

# SMART TARGET WRITING

To get anywhere we need to know where we want to go and have a clear plan of how we will get there. You need to know the difference between an aim and a target. An Aim has long term outcomes they are your final destinations. Target the steps you take along the way. A target is a small step of the whole journey. A child's plan needs to have those small steps.

An example of an aim is "to play with other children" there are many steps to get to that point. Targets along the way may include, being aware of other children, to parallel play, to copy others, to share with adult support, etc. Targets should start with the child's name i.e., "Fred will..." This ensures it's a target for the child not the adult supporting them.

All plans to support children's progress need to have clear targets that are:

**Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic and Time Bound.**

## SPECIFIC

The language needs to be clear about what you want the child to do. Ensure it is something you can see them achieve. You can't be sure some enjoyed something you can be sure they laughed. Unclear language includes, to know, to want, to listen to etc. Clear language is, to point, to give to look at, to say, to read, etc

## MEASURABLE

To measure success a target needs you to clearly say what success looks like. For example, if the target is for Mae to catch a large ball from a distance of two metres the target might be changed to 'Mae will catch a large ball 3 out of 5 times, thrown to her from a distance of two metres.'

Some targets need a looser level of measurability for example that the child can consistently achieve this over a specified period of time.

## ACHIEVABLE

It is important that targets are achievable, and it is possible that the child will be able to reach the target by a given date. Considering this will help in deciding whether the next step is small enough to be a target within the given time or if it is in fact a future aim. If a target remains the same over several plans it is not an achievable target.

## REALISTIC

Targets must be developmentally appropriate for the child and therefore a genuine next step for them. Examples of targets not being realistic would be for a three-year-old to cross the road safely or 7-month-old to walk. Always think about where the child is developmentally would you expect a child that age to achieve the skill?

## TIME BOUND

SMART targets are always bound to a date in which the target will be reviewed to assess progress. The date for when the target will be reviewed should be recorded on the plan when the target is written, and this should be stuck to, and the early years target should be reviewed every 8 to 16 weeks dependent on the child's developmental needs and age.

*Examples overleaf*

## EXAMPLES OF TARGETS THAT ARE NOT SMART

- Joshua will make a choice.
- Arlo will communicate when he wants more.
- Kelly will know 2D shapes.
- Marlin will respond to an adult.
- Jacob will join in for a short activity
- To provide speech sessions once a week
- To use an object of reference
- To sit him on the toilet between changes

## EXAMPLES OF SMART TARGETS

- Joshua will point to his choice of snack, when shown a choice of two snacks (on 3 out of 5 times offered).
- Arlo will request more by using the sign 'more', when adult blows bubbles to him. (On 2 out of 5 occasions).
- Kelly will pick up a 2D square shape when asked by an adult, from a group of 2 2D triangles and 1 2D square shape of the same colour (on 2 out of 5 occasions).
- Marlin will turn her head towards her key worker, when her key worker says her name and when just Marlin and her keyworker are present (3/5 times).
- Jacob will copy the action movement for 'round and round' for the action song 'The Wheels on the Bus', when a practitioner models the action, and the action song is playing during 1:1 time (4 out of 5 times)