

Observations and planning for inclusion: Reflection questions

Supporting resource for Webinar 2: Early childhood inclusion step 1- observations and planning for inclusion



“Assessment refers to the gathering of information about children’s learning, development and wellbeing, undertaken over time using a range of strategies... Through assessment, educators recognise and celebrate not only the giant leaps children take in their learning but the small steps as well.”

Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0, p. 25

Observations and planning for inclusion

It is an expectation within **National Quality Standard 1.3.1** that each child’s learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysis, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection within early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings. The first step in the assessment and planning cycle is to **OBSERVE, listen and collect information**. This occurs when educators use multiple sources of information to gather and document different aspects of children’s learning, development and wellbeing. It involves recording observations of the child in the ECEC environment, across the whole curriculum and throughout the day, including during routines, planned and unplanned experiences, and interactions with peers, family members and other adults. Information is also gathered from the family and other data sources (such as developmental reports). This provides the educator with information about each child’s knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests. When a child has a disability or developmental delay, the information collected during the observation phase of the assessment and planning cycle can help educators to a) identify the child’s strengths and areas where support is needed, b) identify resources that could be used to support this child’s participation and engagement in the ECEC setting, c) measure the child’s progress towards goals and learning outcomes, and d) review the effectiveness of learning experiences, environments and strategies/approaches.

Questions to guide critical reflection

After the webinar, you may have questions about how the content could apply to your practice. Write these down so you can reflect on them and seek input from families and colleagues.

The following questions and prompts may also help guide your personal and team reflection on the practices of observation and planning for inclusion.

1. What observations or data collection methods do you use at your ECEC service?	Reflections	Actions												
<p>What is the purpose of the observations you collect? (you may wish to refer to checklist below)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Purposes of observations / data collection</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>1. To record participation.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>2. To determine what a child knows, can do, and understands.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>3. To identify children needing additional support.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>4. To identify resources needed to support children's participation.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>5. To measure progress towards goals and learning outcomes and review the effectiveness of learning experiences, environments and strategies/approaches.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>What do the current observations 'tell' you about the child?</p> <p>What questions can these observations answer? Are there any questions the observations cannot answer?</p> <p>Do you use different types of observations for different purposes? Why or why not?</p>	Purposes of observations / data collection		<input type="checkbox"/>	1. To record participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. To determine what a child knows, can do, and understands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. To identify children needing additional support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. To identify resources needed to support children's participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. To measure progress towards goals and learning outcomes and review the effectiveness of learning experiences, environments and strategies/approaches.		
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1. What observations or data collection methods do you use at your ECEC service?	Reflections	Actions
<p>How do you collect observations/record data at your service? What specific methods or types of observations do you use?</p> <p>Why do you use these specific types of observations?</p> <p>Who is advantaged/included when you collect observations in this way? Who is disadvantaged, excluded or silenced?</p>		
<p>Are you required to use the same type of observation or data collection method for all children at your service? Why or why not?</p> <p>Think about one child at your service with a disability or delay. What is a different type of observation you could use to collect information about this child?</p>		

2. What are some barriers to recording observations/data that you have encountered?	Reflections	Actions
<p>When you think about recording observations or collecting data, is there anything you would like to do regularly that you feel you are not able to do at present?</p> <p>What resources and supports do you need to record observations? How could you access these?</p> <p>Who could help you in collecting these observations?</p> <p>Is there a more time-efficient method you could try?</p>		
<p>Are there any changes to your routine- when, where, or how you collect observations- that you could try?</p> <p>What would this change in routine mean for you and your colleagues?</p> <p>What would this change in routine mean for the children at your service?</p>		

3. Has there been a time when a discussion with a parent or guardian about their child’s development didn’t go to plan?	Reflections	Actions
If YES:		
<p>What did you think would happen and what actually happened when you approached the parent or guardian?</p> <p>What do you think this conversation felt like for the parent or guardian?</p> <p>What feelings came up for you during and after the discussion?</p>		
<p><i>Read the tip sheet 'Tips for raising concerns with families' and, if possible, discuss your responses to the questions above with a trusted colleague, then reflect on the questions below.</i></p>		
<p>What would you do differently next time?</p> <p>Would you do anything differently <i>before</i> the discussion?</p> <p>Would you approach the parent or guardian differently <i>during</i> the discussion? What specifically would you change about <i>your</i> behaviour during the discussion?</p> <p>Would you do anything differently <i>after</i> the discussion?</p>		

3. Has there been a time when a discussion with a parent or guardian about their child's development didn't go to plan?	Reflections	Actions
If NO:		
<p>Think about all the different directions a discussion might take- what different responses might you receive from parents or guardians and how might you react to these different responses?</p> <p>What will it mean for you, the family, and the child if the parent or guardian doesn't respond positively?</p> <p>How might the parent or guardian experience this discussion?</p> <p>What can you do to ensure that the relationship with the child and family is sustained regardless of the outcome of the discussion?</p>		