



# Guidance

# Using Floorbooks



to support planning and assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond...

# Guidance on Using 'Floorbooks'

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# Introduction

## Background – ‘What is a Floorbook?’

Floorbooks are part of the [Talking and Thinking Floorbook Approach™](#) as developed by Claire Warden (1994) in her book [Talking and Thinking Floorbooks](#) (3rd ed, 2015).<sup>1</sup> A Floorbook can be used as a document which records children’s ideas and thoughts when they have been part of the planning process. The Floorbook is a way of documenting the consultation process that takes place between adults and children as the learning develops.

## Using this Guidance to develop ‘Floorbooks’

This guidance has been developed in response to frequently asked questions by schools who would like to develop and use Floorbooks in their setting, but are not sure where to start, what they should look like, what to include, who to involve, or how they can be managed as part of the observation, planning and assessment process within a school.

There is no right or wrong way to produce a Floorbook, but it is important to identify the purpose specific to the school and this guidance is intended to answer some of these questions, whilst enabling practitioners to make informed decisions about the development and use of Floorbooks.

This document has been developed with the support of a number of Lancashire schools who are successfully using Floorbooks with the children and who have each produced a case study.

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<sup>1</sup> Claire Warden *Talking, Thinking Floorbooks- Using ‘Big Book Planners’ to Consult Children’ Mindstretchers* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2015)

# Floorbook

## **Purpose**

A Floorbook is a unique document and it is up to schools to decide how the Floorbook will be developed and used to support and provide evidence of the learning process within the EYFS. It is important that each school clearly identifies the purpose of the document and acknowledges how it will be used to consult children and involve them in the planning process within the EYFS.

## **What form the Floorbook will take**

A school is free to decide on the nature and format of the Floorbook including the type of book to be used, contents, and how it will be developed. A Floorbook may be developed over time to document learning within a range of contexts and across different areas of learning/themes/provision, or it may just be used to illustrate a single aspect of learning over a shorter period of time.

## **Developing and managing the Floorbook**

A school is free to answer the following questions for themselves. Who will be involved in the process of developing the Floorbook? Who will manage the process? How will consistency be maintained? How will all children be included in the process? How will the Floorbook form part of the assessment and planning process within the EYFS?

## **Using the Floorbook to consult and involve Children in the planning process**

Using Floorbooks provides the opportunity for children to contribute to their own learning opportunities and experiences in EYFS. Consulting with children during the planning process can be reflected through the Floorbook. A school will need to identify within the planning process, how children will be involved and how the Floorbook will be used to reflect, enhance and extend children's learning.

## **Parental involvement in the development of the Floorbooks**

A school will need to consider how parents can play a part in the development of the Floorbook, including how they can contribute to the process and how the contents of the Floorbooks can be shared with them.

## **Guidance Notes:**

### **(1) Purpose**

#### **Considerations**

It is not statutory to use Floorbooks as a way of recording children's thoughts and ideas, or as evidence of planning within schools. However, if Floorbooks are used it will be important to ensure they form part of the existing observation, assessment and planning system within the school, and therefore it is important to reflect on the following:

- Will the Floorbook form part of the existing systems for planning for learning? If so, how will planning be evidenced in the book?
- How will the Floorbook be used to evidence children's contribution to the planning process?
- Will the Floorbook be used to record evidence of the learning and consulting with children across all areas of learning and development? Or will the Floorbook be linked to specific themes, areas of provision or learning focus?
- Will the Floorbooks be used to monitor coverage of opportunities and experiences across all areas of learning and development within EYFS? If so how?
- Will the Floorbook be used to provide evidence of skills, knowledge, and concepts across the areas of learning and development? If so, for which areas? How?

## **(2) What form the Floorbook will take**

### **Considerations**

- What will you use to create a Floorbook? For example will you use a purpose made Floorbook with a spiral spine, or will you collate your book from separate pages the children have collaboratively produced?
- How will you decide on the focus and content of your Floorbook?
- How will you decide on the starting point for your Floorbook? Will you use a Talking tub<sup>2</sup> as a starting point, a mind map or another stimulus?

### **What will be included in the Floorbook**

Consider:

- Annotated photographs of the children engaging in learning opportunities and experiences. *Indoors, outside, within the school grounds, forest school, beyond the school.*
- Brief description of the focus for learning, context, experiences, opportunities, with links to EYFS areas of learning and development
- Children's drawings and writing linked to the experiences, to demonstrate their thinking, ideas, suggestions, predictions, and links in their learning.
- Comments made by children.... *Observations they have made, new vocabulary, their thoughts and ideas, predictions, suggestions, questions, explanations, etc.*

N.B. It is important to consider how to allow the children themselves to record their ideas and thoughts directly into the Floorbook.

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<sup>2</sup> Talking Tub

### **(3) Developing and managing the Floorbook**

#### **Considerations**

**Who is involved in developing the Floorbooks?** (Teacher, teaching assistants, children, other members of staff)

**Who is responsible for managing the process, and ensuring the Floorbook is developed and maintained as appropriate?** *Class teacher, EYFS leader, senior leader.*

#### **How will the Floorbook develop?**

Consider:

- When will the Floorbook be used as part of EYFS practice within the school? *On – going, for a specific period of time.*
- Over what period of time will the Floorbook develop? *All year, termly, half termly, 2 weeks, 4 weeks.*
- How much time will be spent working on each Floorbook? *On- going, afternoon sessions, one afternoon a week with all children, three afternoons over a period of time, one hour a day everyday with different groups of children.*

#### **Managing the process:**

- How will all staff be trained to understand the philosophy of a Floorbook and the process of consulting with children?
- How often will the Floorbook be discussed as a team and monitored to ensure there is consistency?
- How will all children be involved in the process?
- How and when will the children be able to reflect on their learning as it develops through the Floorbook?

- Will the Floorbook be used to support monitoring and the moderation process within EYFS in the school? Who will be involved in this process and what will be the expectations?

#### **(4) Using the Floorbook to consult and involve children in the planning process**

##### **Considerations**

##### **How will Floorbooks be used as part of the planning process?**

- How often will a Floorbook be developed? *On –going through the year, one book per term or one Floorbook in a specific term.*
- Will Floorbooks be used to plan across all areas of learning and development? If so, how? If not, which ones?
- How will all the children be involved in the process? *Through groups, during key person time, individually.*

##### **Using Floorbooks to capture children's ideas and thoughts:**

- How will you involve the children in this process to ensure you are genuinely recording their thinking and ideas? *Children's own mark-making, writing or drawings and/or adults scribing children's ideas and thoughts as they occur.*



## **(5) Parental Involvement in the development of the Floorbook**

### **Considerations**

- How will you inform parents about the purpose of Floorbooks in your school/setting?
- Do you have 'guidance for parents' on 'what is a Floorbook'?
- How will you encourage parental contributions to the Floorbooks?
- How will you share the Floorbooks with parents and/or carers?