

## Writing a Learning Journey file

There is no requirement to write a 'Learning Journey' document for EYFS aged children. However, there is a requirement to record observations and assessments and individual planning, work with parents, note information from other settings etc.

You need to consider where you will put all this information if you do not have a file for each child... and what better name can you think of than a Learning Journey because, after all, that is what you are writing!

We document children's learning for main reasons -

- To keep parents updated on children's achievements and where they might be struggling;
- To help us plan exciting and challenging activities for every child;
- To prepare children for school - the prime areas of learning are especially important for school readiness and the specific areas are used to teach children about lots of different things in the world around them which prepare them for learning in a school environment.

A well written Learning Journey booklet which is regularly updated and filled with photos and exciting moments from the child's life will be an important part of the documentation process.

A child's learning journey booklet / document / file contains...

- Starting points / initial information from parents
- Care plan - which discusses the child's care needs such as medical concerns, allergies etc.
- Photos - because they often say more than words (remember you must have written permission from parents, be registered with the Information Commissioners Office and discuss use of photos in your safeguarding / child protection policy and procedures).
- Child's individual routine including outings, types of play through the day, meal times etc
- Observations and assessments - observations say what the child is doing or saying and assessments say what the observations mean ie. child is mixing colours which means they are learning about colour blending; child is counting '1, 2, 4, 5' which means they are learning to sequence numbers.
- Development Matters document personalised for the child - when you do an observation, you note it with a date on the Development Matters document. This helps to show the child is progressing - and helps you to pick up any areas where the child is not making good progress so you and parents can focus on them.
- Individual planning / next steps / individual learning plans / possible lines of development (PLODS) - whatever you call them, they discuss what you and parents are going to do next to support the child's future learning.
- Group planning notes - if the child is old enough to be included in group activities

- Comments from the child – when they are old enough to contribute to their Learning Journey
- 2 year progress check - if relevant
- Some childminders include a tracker document to show when areas of learning have been achieved
- this is only ok if it is backed up with observations, assessments and individual planning notes to show evidence of achievement.
- Copies of the child's artwork – photocopy if the child is desperate to take everything home. I often take photos of displays to which children have contributed and put those in their Learning Journey files to share with parents (especially if parents are too busy to pop in and see them).
- Notes from parents / other settings about the child's learning elsewhere
- Transition document - if the child also attends another setting

Learning Journey files can be set out in date order or however they make sense to you. Some childminders use a photo album type memory / scrap book – you do not have to use sheets if you prefer. Other childminders buy documents to use - as long as they are flexible enough to include all of the above, then they are normally fine for Ofsted.