CHILD DEVELOPMENT

| Paper 0637/01 |
| Theory Paper |

Key messages

The paper asked for candidates to recall their knowledge and use it in a number of different ways. Candidates needed to respond to direct questions through giving accurate information, offer their understanding and opinion. In order to do well on this question paper it was essential that candidates read and understood each question.

General comments

- Those who scored most marks had responded well to each question and extended their response where prompted.
- Some candidates did not understand the concept of a 'hazard' for **Question 8(b)**.
- The majority of candidates had made good attempts to answer all of the questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

All candidates attempted this question. This question was generally answered correctly. Candidates understood the terms ante and post and gave accurate responses.

Question 2

Some candidates did not give circumstances that required urgent attention, although their responses might have suggested medical attention should be sought, not as a matter of urgency.

Question 3

Most candidates gave a good response to this question, such as parents working or children attending pre-school provision to socialise.

Question 4

This question was answered well by candidates with almost all able to identify at least one common cause of tooth decay. A few candidates suggested teeth falling out; this is not a cause of decay so no mark was awarded.

Question 5

Candidates gave some good responses to this question. At times, some responses were repeated. Candidates stated that children would be deficient in nutrients and then went on to state this again, naming specific nutrients. This was a repetition and in these cases, no marks were awarded for the repetition.

Question 6

This question was answered well by candidates. Some candidates suggested that fever was a symptom of all without elaborating on a key sign or symptom and repetition of this response did not receive a mark. Almost all candidates knew the signs and symptoms of chicken pox.

Question 7

A few candidates responded to this question by saying that age was a feature of clothing. Although this would be considered by parents, without explanation, such as this is an age when children are toilet training, no mark was awarded. Most candidates identified comfort as important.

Question 8

(a)   Good responses were given to this question. Some candidates gave no detail. There were responses that stated that pillows could cause cot death, but there was no explanation as to why. Many candidates correctly identified that cots need high sides to prevent children from falling out.

(b)   By not understanding what a hazard is, candidates missed marks on this question. Some suggested cold weather was a hazard without explanation. Where candidates identified that an insect sting could cause an allergy a mark was awarded, without this detail a mark was not awarded.

(c)   This question asked candidates to identify pieces of safety equipment. Many candidates did not identify a piece of equipment, stating instead, high shelf or not having hot pans near children. These are not pieces of safety equipment and so no mark was awarded.

(d)   Good responses were given to this question with many candidates showing their understanding of how to deal with burns. Some candidates did not state that the water needed to be cold and some candidates incorrectly stated that adding butter or fats to burns helped to treat them.

Question 9

(a)   When responding to this question some candidates repeated the question. However other candidates gave a very strong account of the notion of attachment.

(b)   There were generally correct responses to this question but most candidates did not explain how it was encouraged, simply stating 'promotes attachment'. These responses did not receive full marks.

(c)   Candidates knew about events that might cause children distress. Some candidates suggested how children felt rather than how they show distress.

Question 10

(a)   Good responses were given to this question and some expansion was clear in most responses. The candidates who scored highest demonstrated clearly that they understood about developmental norms and expectations for development. Most marks were awarded where the candidates were able to identify all areas of development and suggest ways that parents can promote learning.

(b)   The majority of candidates responded to this question. Marks were awarded for candidates who clearly understood the question and answered each part well. There was good explanation about pelvic floor exercises as well as exercise for fitness. Candidates showed they understood about specific dietary needs, such as folic acid. These responses gained the most marks. Several candidates gained full marks for this question.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

> **Paper 0637/02**
> **Coursework (Child Study)**

General comments

Thank you to all centres who sent completed student work and Individual Candidate Record Cards and MS1's in a timely manner. The Child Studies were, on the whole, a pleasure to read and many of reasonable quality. Although generally over-marked by centre teachers with one or two notable exceptions, the degree of over-marking was less marked than previously. Most candidates appear to be using the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, providing a logical path, including all the relevant parts. Remember that the word-count guidance is 3000 words – encourage students to record their own word-count at the end of the work. Candidates vary in choosing to observe one child aged up to 5 and compare with the norm or compare with another child. Centres obviously offer advice on this and it varies according to the availability of opportunities to observe other children of a similar age. Some candidates are still choosing to observe family members, which does compromise the anonymity for children. Where candidates do choose this option, they need to analyse the pros and cons of this in more detail than they are generally doing. It would be useful for the candidates' analytical skills if they recorded the age of the child in years and months for each observation.

The approach to current theories of child development varied considerably between centres. The most in-depth responses compared what they had observed with what current literature says on the aspect of development and again used a compare and contrast method to look at two or more theories. The weaker projects provided a shallow comparison with a few key norms. A consideration of the context of the child's life and a 'picture' of the societal, cultural and familial life would be useful as these factors can have an impact on child development.

As previously reported, candidates need to be explicit about using a pseudonym for their child to protect true identities and this needs repeating.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning.

(a)   Candidates at this level appeared to find this a real challenge, but the best studies provided a good introduction in which the candidate discussed what they **intended** to do and why, sometimes introducing a personal link to explain their choice of focus, whether they were looking at physical, cognitive, social, language or emotional development. Whilst some candidates are clearly writing their plan at the end of the process and using the past tense in doing so, this was less common than previously.

(b)   Background information on the child/children was generally well presented. The better candidates were able to give a well-rounded context, including physical, intellectual, emotional and language development as well as family situation and social/ environmental background. From the candidate's point of view, this was what the study was all about and the relevance of the task was clear.

(c)   The explanation, with the relevant theoretical information, of the development area chosen with reasons for choice, is an area where many candidates could improve. Firstly, a clear statement of the developmental area chosen is required and although this seems obvious, it was not consistently provided by the candidates. The reasons for the choice could easily be linked to the interesting aspects of the relevant theories.

Section B – Application

(a)   The written report of each observation made was approached by candidates in different ways. The most logical was an observation report clearly dated and with a clear intention of what was to be observed and why, followed by the actual observation. Use of dates and times helps the analysis of the information gleaned through observation as would the exact age of the child/ren in years and months. Students who gave a general picture of what went on during each visit with the child did less well, as they tended to miss detail and to record selectively. Do encourage the making of notes during the observation and encourage students to write as if they are still there – in the present tense.

(b)   Application of knowledge and understanding of accepted child development theories to the observations is obviously a higher level skill than the simpler description of what happened, but a natural corollary. As you would expect, stronger candidates did well and weaker candidates needed more guidance on what are the relevant theories for their studies.

(c)   Comparing the evidence of their observations with the norms or other children of a similar age was generally well covered by candidates.

Section C – Analysis and Evaluation

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. It is also the section where it becomes obvious if the time frame for the study is limited, mostly because the development observed was also limited and therefore less to analyse and discuss.

Again, if the original plan was unclear about what aspect of child development was to be observed, then the conclusion in this section is also necessarily weak. Candidates need encouragement to be concise about what it is they are going to observe – narrow the field right down and make it specific to one aspect of intellectual development, rather than intellectual development as a whole, for instance. This would also help with the final section which asks candidates to identify areas for further development and improvement of a child study.

Some candidates were able to discuss the holistic nature of development whilst at the same time drawing on specific examples from their observations. Some were able to comment on the historical development of the theories to show how our understanding of child development is advancing, although these were in the minority.

There was, as usual quite a wide variation in students' ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses – not an easy aspect of the study for Level 2 students who may only just be beginning to develop reflective practices. However some honesty about what aspects of the study went well and what areas were more problematic was evident in the stronger candidates' work.

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Paper 0637/03
Coursework (Practical Investigation)
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General comments

Well done to all centres which sent in student work and teacher/centre marking records promptly. The Practical Investigation gives students the opportunity to do some first-hand research whilst learning about an aspect of child care and development. The choice of what to investigate is the key to a successful learning experience. Those students who choose an area of care or development benefit much more than those who choose to carry out a piece of consumer research. So, for example, simply 'investigating' which nappy cream is the 'best' or most 'economical' is not really what we want students to do for this module. Try to encourage students to investigate whether nappy cream is beneficial, and if so how, so that they are asking deeper questions about children's care and development, not simply addressing consumer issues. Topics as varied as children's literature, food and behaviour management provide stimulating opportunities.

The methods used for the investigation do need some analysis, so being clear in **Section 1** about what investigative methods they will be using is important for students. The better reports include a variety of methods and a range of 'research'. Ask students to begin thinking about how they find out about anything – the answers are the same: some reading of books, journals, the internet and asking people: friends, parent, experts, professionals, some observing and listening.

It is the conclusions from the research that give students something useful to present in their leaflets or posters. The leaflets produced have, in the main, been colourful and informative and demonstrate good use of IT skills. Students need to specify their target audience for the leaflet or poster, which many do.

Those students who show that they can see the project right through to the evaluation stage achieve the best grades. Being aware of how they can improve their own working methods and possibly achieve a more effective result next time is key to all human development. Admitting that the present research is less than perfect is admirable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning

(a)   Candidates are generally good at choosing a topic, but perhaps some need help to refine their choices. If candidates can provide the reasons for their choice with examples from their own experiences, that is useful. Using a comparison is a useful tool too, so linking early experience of books and reading with socio-economic status, for example, makes for some useful learning.

(b)   Most candidates use internet literature searches, interviews and questionnaires in combination, which is to be commended. Some students manage to arrange interviews with professionals about their chosen topic and others manage to trial their questionnaires with three people before distributing to twenty more. Candidates must use at least four methods.

(c)   Planning and organisation requires students to consider timing and the need to show some empathy with their target group. An understanding of the difficulty in getting the general public to respond to questionnaires, for instance, is good at this stage.

Section B – Application

(a)   Students need to be using four varied methods to acquire information and this is the stage where they will be able to comment on the usefulness of each method.

(b)   Application of knowledge and understanding; this section is where students present their findings, remembering that the findings may be very different from their initial expectations, so keeping an open mind is important.

(c)   Students generally enjoy producing the leaflet or poster, but the quality of this is dependent on the quality of the information acquired through the different research methods.

Section C – Analysis and Evaluation

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. Sufficient time has to be given for this section – sometimes students haven't given themselves enough time, so valuable marks are lost. Students need to provide explicit analysis for each section. Students who realise that their plans were unrealistic in the timescale often do better – the honest approach to the task is the best! Remember that students are analysing and evaluating the investigative process, not their findings from the research; the latter should have been competed in **Section 2**.