

Small steps, big futures.

with 50 things to do

How 50 Things to Do Before You're Five supports the Best Start in Life Strategy

Briefing Paper 1

Supporting Children's Development Beyond their GLD Targets

Improving Children's Good Level of Development (GLD) Outcomes

Improving children's Good Level of Development (GLD) outcomes is very important - but early childhood should never become a target-driven race toward a school readiness judgment which is measured only by GLD.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reminds us that children learn best through play, relationships and exploration, not through formal instruction or testing. To sustain improvements in GLD, we must focus on the quality of experiences, not the quantity of outcomes.



The Strongest Foundation for GLD

The strongest foundation for GLD begins with secure relationships. Children who feel safe, seen and valued develop the confidence and emotional regulation needed for learning. Practitioners who create warm, responsive connections create environments where curiosity and communication can flourish.

Alongside this, language-rich interactions are crucial. Singing, storytelling, conversations and shared book reading build vocabulary, comprehension and imagination. All of these skills and knowledge are core to every area of development assessed within the GLD framework.

50 Things to Do is an exciting initiative offering 50, screen-free, low or no-cost activities for families with young children, helping them reach their social, emotional and physical milestones and ultimately, improving their life outcomes.

50 things to do before you're five

BEST START IN LIFE

A Balanced, Play-Based Curriculum

A balanced curriculum that emphasises exploration, movement, creativity and outdoor play nurtures cognitive, physical and social growth.

Rather than focusing narrowly on literacy or numeracy, practitioners can weave learning naturally into play, counting while building towers, recognising shapes in nature, or describing textures and colours.

This holistic approach supports the EYFS prime areas, communication & language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development, which in turn underpin GLD success.

Supporting Parents and Carers as Partners in Early Learning

Supporting parents and carers as partners in early learning is equally vital. Everyday routines, mealtimes, walks, bedtime stories, offer powerful learning moments.

By empowering families through advice, modelling and encouragement, practitioners extend a child's learning beyond the setting.



Embedding 50 Things to Do Before You're Five

An effective way to strengthen this holistic approach is by embedding 50 Things to Do within early years settings, family hubs and communities. Our initiative provides a practical, engaging framework for families to enrich their child's home learning environment, which is a key driver of improved GLD outcomes.

By encouraging everyday, low-cost experiences, such as exploring local parks, baking together, collecting natural objects, or sharing stories, settings can inspire families to see learning opportunities in daily life. When practitioners actively use and promote 50 Things within their curriculum planning, they model how play-based learning extends beyond the setting and into the home.

Working collaboratively with parents to choose, celebrate and reflect on these shared experiences not only strengthens parent-child relationships but also builds confidence, curiosity and communication skills, the very foundations of the EYFS prime areas.

Get in touch:

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