

# BETLS observation tool

**BETLS is an acronym for behaviour, emotions, thoughts, learning and social relationships.**

This tool is a template for gathering and documenting information and observations about a child or young person, and your particular concerns.

## Observations should:

- focus only on what you actually see and hear, rather than what you think about a child or young person's behaviours, emotions and thoughts
- take note of when, where and how often a child or young person is showing a particular behaviour or emotion
- notice what makes the child or young person's experience worse and what makes it better
- record how long the behaviour or emotion occurs (for example, if you're concerned about a child or young person's outbursts, take note of how long they last)
- notice what happens before and after the behaviour that is a concern
- be recorded by different people and in different situations during the day.

**This template also provides a space to reflect on a child or young person's experiences.**

It allows you to note their thoughts about a situation, and any other additional information that could be playing a role in their behaviour or mood. The space for these notes is limited in the template so your information appears in full when you print, save or share the document.

## Details

Child or young person's name

Child or young person's age

Date of observations

Child or young person's strengths

Concerns

Behaviours	Emotions	Thoughts	Learning	Social relationships
What is the child or young person doing?	What is/might the child or young person be feeling?	What is/might the child or young person be thinking?	What learning areas are being affected?	What social areas are being affected?
<i>(for example, unsettled at sleep time, not following instructions or getting into conflict with others)</i>	<i>(for example, sad)</i>	<i>(for example, I'm missing my family, or nobody understands me)</i>	<i>(for example, difficulty concentrating)</i>	<i>(for example, avoids group situations)</i>

### Pervasiveness

Who is present at this time? Staff? Family members? Other children or young people?

Where do these concerns/events occur (one setting, multiple settings)?

When do they occur? What times of the day? What happens before and after these occurrences?

## Frequency

How often does this happen (times per day/week)?

## Persistence and severity

How long has this been happening for? Always? Just started? Built up over time?

How much does the behaviour impact on the child or young person and others?

## Your feelings

How does this situation make you feel? What additional support may you need?

What have others noticed about this child or young person?

## Strategies

What things have been tried with the child or young person? Who implemented these strategies?  
What was the outcome?

## Other factors to consider

What cultural factors might be playing a role in this situation? Have there been any changes in the child or young person's life or in the service or school?

## Other notes/observations

## What might you do next?

Talk with the child or young person's family? Talk with a colleague? Can individual and family strengths be used to help me think of strategies? What more information do I need about this child or young person – where could I get it?