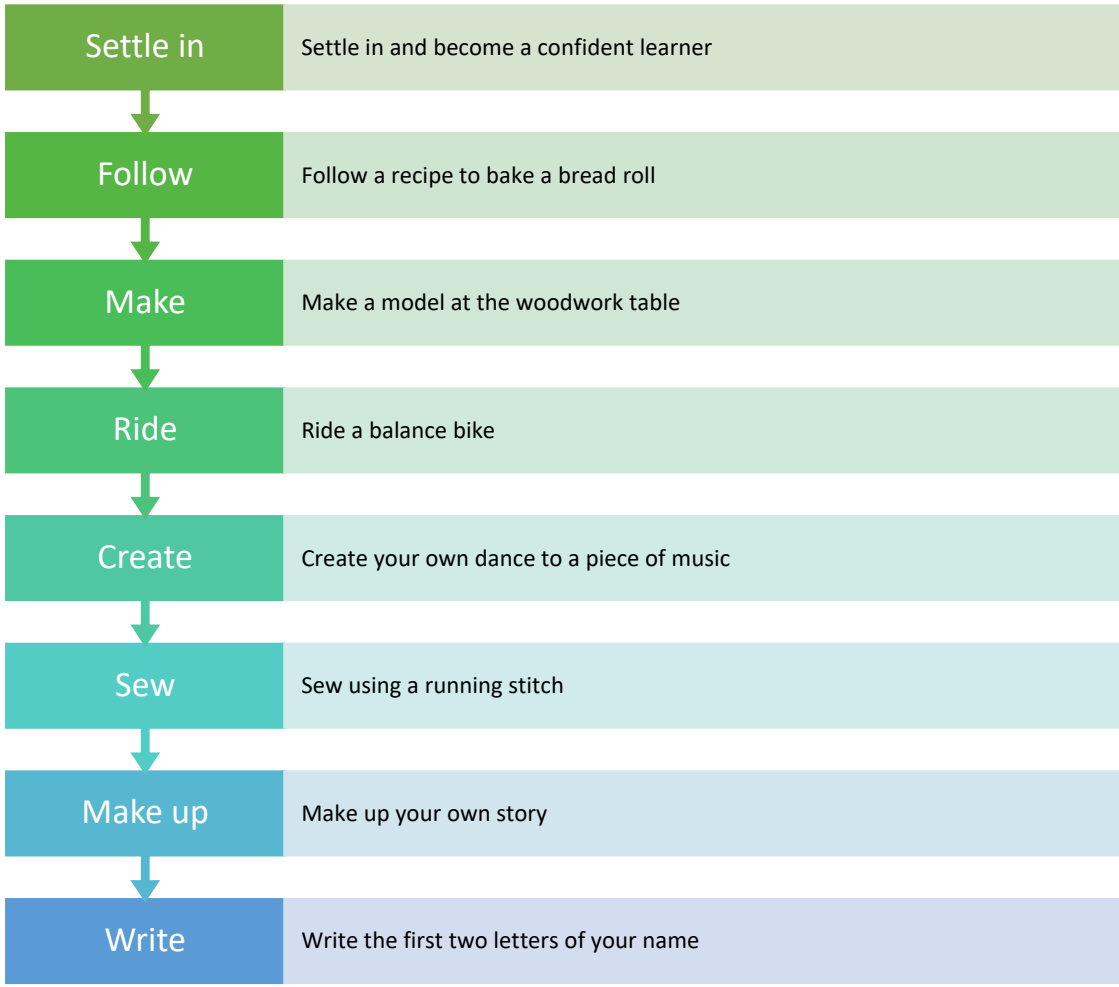
Everything connects

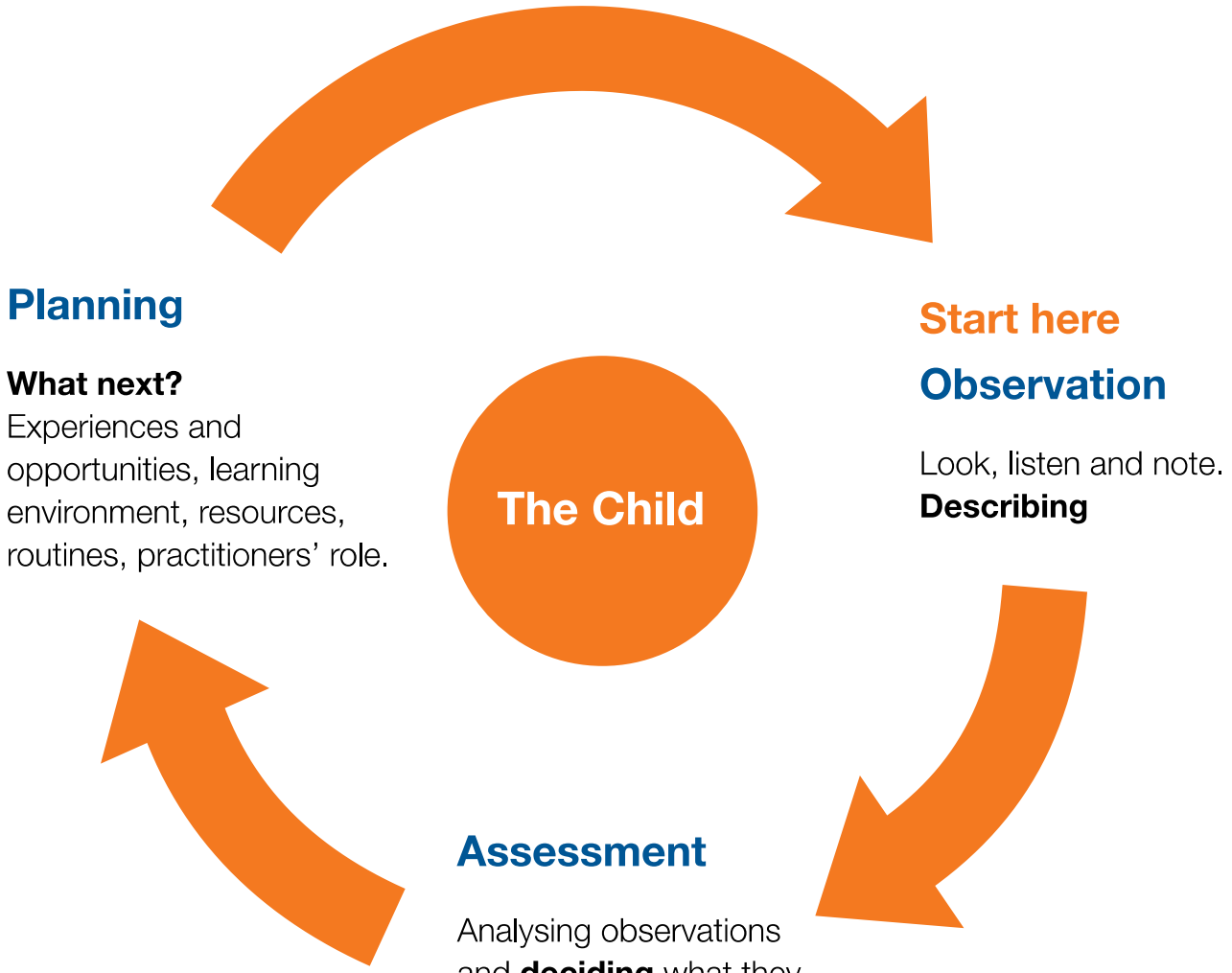
- For example:
- Communication and emotional wellbeing
- Physical development and self-regulation
- Understanding the world and communication
- Expressive Arts and Design and communication

- ‘Prime areas first’ doesn’t make sense. All the areas of the EYFS weave together.


1. Teaching and learning based on children's interests
2. A regular cycle of learning related to:
a) key books, rhymes and songs
b) forest school
c) trips to the farm, museums and the beach.
3. Core experiences: growing beans and looking after ducklings and caterpillars.
4. Our curricular goals for children

Our 8 curricular goals

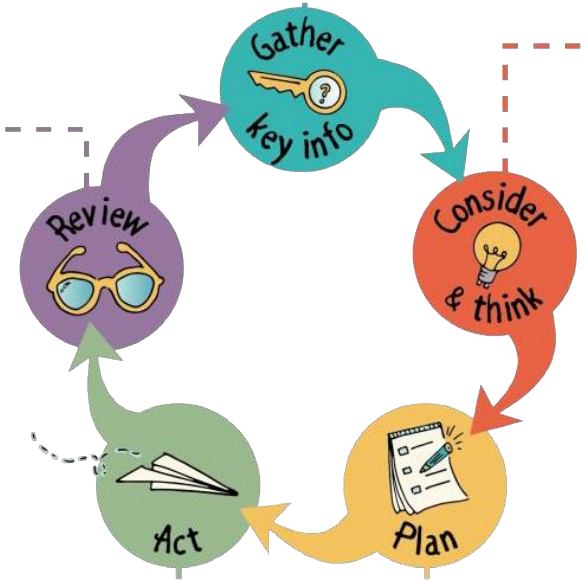



Planning
What next?
Experiences and opportunities, learning environment, resources, routines, practitioners' role.
The Child
Start here
Observation
Look, listen and note.
Describing
Assessment
Analysing observations and deciding what they tell us about children.

An example of a planning cycle

The 'big picture': what you want children to know and be able to do.
Starting off: what you've noticed about children's interests and what their parents have told you.
Keeping going: helping children to keep building on their learning.

Noticing: what children know and what can they already do.
Linking: what do you want children to learn next?
Introducing: rich new ideas and cultural experiences.



Allow plenty of time: children need regular opportunities to practise and repeat their learning.
Keep plans under review: some children will need extra help to keep up. Others will benefit from additional experiences to deepen their learning.

Helping children to learn: what will practitioners do (interaction with children and/or learning environment)
Vocabulary: what specific vocabulary will be introduced to children.
Reasoning: what scaffolding and open-ended questions will help children to develop their thinking?

Helping children to learn: organise the activities or equipment which will maximise learning.
Checking that children understand and can do what you intended.

The Rochford Review: final report

Review of assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests

Chaired by Diane Rochford

October 2016

Inclusion

‘Curriculum should drive assessment and not the other way round’.

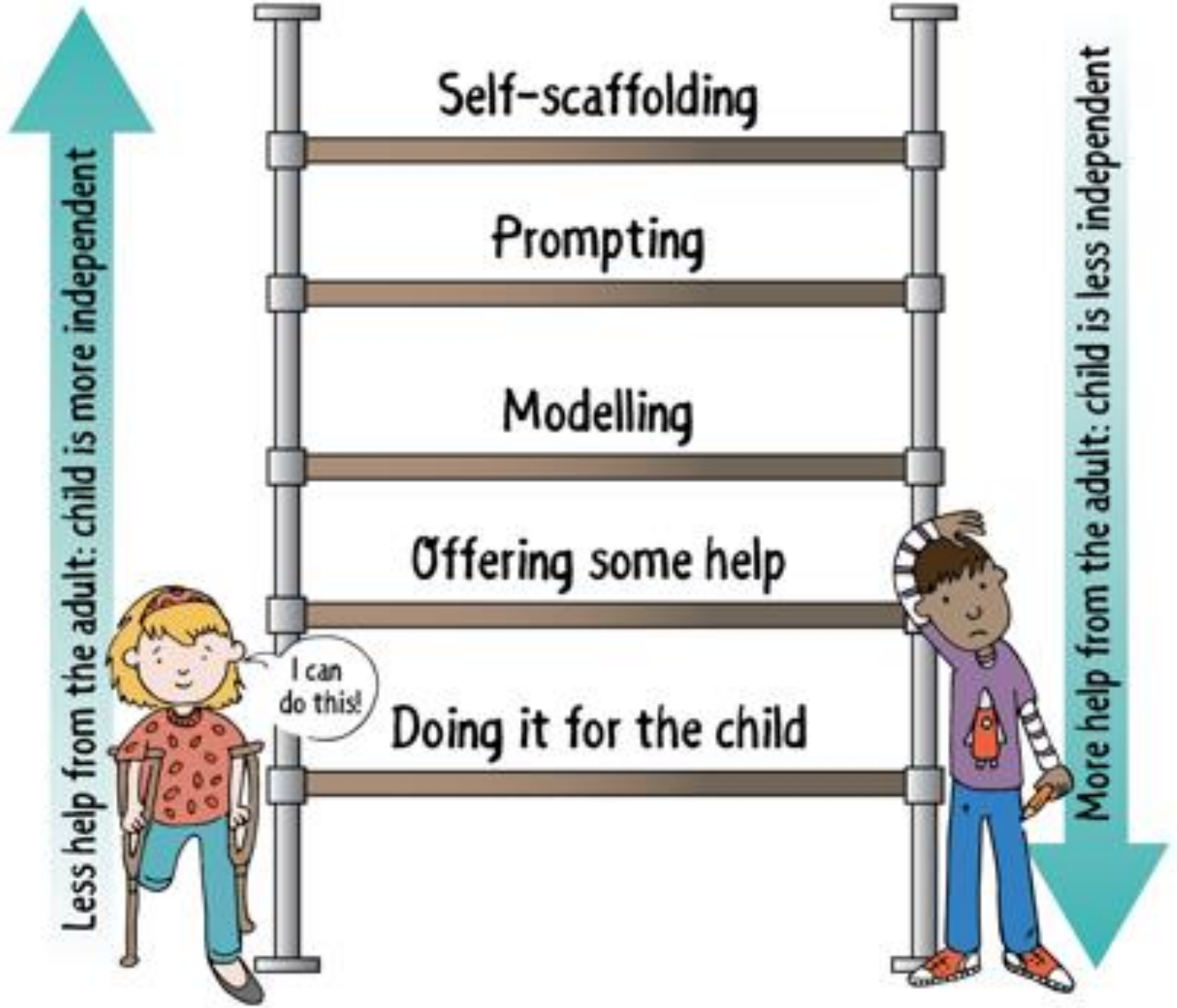
Following children's interests?

Differentiation?

Scaffolding?

What are the barriers to learning that the pupil is experiencing and in which subjects?	What are their strengths, interests, and aspirations?
What support do they need to access the curriculum?	How can the school's provision be improved to support this pupil to learn?

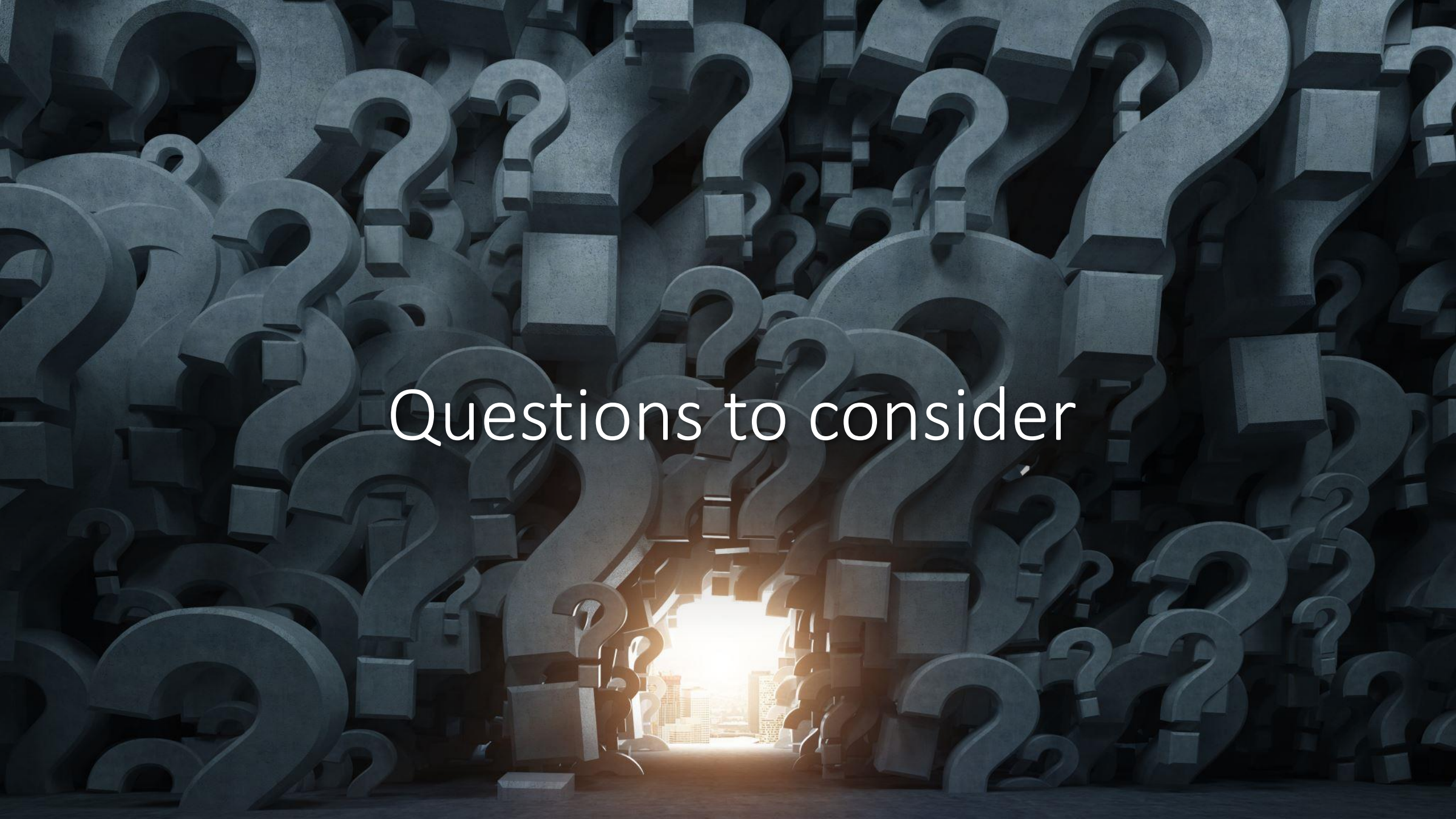
Scaffolding



Children with SEND

- Think carefully about our early years curriculum.
- Consider the support each child with SEND requires to access that curriculum and make progress towards key milestones.
- Assessment must check that this key learning is secure. That requires precision.
- Vague phrases like ‘not on track’ or references to bands and levels won’t help.

Laurence


Questions to consider

The Early Years **Foundation Stage**

How well does your approach to the Foundation Stage meet the needs of children as the come into your school?

Are children gaining the key early knowledge and skills they need for school and for life?

High-quality play?

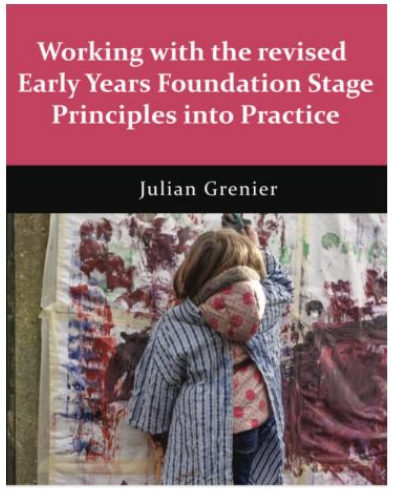
Secure foundations for later learning?

Find out more

development-matters.org.uk

Download “The Revised Early Years Foundation Stage: Principles into Practice”

Principles-into-Practice-2021-revised.pdf – Downloaded 88317 times – 5 MB



DOWNLOAD “What to Expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage: A Guide for Parents“