Warrington EYSENDIF.

How to write a good personal plan

This guidance follows the same principles as the National Portage Association. www.hub.portage.org.uk

These are the 12 principles that underpin the Portage model (These values will be highlighted throughout the guidance so that you can see the links).

When you complete a Personal Plan for your individual child we would like to see some of the above principles being used in your teaching targets.

J Spiers 15 August 2019
Possible **Long Term Goals** arise from discussions with parents and key workers and will reflect their priorities, thoughts and in depth knowledge of the child.

Other professionals may also be working with the family. Setting long term goals allows this work to be included. There are no hard and fast rules for predicting the precise level of a skill a child will attain, although the shared experience of seeing the child learn over a period of time makes it easier to set realistic goals.

The review of a child’s long term goal(s) needs to take place at reasonable and regular intervals. The timing will be individual to each child and family.

**Long term goal**: Sam will use a spoon to feed himself soft food with minimum adult support from his key worker (physical support at elbow as he lifts his food to his mouth) while he sits at the table alongside his peers. When it’s possible start with foods that Sam enjoys as identified in baseline.

**Long Term Goals help to:**

- Ensure a balance between the skill areas being worked on
- Ensure the skills being taught are cumulative
- Ensure we are heading in the right direction
- Ensure that families priorities are being reflected
- Ensure partnership working

**Working in partnership** with other colleagues and agencies
Often you will find that children who have been identified as needing extra help will be supported by other agencies / health professionals as well as yourselves; i.e. speech & language therapist / physiotherapist / occupational therapist or specialist advisory teacher. With the parents’ permission it’s important to keep communication channels open and share information on a regular basis. Strategies and personal plans can often be used both in the home and at the setting.

**Recording long term goals**

When recording long term goals they should be:

- In line with the 12 principles shown at the beginning of this document
- written in partnership with parents (if parents help to set targets they are more likely to engage and will be enabled)
- written using clear language, avoiding cloudy words
- have an agreed date for reviewing the child’s progress

Working together with parents to write and share plans is enabling and helps to improve and sustain communication.

**Points to consider when setting long term goals**

- They need to be easily achievable, plan with success in mind. Goals that the child achieves quickly can be reset.
- Sometimes goals that are set are inappropriate: the step is too big for the child or particular point, the situation may have changed in the setting or in the child’s family or the child may become ill.
- All goals should be negotiated with the child’s parents / carers and reflect the child’s cultural background. This will give the opportunity to celebrate diversity.

Don’t forget when setting goals they will work well if they are:

- activities that the child is closest to being able to perform (small steps)
- activities that are practical, immediate and relevant for the child, family and setting
- activities that will provide foundations for future developments (Looking forward)

**Using clear language to help children learn**

When you want a child to learn a new skill you need to be clear about what they can do now and what you want them to be able to do next (long term goal). You need a clear baseline description and a clear statement of the new skill you want a child to learn.

Avoid cloudy words: these are words which may mean different things to different people for example: ‘will understand / will know / will join in / understands the concept / behave appropriately / will be kind / will recognise / enhance experience etc.”

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Clear language

Clear statements are statements about learning that are not open to interpretation and can be seen or heard.

Try this!
(A trick used in the Portage Training)

The ‘hey you’ test (Try saying this in your head when you practise your teaching targets)

Place the words ‘Hey you come and see me …’ or ‘Hey you come and hear me….’ at the beginning of the description. If the sentence doesn’t make sense, it is probably unclear. If it makes sense and you can see what is happening or you can hear what is happening, then it is a clear description. (e.g. Hey you, come and see me feed myself every day with a spoon, alongside my friends at the table.)

Plotting your small steps to learning for the child
(Task analysis)

Very simply, task analysis means breaking down a long term goal into smaller steps. Even a small task or behaviour is complicated once you start to break it down, for example think how many steps are involved with a child learning to wash their own hands at the sink, before you can say they are competent in doing it by themselves.

In task analysis, small steps are identified that will lead to the long term goal.

It provides more opportunities to celebrate success and to be positive.

As the child progresses through the steps, they can be rewarded for the successful completion of each step instead of having to wait to complete the whole task.

Don’t forget:
Before setting targets – you first need to establish a clear and accurate baseline.

Develop a holistic approach to information gathering as in the Portage holistic assessment wheel i.e. observation of child / info from family / info from other professionals / developmental checklists.

Be positive – base it on what the child CAN DO. Before you can plan the steps, you need to know what the child can do as their baseline, what will motivate them and what you want them to be doing in the future. It may sound very obvious, but it’s surprising how often we make assumptions about a child’s skills and plan teaching on that basis only to discover that the child’s abilities are, in fact, quite different.
Completing a personal plan for a child in your care

What to enter in each column -

Name/relationship of adult involved in the activity. This may be the child’s key worker but it doesn’t always need to be the same person. All staff should be aware of the child’s targets so that they can offer support to the child in all areas of the provision. Support Plus funding is to offer enhanced staffing rather than one specific adult offering 1-1 support at all times. All staff are responsible for the child’s learning and progress.

Prime area - in here we need you to identify which area of the EYFS you are concentrating on when helping the child to accomplish this task. Choose one area per sheet..
- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Step - number each stage of the tasks being set to achieve the long term goal. The panel will expect to see more than one step tried. Do your first step, evaluate then write the next step. You may need to change the conditions etc if it doesn’t work the first time.

Who - this would be the child’s name.

Does what? - (This is what you want them to do, you need to be able to SEE or HEAR the child’s action). You may not write it but you would expect to include the previous step with your new step (creating a chain of events) – for example:

Step 1 Sam will take a spoon by the handle when held out by the adult.
Step 2 Sam will load food onto his spoon – practitioner guiding hand over hand. (In reality this would mean the adult working with him to hold the spoon out, Sam take it and then both work together to load food on to it).

Always write what they are expected to achieve in Bold type – it will help you to remember this part of the clear teaching target.

Under what conditions? - This is where you describe how much help you will give, what kind of environment it will take place in and what materials or items you will use to support the child to complete the teaching objective. (Write it so that any member of staff could carry out the task without having seen it before)

Always write this section and then underline – it will help you to remember that part of the clear teaching target.

Degree of success: This is how well the child must do the task before we can say that he has succeeded. It could be the number (or percentage) of times the child is expected to respond successfully out of the number of times practised. For example, 3 times out of 5 if Sam attends every day and tries each dinner time.
Dependant on the type of activity, it could be the length of time needed for the successful completion of a task (i.e. for 5 minutes) or the frequency of the behaviours (i.e. every day).

Always write this section using a font in italics (on a slant) – it will help you to remember that part of the clear teaching target.

Date attempted: as it suggests

Comments: try to keep them brief and use clear language – DESCRIBE / WRITE WHAT YOU SEE OR HEAR! (this is where you record your evidence for having tried the step).

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name / (relationship of adult involved in the activity)</th>
<th>Prime area</th>
<th>Step (You need to evidence your first step before writing your 2nd)</th>
<th>WHO? (child)</th>
<th>Does what? Write your small step in this column. What do you want them to do? (You need to be able to see or hear the action)</th>
<th>Under what conditions? (amount of adult help, environment, materials) i.e. physical or verbal prompts / modelling / in a specific area or throughout setting / distraction free area / at a table / on individual mat / size of group / specific resources</th>
<th>Degree of Success (number of times a child is expected to responded successfully out of the number of times practised)</th>
<th>Date Attempted (week beg)</th>
<th>Comments (You may need to include a key in here if you have different ways of recording successes etc.) For e.g. √ means successful in this table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Carol (key worker)</td>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Will take spoon from adult by the handle upon request. Sitting at a table alongside his peers while they are waiting for their lunch. When Sam’s favourite food arrives. Adult to hold the bowl of the spoon and offer the handle to Sam. Spoon to be appropriate size and adult to say ‘Sam hold’ to encourage him.</td>
<td>3/5 times per week</td>
<td>Mon 3.3.14</td>
<td>Guests refused help all through dinner. Tues Surprised Carol by accepting hand over hand technique, accepted the first 4 spoons and managed to load spaghetti on then wanted to eat the rest of the meal with fingers. Cried. Carol encouraged him to have another go. Wed √ Carol Thurs √ Bev Fri √ Carol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Carol (key worker) Bev (room supervisor)</td>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Will hold the spoon by the handle and allow adult to guide his hand while they load the food onto the spoon. Using correct spoon, plate (with raised sides). Guided hand over hand (on Sam’s right hand, bringing the spoon towards him). Loading his favourite food in manageable but satisfying mouthfuls. Adult to give verbal encouragement.</td>
<td>3/5 times per week</td>
<td>Mon 17.3.14</td>
<td>Guests refused help all through dinner. Tues Surprised Carol by accepting hand over hand technique, accepted the first 4 spoons and managed to load spaghetti on then wanted to eat the rest of the meal with fingers. Cried. Carol encouraged him to have another go. Wed √ Carol Thurs √ Bev Fri √ Carol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### EY 3 form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Completed By</th>
<th>Task Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 24.3.14    |              | e.g. Bev (room supervisor) Carol (key worker)  

#### Physical development

#### Step 3

- **Sam**
  - **Will hold the spoon by the handle and let adult guide him.**
    - **Adult**
      - guide him by lightly holding his arm below the elbow.
      - guide him verbally.
    - **Times**
      - 2 / 5 times per week

#### Step 4

- **Sam**
  - **Will feed himself with a spoon with a small physical reminder.**
    - **Sitting alongside his peers and adult. Sam will be verbally encouraged to have a go and if needed adult will guide his elbow so that he takes it to his mouth with the next lot of food – when he has finished chewing.**
    - **Times**
      - 4 / 5 times per week

<table>
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<th>Task Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 31.3.14    |              | e.g. Carol (key worker)  

#### Physical development

#### Step 4

- **Sam**
  - **Will feed himself with a spoon with a small physical reminder.**
    - **Sitting alongside his peers and adult. Sam will be verbally encouraged to have a go and if needed adult will guide his elbow so that he takes it to his mouth with the next lot of food – when he has finished chewing.**
    - **Times**
      - 4 / 5 times per week

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<tr>
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<th>Task Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 24.3.14    |              | Mon Sam wanted to have a go himself. Food dropped from his spoon, he cried. Bev said ‘never mind’ and used hand over hand to remind him of the position.  

#### Tues
- **√ Tried the new guiding position – Sam smiled when he managed his first spoons this way.**

#### Wed
- **√**

#### Thurs
- **√**

#### Fri
- **√** Carol

**Don’t forget you can make as many or as little steps as you need:**
- Better to make them as small as possible so that they are achievable.
- If you have too many small steps, tweak your long term goal to bring it nearer.
- Steps should be reviewed regularly and the key person / practitioner should reflect upon whether the target is achievable.
- If you get to the end of a time period and the step hasn’t been achieved, the task maybe too hard. (You may need to look at the actual task but also at changing conditions & / or degree of success).
- The most important thing is to give it time to work and to record what happens carefully so that you can analyse the benefit to the child.

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