

Chief Examiner and Chief Moderator Report

**NCFE CACHE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Child
Development and Care in the Early Years
QN: 603/7012/9**

Series: Summer 2025

**Examined assessment (EA) paper number:
P002839, P002840**

**Non-exam assessment (NEA) paper number:
P002841**

EA assessment date: 10 June 2025

NEA assessment date: 30 April 2025

Introduction

This report contains information in relation to the examined assessment (EA) from the chief examiner and non-exam assessment (NEA) from the chief moderator, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment series.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally performed well, as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grade boundary information
- administering the examined assessment (EA) and non-exam assessment (NEA)
- evidence creation
- standard of learner work
- responses to the assessments

The qualification is linear, meaning both assessments must be taken in the same assessment series and cannot be combined across different assessment series. Learners are allowed one attempt at each assessment, and there are no resit opportunities.

Grade boundary information

This qualification consists of two assessments: the examined assessment (EA) and the non-exam assessment (NEA).

After both assessments are completed and marked or moderated, the marks are combined to give a final mark for each learner. Where the raw marks do not reflect the required weighting of the assessment, a scaling factor is applied. For further information on grading information and scaling factors, please see the Qualification Specification.

Qualification scaled mark boundaries in this series are:

	Overall	Notional boundaries*	
		EA	NEA
Scaling factor		1.15	1
Max	184	80	92
Level 2 Distinction*	162	69	81
Level 2 Distinction	140	60	71
Level 2 Merit	118	51	59
Level 2 Pass	96	42	48
Level 1 Distinction	78	35	38
Level 1 Merit	60	28	28
Level 1 Pass	42	21	18

*The grade boundaries given for each assessment are known as 'notional grade boundaries', as they are for illustrative purposes only. Grade boundaries are the lowest mark with which a grade is achieved.

Administering the examined assessment (EA) and non-exam assessment (NEA)

The EA is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#) document. The NEA is moderated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of NEA – Non-Exam Assessment](#) document.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the tasks and these are highlighted within the [Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery](#) (QSID) document.

Evidence creation

Examined assessment (EA)

Learners should use the space provided to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, the learner's name, centre number, centre name and task number must be clearly visible. The additional paper must then be securely attached to the workbook.

Where assessments are completed online, centres must ensure they are familiar with the Surpass platform and have completed all testing and preparation before the assessment, to ensure learners are unaffected by technological issues.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

The NEA comprises of six tasks as follows:

Task 1: transitions: leaflet and report required to be created on the topic of supporting the weaning process.

Task 2: the planning cycle: observe and assess. Written report required to review the learning journal observation (appendix 1), completed by the childminder.

Task 3: planning cycle: plan for identified support needs. Creation of a basic care plan using the written report from Task 2

Task 4: planning play activities: create two activity plans for two different types of play to promote one area of development.

Task 5: health and safety procedure: food hygiene procedure. The creation of a procedure to show how / why all adults in the setting need to maintain food hygiene.

Task 6: evaluation of planning: to complete an evaluation of the plan created in Task 3

Standard of learner work

Examined assessment (EA)

This is the second iteration of the paper, and learners appeared to have been able to access the questions, making clear links between the knowledge and theory, as well as their practical application within the questions. Learners do not need to write out the question before they start their answer, as it uses a lot of space and is not acceptable content for marking, as it is in the given exam question. For state and identify command verb questions, single words would be sufficient as a response.

The paper consists of four sections, with Sections 1, 2 and 3 beginning with two multiple-choice questions (MCQ) and concluding with a longer extended-response question. Section 4 is comprised of two very long extended-response questions, Q25 and Q26

The multiple-choice questions 1, 2, 9, 10, 17, and 18 were generally answered correctly. Learners used elimination to select the correct response. This is a positive examination technique.

With some of the short-answer questions, learners only achieved one of the two marks, as they did not identify and then explain or apply the response for the second mark. It is important that the describe, explain, and assess responses, fully meet these command verbs and are linked to the question. For more detailed information, refer to the question-by-question analysis below. Centres may wish to provide a glossary of terms to support learners during teaching. Some of the words identified in this paper that would have benefited from a more precise understanding included 'impact', 'assess', 'purpose', 'statutory', 'provision', 'suggest', and 'aspect'. These general terms, combined with the technical language of the qualification, including safe practice, working in partnership, inclusion, genetics, biological factors, inheritance (inherit), formative and summative assessment, and styles of observation, may have supported learners in providing more detailed responses.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Overall, learners did perform well. There were some excellent pieces of evidence produced over the six tasks.

Task 1: some learners completed one piece of evidence instead of the requirement of creating a leaflet and a report.

This task focused on weaning, however some learners did not follow the brief and discussed ways to support transitions which was not the focus of the task.

Overall, learners tended to do well with Tasks 4 and 5. However, in Task 4 some learners created two different types of play activities for two areas of development. The NEA stipulates one area of development.

The food hygiene procedure for Task 5 was generally completed to a high standard and covered numerous aspects of the need to maintain food hygiene in the setting. Many learners had gathered relevant information in the research pack, it was evident that the majority had a clear understanding of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), food storage and good hand hygiene.

Overall, the learners who had not performed as well as expected had received feedback from the assessor with regards to attendance issues. Timing was also an issue for some learners,

especially Task 6 (1 hour), as well as not having a clear understanding of the question. For example, Task 6, complete an evaluation of the plan you created in Task 3, where Task 3 was weak, this did have a knock effect on the Task 6 marks. The final bullet point (Task 6) was to improve the plan from Task 3; this did prove challenging for some learners and was omitted in several cases.

Some learner evidence was missing which did result in delays to the moderation process. Please check all that tasks are uploaded, ideally chronologically.

Moderation was assisted when the assessor feedback linked directly to each assessment objective (AO) per task. Some assessors did struggle to break down the tasks into AOs especially where more than one AO was awarded per task.

On occasion the checklist was not included, this should be completed so it is evident if the learner attempted each individual task or not.

It was helpful to observe detailed, constructive assessor comments linking to the NEA marking band terminology throughout the tasks to show exactly where the AOs had been awarded.

It was excellent to observe learner feedback even if, on occasion quite limited in content.

Responses to the assessments

Examined assessment (EA)

The paper consisted of 26 questions split into four sections. Sections A, B, and C started with 2 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and finished with an extended-response question. Section D consisted of two extended-response questions.

Question 1

Most learners could identify that a primary school provides term-time statutory education and care.

Question 2

Most learners were able to identify that an early years practitioner cleaning a spillage without being told was using their initiative.

Question 3

Learners gave some mixed responses as they confused the reason for having an early years establishment and the role of the early years practitioner; some learners lost marks for this question, or did not attempt the question.

Question 4

Most learners knew the role of the key person (early years practitioner) and were able to give three suitable examples.

Question 5

Learners appeared to understand the requirement of a risk assessment, but they did not always link it directly to the scenario of a previous risk assessment being in place and needing updating, or the consequences of this for these new children. Therefore, the second development mark was not always covered in their responses.

Question 6

Learners provided some positive activities and suggestions on how to work with Esther to help her settle into the nursery but did not link these to working in partnership and why this is important, nor how it could aid Esther's transition. Some only gained half marks for this question, as reading the question carefully would have supported responses.

Question 7

Learners were able to suggest suitable activities for Finley to support him with English as an additional language, but they missed the opportunity to develop their response by not expanding on how the activity would make him feel included. Again, some only gained half marks for this question, as reading the question carefully would have supported responses.

Question 8

Learners were able to engage with the question of Ivan's lateness to work. They were able to provide information on staffing ratios, activities not being ready, children feeling unsettled, and

issues for parents who had to go to work. Many learners became fixated on the risk and staff ratios, and other points were not always fully developed.

Question 9

Learners were able to eliminate incorrect responses and select the correct response of nature and nurture to understand the influence of genetics and the environment.

Question 10

This was a question that required learners to know about social and emotional development and the milestones of a one-year-old. Responses again showed learners eliminating responses to gain the correct response.

Question 11

Some learners deviated from the specification with their responses to this question, and some of the responses were vague and included genetic factors. Not all genetic factors are inherited; some are mutations. Learners needed to give two biological factors that could be inherited to gain full marks.

Question 12

Learners were able to describe strong emotions and why these emotions could be demonstrated by children when starting school for the first time. Marks were lost if they only gave information on starting school for the first time and what can be done to smooth the transition, or if they talked about different emotions only. Learners who read the question entirely made a more detailed response.

Question 13

Learners needed to identify two separate emotions that a child may display when toilet training. Explanations or descriptions were not required. Learners sometimes gave emotional states rather than raw emotions. For example, uncomfortable, frustrated, anxious rather than sad, happy, fear. Learners should know the difference between raw emotions and emotional states.

Question 14

Learners were not always sure how an early years practitioner could support toilet training. They would give an activity, for example read a book, but then not be able to say how this would support Jackson to toilet train as a two-year-old. The responses should have reflected the age of the child and how it helped him to toilet train. Where rewards were offered as an activity, learners sometimes did not say why this was a good idea, for example to encourage repetition of using the toilet to gain the second mark.

Question 15

Some learners were not sure of the physical developmental milestones of a one-year-old as identified in the specification. They gave cognitive and language milestones or activities that were not appropriate for the child's age.

Question 16

Learners were able to engage with the information about the scenario and the issues that Lucy might experience due to her housing conditions and their impact on her growth and

development. Learners understood the issue of the mould and also the need for outdoor space for physical development and these points were detailed and fully developed. The overcrowding, broken furniture, and damp, cold environment were less well developed. Learners were caught up on the mould and physical development and gave many facts around each of these points.

Question 17

Learners were able to identify which of the given responses would support children's independence. Where marks were missed, learners appeared not to have fully read the question, choosing Option D: tidy up after children or Option A: choose equipment for children.

Question 18

Learners did not appear to know what an objective observation meant, so many learners picked the incorrect response and gave a response that would be better aligned with a subjective observation.

Question 19 (a)

Learners had to know observation styles; most gave two different observation styles. Some gave descriptions of the style which was not needed and would have cost time for the learners. The command verb was 'identify', and so just two observation styles were required.

Question 19 (b)

Learners provided reasons for the necessity of an observation but often forgot to link it to the specific observation style of the checklist, limiting some of the marks. The checklist is easy, quick, and lists for checking off, which were some of the points to be linked to the reason why it was a suitable tool for identifying this child's stage of development.

Question 20 (a)

Most learners knew two additional stages of the planning cycle, other than the 'assess' stage.

Question 20 (b)

Learners had to understand about formative assessment and why it would be used in supporting the planning cycle, and how formative assessment could be used in the 'assess' stage of planning. Learners could give information about assessing the children to plan for next steps but did not always link to or refer to formative assessment, so responses were generic and could have applied to summative assessment, limiting some learners from gaining marks. Learners who read the question entirely made a more detailed response.

Question 21

Learners again understood how to support children by reviewing activities but missed marks as they did not relate this to the improvements to Kit's (the early years practitioner) practice. Learners who read the question entirely made a more detailed response.

Question 22

This question was about how summative assessments support children's progress and development. Learners who did not achieve full marks provided generic responses and overlooked the fact that it was a summative assessment; therefore, their responses were limited

and focused on identifying the children's developmental milestones. Learners who read the question entirely made a more detailed response.

Question 23

Most learners were able to identify three sensory resources; most of the named resources were based on touch.

Question 24

This question was challenging for some learners, as they were given information about a nursery's outdoor play area and asked how the role of early years practitioners impacts the children's outdoor play activities. Learners linked to risk assessment and staffing ratios. Only a few learners extended their responses to include information on providing engaging activities in the woodland area, interacting with the children, and developing communication skills by discussing nature and managing children's behaviour. Learners need to understand how early years practitioners can support learners in different areas of the curriculum, during both inside and outside play.

Question 25

This question had positive responses. Learners understood about creative play, about holistic development, and how creative play could support each of the areas of development. The learners who achieved the highest marks gave a variety of creative activities, linked them to different areas of development, described the skills that would be gained from the activity, and considered whether the activities were suitable for a 5-year-old. Where marks were limited, learners either did not fully attempt the question, or gave only one or two areas of development, or did not give activities related to development, or did not give any skills, but spoke generically about developing and playing, not related to any specific age.

Question 26

The question was about risk assessment and why it was necessary to be completed before taking 2 to 3-year-olds to the park. Learners knew about the risk assessments and how to identify hazards. Where learners gained higher level marks, they explained a variety of hazards and how these could be reduced, and why the early years practitioner needed to be prepared. They identified and considered the age of the children and the potential risks to children, on the journey to the park from traffic, and the route to be taken. They considered not only physical risks but identified potential risks such as bee stings and medical issues, walking ability of the children, consent of parents, staffing ratios, and the role of the early years practitioner in maintaining the safety of the children and how each of these could be mitigated. Where learners received lower mark levels, they mainly focused on children getting lost, broken equipment, and how to get to the park. These points were discussed without full development. The specific age range of the children was not considered, and points were generic, relating to any age group of children going to the park.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Task 1

A leaflet and report were required for the task which was not understood by all learners. Some learners produced one piece of evidence only. Generally, learners did achieve positively and displayed a good knowledge of support through the weaning process and the transition from liquids to solid foods. The NEA does state that the learners are not being assessed on the quality and presentation of the resource, but the advice provided. However, the leaflet was enhanced by neatly displaying or word processing the evidence with images, boxes and headings. The analysis and evaluation to justify how the strategies in the leaflet could support Isaac and his parents was sometimes weak. A description was provided rather than a deeper analysis. This was also evident in Tasks 2, 3, and 6 where some learners had enjoyed creating a leaflet to provide strategies on how the childminder could support Isaac and his parents through the weaning stage.

Task 2

Learners were required to review the learning journal observation completed by the childminder (appendix 1). Those who had made relevant notes, revisited the content of the documents did achieve the higher marks as it evidenced Isaac's holistic development over 2 days. It was clear that some learners had simply copied the text from the supporting document without expansion or context in their written report. Generally, most learners achieved positively, however, some showed limited knowledge and understanding of how aspects of Isaac's holistic development might be interconnected. As above, the report sometimes fell short in the analysis and evaluation of Isaac's holistic development against the expected milestones. A description was provided rather than using the command verb from the NEA. This was a 20-mark task with six content areas to be assessed and proved challenging for some learners.

Task 3

The written report from task 2 was required to help complete Task 3 where a daily care plan had been created. The care plan was showing strategies the childminder could use when supporting Isaac's care routines and to meet his basic care needs, the information was more comprehensive and showed a good understanding of how the key person could support Isaac's holistic development. In some cases, no reference to relevant legislation, policies and procedures was made within the plan. Best examples of the plan referred to timings throughout the day (9am-5pm) and how Isaac's day could be structured to support his holistic needs. Some learners did not always cover all six assessed areas to plan for Isaac's identified support needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theoretical model was embedded into some learners' evidence however, this needed to be contextualised to Isaac's basic needs plan for it to be meaningful against the marking bands.

Task 4

The task required learners to create an activity plan to promote two different types of play activities that the childminder could use to promote one area of Isaac's development. This did cause some confusion. Most learners planned two separate play activities; however, these did

not always link to one area of development as per the guidance. This did not have a negative impact on the marks awarded. It is important to note that all bullet points for the task should be included. In some cases, timings, expectations of the childminder during the activity, resources and adherence to relevant legislation, policies and procedures were omitted. The best activity plans were word processed, clearly identifying each bullet point under relevant headings / sections so that no information was excluded.

There was a definite improvement to the task content from the centres who completed NEA1

Task 5

The learners were required to create a food hygiene procedure to show how / why all adults in the setting need to maintain food hygiene. The best examples were split into different sections: food storage / preparation, hand washing, PPE and reducing the spread of germs. Most learners did refer to legislation, policies and procedures in the early years predominantly the use of PPE, risk assessments and health and safety in the workplace which is excellent practice. Overall, learners did well in this task and showed a good understanding of effective food hygiene procedures. It was evident that learners were well prepared for this task.

Task 6

Task 6, which was to complete an evaluation of the plan created in Task 3, proved to be challenging for some learners. This resulted in lower marks in some instances as there was repetition from Task 3 rather than analysing and evaluating how well the plan met Isaac's needs. On occasion, the NEA guidance was not understood or followed resulting in lower marks being awarded. Evaluating the plan created in Task 3 was not always fully developed. Furthermore, suggestions for improvements to the plan showed minimal relevance and detail. This was evident where Task 3 showed limited recall of knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation. This task was not attempted by some learners which had an impact on overall achievement.

It would be beneficial if the evaluation and analysis of evidence were covered in more depth during the taught sessions for the NEA.