



# MAPP - Semi-Formal

## Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress

For learners of all ages working within a Semi-Formal Curriculum Model

MAPP is a suite of materials developed to facilitate the planning, assessment and recording of progress in relation to personal learning intentions.

### Section 1: MAPP Planning

MAPP Milestones

### Section 2: MAPP Assessment

The Continuum of Skill Development

### Section 3: MAPP Recording

Guide to the Spreadsheets

### Section 4: MAPP Principles and Processes

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## Semi-Formal

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curriculum model

## Section 1: Planning

### MAPP Milestones

# MAPP (Semi-Formal) Milestones

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## MAPP (Semi-Formal) Milestones

### Introductory Notes

The aim of the milestone statements is to support the writing of personal learning intentions by helping to identify sets of significant skills within the areas of communication, cognition and personal development. The milestones are not assessment items, and their purpose is not to identify what a learner can or cannot do in relation to a set of pre-determined criteria, but *to assist in planning the next steps in learning based on an individual's strengths, needs and motivations*. The numbering of the milestone statements is made solely to facilitate referencing, and on no account should this numbering be taken to imply a fixed order of progression: the milestones should *inform* planning bottom up, starting with the learner, and must not *lead* planning, top down, as from a checklist. Progress in MAPP is evaluated using the Continuum of Skill Development (Section 3 below) and not through an accumulation of ticks on a checklist.

A distinction must also be drawn between curriculum planning and learning intentions. Learning intentions, (and the milestone statements which inform their writing), should be delivered as part of a curriculum which is relevant and engaging and must not themselves become objectives which determine curriculum content. Failure to observe this distinction will transform learning intentions into objectives which are un-related to the individual's motivations and wider experiences, leading to subsequent problems in generalisation, independence and engagement. For discussion of this last point see page 8 of the *Additional Guidance* in Routes for Learning (WAG, 2010).

The milestones are divided into sixteen areas under the broad categories of *communication, cognition* and *personal development*. The rationale behind this structure is, firstly, to avoid the impression that the milestone statements form a single continuous scale along which all individuals should progress in the same sequence as one another and, secondly, to provide a framework which can be used to highlight a learner's strengths and interests by focusing on areas which are of greatest significance to them. These areas need to be identified through careful observation, discussion between professionals and parents/carers and through listening to, or representing, the views of the learner.

Although there is a notional hierarchy of skills *within* each area, and some areas, (particularly 'Pre-intentional Behaviours' and 'Interaction') identify very early skills, the areas themselves are not hierarchical.

There are a few close links between milestone statements across areas, and where these occur the reference from one to another is noted (for example 4.6 in 'Handling Information' is referenced to 9.3 in 'Understanding Instructions')

A final note relating to pedagogy: learning intentions should be achievable with support - in the form of prompts, cues or modelling - and with scaffolding - in the form of modifications to the task or the environment. This space, which lies between the present level of attainment and what is achievable with support, is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as defined by Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978). This does not mean that support should be provided to such a high degree that *all* learning is errorless and indeed in some areas, most notably 'Problem-Solving' and 'Independent Living Skills', it may be necessary to allow learners to make (safe) mistakes as an integral part of the learning process.

## 1 PRE-INTENTIONAL BEHAVIOURS

**Progression is from pre-communicative reflex responses to behaviour which intentionally uses others in order to achieve a goal.**

Adults must consistently respond to pre-intentional behaviour as though it were communicative and assign meaning to it.

The earliest responses learners make are likely to be indicative of liking or disliking some stimulus or other, and are therefore most likely to be interpreted as communicating either refusal/rejection or as a request for recurrence/repetition of an object or activity.

In responding to such pre-intentional behaviours, adults should agree simple and consistent language, (for example single word utterances such as *'more'/'again'* to convey the message "Ah! That's fun!", "Oh, you want more", or *'finish'* to convey the message "Oh, you don't like that", OK, we'll stop"). Adult responses may also be non-verbal, for example presenting or removing an object in response to the learner's behaviour, repeating or ending an activity, using exaggerated facial expressions and other body language. There must also be consensus as to *which* interpretations are to be assigned to *which* behaviours and common agreement as to what these behaviours look like.

It is essential that adults respect the meaning they assign to behaviour and act accordingly. So, if a learner is taken to be signalling rejection of an object or activity, then the object must be removed or the activity stopped. The aim is to develop an awareness in the learner that their behaviour can achieve a goal by affecting the behaviour of others: a key stage in the transition from pre-intentional stimulus-response to communicative intent.

Negation is a key concept here: being sensitive to expressions of rejection and refusal, and responding appropriately to them, is critical in preventing the development of more negative forms of expression (such as aggression toward self, property or other people) by substituting positive means of communication.

Note: Throughout this stage the learner's communication will be unconventional and its meaning may need to be explained to unfamiliar adults.

**1.1 The learner makes involuntary/reflexive responses to external or internal stimuli**

**1.2 The learner's behaviour is voluntary but does not yet intentionally use others in order to achieve a goal**

Behaviours may include responses to stimuli or efforts to change the environment such as: withdrawing arms to avoid contact with an object, material or person; thrusting tongue to reject food; directing gaze toward a desired object; reaching for an object.

**1.3 The learner's behaviour is voluntary and intentionally uses others in order to achieve a goal, (proto-imperative communication)**

Behaviours may include vocalising in order to gain attention or using physical contact, such as tugging an adult, leading them towards an object or 'throwing' the adult's arm towards an object.

Some behaviours will be superficially similar to those in 1.2 above – for example, *directing gaze toward an object*, and careful observation is needed to judge whether this behaviour is motivated only by interest in the object or whether it is also intended to enlist the help of another person.

## 2 COMMUNICATING NEEDS AND WANTS

### COMMUNICATING NEEDS AND WANTS 2.1 – 2.5

**Progression is from using *non-conventional* communication to request objects or activities in the *immediate environment* to the use of *conventional communication* relating to objects or activities which are *not immediately present***

In contrast to most of the behaviour in Section A. *all* communication is now intentional. Initially communication may be unconventional, but more conventional forms are demanded as wider audiences are involved and the meanings expressed become more complex.

#### **2.1 Requests recurrence – ‘again’ or ‘more’**

Burst-pause activities can be used to elicit requests for repetition or continuation of a game. For example, pausing just before hitting a drum or blowing bubbles to give the learner the opportunity to request continuation of the action using her preferred means of communication.

Offering favourite objects or materials in small quantities, one at a time rather than all at once, provides opportunity and motivation to request more.

#### **2.2 Communicates that an activity is finished**

This is an advance on the earlier expression of rejection/refusal. The same behaviour may be used (for example the Makaton sign for ‘finish’), but now the learner signals her desire to end something she enjoys doing in order to switch to another activity, rather than straightforwardly rejecting something she dislikes.

#### **2.3 Expresses preference for an object or activity**

#### **2.4 Points for desired object**

Reaching for something which is within reach and grasping it (‘reach-for-real’) develops into reaching for something which is slightly out of reach (‘reach-for-signal’). The learner communicates that she *wants* the object by looking from it to the adult and back again, by vocalising (e.g. ‘uh,uh’), by persistent reaching out and grasping actions, etc.

Note that the same pointing behaviour can also serve a declarative function and have the meaning ‘look at that!’ rather than the imperative ‘I want that!’

#### **2.5 Chooses object by pointing**

The learner indicates a preference by pointing to one out of two or more objects which are presented to her.

Single points may be linked to encode more complex meanings. (See Milestone 4.12)

**2.6 Uses an Object of Reference in order to indicate a need or preference**

The learner already understands that an object can refer to, or stand for, something beyond itself. (See Milestone 4.1).

**2.7 Selects from a choice of Objects of Reference in order to indicate a need or preference****2.8 Exchanges picture for desired object**

As, for example, through the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

**2.9 Points to a photograph/symbol or signs to request desired object****2.10 Indicates need/preference by touching or pointing to a picture/symbol**

In teaching the reading of symbols the standard progression is from most iconic to least iconic: photograph – picture – transparent\* symbol – abstract\* symbol, but this progression will be influenced by other factors such as a visual impairment (which may make line drawings easier to perceive than photos) or pupil motivation (which may make an opaque symbol such as 'home' more intelligible than a transparent symbol such as 'biscuit')

\* Transparent symbols are iconic – the relationship to the object they represent is pictorial (e.g. the Widgit Literacy Symbol for 'banana'); abstract symbols do not represent objects pictorially (e.g. the Widgit Literacy Symbol for 'sorry').

**2.11 Uses representations of objects or events to select objects or events which are outside the immediate environment or which are presently unavailable**

Examples of representations are: sign (e.g. Makaton), object-of-reference, photograph, symbol, word. Examples of significant objects which are outside the immediate environment might be 'home', 'toilet', 'swing', etc.

**2.12 Engages the attention of other before attempting to communicate**

The learner recognises the need to engage another person's attention in order to communicate a need/want. For example, she may present a picture/symbol to an adult, place herself in their line of vision when signing, or tap them on the arm before speaking.