

Cover Letter
Scrapbook 2821

AI Cover Sheet

B) I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes and other resources I used before and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide as evidence.



IDSmed (2025)

The First 1000 Days

What are the First 1000 days?

The first 1000 days of a child's lives are the days that have the most impact on how their lives will be lived and the development that they will have. Unicef (2025) states that the first 1000 days of a child's life starts from the minute a woman conceives in pregnancy up until the child's second birthday.

From the moment a woman conceives her child is when a child starts to learn and develop, the experiences in which a child receives from the moment of conception and throughout a woman's pregnancy, then into infancy and onto toddler age has a detrimental and long-term effect on the health and well-being of the child. If the child has positive impacts and healthy decisions made for them during this stage, they are more likely to thrive in life rather than a child who does not have these opportunities.

The first 1000 days of a child's life is the most important as this when they will form positive relationships with their care givers and build strong and secure attachments. It is important that caregivers are able to form strong bonds with the children as this is what helps to develop a child's brain.

This is a video explaining what the first 1000 days are:
[First 1000 Days](#) Pecorelli (2019).



University of California (2017)

Why are the First 1000 Days Important?

The first 1000 days of a child's life holds a lot of importance as it is what will help the child develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually by the care that they receive.

(E.J White et al., 2020, p. 4) states that children will be influenced by the preferences of others around them within their first 1000 days, this means that it is important that children are exposed to experiences which can help with their well-being and development. This could be attending a playgroup with their carer in order to develop social relationships with other children their age and stage of development.

All experiences in which children have within the first 1000 days will affect how they learn and grow after the 1000 days and the rest of their lives, any trauma, stress, violence, experiences they take part in, love and care they receive impacts the behaviours they will have, the feelings they will have and the outlook they will have on life. If a child receives bad experiences within their first 1000 days of life this can affect their behaviours and thoughts, they will have further on in life, possibly meaning they will not have positive impacts through life.

Pregnancy Birth and Baby (2024) state that nutrition has a vital impact within the first 1000 days of life, by receiving good nutrition from the mother in the womb and having a healthy diet within the first stages of their lives allows the babies metabolism, immune system and organs to develop healthily. By having poor nutrition, it can cause obesity later in life.

Caregiving



Childcare Aware (2019).

What is Exceptional Caregiving?

Exceptional Caregiving is providing care to a child that helps them to survive and gain their full potential within their lives, whether this is physically, intellectually, socially or mentally.

Raychantpat (2025) states there are a number of skills which make an exceptional caregiver, these are, having empathy and compassion, patience, being reliable, strong communication, professionalism, knowledge and training. All these qualities allow someone to be a professional and appropriate caregiver and enables the child to have positive experiences within their life, ensuring that they are safe and protected within their environment.

An exceptional caregiver will provide an enriching enabling environment for children to learn and grow within. Care Learning (2024) states that Bronfenbrenner suggested within his model that if an environment is nurturing for the child and that there are resources that the child will enjoy then they will then feel more encouraged to learn and develop. This model ensures that an environment is enriching for the children, if the environment is found interesting by the children, then they are more likely to want to get involved and enjoy learning.

Exceptional caregivers will also provide inclusive experiences for all children so that all children feel like they belong and have a place. KIT (2024) states that by creating inclusive environments for children this then helps children to feel valued, understood and supported. By having an inclusive practise within the setting, it ensures that children with diverse backgrounds and different needs are supported and will benefit throughout their time within the setting.



Law (2025)

Why is Exceptional Care Giving Important?

Exceptional Caregiving is one of the most important skills and qualities to have when working with children, this is due to the fact that a child needs a safe and secure environment to be able to learn and grow within.

It is important to be an exceptional care giver in order to meet the child's needs and be able to plan activities and experiences for the child that are beneficial to their development. By being an exceptional care giver, they will have the understanding to meet the child's needs and what is beneficial to them and what is not.

Being an exceptional caregiver is important to know how to communicate with families and how to support them at home with the tasks they are also taking part in within the setting.

What are the challenges in providing high quality care?

There are several challenges settings and practitioners face in providing an exceptional service, these could be: Funding, health issues, ALN needs, Staffing, Covid 19 and lack of understanding. Below three of these factors are discussed in depth.

Factor	Influence
Funding	Funding is a major influence within settings, without appropriate funding staff would not be able to be paid, resources would not be able to be bought, funding also covers the cost of the building, along with maintenance and utility bills. Funding has become a universal struggle throughout most settings and childcare provisions, this is also a struggle for parents as childcare is very costly now and most parents are not able to afford this so may then not return to work. Due to the lack of funding childcare settings find it limiting on the activities they can provide for the children; this is where most settings have now brought in the curiosity approach to have more natural resources which they are then able to bring in from outside.
Lack Of Understanding	Lack of understanding can occur in nurseries that possibly have older members of staff which do not understand new legislations and policies. Lack of understanding can also occur when practitioners have only recently qualified and can lack in some knowledge and understanding , especially if they have not had time to look at the policies in depth yet. This can also take place when people do not have a passion to work with children but find that it is a job that is easy to get qualified in.
ALN Needs	ALN needs can be an influence within the setting as there may not be enough staff to cover the needs of children within the setting. If a child needs a one to one it can be a long process to go through to provide the children with one-to-one support and then it can be a lengthy process to find a member of staff to fulfil this role.

Professional Partnership



Vision Edge (2025)

The role of an Early Years practitioner in supporting children and their families in the first 1000 days

An early year's practitioner is one of the most vital caregivers during the first 1000 days of a child's life as they have the training and qualifications to know what experience and support a child needs within this period to develop.

This video shows a day in the life of an Early Years Practitioner:

[Day in the life of an early years practitioner](#)

The Early Years Practitioners role with supporting children within the first 1000 days include providing a safe and secure environment, an enabling environment, having a kind and caring nature to support the child. They can support the child by providing activities that are going to help develop their skills. They can also support the child by doing regular observations so that if the child is then not meeting the milestones for their age or they have concerns for the child's development or health these are able to be reported straight away. The practitioner must ensure that the child has good health within their first 1000 days, this is able to be done by providing nutritious and healthy meals, providing outside time where they are able to run around and use equipment.

The Early Years Practitioners role with supporting families and carers within the first 1000 days include being a support for them if they are struggling with the roles and responsibilities that being a carer brings. Early years practitioners are able to support families and carers by ensuring that they inform parents and carers about groups they can attend to for support, such as, playgroups or parenting groups to socialise and communicate with other parents who may also be finding parenting overwhelming. They can also help to support families and carers by observing the children within settings and if they have concerns about the development of a child, they are able to put referrals into place to support the child and their families. Practitioners work closely with parents and support them by communicating effectively and by working with them so that they are able to work with the child with the same things that they are doing with the setting.

Why is it important to work in partnership during this period?

National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (2025) states that partnership working is when multiple people work together in order to have the same outcome. Working in partnership is important in order to have a consistent approach to the plan that is put in place to support the child, if strong and clear partnership is not taking place there may then be some miscommunication or certain facts about the child that can be missed.

There are many different partnerships which can be used within the early years, these could be social workers, teacher, practitioners, doctors, nurses, speech and language therapists or enhanced play therapists.

Partnership working is vital during the first 1000 days as it is important to have strong communication so that everyone has the same understandings. By working in a partnership, it helps to ensure that children are of a good health, this could be through the health visitor and dietician working together to help a young child who has allergies and will need extra support with weaning or having meals provided within school. By ensuring that effective partnership takes place within the first 1000 days it takes a collaborative working approach.



Autism Toolbox (2019)

Maternal factors and support strategies available

Likhar, A (2022) states that the nutrition that the baby receives during pregnancy will impact their development and that the child will then suffer if the mothers diet and health are not of nutritional value.

Maternal Factors	Support Strategies Available
Breast Feeding	Parental Breastfeeding Advice groups are available within the community for mothers who may be struggling with breast feeding and need some extra support or just someone to talk to. Health Visitors are also available for mothers to talk to when they might be finding breastfeeding overwhelming. Mothers who may have a drug addiction must be advised that it is unsafe to breast feed. NHS (2025) states that mothers can contact their GP, Health visitor or midwife for any concerns they have over taking drugs and the impact of their baby.
Stress and Mental Health	NHS (2025) state that having poor mental well-being whilst pregnant is beneficial to be shared with a doctor as the baby is able to feel what the mother feels. The NHS recommend that while pregnant if your well-being is low they suggest to talk to a family member, friend, midwife or doctor. Try to take part in physical activity as the endorphins can help with mental well-being and try to attend ante-natal classes to meet expecting mothers who may feel the same.

Activities that provide meaningful learning



Activities to support a child in the first 1000 days



Asia Citro (2014)

Taking part in activities with children within the first 1000 days is beneficial to a child's development as it helps them to build strong bonds with their carers which can help build their confidence and help them form healthy attachment bonds.

NSPCC (2025) state that Bowlby (1997) suggests that children form relationships with multiple caregivers although the bond that is provided to the child from birth and through to infancy is the most important and trusting relationship that they can have.

One of the main activities that can have meaningful learning for a child is sensory play. BBC (2025) states that sensory play is an activity that the child takes part in that is able to stimulate one of the child's senses.

Sensory Play activities can include food play, mud play, outdoor play including sticks and rocks, water play, sand play, different textures and paint play.

Sensory play can support a child's development within the first 1000 days as it focuses on pleasing the child's senses which releases endorphins making the child happier which can improve their learning and form bonds with carers.

Stead (2024) states that young children learn through their senses and that by being involved in a sensory enriched environment can then improve their cognitive development.

Activities to support a child in the first 1000 days



NDF Authors (2016)

There are multiple activities that can support children within the first 1000 days, these include: Sensory Play, Outdoor Play, Mark Making, Story Time, Singing and Tummy Time.

Montessori Up (2025) state that Montessori approach is a hands-on independence approach to a child's learning which allows children to explore and play on their own accord and this is how they then learn, Montessori then wanted practitioners to watch the way in which a child plays so that they can then develop on this, early years setting usually use this approach by providing loose parts and a curiosity approach, this is where natural resources are used to see how the children will play with these.

Singing is a good activity that can be used as it helps to build a child's language skills, especially when they are starting to say words and put sentences on. It also helps to develop the child's listening skills and helps them to learn the sounds that are being said in a fun and interesting way. The child will also learn rhythm through listening to an adult sing the song, the child may then start to attempt humming the song and eventually start putting the words or sounds together. By singing songs can also improve their gross motor skills by helping the child to start clapping along or using a music instrument such as a drum or maraca.

Mark Making is a good activity that can help them to improve their fine manipulative skills, as they then get older, they will have the strong use of pen control to know how to start writing letters. Mark making allows children to use their imagination with the marks they make and begin to start developing the imagination that will come when they are able to draw shapes and images, it also helps the children to learn to problem solve.

Tummy Time is an important activity to take part in from birth to improve a baby's core strength ready for when they are preparing to crawl, roll or walk. NHS (2025) states that tummy time can help to strengthen a baby's back, neck and shoulders, which can then help them with moving around and preparing for when they are ready to move.

International Approaches



Community Playthings (2025)

Reggio Children (2022) state that the Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy that focuses on that children are able to guide any decisions the practitioner will make about learning and how the environment is able to be accessed, this impacts how the practitioner can make an enabling environment.

The Reggio Emilia Approach has high values of the parents and community and use a community type approach in order to have input from all children, families and wider communities, this then ensures that everyone understands the input that is going into the child's development. Reggio Emilia has high respect for parents, and they are then classed as on the same level as educators. This approach is also considered within other settings where they are now trying to get parents, families and the communities involved in a child's learning.

Settings do this by providing stay and play sessions where parents are able to come in and view the setting and observe the child playing within the settings whilst also playing with them, they also will take the children out into the community and into the smaller shops, such as, corner shops, supermarkets, bakeries or florists in order to form good relationships with the community. Some settings may also hold open evenings where the community is able to come in and view the setting and even hand out questionnaires on how they think the setting can be improved.

Settings can also use the Reggio Emilia Approach by ensuring their setting is free flow and that children are able to have access to outdoor and indoor provision, settings also take part in forest schools where children are able to have the opportunity to have access to making controlled fires, or cutting food whilst being monitored by appropriate adults.

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