

Continuous provision - overview

Your continuous provision resources are the ones you have out every day, week in week out - the toys, games and activities the children love such as..

- Role play
- Jigsaws and puzzles
- Arts and crafts
- Mark making
- Cooking / food
- Books and other reading materials
- Maths resources etc...

Do you plan for these toys, games and activities every day? Do you re-write your planning? WHY?

You can write a continuous provision plan and then come back to it to do quick updates. You can use it to quickly grab the information you want to include in individual planning as well.

Let's look at continuous provision for mark making. As you know, all activities link to most of the 7 areas of learning, so you might write...

Mark making continuous provision

- PSED - children share and take turns with resources;
- Physical - children develop fine motor skills and hand eye coordination;
- Communication and language - children discuss ideas as they make marks; they can be encouraged to discuss what they have drawn / written;
- Literacy - children are developing the skills they need for writing;
- Maths - children mark make numbers, tally charts, counting lines etc; they mark make shapes and learn about size, patterns etc;
- Understanding the world - children make marks to represent home and family life, animals plants etc; they use ICT to make marks;
- Arts and design - children explore their imaginations through mark making; they copy the marks other children and adults make etc.

If you use my observation prompts list you will be able to find lots more links -

<http://www.childmindinghelp.co.uk/freeresources/Free%20downloads/Resources/Observation%20prompts.pdf>.

Here's another example -

Cooking / baking continuous provision plan

- PSED - working together; sharing ingredients; being proud of what has been made;
- Physical - stirring; pouring; lifting; using tools and equipment safely; plaiting bread; kneading; mixing; stretching;
- Communication and language - talking about ingredients and cooking methods; vocabulary linked to food;
- Literacy - making and reading recipes; writing menus;
- Maths - weights; measures; size; capacity; making comparisons;
- Understanding the world - watching changes; simple science; using the computer to look things up; making recipe cards on the computer; digital scales; microwave; sharing with family and friends;
- Arts and design - decorating cakes;

Once you have written your continuous provision plans you can use them every time you get out a new activity. Instead of re-planning, you just look at the continuous provision plan you have already written and think about how the activity has impacted on the child's learning.

You can do it 2 main ways -

1. John has made patterns using a stick in gloop... look at your CP plan and you will immediately see that he is exploring maths. You might also note how he is holding the stick and make a comment about that from physical development.
2. You want to observe Jane's physical skills because you haven't noted any new learning in this area recently. You set up a gloop activity and you focus your observation on how she is using the stick to make marks. Using a combination of your continuous provision plan and your observation prompts list (above) you note that she is using good hand-eye coordination, holding the stick with her left / right hand, using a tripod / pencil grip etc... observation written very quickly.

Continuous provision plans can be as long as you want them to be! I tend to note the main links to Development Matters - then I put them in a file in alphabetical order and pull them out as I need them during the week.

I also have continuous provision plans to cover our daily routines -

- Arrival time
- Regular outings to the park or toddler groups
- Meal times - snack, lunch etc

- Reading session
- School outings
- Song and rhyme session etc...

Here's an example of a routine continuous provision plan -

Meal time continuous provision plan

- PSED - sharing food; making friends at the table; eating in a group; learning patience - waiting for others to finish; expressing likes and dislikes; trying something new;
- Physical - fine motor skills using fingers and tools to eat; using knives to cut;
- Communication and language - time to chat; language of food and drink; open questions to encourage conversation;
- Literacy - reading books during food times; playing letter games;
- Maths - sharing out food - counting and fractions; playing number games; describing shapes of sandwiches or food;
- Understanding the world - learning at food from different cultures; talking about food from home; looking up new recipes on the internet;
- Arts and design - decorating plates; expressing self through food; being imaginative with ingredients.

Once my continuous provision plans are written, I do not feel I need to write up anything more about children's learning at these times of the day beyond writing the odd observation if the child does something new or different eg...

- John served his friends at snack time. He counted the grapes into the bowl, '1, 2, 3, 5' - I don't need a continuous provision plan to know he was exploring maths (!) but a quick look through my meal time continuous provision plan might also remind me that he is developing social and friendship skills!
- Jane saw a butterfly on her way to school today - I know from my outing continuous provision plan that it links to 'understanding the world' - and it saves me a lot of time when finding the link in Development Matters... so more time to play!

If you are a www.childcare.co.uk gold member you will find lots more information about continuous provision planning in the member section.