Criteria for 3-year-olds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: a typical 3 year old ..........</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Jumps from a height of 20cm.</td>
<td>✓ Cuts along a 20cm straight line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Kicks a large moving ball.</td>
<td>✓ Threads beads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Walks on tiptoe.</td>
<td>✓ Builds tower of 9-10 cubes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Runs 10 steps with co-ordinated alternating arm movements.</td>
<td>✓ Copies a 3 cube bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Runs round obstacles with speed and accuracy.</td>
<td>✓ Uses a pencil to copy simple shapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Pedals a trike.</td>
<td>✓ Uses a pencil grip with good control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Climbs up a slide, slides down.</td>
<td>✓ Draws a person with head and one/two other features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Walks upstairs, with alternate feet.</td>
<td>✓ Paints, covering the whole paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Catches a ball with two hands.</td>
<td>✓ Is attentive and responsive to visual and auditory stimuli.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Puts together a 3-piece puzzle.</td>
<td></td>
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**Gross Motor Development**

**Can walk and position self independently**
- Walks downstairs with help.
- Kicks a large stationary ball.
- Pushes/pulls wheeled toys.

**Maintains balance whilst performing a range of actions**
- Can stop and start with ease

**Can walk and position self independently but has stability and/or coordination difficulties.**
- Sits on a trike without motion.
- Has difficulty climbing onto furniture.
- Loses balance when squatting.

**Development is slow due to long term nature of disability**
- Has some independent movement.
- Needs support to perform some physical skills.
- Is up and moving with supportive equipment.

**Needs are likely to be permanent and lifelong due to nature of disability**
- Has limited functional movement
  - Is unable to position/reposition without assistance.
  - Requires physical support to maintain posture.
and avoid obstacles. | • Cruises around furniture.  
• Moves around through crawling and bottom shuffling.  
• Bears own weight for short periods.  
**Physical skills may fluctuate or deteriorate.**
• Needs support/equipment in all situations.  
• Is unable to bear own weight.

- Displays clumsiness, repetitive movements, poor coordination, and sometimes unusual movements.
- Displays unusual behaviours, e.g. peculiar finger or body posturing, staring or picking at body, self-directed aggression, rocking, spinning, finger wiggling or toe-walking.
- Makes intense/frequent unusual movements which may persist, despite attempts to discourage them or involve the child in other activities.

| **Fine Motor Development** | **Uses 2 hands together.**  
**Has some difficulty in using fingers and thumbs to grasp small objects.**  
- Places and stacks large objects (posting, form boards, bricks)  
- Joins objects together (e.g. Duplo).  
**Development is slow due to long term nature of disability**  
**Needs support to manipulate objects using two hands.**  
- Grasps large objects using whole hand.  
- Releases with some difficulty.  
**Has difficulty with control of individual fingers.**  
**Needs are likely to be long lasting due to nature of disability**  
- Can reach but not grasp.  
- Can hold but not release.  
**Has little or no functional movements for grasp/release but may demonstrate some intention.**

| **Use of Senses** | **Persistently puts objects in mouth.**  
**Is preoccupied with touching, smelling or tasting objects or**  
**Is preoccupied with smelling, tasting or feeling objects for**
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<th>Makes limited response or mildly over-reacts to some sensations such as certain sounds/touch.</th>
<th>May smell or taste inedible objects.</th>
<th>people.</th>
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<td>May be distracted by irrelevant sounds</td>
<td>Makes variable responses to range of sensations (e.g. sounds or touch) - may ignore a sound initially, startle or cover ears, for example.</td>
<td>Shows extreme over – or under – reaction to sound/touch, regardless of type.</td>
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<td>May ignore or over-react to mild pain.</td>
<td>Reacts too much or too little to pain.</td>
<td>May completely ignore pain or react very strongly to slight discomfort.</td>
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<th>May need to be reminded to look at objects.</th>
<th>Must be reminded frequently to look at what s/he is doing</th>
<th>Consistently avoids looking at people or certain objects and shows extreme forms of other visual peculiarities.</th>
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<td>May be more interested in mirrors/lighting than peers, stare off into space, or avoid eye contact.</td>
<td>May stare into space, avoid eye contact, look at objects from unusual angle or hold objects very close to eye.</td>
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- May completely ignore pain or react very strongly to slight discomfort.
- May smell or taste inedible objects.
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- Consistently avoids looking at people or certain objects and shows extreme forms of other visual peculiarities.
**SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT: a typical 3 year old ……..**

- Identifies loud/soft sounds in musical games.
- Listens to a story for 5 minutes.
- Predicts what happens next in a familiar/repetitive story.
- Has a wide, varied vocabulary.
- Uses 4 word phrases/short sentences.
- Uses personal pronouns and plurals correctly and almost all prepositions.
- Uses regular past tense of verbs.
- May use immature pronunciation [substitutions and repetitions].
- Speech is intelligible, even to a stranger.
- Carries on a simple conversation.
- Takes turns.
- Follows rules in group games.
- Asks questions: who, where, how and why.

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**Speech, Language and Communication Development**

- May have mild delay in language or speech sound development.
- May have developed skills in therapy which need to become generalised.
- Has a moderate speech and/or language difficulty which is likely to impact on child’s inclusion or ability to access curriculum.
- Is slow to develop age-appropriate language skills.
- Has a severe speech and/or language difficulty where these skills are behind other areas of cognitive development.
- Has limited age-appropriate language skills.
- Has a profound speech and language disorder.
- Has extremely limited language skills.

**Listening and Attention**

- Listens to comments about what they are thinking about, doing or are interested in.
- Controls focus of interest. Attends to things, events or people for an extended period (non-language).
- Gives single channelled attention.
- Begins to anticipate events from hearing a sound. Is motivated to attend to familiar sounds. May look towards the
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Understanding</th>
<th>Receptive language is more developed than expressive language.</th>
<th>Needs additional cues to support understanding of language.</th>
<th>Responds to single words in context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understands many words, phrases and signs and simple questions and instructions</td>
<td><strong>Points to self when asked ‘where’s …’</strong>. <strong>Has poor generalisation of concepts – colour, size and position.</strong> <strong>Responds to simple instructions containing two information words.</strong> <strong>Responds to simple questions, verbally or non-verbally.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Makes a choice between two objects.</strong> <strong>Relies on visual cues to respond to simple requests.</strong> <strong>Points to and looks at a picture/photograph in book when named.</strong> <strong>Follows a few simple instructions [single word level], e.g. ‘get your coat’.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responds to simple requests in imitation, e.g. clap hands.</strong> <strong>Recognises familiar people and objects when named, e.g. ‘mummy’, ‘cup’, ‘teddy’.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understands at the 2-3 information carrying word level.</strong> <strong>Responds appropriately to common adjectives [big/little/cold/tired/hungry], verbs and prepositions [in/on].</strong> <strong>Responds to ‘what’s … doing?’</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Attends to meaningful language.</strong> <strong>Remembers things heard before.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Begins to attend to meaningful language.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Usually needs some prompting to listen 1:1.</strong> <strong>Needs specific signals to gain/maintain attention in a group.</strong> <strong>Gives better attention to activities involving non-verbal skills than to language based tasks.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tries to copy adult facial expressions/tongue movements.</strong> <strong>Begins to recognise his/her turn to communicate from the rising tone of voice at the end of the adult turn.</strong> <strong>Begins to ‘choose’ own focus of attention.</strong> <strong>Demonstrates awareness of when things sound different – new objects, sounds and people.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Vocabulary</td>
<td>Use of Grammatical Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Has a large vocabulary and use of language is more sophisticated.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uses simple phrases and is starting to use some parts of grammar.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Uses short sentences in conversation.</td>
<td>- Puts 2/3 words together to form simple sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Uses up to 200 words.</td>
<td>- Uses adjectives.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Names familiar objects and pictures.</td>
<td>- Uses telegraphic phrases, e.g. 'mummy home'.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Has a small but steadily increasing vocabulary used to relate information and make requests.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uses two word phrases.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Begins to string together words/and or signs.</td>
<td>- Is beginning to put 2 words/signs together.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uses 50 or more recognisable words or signs.</td>
<td>- Uses telegraphic phrases, e.g. 'mummy home'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Imitates simple phrases, e.g. 'all gone', 'what's that?'</td>
<td>- Not applicable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Echolalia is often present.</td>
<td><strong>Uses single words, signs, symbols and learnt phrases.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Is able to communicate with and sometimes combine a wider range of gestures and vocalisations making it easier for adults to interpret their intentions.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uses single words, signs, symbols and learnt phrases.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Uses a small number of recognisable words or signs to name things that are important.</td>
<td>- Not applicable</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Points to or looks at objects to request or show.</td>
<td>- Produces vocal babble that resembles speech.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Uses gestures to indicate a desire for more.</td>
<td>- Not applicable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Copies representational sounds, e.g. 'brmm'.</td>
<td>- Not applicable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Imitates simple words when prompted.</td>
<td>- Not applicable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majority of child’s speech is intelligible.</td>
<td>Much of what the child says is intelligible in context..</td>
<td>Is difficult to understand even when context is known.</td>
<td>No intelligible speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practices speech by talking to self in long monologues which may be incomprehensible to others. Often omits initial and final consonants, e.g. bus = ‘us’..</td>
<td>• Will start to copy much of what they hear around them. Often enjoy new/silly sounds and seem to enjoy the sound of particular words and phrases.</td>
<td>• Has disordered sound system; e.g. some unusual sounds may be used. • May use constant echolalia.</td>
<td>• Babbles. • Uses very small range of sounds mostly ‘ah’, ‘er’, ‘oh’. • Few consonants are used.</td>
</tr>
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| Interaction |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Knows how language can be used to make contact with people, to direct their attention to things and to order them about! | Has a range of ways of communicating meaning but only some of these may be understood even by close family. | Displays some, limited motivation to initiate, respond or sustain an interaction. | Shows a developing interest in songs, rhymes and communication games. |
| • Joins in singing nursery rhymes and songs. • Refers to self by name. • Greets and uses ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ when reminded. • Makes simple verbal requests and comments. | • Is able to communicate for a purpose using short phrases and gestures. • Will participate in a familiar rhyme with appropriate actions/gestures. • Wants to share songs and conversations. | • Joins in some actions of familiar rhymes/songs, with support. • May constant echolalia. | • Makes sounds/gestures to songs/nursery rhymes.. • Makes noises when talked to. • Makes eye contact when receiving attention. • Responds to ‘peek-a-boo’ games. • Has poor motivation to initiate interactions. |
| • Non-verbal communication is meaningful and appropriate to age and situation. | • Pointing or reaching for what is wanted may be vague. | • Is generally unable to express needs or wants non-verbally. • Cannot understand others’ non-verbal communication. | • Only uses bizarre gestures with no apparent meaning (e.g. flapping). Shows no awareness of |
| meanings of others’ gestures or facial expressions. |
**PERSONAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: a typical 3 year old ……..**

- ✔ Is still dependent on adult.
- ✔ Is jealous of others.
- ✔ Likes to help adults.
- ✔ Invents people/objects in make believe play.
- ✔ Shows some understanding of the need to defer wishes to future.
- ✔ Has tantrums when thwarted, and is not easily distracted.
- ✔ Is exceedingly active, restless, resistive of restraint.
- ✔ Awaits turn.
- ✔ Begins to learn appropriate behaviour for different social settings.
- ✔ Talks of self as ‘I’ (‘me’).

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**Emotional and Social Development**

**Is ready to respond to reasoning and bargaining.**

- Is constantly demanding parental attention.
  - Follows parent/adult.
  - Clings tightly (affection, fatigue, fear).
  - Is resentful of attention shown to others.
  - Wants approval of known adults.

**Is able to adapt to change.**

- Is emotionally changeable and unstable, alternating between clinging and resistant.
- Demonstrates appropriate responses in feelings and actions.
  - Casts toys in play/anger.
  - Shows toys.

**Finds managing change difficult.**

- May have some difficulty with emotional responses to others.
  - Shows affection towards familiar people, e.g. hugs, pats and kisses.
  - Finds it difficult to cope with anger/frustration.

**Has significant difficulties in managing change.**

- Needs familiar adult in sight.
- Makes simple social responses to familiar routines, playful handling.
- Is beginning to develop a social response to others.
  - Accepts offered toys.
  - Responds to different tones of voice.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Shows affection to siblings.</th>
<th>Shows sympathy for someone who’s hurt.</th>
<th>Begins to understand how actions impact on others.</th>
<th>Shows eagerness, anger and pleasure by body movement, facial expression, vocalisation.</th>
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<td>• Seeks attention by vocalising rather than crying.</td>
<td>Is unaware of cause and effect of own actions / has limited ability to understand how actions impact on others.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Shows some signs of willingness to wait for adult attention.</td>
<td>• Puts self or others in danger.</td>
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<td>• Repeats actions that produce laughter.</td>
<td>Is withdrawn/unwilling to engage.</td>
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<td>• Seeks attention by vocalising rather than crying.</td>
<td>May be anxious and demonstrate disruptive/challenging behaviour.</td>
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<td>• Responses are seldom appropriate to situation, and it is difficult to change child’s mood.</td>
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<td>• May continue same activity or use same materials when adult tries to change tasks.</td>
<td>• Actively resists changes in routine, tries to continue old activity, is difficult to distract.</td>
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Extremes of moods and behaviour are common.
- Has tantrums when frustrated, but is easily distracted.

Is capable of being very independent in behaviour.
- Defends own possessions.
- Can be rebellious when thwarted.
- Can find waiting difficult.

Tends to see the world from own point of view.
- Is easily frustrated, with occasional temper tantrums.
- Stops briefly when told ‘no’, usually needing reinforcement.
- Is not dissuaded from undesirable behaviour by verbal reasoning. Responds to distraction and change of environment.

Has intense mood swings from dependence to independence, eagerness to irritation, cooperation to resistance.
- Understands ‘no’.
- Shows rage when thwarted.
- Is difficult to distract when upset.
- Obeys simple instruction.

Needs reassurance of familiar adult.
- Cries to gain attention.
- Shows likes and dislikes strongly.

Responds to positive attention.
- Stops crying when spoken to.

Identify, Self Esteem and Social Presentation

Is becoming aware of who s/he is and what s/he is like.
- Plays alone well.
- Greets positively.
- Treats animal/baby/doll with care

May have low self-esteem due to frustration and failure.

Has positive sense of self / abilities.
- Begins to distinguish between ‘you’ and ‘me’.
- Has a sense of ‘me’ and ‘mine’.
- Recognises self by name and image.

Is usually confident in social situations.
- Plays contentedly alone but likes to be near familiar adult.

Has some difficult relating to adults and with peer groups.

Is developing self awareness.
- Knows own name.
- Can distinguish between different members of the family.

Displays some insecurities.

Is unaware that people or things exist apart from self.

Begins to recognise self as a separate individual.
- Smiles at own image in mirror.
- Shows preference for main carer.

Social Relationships

- May be shy, fussy or annoyed at being told what to do.
  - Avoids eye contact, is excessively shy, rather unresponsive to adults or clinging to parents.
  - Seems unaware of others as people, initiates minimal contact; attention is only gained by persistent and forceful attempts.
  - Is consistently unaware of others’ actions. Rarely responds or initiates contact.
  - Only the most persistent of attempts to get the child’s attention have any effect.
- Needs reassurance of familiar adult.
  - Cries to gain attention.
  - Shows likes and dislikes strongly.
  - Responds to positive attention.
  - Stops crying when spoken to.
| Plays more with children.  
| ---  
| • Plays alongside.  
| • Undertakes spontaneous simple role play and make believe with self/doll.  
| • Takes turns but has little idea of sharing  
| ---  
| Relates more easily with adults than children.  
| • Needs adult support to relate to other children.  
| •  
| ---  
| Relates differently to various adults.  
| • Acts socially to different members of the family.  
| • Is shy with strangers.  
| • Is affectionate to familiar adults.  
| • Waves goodbye.  
| ---  
| Is becoming more aware of self in relation to other people and things.  
| • Seeks out social contact.  
| • Is friendly with strangers, showing occasional shyness.  
| • Reaches out for familiar people, shows desire to be picked up or held.  

**Self Care and Independence**

| Has a growing level of competencies.  
| ---  
| **Self-care skills are maximised, despite disability.**  
| • Feeds self with spoon.  
| • Uses cup appropriately.  
| • Verbalises toilet need but may be unreliable.  
| • Assists with bathing/dressing.  
| ---  
| Is slow to develop self-care skills.  
| **Disability limits amount of self-care.**  
| • Holds spoon and gets food safely to mouth.  
| • Is beginning to give notice of urgent toilet needs.  
| • May know if wet/soiled.  
| • Takes off items of clothing but is unable to put them on.  
| ---  
| Has limited self-care skills.  
| **Disability prevents self-care in a significant range of tasks.**  
| • Puts hands around bottle/cup when drinking.  
| • Has no bowel/bladder control or awareness.  
| • Co-operates with bathing/dressing.  
| • Attempts to hold spoon.  
| ---  
| Does not demonstrate self-care skills.  
| **Relies totally on others to meet care needs.**  
| • Accepts dressing and bathing routines, may show enjoyment.  
| • Is dependent on adult for all personal needs.  

---
**LEARNING: a typical 3 year old ........**

- Can match 2 or 3 primary colours and name 3 shapes.
- Names ‘big’ and ‘little’ objects.
- Begins to understand the concept of time.
- Can sort objects into simple categories.
- Counts up to 10 by rote and understands the concept of ‘1’ and ‘lots’.
- Can copy a building pattern of 3 or more cubes.
- Is fascinated by cause and effect and often asks ‘why’.
- Plays constructively with large blocks, e.g. to make houses, cars, hospitals.
- Points to 10 body parts on verbal command.
- Repeats songs and nursery rhymes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal /Differentiation</th>
<th>Additional Needs</th>
<th>Complex Needs</th>
<th>Severe Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving and Reasoning</td>
<td>Up to 5 hours</td>
<td>5 - 10 hours</td>
<td>More than 10 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Begins to predict what might happen.
  - Mostly able to follow familiar routines.
  - Completes simple inset puzzle.
  - Can fit complex shapes into variety of containers.
  - Matches pictures.

- Begins to identify problems and work out possible solutions.
  - Can remove small objects from a container by turning it upside down.
  - Posts objects into boxes.
  - Can carry out familiar routines with support.
  - Likes own routine but can accept changes with preparation and support.

- Experiments by relating objects using trial and error.
  - Drops and throws toys deliberately and looks to see where they have fallen.
  - Builds with a few bricks and arranges toys on the floor.
  - Puts objects into a container.

- Learns through inbuilt reflexes and reactions.
  - Explores objects in immediate environment.
    - Places objects in a container in imitation.
    - Shakes a sound making toy.
    - Removes from face a cloth that obscures vision.

- Shows mildly inappropriate
- May show little interest in
- Plays inappropriately with
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Understanding</th>
<th>Explores, recognises and begins to understand the wider environment.</th>
<th>Shows preferences. Understands object permanence.</th>
<th>Activities involve sensory stimulation rather than functional use of objects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is beginning to understand the consequence of actions.</td>
<td>Points to objects in the wider environment.</td>
<td>Can point with index finger to objects of interest.</td>
<td>Explores objects in immediate environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is eager to try out new experiences.</td>
<td>Recognises familiar people/places.</td>
<td>Knows and responds to own name.</td>
<td>Looks for an object that has been removed from direct line of vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is beginning to ask questions (‘what?’, ‘who?’)</td>
<td>Remembers where objects belong.</td>
<td>Recognises familiar sounds and voices.</td>
<td>Shows curiosity towards people, objects and events.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Points to some facial features/one body part.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Points to familiar people, animals or toys when requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is beginning to understand the concept of present/past.</td>
<td>Shows the function of simple objects.</td>
<td>Understands the function of simple objects.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Creating</th>
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<td>Begins to use symbols in play.</td>
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- Interest in, or use of, toys/objects.
- Toys/objects.
  - May be preoccupied with using toys/objects in a strange way (e.g. focusing on an insignificant part, showing fascination with light, making repetitive movements, playing exclusively with one object).
- Objects, frequently and intensively.
  - Is difficult to distract when engaged in inappropriate activities.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- Is beginning to understand the consequence of actions.
- Is eager to try out new experiences.
- Is beginning to ask questions (‘what?’, ‘who?’)
  - Identifies some familiar animals.
  - Recognises familiar people/self in photos.
  - Knows own full name.
- Is beginning to understand the concept of present/past.

Creating:

- Begins to use symbols in play.
  - Is beginning to talk to self
- Begins to experiment with a range of materials.
- Manipulates a variety of materials using a range of
- Is preoccupied with parts of an object or non-functional
<table>
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<tr>
<th>during play.</th>
<th>Is interested in exploring small objects, looking for minute detail.</th>
<th>actions.</th>
<th>elements of play materials such as smell or feel.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Begins to engage in more sustained role play such as putting dolls to bed.</td>
<td>• Performs different actions with objects to find out what they can do.</td>
<td>• Manipulates/mouths a limited number of objects and plays repetitively, with resistance to change.</td>
<td>• May have unusual responses to sensory experiences.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Uses one object to represent another in pretend play.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rarely or never imitates sounds, words or movements even with prompting and assistance from an adult.</td>
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<td>• Likes to build with construction toys.</td>
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| Can imitate sounds, words and movements.                                  | Generally imitates simple behaviours, e.g. clapping or single verbal sounds, sometimes after prompting or a delay. | Imitates sometimes and requires persistence and help from an adult; frequently imitates after a delay. | Rarely or never imitates sounds, words or movements even with prompting and assistance from an adult. |