

LEARNING WALLS & FLOORBOOKS

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

1

STARTING POINT

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.

Both learning walls and floorbooks start with:

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?

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.

2

DISCOVER

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

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.

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

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

3

RECORDING

Talking & Thinking Tubs

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

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

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

Mind Maps

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

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

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.

4

PLANNING

Identifying Challenge Questions

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

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

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

Planning

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

- 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?

Intentional Promotions

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

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

5

PLODs

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

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.

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).

6

EVALUATION

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

The 7 Principles of Curriculum Design are:

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?