



will inevitably be different for different children, i.e. how they show their responses will be different. This means you can use this document to fit around children’s individual needs and again celebrate their successes.

To go alongside this document is the Early Years Small Steps Assessment – example summary sheet. This summary sheet document can also be used to support applications for funding, additional support or statutory assessments within Leicestershire. It can also be used to share with health professionals. We advise in these specific applications and uses, providers report on ‘secure’ levels of achievement, where a child is secure (independently and consistently achieving) within an age bracket.

Please visit our website for further support on how best to use this document and assess children with additional needs.

Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	Page 3
	Speaking	Page 7
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	Page 10
	Managing Self	Page 13
	Building Relationships	Page 17
Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills	Page 20
	Fine Motor Skills	Page 24
Literacy	Comprehension	Page 28
	Word Reading	Page 31
	Writing	Page 34
Mathematics	Number and Numerical Patterns	Page 37
	Spatial Reasoning Skills	Page 40
Understanding the World	Past and Present	Page 43
	People, Culture and Communities	Page 45
	The Natural World	Page 48
Arts and Design	Creating with Materials	Page 51
	Being Imaginative and Expressive	Page 53

N.B. The areas of Learning and Development follow the Early Learning Goals, as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Due to the nature of the small steps document, Number and Numerical Patterns are linked within the same area. There is also an additional area (Mathematic: Spatial Reasoning Skills), as noted in the Educational Programme in the Early Years Statutory Framework. This is an optional additional area for assessment.

Begins to focus on an activity of their choice for short periods
 Responds to familiar words or phrases by looking or with gestures e.g. 'Daddy'
 Has a greater focus on motivating tasks for a longer period of time
 Responds to own name by stilling or turning
 Responds to familiar greetings through gesture/sound/eye gaze etc. e.g. turning/stilling
 Begins to respond to stimuli presented in an on/off pattern
 Begins to recognise and respond to key objects of reference e.g. nappy at changing time/ bottle/cup at snack time
 Begins to make a choice to select a desired object from two

12 – 18 months

Consistently points to items of interest and use gestures to show things to adults
 Begins to listen and respond to one step instructions containing one key word e.g. get your cup
 Chooses between two objects e.g. 'do you want baby or car?'
 Begins to respond to simple commands / instructions when in a familiar context with a familiar adult e.g. point to Mummy, give the apple to Mummy
 Understands familiar single words in new contexts e.g. 'bath' at home and elsewhere
 Concentrates, for short periods, intently on an object or activity of own choosing / dominant stimulus
 Enjoys a wider range of nursery rhymes, trying to join in with some simple actions e.g. clapping hands and / or vocalisations
 Stops in response to 'no' or inhibitive sounds
 Becomes excited and waits during anticipation games e.g. waiting for 'go' in 'ready, steady, go' or, '1, 2, 3... go' games or songs
 Imitates a sequence of three or more actions

18 – 24 months

Understands a range of single words and some simple action words
 Consistently listens and responds to simple one step instructions in context e.g. sit down
 Consistently listens and responds to one key word instructions e.g. when given a choice of teddy or dolly, will point to dolly, rather than teddy
 Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories with multiple / complex actions, trying to join in with some actions and attempting vocalisations, albeit not always clear e.g. 'Wind the Bobbin Up'
 Pays attention to own choice of activity, may move quickly from activity to activity
 Understands approximately 50 familiar naming words
 Attention focused on the activity so that they may appear not to hear or respond e.g. when playing with toys
 Listens with interest to general conversation, responding to familiar words that interest them, e.g. 'biscuit'

24 – 30 months

Begins to show an interest in what other children are playing and will occasionally join in
 Understands more words than they can say – between 200-500 words
 Begins to respond appropriately to simple two-part instructions or requests such as 'get your shoes and put on your coat' or 'pick up the ball and give it to me'

24 – 30 months

- Begins to respond to two key word instructions e.g. when given the choice of teddy or dolly / choice of apple / cake, will respond by giving the apple to dolly
- Indicates understanding of action words by demonstrating with self / toy e.g. 'make teddy jump'
- Points to five body parts on request independently
- Picks out a simple familiar instruction even when there is background noise, for example 'dinner time', 'no' or 'stop now'
- Listens to music and responds when it is turned off, for example stops singing or dancing or turns to look at the stereo
- Begins to shift to a different task if attention fully obtained with adult / visual prompting and support
- Responds appropriately to 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions with gesture / single words

30 - 36 months

- Consistently shifts to a different task if attention fully obtained with adult / visual prompting and support
- Consistently responds appropriately to simple two-part instructions or requests such as 'get your shoes and put on your coat' or 'pick up the ball and give it to me'
- Recognises and responds to many familiar environmental sounds, e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door
- Consistently recognises and joins in with familiar and self-chosen rhymes, number songs and actions, such as 'The wheels on the bus'
- Shows understanding of action words by pointing to the right picture
- Briefly attends to activities of others
- Shows understanding of prepositions 'in' and 'on' such as 'put dolly in the box' by carrying out action or selecting correct picture

36 - 42 months

- Shifts from one activity to another independently if you gain their attention, for example will stop when asked to and help tidy up
- Joins in with an activity that an adult or a child suggests
- Understands use of objects e.g. 'Which one do we cut with?'
- Begins to respond to three key word instructions e.g. when given the choice of teddy or dolly / size / choice of apple / cake, responds by giving the apple to little dolly
- Shows understanding of prepositions e.g. 'under', 'on top', 'behind', 'next to' by carrying out an action or selecting a correct picture
- Begins to follow instructions containing concepts of size (big / little), position (in / on), number and colour
- Joins in with key words and repeated refrains and anticipates key events/phrases in rhymes and stories
- Listens to familiar stories, verbally and / or using visual prompts
- Anticipates what might happen next in familiar stories with adult support
- Listens to others in one-to-one or small groups when conversation interests them

42 - 48 months

Follows general directions, if not intently focused e.g. instructions given as a large group

Consistently responds to three key word instructions e.g. when given the choice of teddy or dolly / size / choice of apple / cake, responds by giving the apple to little dolly

Consistently follows instructions containing concepts of size (big / little), position (in / on / under / behind / on top), number and colour

Begins to understand and respond to 'why' and 'how' questions e.g. 'how can we clean up the juice?' 'Why do you want to wear your coat outdoors today?'

Returns to a task after interruption e.g. toilet break

Perseveres for extended periods of time at an activity of their choosing

Understands all pronouns: 'they', 'he', 'she', 'him' and 'her'

Listens to familiar stories with increasing attention and recall, verbally and / or using visual prompts e.g. sequencing pictures

Predicts what might happen next after listening to part of a familiar story e.g. 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt', providing a verbal response, action and / or selecting a sequencing picture

Sings a large repertoire of songs

Knows many rhymes

Talks about familiar books

Tells a long story

48 - 54 months

Follows a short story without pictures or props

Carries out two unrelated directions e.g. 'put your lunchbox away and get your coat on'

Recalls what is missing from selection of items when one is removed e.g. Kim's Game

Shows variability in listening behaviour; may move around and fiddle but still be listening or sit still but not absorbed by activity e.g. whilst listening to a story, the child fiddles with their zip

Enjoys listening to stories, however, can only focus on one thing at a time

54 - 60 months

Understands a range of complex sentence structures including negatives, plurals and tense markers (past / present tense)

Beginning to understand humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes

Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion

Links significant events from own experience and from stories, paying attention to sequence and how events lead one to another

Predicts what might happen next after listening to part of an unfamiliar story

Listens to longer stories with adult on a one-to-one basis

Listens attentively to stories / songs / rhymes in a class group

Uses pointing with eye gaze, and then fingers or hands, to make requests and to share an interest
Creates personal words as they begin to develop language e.g. 'baba' for 'baby'
Vocalisations start to have the tone and rhythm of home language

18 - 24 months

Uses a range of adult like speech patterns (jargon) and says around 20 words
Copies familiar expressions e.g. 'Oh dear', 'All gone'
Uses different types of everyday words including nouns (naming words), verbs (action words) and adjectives (describing words), e.g. banana, go, sleep, hot
Begins to put two words together e.g. 'want ball', 'more juice'
Begins to talk about people and things that are not present e.g. 'Mummy gone'
Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk, e.g. reaches toward toy, saying 'want it'
Comments using a single word or known phrase to describe a situation e.g. 'doggy' or 'fall down'
Uses a mixture of words and vocalisation (jargon) combined with or instead of gestures when playing
Talks to self continuously when playing, although may not be readily understood

24 - 30 months

Says up to 50 words
Uses gesture and / or signing to support others to understand their wants / needs
Puts two or three words together
Asks a variety of simple questions e.g. 'what?', 'where?'
Uses personal pronouns, e.g. 'me', 'my' (not always grammatically correct) e.g. 'my do it'
Uses short phrases, 'my got one'
Uses a range of verbs to describe actions e.g. 'boy jumping'
Links noun and verb e.g. 'Daddy sleeping'
Learns new words very rapidly and can use them to communicate

30 - 36 months

Uses around 100-200 words
Asks questions frequently, such as people's names and objects
Sometimes uses pronouns ('he'/'she') and prepositions ('in/on'), although not always accurately
Uses longer simple sentences with up to 3- 4 words, (e.g. 'Mummy gone work')
Begins to use word endings e.g. 'going', 'cats'
Uses a variety of questions e.g. 'what?', 'where?', 'who?', 'why?'
Holds a simple conversation with an adult jumping from topic to topic
Uses language / non-verbal communication e.g. gesture / photo / symbols / signing to share feelings, experiences, and thoughts
Anticipates key events and important phrases in familiar rhymes and stories
Talks to self in play
Tells own name and age
Speech can be understood by familiar adults and peers, with some errors such as 'sh', 'ch', 'th' and 'r'

3 6 Uses around 300 words

Uses some descriptive language, including time words (e.g. 'later'), space words (e.g. 'over there') and function words (e.g. explain function of items)

Frequently uses pronouns ('he', 'she') and prepositions ('under')

Retells a simple past event in order e.g. fell down, hurt finger

Answers 'yes / no' questions appropriately

Provides information about self and favourite things

Talks with peers during play about what they are doing and/or to direct them e.g. 'you be the Mummy'

Modulates volume of voice

42 - 48 months

Uses sentences of 4-6 words

Uses possessives, for example 'the boy's teddy'

Questions why things happen and gives explanations e.g. 'who?', 'what?', 'when?', 'how?', 'why?'

Provides appropriate answers in response to 'where?', 'who?' and 'what?' questions e.g. 'Where is the sponge?' - 'under the sink'

Uses 'and', 'because', 'so' to link simple phrases

Begins to use a range of tenses e.g. (play, played, playing) at times, making errors e.g. 'I runned outside'

Uses language they hear around them in their community and culture

Uses talk to explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next

Talks about things that are of particular importance to them

Builds vocabulary reflecting the breadth of their experiences e.g. the topic of dinosaurs

Speech is understood by unfamiliar adults, with some errors e.g. 'r', 'l', 'th', 'sh', 'j'

48 - 54 months

Retells a simple story recalling events and characters

Uses future tense e.g. 'will play'

Names time of day associated with activities

Begins to introduce a storyline / narrative into their role play / small world play

Watches / waits for listener confirmation before continuing (nod / smile)

54 - 60 months

Gives a connected account of events or experiences, using language of 'first', 'next' and 'then'

Tells longer stories, sometimes mixing fact and fiction

Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations

Uses talk to work out problems by organising, sequencing and clarifying their thinking, ideas, feelings and events

Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words

Has a wariness of strangers

Protests or shows resistance by stiffening or vocalisations to show annoyance / refusal

12 - 18 months

Responds to emotions in key adult voices

Explores the boundaries of behaviours, may look at an adult to check before acting or testing boundaries

Needs constant supervision due to dangers of increased exploration

Participates in daily activities as they become familiar with and anticipate routines e.g. getting dressed or finding their beaker

Can usually be distracted when upset with a gentle prompt

18 - 24 months

Expresses positive feelings such as joy and affection and negative feelings such as anger, frustration and distress e.g. through actions and / or behaviours and a few words

Experiences a wide range of feelings with great intensity, such as anger and frustration

Developing impulse control, will look towards a caregiver before acting

May lose control of feelings, body and thinking when distressed

Tantrums if frustrated but can be easily distracted

Is aware of others' feelings and is beginning to show empathy by offering a comfort object to another child or sharing in another child's excitement

Asserts their own agenda strongly and may display frustration with having to comply with others' agendas and with change and boundaries

Pleased by praise

Developing an awareness when they have done something wrong

24 - 30 months

Can feel overwhelmed by intense emotions, resulting in an emotional collapse ('meltdown') when frightened, frustrated, angry, anxious or overstimulated (e.g. fight, flight, freeze)

Seeks comfort from familiar adults when needed, distracts themselves with a comfort object when upset

Responds to the feelings of others, showing concern and offering comfort

Joins in with familiar routines when in a small group

Expresses their own preferences for what they want to play / eat / wear

Shows a growing awareness that others have feelings

Sometimes complies with requests, sometimes may be stubborn

30 - 36 months

May recognise that some actions can hurt or harm others and begins to stop themselves from doing something they should not do

Expresses emotions of pride and embarrassment as well as a wide range of other feelings

Begins to modify own behaviour with support

Aware adult may approve / disapprove of their actions e.g. checks to see if adult is watching, or looks guilty if caught in the act

May display feelings of intense emotions through their actions e.g. voice or / and physical

Less easily distracted

36 - 42 months

Expresses a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others and through their behaviour and play
 May exhibit increased fearfulness of things like the dark or monsters etc. and possibly have nightmares
 Talks and responds about how others might be feeling
 Has a developing awareness that their actions and words can hurt others' feelings
 Modifies behaviour, with support, to fit in with what others are doing e.g. waiting a short time for a turn
 Has strong sense of own space and own possessions
 Complies with familiar rules e.g. not climbing as they may fall

42 - 48 months

Takes turns more readily with reminders
 Does not always need an adult to remind them of a rule
 Asks permission to use a toy a peer is playing with
 Some understanding of sharing e.g. toys, snacks
 A developing ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviour to enable them to achieve a goal

48 - 54 months

Understands their own and other people's feelings of happiness / sadness, offering empathy and / or comfort
 Attempts to repair a relationship or situation where they have caused upset
 Understands how their actions impact other people
 Is more able to manage their feelings when their wishes cannot be met
 Negotiates solutions to conflicts in their play
 Strongly self-willed
 Easily upset by failure
 Understands the need to argue with words rather than actions
 Expresses their needs, a wider range of feelings and behaviour in appropriate ways

54 - 60 months

Seeks support, 'emotional refuelling' and practical help in new or challenging situations
 Is aware of behavioural expectations and sensitive to ideas of justice and fairness within a range of environments
 Understands what is considered right and wrong and can explain why
 Seeks ways to manage conflict, for example through holding back, sharing, negotiation and compromise
 Has awareness of the boundaries set and behavioural expectations within a range of environments
 Engages in socially acceptable behaviour in public, able to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviour

Begins to co-operate with nappy changing
 Grasps finger foods
 Tries to share control of the spoon
 Tolerates hand over hand support e.g. holding a spoon

12 - 18 months

Begins to participate in bathing e.g. holding out arms and legs for washing and later uses sponge, following prompting
 Cooperates with drying hands
 Tolerates use of toothbrush and toothpaste
 Actively cooperates with nappy changing e.g. lies still, helps hold legs up
 Starts to communicate urination, bowel movement
 Attempts to put shoes on
 Accepts new textures and tastes such as larger pieces of food and increasing range
 Looks back to familiar adult to check if not sure about something
 Points and vocalises to draw adult's attention to something of interest
 Briefly demonstrates a scenario in their play related to their everyday life, e.g. wiping doll's face
 Responds to their own name and enjoys finding own nose, eyes or tummy as part of interactive games
 Shows separation anxiety (if left) as they become more aware of themselves as separate individuals
 Shows an emerging autonomy through asserting choices and preferences such as different tastes and rejects things they do not want, e.g. by pushing them away
 Understands that their own voice and actions causes an effect on others, e.g. clapping hands starts a game
 Shows growing self-confidence through playing freely and with involvement

18 -24 months

Holds open cup with both hands, drinks without much spilling
 Starts to be less messy with food
 Develops own likes and dislikes of food and drink
 Tolerates use of toothpaste and brush and may help brush their teeth
 Rubs hands with soap and rinses under water
 Shows some awareness of what a potty or toilet is used for
 Puts on hat and slip on shoes
 Pulls down zip on coat
 Assists with removing loose garments e.g. pyjama bottoms, unbuttoned coat, cardigan
 Smiles or laughs when successful
 Seeks reassurance from familiar adult when tired, upset or hurt
 Is aware of and interested in their own and others' physical characteristics, pointing to and naming features e.g. noses, hair and eyes
 Experiments with what their bodies can do through setting themselves physical challenges, e.g. pulling a large truck upstairs

24 - 30 months

Asks, or searches for food when hungry
 Willing to try new food textures and tastes
 Feeds self with spoon without spilling and increasing need to be in control
 Indicates need for toilet by behaviour e.g. dancing movements or holding self
 Tolerates sitting on potty or toilet
 Clearly communicates wet or soiled nappy or pants
 Locates arms in coat or shirt when held by an adult, pulls top down over head
 Enjoys exploring new places with a trusted adult
 Shows persistence in expressing needs, if not met
 Knows their own name, preferences and interests
 Is developing an emerging understanding of similarities and differences between themselves and others
 Makes choices and decisions based on personal preferences and own ideas
 Growing in independence, rejecting help e.g. 'me do it'

30 - 36 months

Eats with a fork and a spoon, able to blow e.g. candles or when cooling food
 Pours drink from jug with some spillage
 Helps wash self, turns taps on and off and helps dry self after washing
 Willing to have a go at brushing their own teeth however needs an adult to supervise / support
 Toilet trained with infrequent accidents
 Removes or pulls up trousers
 Shows active sense of humour, does things to make others laugh
 Very aware of others' reactions, likes to demonstrate ability
 Searches out familiar adult for comfort
 Shyness with strangers, especially adults
 Likes to sit, cuddle and share events of the day with familiar adults
 Is becoming aware of their unique abilities e.g. riding a scooter, dancing, singing / signing
 Begins to use 'me', 'you' and 'I' in their talk and to show awareness of their social identity of gender, ethnicity and ability

36 - 42 months

Asks for toilet using voice, gesture or action, for example, leads adult to toilet and asks verbally or makes a sign
 Usually able to control bowel with occasional accidents
 Pulls down own pants when using the toilet, flushes toilet with support, waits to be wiped
 Brushes own teeth and hair
 Dresses and undresses, but needs help with fastenings
 Helps with food preparation, beginning to use a knife for spreading
 Beginning to have food preferences and expresses them
 Separates from main carer with confidence
 Is more outgoing towards strangers and more confident in new social situations

More willing to take risks and try new things
 Able to express their needs and ask adults for help
 Shows strong personal preference e.g. clothes
 Is becoming more aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others in more detailed ways and identifies themselves in relation to social groups and to their peers
 Enjoys having a 'job' e.g. fetching the milk carton / fruit / washing up

42 - 48 months

Understands need for variety in food, eats a healthy range of foods
 Knows when to wash hands and face
 Carries scissors carefully
 Developing sense of basic road safety
 May argue to achieve own wishes
 Is confident in seeking comfort, reassurance and help from special people
 Is sensitive to others' messages of appreciation or criticism
 Develop ideas about themselves according to the messages they hear from others
 Recognises that they are part of a group e.g. badger class

48 - 54 months

Uses personal hygiene materials competently
 Reliably dry and clean during the day
 Understands not to touch hot surfaces
 Developing awareness of the importance of daily exercise
 Expresses wishes and needs clearly, can wait, modify, and defer
 Enjoys receiving praise for achievements
 Approaches new challenges with confidence
 Recognises that they belong to different communities and social groups and communicates freely about own home and community
 Has a clear idea about what they want to do in their play and how they want to go about it
 Shows confidence in choosing resources
 Displays perseverance in carrying out a chosen activity

54 - 60 months

Understands need for hygiene in food preparation, serving and eating
 Begins to take responsibility for self-care in washing and teeth cleaning
 Knows the routine of wiping self and hand washing and usually carries this out
 Shows confidence in speaking to others about their own needs, wants, interests and opinions in familiar group
 Displays resilience when faced with challenges e.g. learning a new skill
 Able to negotiate and accept others' perspectives
 Describes self in positive terms and talks about abilities
 Shows confidence and ability to stand up for themselves

12 - 18 months

Shows shyness around unfamiliar people and shows preference for certain people
 May look concerned if hears crying, or displays excitement if hears familiar, happy voice
 Initiates interaction with other children e.g. vocalising, reaching, moving towards
 Engages another person to help achieve a goal e.g. to get an object out of reach
 Seeks reactions e.g. to minor injury
 Draws others into social interaction through calling, crying and babbling, smiling, laughing and moving their bodies and limbs
 Cooperates with caregiving experiences, such as dressing

18 - 24 months

Enjoys playing alone and alongside others (parallel play)
 Will often watch, follow and imitate others in their play
 May find long periods of social engagement overwhelming and may withdraw
 Shares interest and attention by looking to where the adult is looking, pointing and using their gaze to direct the adult's attention to something
 Explores the environment, interacts with others and plays confidently while their parent/carer or key person is close by; using them as a secure base to return to for reassurance if anxious or in unfamiliar situations
 Shows empathy by offering comfort that they themselves would find soothing e.g. their dummy

24 - 30 months

Builds relationships with special people but may show anxiety in the presence of strangers
 Is becoming more able to separate from their close carers and explore new situations with support and encouragement from another familiar adult
 May dislike sharing a preferred adult's attention with another child
 Enjoys conversation with carers
 Engages in play with other children
 May intentionally hurt another person if angry

30 - 36 months

Enjoys company of other children and wants to play with them
 Enjoys gaining attention of others and sustaining interaction
 Defends own possessions
 Shows some understanding that other people have perspectives, ideas and needs that are different to theirs e.g. may turn a book to face you so you can see it
 Closely watches others' body language to begin to understand their intentions and meaning
 Shows empathy and concern for people who are special to them by partially matching others' feelings with their own e.g. may offer a child a toy they know they like

36 - 42 months

Sometimes shares or takes turns with others with adult guidance to understand 'yours' and 'mine'
 Notices and asks questions about differences, such as skin colour, types of hair
 Seeks out companionship with adults and other children, sharing experiences and play ideas
 Participates in some co-operative play
 Joins in group activities
 Shows initiative and autonomy in relating with others
 Identifies self with children of same age and gender
 Uses their experiences of adult behaviours to guide their social relationships and interactions

42 - 48 months

Understands that own actions affect other people e.g. may comfort a child they have upset
 Shows increasing consideration of other people's needs and gradually more impulse control in favourable conditions e.g. giving up a toy to another who wants it
 Initiates play by giving peer a role, e.g. 'you be the Mummy'
 Begins to select friends and exclude others
 Articulates their wants and needs
 Looks to a supportive adult for help in resolving conflict with peers

48 - 54 months

Independently plays in small and large groups
 Enjoys doing things with other children and adults
 More confident in new social situations
 Develops particular friendships with other children
 Starts to recognise their friends may have different ideas
 Returns to the secure base of a familiar adult to recharge and gain emotional support and practical help in difficult situations

54 - 60 months

Enjoys playing alone, alongside and with others, inviting others to play and attempting to join others' play
 Takes turns, shares resources and equipment with peers
 Aware that there are different ways in which to behave dependent on the situation and company they are in
 Represents and recreates what they have learnt about social interactions from their relationships with close adults, in their play and relationships with others
 More able to understand other people's needs, wants and behaviours
 Takes steps to resolve conflicts with other children by negotiating and finding a compromise; sometimes by themselves, sometimes with support
 Proactively seeks adult support

6 - 9 months

When placed in a sitting position, leans forward and then returns to original position
 Sits with support with head and back straight and turns head from side to side to look around
 Tries to sit up from lying on their back when hands are held
 Rolls over from front to back and from back to front
 Demonstrates pre-crawling movements with arms and legs when lying on tummy
 Takes weight through legs and bounces up and down when in a standing position (where appropriate)
 Makes stepping movements when held by an adult
 Pulls self to standing against a support e.g. furniture, but does not yet lower self down with control
 Puts arms up to be lifted
 Kicks legs vigorously one leg then the other
 When sitting, puts hands out when off balance to save self from falling

9 - 12 months

Pulls self to sitting position
 Sits unsupported on the floor and can adjust body posture when leaning forward to pick up and manipulate a toy without losing balance
 Sits up from lying down
 Rolls from front to back/back to front with deliberate intent and can roll from left to right and right to left
 Moves around independently e.g. commando crawling / bottom shuffling / sliding on the back / crawling
 Moves from a sitting position to a hands and knees crawling position
 Whilst in a crawl position, reaches out with one arm and maintains balance
 Takes weight through legs when placed in a supported standing position
 Kneels up against furniture
 Pulls self to standing against furniture and lowers self down with increasing control
 Walks around furniture lifting one foot and stepping sideways (cruising)
 Walks with one or both hands held by an adult
 Stands by themselves for a few seconds when placed in a standing position
 Gets onto a low edge or step
 Walks with a push along walker or by pushing a stable toy
 Stretches out with one hand to grasp a toy when offered
 Throws toy or object with random aim

12 - 18 months

Sits well and gets into sitting position independently
 Pulls to standing from sitting e.g. using furniture or adult support
 Sits down from a standing position with control
 Crawls upstairs and comes down backwards on knees
 Takes a few steps independently, these may be uneven
 Picks up an object on the floor with support from an adult or furniture
 Climbs forward onto adult's chair then turns and sits
 Gets onto child's chair themselves backwards or sideways

Purposefully throws a small ball or other object
Turns over containers to tip out contents

18 - 24 months

Sits and plays in more than one position e.g. kneeling, legs outstretched, legs crossed, side sitting
Walks well, with shorter steps, legs closer together and no longer needs to hold arms up for balance
Attempts to run carefully but not yet smoothly
Changes direction whilst walking
Walks backwards for a few steps when pulling an item or toy using rope or string
Lifts leg whilst holding onto an adult to assist with dressing
Gets onto a chair independently

24 - 30 months

Runs well although not always avoiding obstacles
Kicks a ball e.g. stands on one foot while kicking with the other
Jumps with both feet off the ground
Squats down to pick up objects, occasionally falling
Returns to standing after squatting down to pick up an object
Carries large objects whilst walking
Moves a tricycle or bike by pushing feet along floor
Pushes and pulls large toys or objects, difficulty steering around obstacles
Walks upstairs holding an adult's hand or bannister by putting two feet on each step

30 - 36 months

Jumps from a small step or low piece of equipment
Rolls or throws ball or bean bag more accurately e.g. passing to another person, aiming at a target
Catches a large ball thrown into two arms e.g. beach ball, balloon ball, light football
Kneels without support
Bends over to retrieve an item from the floor without needing to hold on to anything
Runs safely on whole foot
Negotiates obstacles and turn corners when running
Stands independently from a kneeling position without using furniture to support
Stands on tiptoe when holding onto something
Walks downstairs, two feet to each step whilst carrying a toy
Walks backwards, forwards and sideways
Steers a wheeled toy with hands and attempts to pedal e.g. balance bike / trike

36 - 42 months

Moves freely with confidence in a range of ways e.g. slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding, hopping

Climbs confidently and begins pulling themselves up on play equipment

Climbs stairs, ladders or gym equipment using alternate feet

Pedals a tricycle

Squats with steadiness to rest or play with object on the ground and rises to feet without using hands

Walks along a bench / low wall

Kicks a large ball successfully with directed aim

Kicks smaller balls forcibly

Catches a large ball

Catches a small ball at close range

Links two movements together e.g. run and jump into a puddle; walk and duck under a climbing frame

42 - 48 months

Stands on one foot for a few seconds independently

Rides a two-wheel bike with stabilisers or lifts both feet off the floor on a balance bike

Hops up and down with adult support

Jumps from apparatus landing appropriately

Runs skilfully, adjusting speed and direction to avoid obstacles

'Bounce passes' a large ball and receives a bounce pass

48 - 54 months

Avoids obstacles and changes direction when riding a bike / tricycle

Throws a small ball up and down, catching it as it falls

Travels with confidence and skill around, under, over and through gymnastic equipment

Jumps over a low hurdle e.g. up to 10cm high

Bends knees to touch toes

Climbs up a slide and comes down independently

54 - 60 months

Attempts to jump using a skipping rope

Bends over and touches toes with straight legs

Copies a sequence of gross motor movements after demonstration, e.g. hop, jump, skip

Masters throwing and catching a variety of different sized balls

Performs dances using simple movement patterns

Takes part in simple team games, developing simple tactics for defending and attacking

Rides a two-wheeled bike independently

9 - 12 months

Releases an object voluntarily by dropping it but not yet placing object down deliberately
 Explores objects by banging, shaking and turning them around in their hands
 Explores different textures with hands in a sensory way e.g. cornflour, beans, icing sugar
 Aware that hand movements can leave a mark, e.g. plays with food on tray of highchair
 Bangs two toys together in the midline
 Holds an object and bangs or taps it against a surface
 Copies clapping hands
 Begins to put objects into a container
 Begins to isolate index finger
 Manipulates malleable materials
 Begins to stack blocks on top of each other
 Uses two hands to lift small and large objects in and out of containers
 Picks up objects using pads of the thumb and index finger (inferior pincer grasp)
 Stretches out with one hand to grasp a toy if offered
 Looks at and knocks down an object placed at table height, shoulder height or floor level
 Intentionally pass an object to an adult

12 - 18 months

Picks up, holds and releases small objects with precision using tips of fingers (superior or 'neat' pincer grasp)
 Notices their hands or tools they use can make marks as they explore sensory materials
 Claps hands together spontaneously
 Waves goodbye
 Begins to stack blocks on top of each other
 Puts objects and toys into and out of containers with one hand
 Pulls along toys and items using a rope or string
 Uses a single finger to touch or point e.g. to indicate need, to explore an object or to activate a cause and effect device
 Points to and pokes objects with index finger
 Copies finger movements
 Begins to use a spoon and cup
 Helps turn the pages of a board book but may turn more than one at a time
 Fits large shapes into a posting box or shape sorter
 Removes pieces from an inset puzzle or pegs from a pegboard

18 - 24 months

Begins to pick up something small with their first finger and thumb i.e. a pincer grasp
 Releases items when held with pincer grasp
 Uses hands to twist, turn and manipulate an object
 Scoops with a spoon at mealtimes or during play
 Puts rings on a ring stacker
 Builds a taller block tower
 Turns pages of a book one at a time

24 - 30 months

Stabs food with a fork at mealtimes
 Uses a pouring action when playing with containers in sand or water
 Presses small switches and buttons using index finger
 Squeezes toys or instruments to produce a sound (both two handed and using one hand)
 Deliberately places small objects e.g. pegs in a pegboard, pieces into an inset puzzle
 Builds tall structures without them falling over
 More co-ordinated hand movements; using both hands at the same time
 Uses appropriate actions to explore properties of objects e.g. turning, twisting, rolling and pressing

30 - 36 months

Holds cup with or without handles with two hands, drinking with minimal spilling
 Threads large beads onto rod, wire or floppy cord e.g. washing line cord or heavy shoelace
 Uses a knife to chop soft items
 Places objects down neatly and precisely
 Fits increasingly small shapes and objects into holes during posting activities
 Puts tiny objects into a small container
 Squeezes a pair of loop scissors independently to make single snips when an adult is holding the paper

36 - 42 months

Threads onto a shoelace
 Removes unfastened clothing independently e.g. tops, bottoms, socks, footwear
 Creates long shapes when rolling dough
 Holds scissors in one hand, makes single cuts in paper
 Folds paper in half
 Manipulates puzzle pieces to complete an inset jigsaw

42 - 48 months

- Pours, sieves and digs with control
- Builds towers using several small connecting bricks
- Shows control in holding and using books, hammers and mark making tools
- Makes consecutive cuts in self held paper
- Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts and bolts

48 - 54 months

- Uses wind-up toys
- Cuts simple shapes and manipulates a conventional pair of scissors
- Manipulates puzzle pieces to complete a simple jigsaw

54 - 60 months

- Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely with increasing control and intention
- Manages all fastenings on clothes with minimal help
- Skilfully operates appropriate electronic devices with ease and control
- Makes simple stitches using a large needle
- Effectively uses a range of tools with consistent control e.g. uses scissors to cut along a line

Literacy: Comprehension

0 - 3
months

Quietens to caregiver's voice

3 - 6
months

Notices and engages with sounds and images in the environment

Reacts to familiar sounds or sights by changes in behaviour e.g. smiling, looking, reaching

6 - 9
months

Turns when hears own name

Enjoys rhymes with actions, e.g. row the boat

Starts to understand contextual clues e.g. familiar gestures, words and sounds

9 - 12
months

Begins to follow adult point

Responds to familiar words or phrases by looking or with gestures e.g. 'Daddy'

Immediately responds to name

Responds to several familiar words e.g. family names, cup, spoon, car

Begins to anticipate some actions in rhymes

Starts to respond by action or gesture, e.g. clapping hands in response to verbal prompt and modelling from familiar rhyme

Understands simple instructions with gesture e.g. when adult holding out their hand, 'Give it to Mummy'

12 - 18
months

Understands names of some common objects e.g. points to a toy or item when it is named

Points to a familiar named item in a picture book

Starts to follow simple instructions / statements from familiar adult with gestures or clues e.g. 'get your cup'

Points on request to a familiar person

Understands familiar words in a new context e.g. 'bath' at home and elsewhere

Responds to comments and gestures such as 'show me', 'find the' or 'point to'

18 - 24
months

Points to three named items

Selects a familiar object from a selection of four on request

Selects familiar objects by name or identify objects from a group

Responds to questions with familiar vocabulary and context e.g. 'Where's Mummy?'

Looks at and talks about a picture with familiar features

Points to five body parts on themselves, for instance during song or in play

24 - 30 months

- Names 4-5 pictures in a book
- Indicates correct picture of described action, e.g. 'show me the girl drinking'
- Points to five body parts on a doll or teddy
- Responds appropriately to simple 'who', 'what' or 'where' questions

30 - 36 months

- Identifies objects described by their function, e.g. 'what do we sit on?'
- Supplies missing words in familiar rhyme if adult pauses
- Understands more complex sentences
- Communicates what happens next in a repetitive story verbally or using gesture
- Shows understanding of basic prepositions 'in' and 'on' such as 'put dolly in the box' by carrying out action or selecting correct picture
- Indicates object from choice of two

36 - 42 months

- Enjoys familiar stories
- Listens to and joins in with rhymes and stories on a one-to-one basis
- Begins to understand basic concepts e.g. position / size / colour / number by carrying out an action or selecting a correct picture
- Understand instructions with three information carrying words e.g. 'put the jumper under the table' (objects / pictures used should be familiar to children)
- Shows understanding of prepositions e.g. 'under', 'on top', 'behind' by carrying out an action or selecting a correct picture
- Responds appropriately to more complex 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions using objects e.g. 'what do we put on our feet?'
- Recognises and offers a word when omitted from a familiar story

42 - 48 months

- Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall
- Suggests how a story might end
- Retells a simple past event from their lived experience in the correct order e.g. went down slide, hurt finger
- Begins to understand and use pronouns in context: 'they', 'he', 'she', 'him', 'her'

48 - 54 months

- Aware of roles of people who help us e.g. doctor
- Beginning to understand 'how' and 'why' questions
- Understands abstract concepts e.g. sound / texture / weight / quantity / length
- Listens attentively to a story in a medium sized group
- Repeats a simple story using pictures / objects as prompts

54 - 60 months

Demonstrates understanding of 'how' and 'why' questions by giving explanations

Links significant events from own experience and from stories, paying attention to sequence and how events lead one to another

Makes up stories

Sequences 3-5 elements of a story with help

Predicts what might happen next after listening to part of a story

Engages in extended conversations about stories

