

## Linking observations to the EYFS

When you have written up an observation or parents come to tell you that their child has done or said something new at home, you will want to use the Development Matters guidance document to help you assess what the observation tells you about the child.

This process, often known as 'linking', causes a lot of concern.

The best way to learn how to link observations to Development Matters (DM) is to get to know the DM guidance really well. Once you see how it works, linking to it will be second nature.

Every activity a child does links in some way to the areas of learning and development of the revised EYFS. There are no hard and fast rules when linking because all children's experiences are different, for example, a child might be painting...

- Which is linked to arts and crafts
- But while painting he might be demonstrating really good sharing - which links to PSED
- Or friendship with another child - which again links to PSED
- Or he might be using his developing fine and gross motor skills to carefully write his name with the paintbrush (which links to physical development and literacy)!

Here are some of the most common links...

Activity	Links to EYFS	The child is...
Painting	Arts and design	Being creative
Puzzles	Mathematics	Exploring shape, space and measures
Outdoor play	Physical	Developing gross motor skills (moving)
Playdough	Physical	Using fine motor skills (handling)
Cooking	Mathematics	Exploring shape, space and measure - weights, measures, size, capacity etc
Books / printed materials	Literacy	Reading
Mark making (under 3s)	Physical development	Using manipulative skills (handling)
Writing letters / numbers	Literacy	Writing
Sand and water / malleable / messy play	Physical	Using fine and gross motor skills (moving and handling)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Links to EYFS</b>	<b>The child is...</b>
Construction	Arts and design	Using imagination and creating
Small world	Arts and design	Using imagination
Using CD player	Understanding the world / communication	Using technology and developing listening skills
Role play	Arts and design	Using imagination
Getting dressed	Physical development	Developing fine motor (handling) skills
Numbers	Mathematics	Exploring numbers
Multicultural and diverse themes	Understanding the world	Learning about the world around them
Nature and the natural world	Understanding the world	Finding out about the local community and wider world
Experiments	Understanding the world	Exploring simple science - learning about the world
Dolls / teddies - cuddling and caring	Personal, social and emotional	Making friends
Musical instruments	Arts and design	Being creative
Dancing	Physical development	Moving to music or a beat - moving
Eating	PSED Physical development	Socialising / making friendships Health and self care
Self registration	Literacy	Developing writing skills

Remember, very few activities and experiences link with only one area of learning and development at a time. Sometimes, you will want to find the link which best describes what you are looking for - you might note that a child is proud of their achievement (PSED) while another practitioner might say - but they made lovely use of colour (Arts and Design).

The most important thing is that you use the Development Matters guidance to GUIDE you through the child's learning journey - it cannot possibly contain references to everything you do with a child or everything a child says or does and you must not use it as a tick list or to highlight when they have achieved something because that is not its purpose.