

CACHE Level 2

Certificate Introducing Caring for Children and Young People

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT

HEALTHY EATING

SAFEGUARDING

LEGISLATION

RESPECT AND VALUE

Workbook 1

Section 1: Young children's development

In this section, learners will explore how children develop in the first three years of life. They will also learn why children develop at different speeds and in different ways and how the stages of development are all interconnected.

Development of young children in the first three years of life

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 1.

The first three years of a child's life are critically important to development. It is the period when cognitive, social, linguistic, emotional and physical development happen at a rapid pace. Development can be broken down into six main areas:

- **Cognitive development** – e.g. learning how to make decisions, remember information and solve problems.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** – e.g. when a child develops their self-image and identity. Children learn how to build relationships and interact with adults and peers and manage their feelings.
- **Language development** – e.g. learning how to communicate and talk. This enables children to communicate with others and make connections in their learning.
- **Physical development** – e.g. learning how to hold objects – large and small – sit up and walk.

Did you know?



Research has shown that children of university-educated parents are more likely to excel at school. In England:

- 56% of 14-year-olds whose parents had degrees scored high enough grades to perform in the top quarter of their peer group
- 9% of teenagers whose parents left school without any qualifications performed in the top quarter of their peer group

This makes it even more important that early years education is high quality and meets children's development needs.



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Look at the following table to learn about the different stages of development most children will go through in the first three years of life.

Age	Stage of development	Additional information
1-3 months	Suck and swallow	Babies are able to feed from the moment they are born.
	Recognise mother's voice and smell	At this stage babies may turn towards their mother's voice.
	Smile	At first, a baby will smile to itself, but by 3 months he/she will be able to smile back when someone smiles at them, a social smile!
	Raise head	When placed on their tummy, a baby will be able to lift his/her head and chest off the floor (prone position). Remember, babies should not be placed to sleep on their tummies.
	Track objects with eyes	If you hold a toy in front of the baby's face and move it from side to side the baby will follow it with his/her eyes.
	Reach for objects	At this stage babies will learn to reach for dangling objects, such as toys on a bouncy seat activity bar or a mobile.
	Grip objects	If a baby is given a toy or rattle they will be able to hold onto it with their fingers.
4-6 months	Roll over	It is easier for a baby to roll from his/her front to his/her back.
	Babble	Babies will make random sounds such as 'dadada' or 'babababa', although they are not associated with a particular person, such as mummy or daddy.
	Laugh	This will usually be to themselves or when someone pulls a funny face or plays peek-a-boo.
	Reach out and grab objects	Progressing from just grasping objects that are given to them, at this stage a baby will be able to reach out and take hold of an object.
	Sit up (with support)	When placed into a seated position and supported with a hand or pillows, a baby will be able to stay upright.
	Head control	A baby will be able to hold his/her own head up at this stage and turn to look at people or objects.

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6 months	Eat solids	According to the NHS, the best age to start babies on solid food (known as weaning) is 6 months old. Before then, if possible, it is recommended that babies are exclusively breastfed or given formula. Babies who are started on solid food should be able to stay sitting up, control their head movement and be able to pick food up and put it in their mouths.
7-9 months	Crawling	There are different ways of crawling, including crawling on their hands and knees, 'scooting' on their bottoms and 'army crawling' on their tummies, using their elbows and knees to propel them.
	Sitting (without support)	At this stage, a baby has better coordination and can sit on their own without cushions or a hand steadying them.
	Teething	Babies will start to get their first teeth, which often cause discomfort and interfere with sleeping patterns.
	Babbling	Sounds will become more similar to real words, such as 'Mama' and 'Dada'.
	Copying actions	Babies will be able to clap, play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.
	Pull up to standing position	A baby will be able to pull themselves up to stand up straight using furniture, toys or carer's hands.
10-12 months	Move around on their feet (with support)	Having learned to pull himself/herself up to a standing position, a baby will now be able to use the furniture or toy as support to walk or 'coast'.
	Respond to their name	At this stage, when someone calls the baby's name, they will look toward the person.
	Use words for specific people	A baby will use a specific word for a specific person, e.g. 'Dada' for their dad or 'Mama' for their mother.
	Point at objects	A baby may point at an object they would like.
	Pretend play	At this stage a baby may copy their sibling or parent by, for example, pretending to talk on the phone.
10-18 months	Take first steps	Once they have mastered 'coasting', a baby will gain enough balance to take their first unaided steps.

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11-12 months	Feeding himself/herself	Using a 'pincer grip', which is their thumb and first finger, a baby will be able to pick up small objects such as cereal.
12-18 months	Using and understanding words	According to the NHS, at this stage a child may have a vocabulary of between 6 and 20 words and they will understand a lot more.
	Shakes head to express 'no'	
	Undressing/dressing	At this stage a child may like to help when they are getting dressed or undressed.
13-15 months	Self-feeding	At this stage, a child may want to feed himself/herself with a spoon and drink out of a cup. This is a good time to introduce new foods.
15-18 months	Independent play	A child may enjoy playing with blocks and can spend some time playing alone.
18 months – 2 years	Putting words together	A child will use the words they know to create short sentences.
2-3 years	Copying others	At this stage a child will watch and copy adults, siblings and other children. They will also play alongside other children, but not with them in collaborative games. By the time they are three, a child will play cooperatively with their peers.
	Putting words together	A child may create longer, complex sentences using more words.
	Recognise and name people/things	A child will be able to name familiar people and items, such as a bird or dog in a book.
	Run/climb	A child will be able to kick a ball, run and climb stairs (with assistance) at this stage.
	Follows instructions	
	Enjoy books	
	Use the toilet alone	
	Climbs stairs unaided	
	Completes simple puzzles	
	Know own name and age	
	Dress/undress himself/herself	

Rates and sequences of young children's development

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 2.

Young children develop physically and cognitively at different rates and in different sequences to their peers because each individual brain matures at a different speed. When a brain matures, it means that the types of function it can do, such as recognise sounds or letters, increase. Whilst most young children develop the same skills and abilities over time, they will most likely do so at a different speed or in a different order to their friends. This is a direct result of the speed at which the brain matures. For example, one child may learn to walk at 12 months while another not until they are 18 months; the child who walked at 12 months may not talk until they are 18 months, but the child who walked later may be able to speak at 12 months.

It is important to understand that, just because children develop at different rates, it doesn't mean that they have a developmental delay. It is just that each brain function matures at a different rate. We are all unique!

Rates of development can also be influenced by:

- **Environment** – e.g. a child can learn to read when his/her auditory system is developmentally ready to tell different sounds apart. However, if a child's caregiver doesn't read to them or provide reading support, learning to read will be delayed.
- **Appropriate tasks** – e.g. if a child is not developmentally ready to speak, providing them with speaking-related tasks such as 'Please tell Claudia her drink is ready', will not be useful to them. Another example is asking a child to copy a simple picture before they are able to hold and properly manipulate a pencil or crayon.
- **Style of learning** – different children learn in different ways, for example, one child may learn when someone explains something to them, while their peer may learn by watching someone else acting out the process. If a child is placed in an environment where everything is presented verbally, but they learn visually, then their development will be delayed. Babies and young children learn through their experiences, exploring and discovering through first-hand play opportunities.

Just as children may develop at different speeds, their stages of development may also happen in different sequences. As in the example above, one child may learn to walk earlier than expected or begin to speak later, while another may talk early and walk late. The sequence in which children develop is based on when their brain matures. If you think that children in the same year group don't all grow at the same pace, then it is easier to understand that their brains will also grow at different rates, which means they will pick up skills at different points in their development.



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