

Developmental Assessments

Children develop different skills at different times. Whilst there are general guidelines for the development of skills, such as walking, talking or toileting, there are no set deadlines for your little one.

There may be times when you do have concerns about your child's ability to meet expected milestones, their ability to perform everyday tasks or their transition into primary school. Here, a developmental assessment may be appropriate. These assessments are specifically for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers and can help to identify possible developmental delays, inform professionals about specific areas of strengths or weaknesses, and provide a method of monitoring your child's developmental progress. These assessments can also form part of the evidence required for an application for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

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What's Involved?

Our assessments begin with thorough discussions about your child's development, family history and your concerns. We will then get out all our toys and games, and allow your child to explore the many engaging items and challenging puzzles. This is not just playing with cars and teddies. We will make some very specific observations, encourage your child to interact with certain items in certain ways, and ask them to respond to certain requests, all to help inform our understanding of their skills and development.

We will also spend some time talking about their strengths and their weaknesses in day-to-day tasks, such as eating, toileting, moving around, using crayons, and their imagination. If they are at a childminders, nursery or pre-school, we will liaise with them to obtain some further information, and we will review any correspondence about your child or previous assessments that they've completed. We will also have some questionnaires for you to complete.

We Will Formally Assess Your Child

Cognitive Abilities

This will help to understand how your child thinks, reacts, and learns about the world around them. We can measure their interest in new things, their attention to familiar and unfamiliar objects, and how they play with different kinds of toys. We will observe how your child explores new toys and experiences and how they solve problems. Your child may also be given items that measure their pretend play and activities such as building with blocks, colour matching, counting, and solving more complex puzzles.

Language Abilities

Your child will be given items that measure their recognition of sounds, objects, and people in the environment. We will assess their ability to follow directions, identify action pictures, and their understanding of basic grammar. We will observe their non-verbal expressions such as smiling, jabbering expressively, and laughing. Your child will be given opportunities to use words by naming objects or pictures and answering questions.

Motor Abilities

Your child will be assessed for muscle control from eye movement to grasping an object. They will have the opportunity to stack blocks, draw simple shapes, and place small objects, such as coins in a slot. Your child may also be asked to draw more complex shapes and build structures using blocks. We will also assess their movement, observing their ability to climb stairs, run, maintain balance, kick a ball, and other activities requiring full body control or coordination.

Feedback and Your Report

We will review all the information to come to a comprehensive understanding of your child's early development. Appropriate diagnoses (e.g., "global developmental delay") can be made if there is sufficient evidence, and recommendations can be made about appropriate school settings. At a feedback meeting, we can take you through everything we did, what it means and what we recommend for your child. All the information will be detailed in a report, along with recommendations most appropriate for your child.

Whatever the outcomes of the assessment, our reports can be shared with schools, local authorities or NHS teams to help ensure that the right support can be put into place. Our reports have been used as evidence to support EHCP applications and support transitions into primary school.

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