



Early Years

Child Development Tool

An Early Years tracking tool by Early Childhood Services (NCC) that has been created using information from Mary Sheridan's child development norms **Sheridan M., (1973) From Birth to Five Years: Children's Developmental Progress" (1st ed.) Routledge.**

Practitioners can use this tool to assess a child's development. If applicable, you can then use it to identify small next steps that you can support with their developmental progress.



Child's name	
Child's DOB	
Name of Key Person	
Name of Provision	
Child's start date	

Early Years Child Development Tracking Tool

Mary Sheridan

Mary D Sheridan carried out pioneering work in the field of community paediatrics for over 40 years. Her publications include *Spontaneous Play in Early Childhood* and *From Birth to Five Years*. Mary Sheridan is widely regarded as the go-to reference for health, education and social care professionals, or anyone concerned with the developmental progress of pre-school children.

This new edition of Mary Sheridan's *From Birth to Five Years* is a good go-to reference for anyone concerned with the developmental progress of pre-school children. It provides the knowledge required for understanding children's developmental progress with age and within each developmental domain.

Sharma A., Cockerill H., Sanctuary L., (2021) *Mary Sheridan's From Birth to Five Years: Children's Developmental Progress*. Routledge.

In using this child development tracking tool, you may find that it enables you to:

- Identify areas of strength and/or weakness in provision
- Identify patterns of uneven development and consequent areas for intervention
- Support referral processes, e.g. by clarifying and pinpointing gaps and issues
- Identifying smaller steps for planning
- Track and reflect on the progress of different cohorts.
- Share information with other professionals using common child development language
- Support parents in their understanding of developmental norms
- Support practitioners in their conversations with parents

Procedure for Completing the Early Years Tracking Tool

1. Fill in the child's personal details on the front page.
2. Add the date of your assessment on the assessment table
3. Work out the child's chronological age (in months) and record this at each assessment point.
4. Find the child's chronological stage in the left hand column of the assessment tool and highlight this.
5. Start your assessment from the preceding stage that you have highlighted on the assessment tool.
6. Starting at this preceding stage, take each point in turn and highlight if child can do.
7. If the child can do all of the items described at the starting point, we can assume that they will be able to do all of the chronological stages before, so highlight all of these too. (This will help you when you complete the scoring).
8. If the child is unable to do 1 (or more) items in the starting point stage, go back a stage until they can complete all items at a stage.
9. Move to the next stage, and again take each point in turn and highlight if child can do.
10. Complete each stage, but do not progress to the next stage if you do not highlight all items in your current stage.
11. Do this for all of the development areas.

Scoring

- Starting with the first area of development, look down each line and add all of the highlighted items
- Count all items highlighted, including the ones in a last stage where all items may not be completed.
- Record this total number in the **total point score** at the bottom of the assessment column.
- Convert the total point score using the points **score key** and add this to the **age level** row. (please note that the score key is different for each area of development).
- Look at the child's chronological age and ask yourself if the child is functioning as **Emerging, Expected, or Exceeding** in their development and record this information.
- Repeat this procedure for each of the areas of development as appropriate.
- There is space to record eight assessment points for each individual child.
- If applicable, you can use the **Support Plan for the Child's Provision and Home**

AGE	Language/ Cognitive Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)
By 3 Months (0 -3 months)	Recognises familiar voice (e.g. parent, sibling, key person)
	Vocalises when spoken to, beginning conversations
	Responds to environmental sounds e.g. doorbell, favourite rattle, other children
By 6 Months (4-6 months)	Makes simple babbling noises e.g. “da-da, bab-bab”
	Responds to rhyme / rhythm e.g. turns to practitioner singing
	Laughs, chuckles, squeals in play.
By 9 Months (7-9 months)	Responds to own name, understands simple words e.g. ‘no’, ‘bye-bye’
	Will point to objects of interest e.g. favourite toy on the table
	Child’s babble is more complex, and makes louder and more tuneful sounds
	Imitates sounds e.g. coughing, smacking lips, and laughing
By 12 Months (10-12 months)	May use some single words e.g. “Dadda” “Bye Bye”
	Joins in with some songs
	Looks for out of sight objects (object permanence) e.g. comforter under the blanket.
	Beginning to understand cause and effect e.g. shakes toy to make a noise
By 15 Months (13-15 months)	Uses some single words.
	Understands instructions e.g. “come for snack time”
	Begins to make marks
	Early pretend play – e.g. drinks from a cup in the home corner
By 18 Months (16-18 months)	Makes speech-like sounds to self in play e.g. “Brum Brum” whilst playing with a toy car
	Uses between 6 and 20 words but understands many more
	Makes demands known by pointing, with vocalisation e.g. pointing at their beaker.
	Enjoys nursery rhymes and will try to sing along

AGE	Language/ Cognitive Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)
By 2 years (19-24 months)	Will name objects on sight e.g. car, doll, book
	Vocabulary increases approx. 50 words expressed and understands many more
	Will join two words e.g. “shoes on” “go home”
	Short sentences by 2½, sometimes grammatically incorrect e.g. “I goed home”
	Beginning to understand actions have consequences
	Completes simple jigsaws / puzzles
Engages in role-play and make-believe activities e.g. puts a baking tray in the home corner oven	
By 3 years (25-36 months)	Frequently asks ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions
	Uses language for thinking and saying what’s happened or what they have done/doing.
	Increased and mainly accurate vocabulary e.g. correct use of plurals-“two cups on the table”
	Can match and sort items into simple sets e.g. large and small pinecones
	Can repeat numbers one to ten by memory, but will only count reliably to three or four
	May recognise written form of own name e.g. on their coat peg
Elaborate make-believe play e.g. space travel, under the sea, dinosaur land etc.	
By 4 years (37-48 months)	Speech grammatically correct and intelligible though some immaturities in pronunciation likely e.g. “I’m going to stool” [I’m going to school]
	Can give accounts of recent events / experiences, retell stories and repeat nursery rhymes
	Enjoys jokes and playing with words
	Can sort to more complex sets e.g. their friends who have shoes on, and who has trainers on, and boys and girls.
	Can work out a possible solution to a problem e.g. how to attach arms to their box model robot
By 5 years (49-60 months)	Uses language to share opinions, thinking e.g. “I think Ella is sad today”
	Enjoys books and beginning to read words
	Concentration span increases, shows greater persistence in activities
	Beginning to write words

Assessment for Language/ Cognitive Development

	Assessment 1		Assessment 2		Assessment 3		Assessment 4	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-6 Points = 0-6 Months	7-14 Points = 7-12 Months	15-22 Points = 13-18 Months	23-29 Points = 19-24 Months	30-36 Points = 25-36 Months	37-41 Points = 37-48 Months	42-45 Points = 49-60 Months	

Assessment for Language/ Cognitive Development

	Assessment 5		Assessment 6		Assessment 7		Assessment 8	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-6 Points = 0-6 Months	7-14 Points = 7-12 Months	15-22 Points = 13-18 Months	23-29 Points = 19-24 Months	30-36 Points = 25-36 Months	37-41 Points = 37-48 Months	42-45 Points = 49-60 Months	

AGE	Social/Emotional Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)
By 3 Months (0 -3 months)	Smiling at carer or key person
	Beginning to show emotion e.g. squealing with delight at mum arriving at the nursery
	Enjoys being held and having cuddles
By 6 Months (4-6 months)	Enjoys attention and being with others
	Beginning to demonstrate preference for familiar people e.g. their key person
By 9 Months (7-9 months)	Clear preference for familiar people e.g. mum, dad, grandparent etc.
	Plays with key person e.g. pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo
	Stiffens whole body in annoyance, resistance with vocal protest
By 12 Months (10-12 months)	Waves 'bye-bye'
	Repeats actions when laughed at
	Affectionate to familiar people e.g. all of the practitioners in the baby room
By 15 Months (13-15 months)	Explores their environment but needs practitioners close for reassurance
	Plays games with a practitioner e.g. pushing car backwards and forwards
	Begins to notice presence of other children
By 18 Months (16-18 months)	Plays contently alone but likes security of near, familiar practitioner
	Can be clingy but at other times will resist practitioner's presence
	Energetic and eager to explore the environment, but has no sense of danger
	Imitates everyday activities e.g. feeding doll, wiping tables, changing nappies

AGE	Social/Emotional Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)
By 2 years (19-24 months)	Demanding of parent / practitioner's attention
	Tantrums when upset, but is usually easy to distract
	Defends own possessions and doesn't tend to share toys or adult attention
	Plays alongside other children but not yet with them (solitary play)
By 3 years (25-36 months)	Can express feelings to practitioners. Beginning to empathise with feelings of others
	Enjoys company of other children and beginning to make friends
	Beginning to understand the concept of saying sorry and making up
By 4 years (37-48 months)	Friendship with other children is increasingly valued. More confident socially away from practitioners
	Can wait to have needs met (and understand the needs of others) e.g. waiting their turn for a bike
	Beginning to understand the importance of rules and tries to keep to them e.g. walking feet inside
	Vivid imagination can lead to fears e.g. the dark, monsters
By 5 years (49-60 months)	Keen to fit in with others – approval sought from other children and adults
	Friends are important but lots of falling out
	Understands rules but sometimes has difficulty in accepting them e.g. they may question the rules
	Engages in play with other children (co-operative play)

Assessment for Social/Emotional Development

	Assessment 1		Assessment 2		Assessment 3		Assessment 4	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-5 Points = 0-6 Months	6-11 Points = 7-12 Months	12-18 Points = 13-18 Months	19-22 Points = 19-24 Months	23-25 Points = 25-36 Months	26-29 Points = 37-48 Months	30-33 Points = 49-60 Months	

Assessment for Social/Emotional Development

	Assessment 5		Assessment 6		Assessment 7		Assessment 8	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-5 Points = 0-6 Months	6-11 Points = 7-12 Months	12-18 Points = 13-18 Months	19-22 Points = 19-24 Months	23-25 Points = 25-36 Months	26-29 Points = 37-48 Months	30-33 Points = 49-60 Months	

AGE	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)</p>
<p>By 3 Months (0 -3 months)</p>	Lifts head and chest from floor e.g. during tummy time
	Brings their hands together, some finger play
	Kicks vigorously, sometimes alternating their legs
<p>By 6 Months (4-6 months)</p>	Can roll over – back to front and front to back
	Can sit with support, holding head and back straight
	Uses whole hand in palmar grasp and passes an object from one hand to the other
<p>By 9 Months (7-9 months)</p>	Sits unsupported, leaning forward to maintain their balance
	Covers the floor area by crawling, rolling, and wriggling
	Pulls to standing, holding on furniture for support
	Beginning to pick up small objects with pincer grasp but cannot yet 'place'
<p>By 12 Months (10-12 months)</p>	Cruises around using furniture for support
	Throws toys intentionally
	Stands alone, may walk a few steps
<p>By 15 Months (13-15 months)</p>	May walk independently with uneven steps using arms to assist their balance
	Crawls upstairs and comes downstairs feet first (or up and down on soft play equipment or on something similar)
	Pincer grasp better developed. Will pick up small objects, can place with precision e.g. one block on top of another
<p>By 18 Months (16-18 months)</p>	Walks well and no longer uses arms to balance and can run but finds it difficult to negotiate obstacles
	Will push or pull large boxes, toys or resources
	Can walk up steps holding hands (usually crawls down backwards) e.g. on soft play cubes, or steps to the garden area etc.
	Can kneel and squat steadily
	Will use mark making tools and beginning to show preference for one hand but still uses both
	Can turn pages in a book but not usually one-by-one

AGE	Physical Development (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)
By 2 years (19-24 months)	Runs competently with more control when negotiating obstacles
	Walks up and down stairs or steps holding handrail for support
	Rides large wheeled toys (with no pedals)
	Can join and separate interlocking toys (e.g. Duplo and Knex)
	Draws circles, lines and dots
By 3 years (25-36 months)	Walks and runs on tip-toes
	Rides wheeled toys using pedals and steering
	Can climb and slide on equipment
	Can kick a ball
	Turns the pages of a book one by one
	Can draw a face and attempts letters now using their preferred hand
By 4 years (37-48 months)	Can change direction while running
	Can walk in a straight line
	Confident on climbing and sliding equipment
	Increasing control when kicking a ball
	Learning to use scissors and can cut out simple shapes
	Drawings are more detailed and representative e.g. their car drawing looks like a car
	Makes marks and letters, demonstrating their understanding that print carries a meaning e.g. their marks represent their mummy's name
By 5 years (49-60 months)	Has good ball control and can play ball games with rules
	Balance is good – e.g. on balancing beams or on wobble boards etc.
	Sense of rhythm demonstrated in dance and movement activities
	Good control in mark making and can form letters accurately

Assessment for Physical Development

	Assessment 1		Assessment 2		Assessment 3		Assessment 4	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-6 Points = 0-6 Months	7-13 Points = 7-12 Months	14-22 Points = 13-18 Months	23-27 Points = 19-24 Months	28-33 Points = 25-36 Months	34-40 Points = 37-48 Months	41-44 Points = 49-60 Months	

Assessment for Physical Development

	Assessment 5		Assessment 6		Assessment 7		Assessment 8	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-6 Points = 0-6 Months	7-13 Points = 7-12 Months	14-22 Points = 13-18 Months	23-27 Points = 19-24 Months	28-33 Points = 25-36 Months	34-40 Points = 37-48 Months	41-44 Points = 49-60 Months	

AGE	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-help (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)</p>
<p>By 3 Months (0 -3 months)</p>	<p>Makes needs known through a range of different cries</p>
<p>By 6 Months (4-6 months)</p>	<p>Reaches out purposefully to grasp chosen object e.g. rattle, comforter etc.</p>
	<p>May take hold of their beaker if offered</p>
	<p>Removes their socks</p>
<p>By 9 Months (7-9 months)</p>	<p>Begins to feed themselves e.g. with finger food</p>
	<p>Co-operates with dressing e.g. puts their arms up when the practitioner takes off their T-shirt</p>
<p>By 12 Months (10-12 months)</p>	<p>Drinks from a cup or beaker independently</p>
	<p>Feeds themselves with a spoon or fork (but may be very messy)</p>
	<p>May undress themselves e.g. removes hats, gloves, and socks etc.</p>
<p>By 15 Months (13-15 months)</p>	<p>More skilful with spoon and cup but may still require some assistance</p>
	<p>Helps more constructively with dressing e.g. points their toes when a practitioner puts their shoes on</p>
<p>By 18 Months (16-18 months)</p>	<p>More competent with spoon and cup</p>
	<p>Can take clothes off but not yet able to put them on again</p>
	<p>Can find things in a familiar environment and help with tidying away e.g. they can find their beaker in the drinks tray</p>

AGE	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-help (Mary Sheridan, Child Development)</p>
<p>By 2 years (19-24 months)</p>	Attempts to verbalise toilet needs but often unreliable
	Feeds self well with spoon or fork and handles drinks without spilling
	Puts on hat and shoes independently, and may attempt other clothing with help e.g. coat and dressing up clothes (but not using any fastenings)
<p>By 3 years (25-36 months)</p>	Handles mealtimes competently using fork and spoon
	Manages own clothes when using the toilet and can wash and dry their hands
	May be dry at night (but this is variable)
	Can put on and remove coat with 'easy' fastenings
<p>By 4 years (37-48 months)</p>	Can manage most personal care tasks independently (and may resent adult help)
	Uses knife and fork but may need assistance with some cutting
	Will find things for themselves and can put things back
<p>By 5 years (49-60 months)</p>	Will be competent in all aspects of self-care e.g. at mealtimes, toileting and for their personal hygiene
	Uses a knife and fork skilfully
	Can take care of own possessions where there are designated places for storage e.g their coat and bag on their coat peg

Assessment for Self-help

	Assessment 1		Assessment 2		Assessment 3		Assessment 4	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-4 Points = 0-6 Months	5-9 Points = 7-12 Months	10-14 Points = 13-18 Months	15-17 Points = 19-24 Months	18-21 Points = 25-36 Months	22-24 Points = 37-48 Months	25-27 Points = 49-60 Months	

Assessment for Self-help

	Assessment 5		Assessment 6		Assessment 7		Assessment 8	
Date of assessment								
Child's Chronological Age in Months								
Total Point Score								
Age level (see below)								
Emerging, Expected, Exceeding								
Score Key	0-4 Points = 0-6 Months	5-9 Points = 7-12 Months	10-14 Points = 13-18 Months	15-17 Points = 19-24 Months	18-21 Points = 25-36 Months	22-24 Points = 37-48 Months	25-27 Points = 49-60 Months	

Early Years Child Development Tool

Support Plan

for the Child's Provision and Home

Name of Child: Name of Key Person:					
Date	Identified area(s) for further support	What further support / Next Steps have been agreed to support my learning and development in the setting?	What can parents/carers do to support their child's learning and development at home	Key Person progress/review notes	Parent/Carer progress/review comments