



COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

Exploring Key Components of Effective Early Intervention for Children with Special Educational Needs

Dr. Patricia Daly and Dr. Emer Ring

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Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

INTO Conference on Special Education 2015: Rebuilding Special Education
CME Comhdháil ar Oideachas Speisialta 2015: Atógáil an Oideachais Speisialta

Overview of Presentation

- Parents as Partners
- Placing the Child at the Centre
- Curriculum Access
- The Role of the Environment
- Managing Behaviours that Challenge
- Special Needs Assistant Support
- Individualised Planning
- Workshop Task
- Conclusion

The Heckman Equation:

Invest + Develop + Sustain = Gain

<http://heckmanequation.org/heckman-equation>



My child isn't cut into three pieces and I think there is a coordinated service between the agencies and I think that's important.

Parent of a Child with Special Educational Needs cited in Sloper (2004)

Seeking to Develop an Understanding of Parents' Perspectives

Welcome to Holland



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Perly Kinsley, E. (2011, August 29th)

When Peter was a baby and up until five years of age we were advised to put him in residential care, predicting that ‘he would ruin our life’. This was a cause of distress when we needed support

-excerpt from submission

(Department of Equality and Law Reform, 1996, p. 160)

A Parent's Perspective



Partnership

*A way of making the **expertise and experience** of a wide range of people each with **different skills and perspectives available to each other** as they come together and find new ways to address needs. The **process of sharing** involves **open dialogue**, which is a **dynamic and creative** force through **listening, talking and exchanging ideas**, **new understanding** develops.*

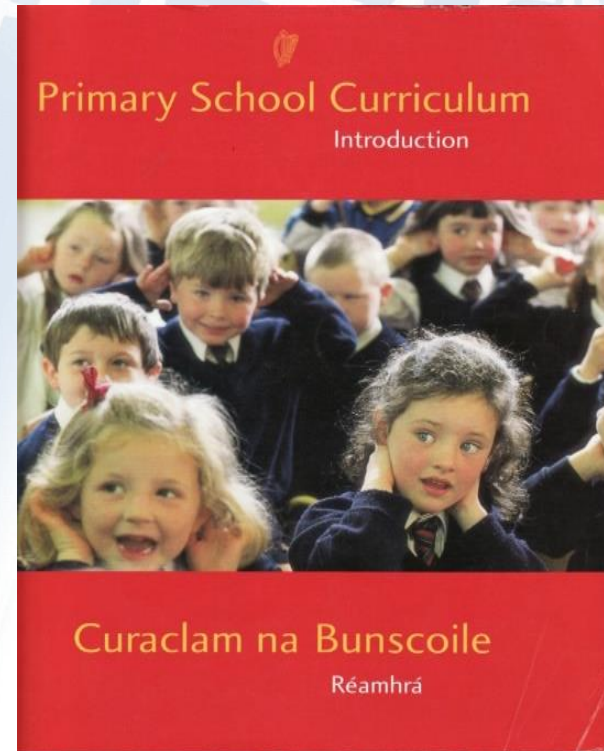
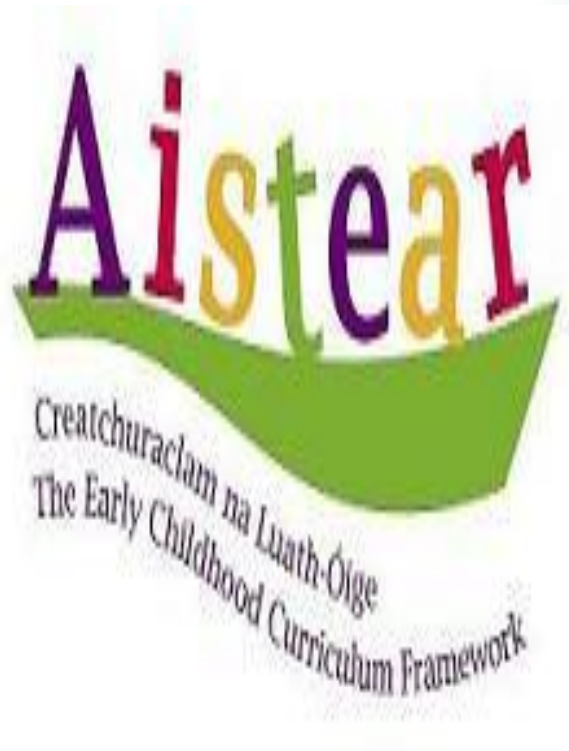
Gaspar, 2010, p. 14

In partnership, all are equal and have a right to be heard and to be listened to, to receive full information and to have equal influence on decision-making processes...



(Gasper, 2010)

The Child at the Centre



Principles

Themes

Well-being

Identity and Belonging

Communicating

Exploring and Thinking

Guidelines for Good Practice

Building partnerships between parents and practitioners

Learning and developing through interactions

Learning and developing through play

Supporting learning and development through assessment

Aims

Principles

Features

Assessment

The Child and the Learning Community

Key Issues in Primary Education

Quality in Education

Literacy and Numeracy

A Sense of Irish Identity

The Irish Language

The Spiritual Dimension

The European and Global Dimensions

Pluralism

Equality and Fairness of Access

Partnership

Information and Communication Technologies

Children with Special Educational Needs

Science Education

Early Childhood Education

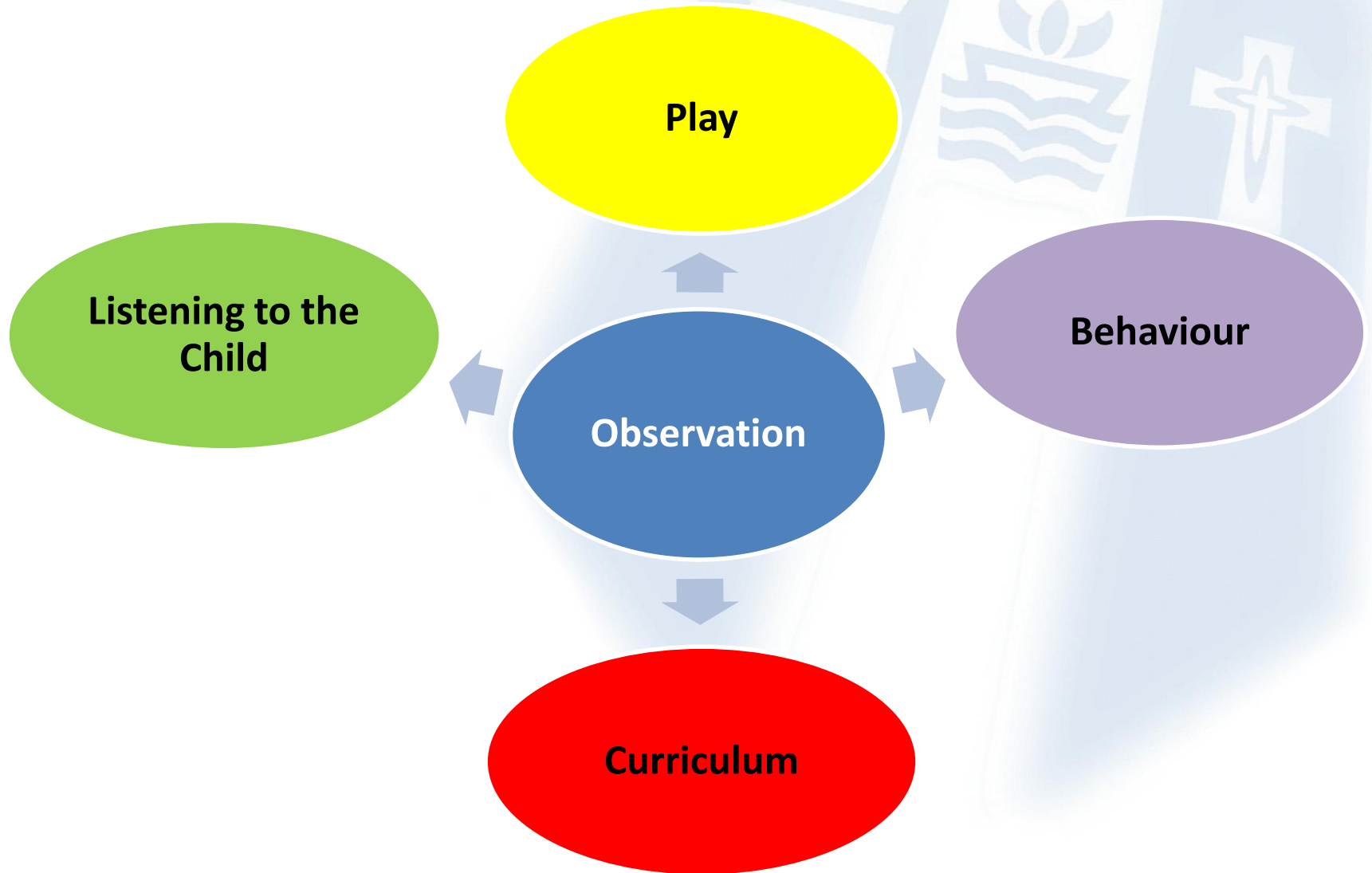
Transition from Primary to Post-Primary

The Curriculum and Lifelong Learning

Curriculum Statements

Teacher Guidelines

Observation



A Signpost



Greene (2006)

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Role of adult as acute observer and lack of response to such observation limits a child's freedom. A teacher incapable of observation unable to teach.



Maria Montessori 1870-1952



What is Observation?

Observation involves watching and listening to children and using the information gathered through this to enhance their learning and development. The adult may use different types of observations depending on what he/she wants to find out...Observations can be planned or spontaneous and are best carried out by an adult who knows the children well.

NCCA 2015, p. 87

Figure 5: Types of observation





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The Potential of Play...



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Why Play?

All human beings are active seekers of knowledge, and play is an integral facet of this ongoing quest.

*The **pedagogical value of play** does not lie in its use as a way to teach children a specific set of skills through structured activities called ‘play.’ Rather, play is valuable for children primarily because it is **a medium for development and learning.***

Bergen, 1989, p. 9

Observation and Play

- Children's engagement with materials;
- Children's engagement with others;
- Children's skill development;
- Potential to target areas of interest.



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Some Thoughts on Play...

- Play is conducive to all the major achievements of the preschool period (Rubstov and Yudina, 2010).
- Children are intrinsically motivated to play (Paris and Paris, 2000).
- Play encourages a focus on 'means' over 'ends' which is essential for developing higher-order cognitive, social and emotional skills (Pellegrini, 2009).
- Play creates a natural '*zone of proximal development*' where children set their own level of challenge and function at their highest level (Whitebread & O'Sullivan, 2012).

- Children learn many of the skills needed to succeed in formal school in the context of play e.g. social competence and academic learning are dependent on self-regulation ie the ability to control impulses, delay gratification (Johnson et al., 2012).
- Children can learn important foundation academic skills in play (e.g. oral language competence and symbolic representational skills in pretend play). Play and academic learning are not incompatible.
- Children learn better when they perceive an activity as playful (Wood, 2012).
- **While free for the child- not so free for the adult** (Rubstov and Yudina, 2010).

Listening to the Child

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) (Ratified by Ireland 1992)

- Most highly ratified instrument in international law.
- Unique in encompassing civil, political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian provisions in a single human rights instrument.
- Children as autonomous rights holders and the State as the principal duty bearer.



Kilkelly (2007)

- Shannon and Geraghty (2014)

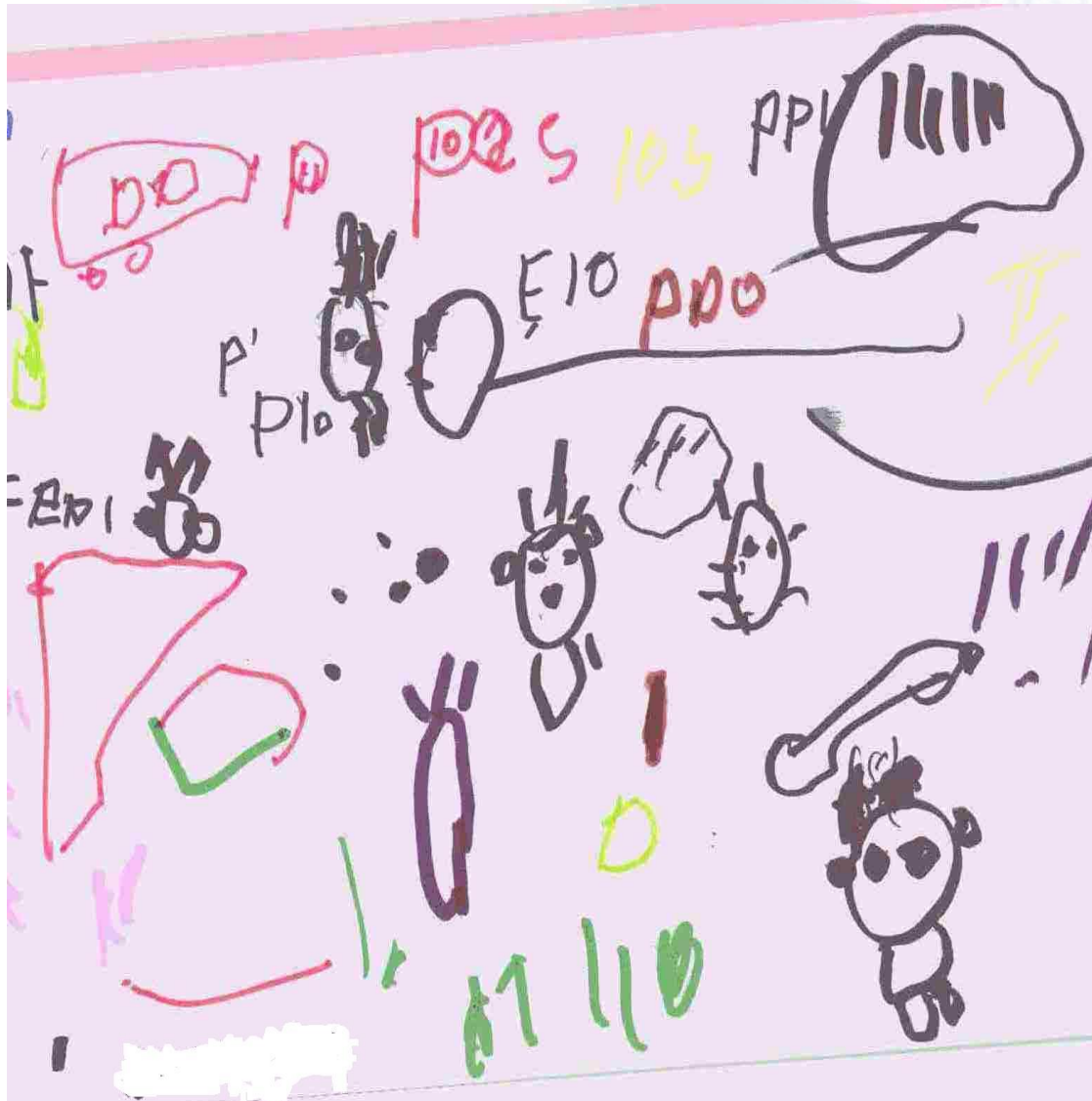


Drawing completed by a participant (aged 8) from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust which depicts play with friends in their childminder's garden

When we go to (childminder's name) it feels like going home (Boy, 6, Interview)



The child depicts feeling bored at their childminder's (Girl, 10, Interview)

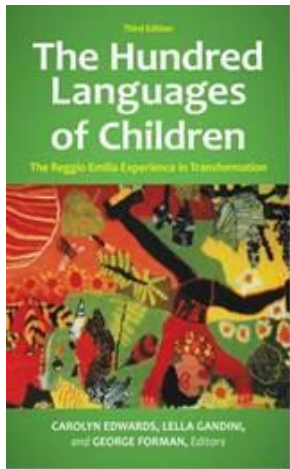


- **Researcher:** *What do ye know about big school?*
- **Child 1:** *Well I only know what my Peter [child's brother] told me about big school...they only get a tiny bit of playtime.*
- **Researcher:** *Oh you only get a tiny bit of playtime? Who told you that?*
- **Child 1:** *My Peter*
- **Researcher:** *Your Peter? Is that your brother? Yeah and you only get a tiny bit of play. What do you think about that? Are you happy or sad about that?*
- **Child 2:** *Well everybody has to go to big school.*

CERAMIC and CSER - DIT, In publication

'The staff. They were very good. They helped me a lot when I needed it. With my reading and stuff I used to go to resource. They were very patient, I'd be sitting there in the corner saying 'I'm not doing this'

(Boland, 2015)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=174pYUcwn7w>



From the beginning, children demonstrate that they have a voice, that they know how to listen, and that they want others to listen to them.

(Rinaldi 2012, p. 237)



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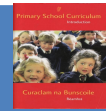
Teacher Guidelines

Aim 1: To enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual.



Ensuring the development of the child's full potential

Holistic learning and development



Learning and development through play

Providing the child with a wide range of appropriate early learning experiences:



Author's own



Author's own



Author's own



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Author's own



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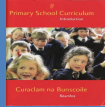


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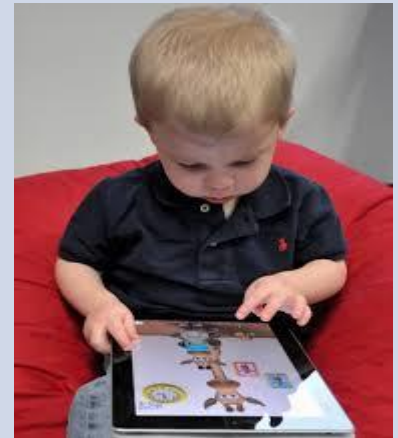


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The range of individual difference should be taken into account
in the learning process
The child's uniqueness
Equality and diversity



Children should be provided with a range of ways to demonstrate their learning:



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Aim 2: To enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society.



Theme: *Communicating*, Aim 1 and Learning goal 1

Age group: Young children

Setting: Sessional service (naíonra)

Caoimhín (3 years) attends a naíonra. He enjoys responding to music. His parents have discussed with Eimear, the stiurthóir (playgroup leader), how he finds it difficult to express his emotions clearly and how this frustrates him. Over recent weeks Eimear has taught Caoimhín and the other children action songs about different emotions. They have also been using instruments while singing the songs and moving to different pieces of music, in order to help them express different feelings. Throughout these experiences, and during play, Eimear has been observing Caoimhín to see how he expresses himself. She makes detailed notes about some of his learning experiences. This documentation shows the progress Caoimhín is making in showing his peers how he feels. Eimear shares this information with his mammy and daddy the next time she is talking to one of them.

Examples of Eimear's notes in her practitioner's file.

Monday 18 February, 12.10 p.m. Outside play

*Caoimhín plays by himself in the sand pit. He shovels sand into a play truck. Anraí and Sorcha come over and try to help him. Caoimhín says, *Ná déan* (don't) and offers them a spare bucket beside him.*

Wednesday 27 February, 9.40 a.m. Indoor play

Caoimhín, Eoin, Niamh, and Amy are playing with the tea set. Eoin serves Caoimhín tea. Amy asks Eoin can she have some tea, Eoin ignores the request and Amy gets upset. Caoimhín offers her his cup of tea.



Reflection: Do I take time to review my detailed observations of children's learning experiences as a way of seeing the progress they are making?

Aim 3: To prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.



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Well-being

- Children will be strong psychologically and socially.
- Children will be healthy and fit as they can be.
- Children will be creative and spiritual.
- Children will have positive outlooks on life.



Identity and Belonging

- Children will have strong self-identities and will feel respected and affirmed as unique individuals with their own life stories.
- Children will have a sense of group identity where links with their family and community are acknowledged and extended.
- Children will be able to express their rights and show understanding and regard for the identity, rights and views of others.
- Children will see themselves as capable



Communicating

- Children will use non-verbal communication skills.
- Children will use language.
- Children will broaden their understanding of the world by making sense of their experiences and through language.
- Children will express themselves creatively and imaginatively.



Exploring and Thinking

- Children will learn about and make sense of the world around them.
- Children will develop and use strategies for observing, questioning, investigating, understanding, negotiating and problem-solving, and come to see themselves as explorers and thinkers.
- Children will explore ways to represent ideas, feelings, thoughts, objects, and actions through symbols.
- Children will have positive attitudes towards learning and develop dispositions like curiosity, playfulness, perseverance, confidence, resourcefulness and risk-taking



Guidelines for Good Practice

- Building Partnerships between Parents and Practitioners.
- Learning and Developing through Interactions.
- Learning and Developing through Play.
- Supporting Learning and Development through Assessment.



The Role of the Environment

- The Environment as the ‘Third Teacher’



Author's Own

BRIATHAR DÈ MO LÓCHRANN



Author's own

BRIATHAR DÈ MO LÓCHUINN



Author's Own

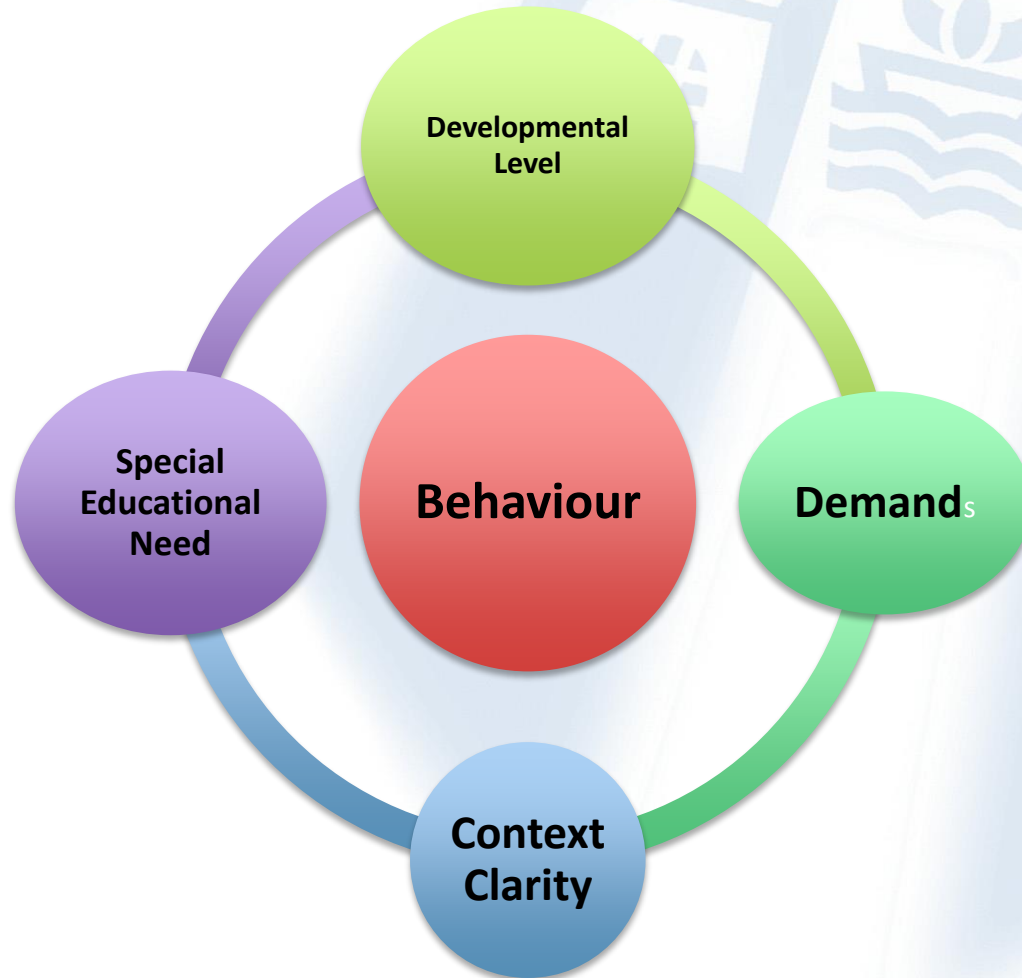


My indoor learning environment:	1. Note what you have/do at present.	2. Rate from 1 to 4.	3. Outline changes you will make.
a) is divided into child-friendly play areas including pretend, construction, messy, quiet, library, mark-making/writing			
b) has areas with similar activities beside each other . for example. the art area is near the sink and the reading area is in a quiet space.			
c) enables children to move materials , for example, moving trucks and cars from the small world area to the sand area.			
d) incorporates children's current interests .			
e) enables children to play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alone • in pairs and small groups • in large groups. 			

My indoor learning environment:	1. Note what you have/do at present.	2. Rate from 1 to 4.	3. Outline changes you will make.
f) is well-lit , with as much natural light as possible.			
g) is painted a neutral colour with lots of space for displays .			
h) has a child-level sink .			
i) allows children choose to play indoors or outdoors .			
j) has storage space for each child's personal belongings that includes the child's photo and name.			
k) limits background noise .			

My indoor learning environment:	1. Note what you have/do at present.	2. Rate from 1 to 4.	3. Outline changes you will make.
a) has children's work including art, constructions, photos and stories named, dated and displayed at children's eye level . These are changed regularly .			
b) has displays which reflect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning activities and experiences • children's cultures and languages • children's families, homes, pets • the local community. 			
c) has an information area for parents that shows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the daily routine • information on the curriculum and Aistear • group learning journals and stories • how they can be more involved in their children's learning. 			
d) has play areas, materials, storage and facilities such as toilets labelled using pictures and words .			

Behaviours that Challenge...



Context as Guide

- Using spaces within the class environment for activities
- Spaces for 'recovery' – calming
- Notes on walls of spaces reminding SNAs and the teacher about talk, instructions, being positive.
- Clarifying context with Visual Supports
- Alternating activities






Turn take or use hand over hand if necessary. If a student is banging/continues to flap, touch gently, place hand on computer and continue.

Using SNAs to Support

- Singing from same hymn sheet
- Developing scripts to guide ...
- Posting reminders around the room ...
- Use particular strengths of ...
- Supporting Independence



Reminders:

Planning

- Based on Assessment –
 - Use assessment techniques suited to young children with focus on OBSERVATION
 - Know typical milestones
 - Consult with Parents providing them with sheet with Key areas listed so they can contribute
 - Set SMARTA targets in each domain
 - USE SNA to help collect data
 - Take videos



Supports

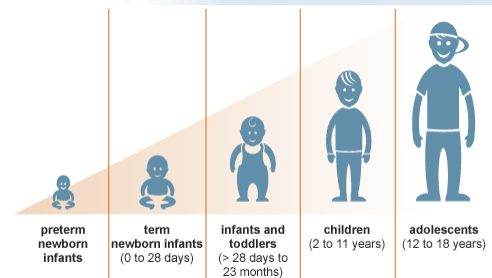


- Matched to needs
- Use of Music, Art, Play
- Include breaks – movement, sensory, recovery
- Using older children in school as ‘buddies’
- Connecting systematically with home



The Teacher

- You need to develop the **LONG VIEW**
- Note how much learning and development takes place in half year, and full year, in two years
- Keep portfolio on each child with products and photos and videos



Workshop Task

- In Groups, appoint a rapporteur and discuss the key component of effective early intervention for children with special educational needs that has been allocated to your group with reference to Positive Experiences; Challenges and Solutions [10 minutes]
- Report Back with the key points to the Group [10 minutes]

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Conclusion

‘...that the knowledge of the great range of possible outcomes and the clear dependence of outcome on the quality of the education received ‘gives us the right and the duty to speak out for such children with the whole force of our personality’

Hans Asperger 1944

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