

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the Milestones?

The milestones have been designed to support a learner-centred approach to, and tracking of, progression. They are not intended to capture every aspect of learner progression. They provide a consistency of language to report progress to pupils, parents and other practitioners.

There are Foundation milestones : these form the foundation of learning for learners with complex additional support needs for all curricular areas. These focus on early communication; making connections; self and emotions; and functional movement.

There are also pre-early milestones for literacy & English and numeracy & mathematics. These pre-early milestones are structured in a similar way to the Curriculum for Excellence Benchmarks and are linked to the Experiences and Outcomes.

How do we use the Milestones to track progress?

The foundation milestones have been designed to help practitioners track progression in learning across all learning contexts.

The pre-early milestones have a direct link to the Experiences and Outcomes which support tracking of progression from this pre early stage into early level where this is possible.

In addition, the Continuum of Engagement and Types of Support have also been developed to help practitioners recognise and report on the small but incredibly important incremental steps learners with complex ASN make.

The milestones are NOT an exhaustive checklist to be used to check progression of typically developing children in early learning and childcare settings.

What is the process for moderating the milestones?

Moderation activity to assess progress of individuals is the same for all learners.

Supporting resources include:

- [The Moderation Cycle](#)
- [The Moderation Hub on GLOW](#) (requires GLOW login); and
- [Moderation and Assessment Professional learning resource](#) (a simplified and short Power Point presentation)

Who should the milestones be used with?

Milestones should ONLY be used to support learners with complex additional support needs, in all school settings including mainstream and specialist, who are working at a pre-early level. Milestones should NOT be used to track progression of typically developing children in early learning and childcare settings.

What other documents would be useful to use alongside the Foundation Milestones?

Profiles for learning, communication, sensory, behaviour, physical or health (these link to the theoretical frameworks of development). Not every pupil would need to be assessed

in all of these areas. Assessment would only be used as is appropriate to the learners needs. For example:-

- A [generalised pupil profile](#) (includes health, family life, behaviour, eating and drinking, communication and manual handling/supports needed)
- A [simple communication profile](#)
- A [sensory audit tool for schools and classrooms](#)

Current **planning and assessment frameworks**, such as, [P Scales](#), [Routes for Learning](#), [Quest for Learning](#), [The South Lanarkshire Framework for supporting pupils with severe and profound learning needs](#), [Learning Tracks](#), Fife progression framework (available Jan/Feb 2020), etc.

Recording, Tracking and Pupil Planning Forms. For example:

[Electronic Pupil Tracker](#)

[Individual Learning Plan](#)

[Evidence Form](#)

What documents do these milestones replace?

The milestones provide an illustration of progression for learners with complex additional support needs at pre-early level. It is important, however, that practitioners continue to base planning activities on the Experiences and Outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence.

Why are the milestones not mapped to all Health and Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes in Curriculum for Excellence?

The principles that underpin Curriculum for Excellence support and empower 'all' children and young people to learn and achieve personal excellence, regardless of their individual circumstances. Whilst being aspirational, establishing high expectations for all learners, Curriculum for Excellence also provides flexibility for schools and settings to plan learning suitable for their own context and the unique needs of their learners. Curriculum for Excellence is designed as an inclusive curriculum to support progression and achievement and attainment for each and every child and young person. Planning for learners with complex additional support needs should therefore continue to be based on the Experiences and Outcomes at all levels.

Many aspects of health and wellbeing do not develop incrementally or remain the same through life. This principle has been reflected in the writing of the 'responsibility of all' area of the health and wellbeing curriculum, i.e. that the development and progression in a learner's health and wellbeing is dependent on a variety of factors and life circumstances which can quickly change (positively or negatively). For this reason the use of benchmarks to evidence the achievement of a level was felt to be inappropriate.

In the development of any milestones for health and wellbeing to support the tracking of progression of children and young people with complex ASN, consideration and care however needs to be taken to ensure that these principles are not undermined.

The foundation milestones do include two aspects of health and wellbeing specifically 'Self and Emotions' and 'Functional Movement'. These foundation skills include:

- a basic awareness of emotions with a focus on tolerance and/or self-regulation
- physical movement with a focus on functionality and independence

These skills are identified without context but would be needed in many learning contexts. The learning context would be identified in the learning intentions by the practitioner.

What did the pilot find?

Key messages from the piloting of the original Milestones included:

- Participating staff found the documents really useful
- Feedback showed an appetite among practitioners for additional Milestones for HWB
- Danger exists for milestones to be used as a checklist
- Milestones need to be used in conjunction with other planning tools
- There is a need for on-going moderation particularly to support a shared understanding of the continuum of engagement and supports
- There is a need for greater recognition that a learner can be working concurrently at multiple levels (spiky learner profiles)
- Changing over to the Milestones language could be challenging for schools who already have pre-existing/different trackers

When would you use the continuum of engagement and when wouldn't you use them?

The continuum of engagement provides us with a common language to describe progression in engagement in more detail. This is particularly useful for learners when progress is very slow or non-linear.

For some milestones you actually can't use the continuum as the learner can either do the skill or they can't. For example, 'shows a simple reflex response to an individual stimuli'.

For the majority of the milestones, however, the continuum can be used and using it will have the added advantage that it will help identify the effectiveness of different learning environments, strategies or resources.

Remember, within an individual class a pupils level of engagement will vary. So it is really important to take an overview of their engagement over a period of time and avoid micro-assessing.

How can we use parental knowledge as evidence to support progression tracking?

If well informed, about what a learner is working on in school, a parent can provide rich supporting information as to whether the learner has managed to generalise a skill by demonstrating its use in the home or another social environment. For example, if a learner can 'follow the steps of a familiar routine' in school, such as, finding their own coat when it's time to go outside, and then they demonstrate their ability to do this either at home in an alternative social context.