

1 STARTING POINT

2 DISCOVER

3 RECORDING

4 PLANNING

LEARNING WALLS & FLOORBOOKS RECORD A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING JOURNEY & SUPPORT CHILDREN TO PLAN AND TALK ABOUT THEIR OWN LEARNING.

WHAT DO CHILDREN ALREADY KNOW & WHAT WOULD THEY LIKE TO FIND OUT ABOUT?

BY KNOWING CHILDREN, PRACTITIONERS CAN IDENTIFY WHICH METHODS TO USE FOR RECORDING KNOWLEDGE & QUESTIONS AS A STARTING POINT.

PLANNING DEVELOPS ALONGSIDE CHILDREN'S QUESTIONING, EXISTING KNOWLEDGE, & EMERGING INTERESTS.

Learning Walls can show a variety of visual evidence surrounding children's thinking. Built-up gradually over time with pictures, photos, mark-making, writing, information, and quotes representing children's voice, they highlight children's knowledge and understanding, whilst allowing them to have ownership over the path that their learning takes.

This is a big question to ask, so it's not always easy to gather this information.

Talking & Thinking Tubs

Identifying Challenge Questions

Both Learning Walls and Floorbooks start with:

Whilst we don't want to pressurise children into answering, this can be a barrier for practitioners seeking a starting point for a Learning Wall/Floorbook. However, children's ability and desire to engage will progress as interest develops and thinking deepens.

These can be used for intentional promotion to gauge knowledge and interests to build-on.

Using challenge questions supports extension of learning by providing challenge, depth, and breadth for individual interests.

A Significant Observation – What have you noticed? What made you want to write this down? Has your 'Daily Responsive Planning' noticed a trend in children's interests?

If we continue to observe and listen to what children are saying, wondering, and asking, Learning Walls/Floorbooks will reflect children's true interests.

Tubs can be bought or made, containing various relevant resources to spark curiosity. (Tubs should not be transparent.)

Challenge questions will be identified from children's statements relating to "what I already know."

A Quality Interaction - This enables development of greater understanding of what you are hearing and seeing. Listening in to the smallest of wonderings can afford better insight into what children really want to know.

2D resources can include photos, pictures, and drawings. 3D can include multi-sensory objects, model animals, flowers, and natural materials.

A challenge question to the comment "that's an Oak Leaf" could be "I wonder if there are other types of leaves?"

Mind Maps

Planning

Remember: Document the initial question or comment and the children who have contributed to the Learning Wall/Floorbook.

Remember: Learning Walls/Floorbooks don't always follow a straightforward path. As children discover new knowledge, they will develop fresh questions that need answers.

Created alongside children, these promote learning together, enabling practitioners to model writing for a purpose.

It's important for practitioners to remain tuned-in regarding:

Create two mind maps. One to show 'what children already know', and the other to highlight questions around 'what children want to know.'

- Are children still motivated?
- Has their interest evolved?
- What do they need now?
- Is there a section that pulls attention back to the Learning Wall in your planning format?
- How are we engaging children in their learning?
- Are we linking it to different curricular areas?

Statements/questions should be recorded as 'exact quotes', demonstrating children's current level of understanding. Practitioners can identify progression for individuals as understanding of the interest develops.

Intentional Promotions

Remember: If children need tangible objects to support conversation and develop critical thinking skills, talking tubs are a useful starting point.

Adult planning develops alongside children's questioning. This is how we extend and support learning, ensuring breadth and depth.

When supporting discussions, it's important that practitioners take notes to record conversations taking place. Notes from 'talking tub' sessions can be used to inform mind maps. If children are experienced in this process, it's possible to go directly to using mind maps.

- Is this topic of learning evident across the setting, both indoors and out?
- How are we ensuring that all children's needs and interests are met?



LEARNING WALLS & FLOOR BOOKS

AN EFFECTIVE PLANNING TOOL FOR DEVELOPING CURRICULUM LINKED EXPERIENCES BASED ON CHILDREN'S CURIOSITIES.

EVALUATION IS AN ONGOING PROCESS, NOT SOMETHING THAT ONLY HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE LEARNING WALL JOURNEY.

This quick guide is designed to support practitioners to record, extend, and evaluate children's learning using visual representations.

Possible Lines of Development (PLODs) should be identified through discussions within staff teams.

Evaluating using the 7 Principles of Curriculum Design will ensure practitioners reflect continually on the experiences offered to children.

Whilst it's important 'lines of development' are happening, as the name suggests, these are only possibilities, there is no need to complete them all.

The 7 Principles of Curriculum Design are:

Examples

If the current Learning Wall/Floorbook interest is 'Summer', PLODs could include:

- Learning new vocabulary: humid, muggy, hay fever, UV protection (LIT010a).
- Exploring units of measurement: rainfall, creating charts to display info, "what happens if there's not enough rainfall in summer?" (MNU011a & MNU020c).
- Talking about sun protection: different clothing that protects, sun cream, and why we use them (HWB048a).
- Discussing summer holidays and identifying different methods of travel (SOC009a).

Challenge & Enjoyment – Are children engaged and motivated?

Breadth – Have children been involved in a range of experiences?

Progression – Are children building on previous knowledge?

Depth – Have children been afforded opportunity to develop different kinds of thinking and learning?

Personalisation & Choice – How did we respond to individual children's needs?

Coherence – Are there links between different aspects of learning?

Relevance – Is learning relevant to children's lives?

See the 7 Principles of Curriculum Design 'Quick Guide' for more detailed information.



"By following a child's interests and motivations, we will almost always be on the right level."

- Realising the Ambition (2020:65)

Remember: Think about the breadth of experiences across the curriculum.



Early Years Training