

Early Years words and phrases explained; a guide for parents and carers - Part 2

We use lots of words and phrases when we talk about early years education.
Here is a collection of some of them with explanations.

Child-centred

A child-centred approach to learning is about listening to and noticing each child and responding to their individual interests. The adult supports their development by facilitating their learning with appropriate resources, experiences, and skillful guidance, enabling children to make choices. Partnership with parents and carers is crucial to a child-centred approach, enabling staff to learn about the whole child.

Partnership with parents and carers

Respectful and equal partnership with parents and carers is very important in the Early Years, keeping the child at the centre of everything. You know your child best. When you share your child's interests and experiences with their setting, staff can use this to create opportunities that will engage them and support their development. Staff will also share your child's learning at the setting so you can build on this at home with lots of talk and play.

Observations

When your child is in an Early Years setting, staff will watch and notice what they are doing so they can learn more about your child. This watching and noticing may sometimes be recorded, as a video, in words, in photos - this is called an 'observation'. An observation tells the adult what a child is interested in, how they learn, how they manage their feelings and where they are at in their stage of development. Observations help adults to adapt their provision to support your child's learning and development.

Child development

Child development is the process of change that occurs in a child from birth - in Early Years we focus on the development from birth to 5 years old. Children continue on their developmental journey after they leave Early Years. Child development covers every aspect of growing and learning - physical, emotional, language, thought and social skills. Knowledge of typical child development informs early years educators and the provision they offer each child. Every child is unique and will follow their own development pathway.

Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

The ELGs set out the expected level of development to be attained by children by the time they reach the end of the EYFS. There are 17 ELGs, one for each of the sections that make up the 7 Areas of Learning. Educators will use their professional judgement and their knowledge of each child when considering whether they are at the expected level of development.