



FREE

SEND OBSERVATION Checklist

FOR EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS



Child's Name: _____

Date of Observation: _____

Age: _____

Observer's Name: _____

Setting: _____

IMPORTANT REMINDER

This checklist is a supportive observation tool and not a diagnostic assessment. Children develop at different rates. Always consider observations alongside professional judgement and discussions with parents.



1 COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION



- Limited eye contact or difficulty engaging with others
- Delayed speech or limited vocabulary
- Difficulty understanding simple instructions
- Limited use of gestures, facial expressions or body language
- Repeats words or phrases without clear understanding
- Difficulty taking turns during conversations or play
- Prefers to play alone most of the time
- Finds it difficult to make or maintain friendships
- Difficulty understanding social rules and routines
- Other observations: _____

2 COGNITION AND LEARNING



- Difficulty following simple routines or instructions
- Takes longer than expected to learn new skills
- Difficulty remembering information or previous learning
- Limited problem-solving skills during play
- Difficulty maintaining attention during activities
- Needs frequent repetition or adult support
- Finds it challenging to complete age-appropriate tasks
- Other observations: _____

3 SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (SEMH)



- Difficulty managing emotions
- Frequent frustration, distress or emotional outbursts
- Appears anxious, withdrawn or lacking confidence
- Difficulty sharing, waiting or taking turns
- Challenges forming positive relationships with others
- Unusual reactions to changes in routines or transitions
- Difficulty regulating behaviour
- Other observations: _____

4 SENSORY AND/OR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



- Unusual sensitivity to sounds, lights, textures or smells
- Seeks certain sensory experiences repeatedly
- Avoids particular sensory experiences
- Difficulty with balance, coordination or movement
- Fine motor difficulties (e.g. holding tools, using cutlery)
- Gross motor difficulties (e.g. running, jumping, climbing)
- Hearing or visual concerns
- Difficulty accessing the environment independently
- Other observations: _____

5 STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS



Every child has unique strengths. Record what the child enjoys and what they do well.

- Positive relationships with familiar adults
- Enjoys specific activities or interests
- Shows creativity and imagination
- Demonstrates curiosity and exploration
- Has particular skills or talents

Notes:



6 NEXT STEPS AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES



- Continue monitoring and observing
- Adapt activities to meet individual needs
- Use visual supports or communication aids
- Provide additional adult support where appropriate
- Discuss observations with parents or carers
- Consult with the setting's SENCO
- Seek advice from relevant professionals if required

Action Plan:



Remember: Early identification and timely support can make a significant difference to a child's learning, confidence and wellbeing. Always focus on the child's strengths, interests and individual needs.



REVIEW DATE: _____

REVIEWED BY: _____