

Early Development Group Evaluation: 2026



Our EDG evaluation report was completed by 26 people; two of which were professionals who work with children that we support.

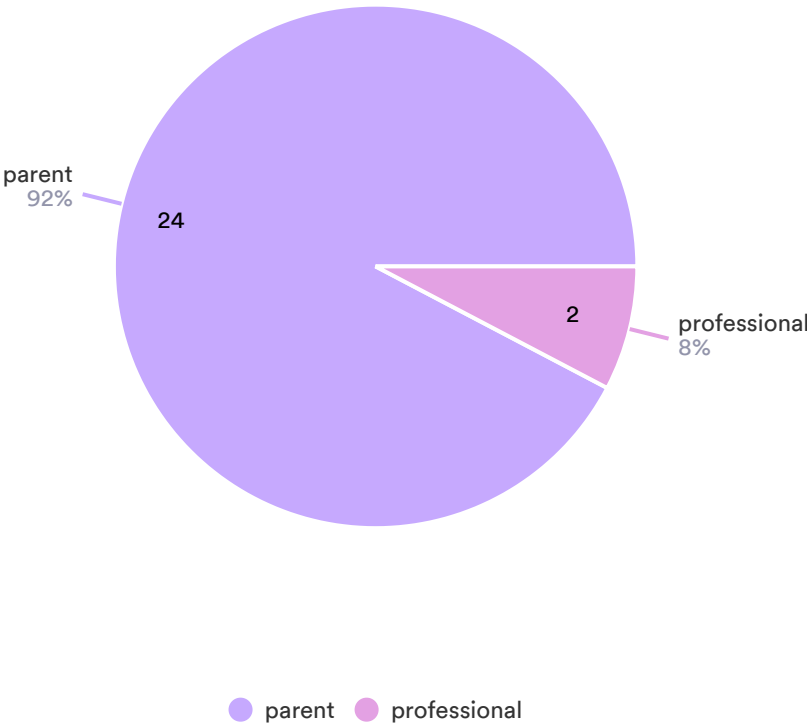
Our Early Development Groups take place at our centre in Bingley and children attend with their parents/carers initially, and then with school staff once they have started attending primary school.

Professionals attend not only to support children, but also to observe best practice as a training exercise.

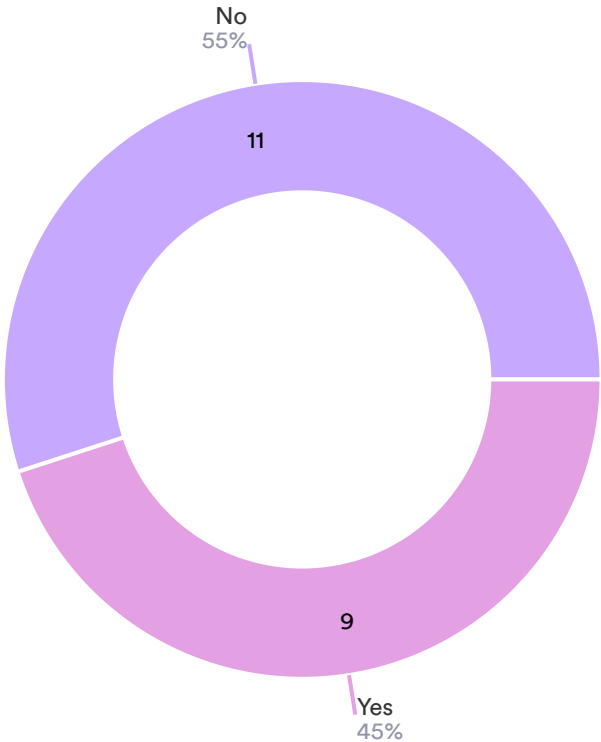
This year we have had both an NHS Physiotherapist and NHS SaLT observe the sessions, in addition to a representative from the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership.

Are you a parent or professional?

26 Answers



Did you have a home visit? yes/no



Our Family Support Officer aims to do a home visit for families with a new baby prior to their first visit to our centre.

The families with children in Year 5 of the EDG program were unable to have home visits due to starting to attend during Covid, which accounts for almost half of 'No' responses.

In addition, families who have not become involved with our service until their child was older often do not require a home visit.

This year there have been 7 home visits made.

100% of families who received a home visit, found this to be extremely helpful. Equally 100% of respondents found our centre to be welcoming when they visited.

Was this visit helpful?



Did you feel welcome during your first visit to a group at our centre?



Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	10	100%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%

Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	18	100%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%
★★★★★	0	0%

When asked about a sense of belonging, all responses were positive and 62% of families were able to explain why:

Do you now feel a sense of belonging and support from being part of the group? Can you explain why?

Data
Yes, group helped me learned how to help my son learning needs.
We As a family feel very welcome and supported from our first visit. The staff are very supportive and helpful. The sessions are throughly thought through and well planned around the needs of the children. These sessions not only support the children’s learning and development, but also support their progression and give them the opportunity to reach their potential.
Yes, the support offered is invaluable to my child’s development
Yes they are very helpful
Yes it helped a lot my son also helped me aswell
yes definately very friendly staff and very welcoming have learnt new things regarding my child's development each time I go.. i can ask questions and the staff always help and reassure me each time .. really nice meeting other parents as we can talk to each other aswell if we need help with anything .
Amazing support, great advise and learning for the children. Laura has been fantastic
The people who attend are regulars. We have a small group and everyone is friendly and welcoming. Wendy and Jen who lead the group are very supportive. I always look forward to attend. My son also enjoys them once he is settled.
Yes helped a lot
Yes, myself and my son, A, have been coming since he was very young (now 2) and love our visits.

Do you now feel a sense of belonging and support from being part of the group? Can you explain why?

Data

Charity team are friendly and helpful No judgement felt Ideas shared

Yes for sure. Support and advice so valuable and it's really reassuring to know we have such a brilliant group to ask questions or get advice. Knowing you are not alone and speaking to the staff and parents puts everything into perspective.

My child's needs were being met and that made me relax and his progress was thrilling. Being with other children with DS learning together is fantastic !

My child has older siblings who attend sessions with him. Their response is that they feel very included and find the group to be very supportive. I also agree with this, when attending the sessions they are well structured and thought out to meet the needs of all attending.

Since I have attended the early years groups I feel I have been given access to a lot of information and my child has picked up so much with his learning skills. As a parent with a child with Down syndrome i feel I have a sense of belonging and that I am not alone as it helps when I speak to other parents in the same situation as me.

I have had some great information from the centre and help for my child. I was in a place where I knew nothing about Down syndrome and having a whole community who are the same made me feel at ease

We believe that it is crucial for parents and families to feel a sense of belonging, as this is key to supporting the child. The program is designed so that the adult who is accompanying the child (whether that is an older sibling, a parent, grandparent or school professional) plays a pivotal role in supporting them during the sessions. This enables both the supporting adult and the child to develop in confidence, ultimately positively influencing the outcomes for the child.

Additionally, all parents are added to a WhatsApp group for updates around their child's sessions, which also helps to create a community feel amongst parents and provides them with a space to discuss things outside of the group environment at the centre.

My child is making progress as a result of attending these sessions



4.80
Avg. Response

25
Responses

What progress/developments have you seen?

Data
General development. My son is more aware of what is happening around him and his understanding has improved too.
Social life Learning manners . Sign language
He learning to count, signing, visual more. Try to say the word.
My child is more confident in structured sessions with turn taking, trying different eating and drinking utensils and with Makaton.
Being able to sit and follow instructions and complete simple tasks like the number line and matching words
He's learning things faster and meeting new friends
Learn loads of things colours numbers sign language animals fruit
there has been a big change in my child's development as my daughter was very weak to start off with as she attended classes her development has come along away with different techniques and skills that are used at the group

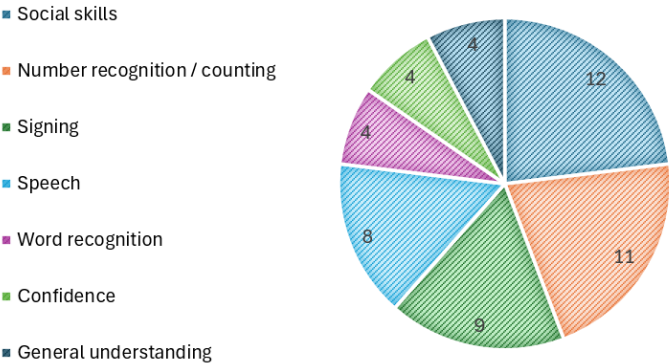
What progress/developments have you seen?

Data
Number counting, sitting and concentrating on tasks for longer periods of time
My son is now counting , speaking in sentences and has friends !
Its been a long time coming but finally she's starting to understand her colours and counting.
Developing his sign language and other skills like learning to wait etc
My son has been putting things inside boxes, using some of the makaton signs we have learnt and also understands some of the actions. Examples of this is when we do 'so big' and raise our arms, my son does the action when I say the words which tells me that he understands. I also use the resources such as the letter books with pictures to learn the sounds. At the group, they encourage us to make the sounds and get our child to look at our mouths when we say the words so they can copy.
He learn how to sit in one place even tho for bit sit sign language loads of words
Developed skills such as matching, copying more signs Some knowledge of numbers
Confidence! Social interaction, making friends, speech improving and progressing well with the learning in group.
Yes, as a professional, I felt a strong sense of belonging and support from being part of the group. The sessions provided excellent CPD opportunities for both myself and other staff working with O. They gave us a deeper understanding of how best to support her learning and reinforced the high expectations we should hold for her progress and achievement. The group environment allowed us to feel comfortable asking questions, sharing experiences, and reflecting on our practice. Observing teaching delivered by an exceptional teacher was particularly valuable, as it provided practical strategies that we could apply in our own settings. We also gained access to high-quality resources and materials that have helped us ensure that O's learning is progressing at an appropriate pace. Importantly, the training has enabled us to adapt teaching within the mainstream classroom in a way that is both inclusive and responsive to O's needs. As a result, we are better equipped to support her in making the rapid progress that she is capable of achieving. O is making exceptional progress in both speech and language development and reading. Her number skills are strong, and in mathematics lessons she is able to access the same curriculum as her peers when appropriate adaptations are made to teaching and learning. O's listening and understanding skills are exceptional. She is able to engage successfully in whole-class teaching and participate alongside her peers, which reflects the high expectations and consistent approaches developed through the group. The strategies and support provided have enabled her to access learning in an inclusive mainstream environment while continuing to make outstanding progress across the curriculum.
My son has made new friendships, improved his communication skills, and grown in confidence. He enjoys the sessions, interacting with others, and learning new skills in a supportive environment.
Building confidence . Learning lots of things

What progress/developments have you seen?

Data
My son's understanding has improved since we have joined Early Intervention sessions
Confidence. Enjoying other children's company, enjoying success ! Increased self esteem
The phonic sessions are very helpful which help with speech development. We are very grateful for the resources provided by the group they have been used by us as a family to help support my childs' development in speech and language, understanding and social communication.
Increased confidence, increased clarity of speech, increased proficiency with numbers and better whole word recognition.
My son has picked up so many skills by attending every fortnight for example being able to communicate and recognise certain things and being able to follow instructions. The list is endless as to what he has picked up by regular attendance.
My child is signing more can string a sentence now with some help with signing. She is able to count

AREAS OF PROGRESS:



Analysis of the findings shows that of the 52 examples provided, social skills (including turn-taking), number recognition/ability to count, and signing were the most acknowledged areas where development has been seen.

Early Development Group Evaluation: our groups 2026

I feel confident to support my child as a result of attending these sessions

26 Answers



4.73

26

Avg. Response

Responses

Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	21	81%
★★★★☆	3	12%
★★★★☆	2	8%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%

I feel that I understand my child’s needs and potential as a result of attending these sessions

26 Answers



4.85

26

Avg. Response

Responses

Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	24	92%
★★★★☆	0	0%
★★★★☆	2	8%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%

Early Development Group Evaluation: our groups 2026

I feel confident in using the resources provided outside of the group sessions



I have added to and developed these resources for use with my child.



Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	22	85%
★★★★☆	3	12%
★★★☆☆	1	4%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★☆☆☆	0	0%

Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	23	92%
★★★★☆	1	4%
★★★☆☆	1	4%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★☆☆☆	0	0%

Early Development Group Evaluation: our groups 2026

How positive do you feel about your child's future as a result of our support and attending group sessions



4.81

Avg. Response

26

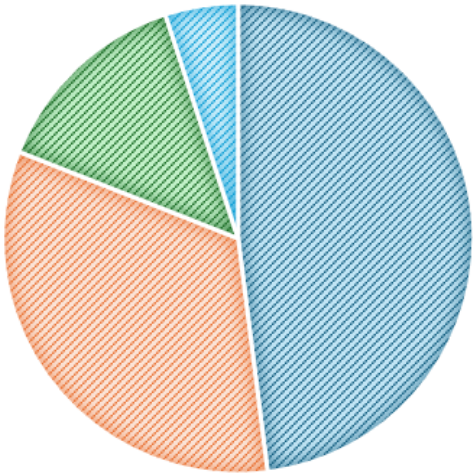
Responses

97% of families felt 'positive' or 'extremely positive' about their child's future as a result of the support offered through the Early Development Groups.

The reasons for this are categorised as follows:

Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	22	85%
★★★★☆	3	12%
★★★★☆	1	
★★★☆☆	0	
★★☆☆☆	0	

WHY I FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE



- I understand how I can help my child learn
- The resources provided enable me to support my child beyond the group setting
- Specialised, friendly and caring staff
- My child will be prepared for starting school

Can you briefly explain your answers to the above further?

Data

Groups gave me understanding of the way children with Down Syndrome learn, and resources given to parents are very helpful!

Really happy and satisfied to take my child to the sessions .friendly and very loving staff .

He has come along so well & the group has helped him through this. Also I have learned how to help my child through the session.

The resources provided for speech and language have been a vital asset in supporting my child's development. The resources provided for each session phonic cards are linked to each session and support my child's development.

Great program, helps my child prepare for school, giving him structure and be able to sit, listen and follow instructions

it's very helpful for parents and children as well

there's alot of support attending these sessions not only the sessions themselves we recieve newsletters , and we recieve every session number cards letter cards as what they have learnt in the session that day its really good as we can carry on with the learning at home too ..

Great resources given to help aid learning

We use the resources provided in the group to develop and refine our teaching over the four weeks before returning to the group. This approach ensures that our teaching is accurately pitched and that we are providing O with materials that are both familiar and accessible to her. Additionally, we mirror the teaching styles used in the development group, which helps maintain consistency and supports her continued progress.

Can you briefly explain your answers to the above further?

Data

I have been given really useful resources , techniques and support during all the EDG. This has given myself confidence to know how best to support my son and pass knowledge onto professionals who support my son. My son's teaching assistant attends the groups also and learns what we do and then mirrors this at school. Providing consistency in my son's teaching and development. Which is also relayed and witnessed by the others teachers and support staff at his school. This also helps the school remain inclusive and feel able to support children with SEND , not just towards my own son .

Given she has down syndrome and autism and developmentally shes far behind even her peers with down syndrome, immune can't help but worry for her future. However the 1:1 sessions with Wendy have definitely helped demonstrate she will achieve it, albeit much slower than her peers.

As this group is specifically for children with Down Syndrome, I feel the group sessions are preparing my son for the school/nursery setting. He is taught to sit on a proper chair, eat and drink independently anround a table with other children and waiting his turn. He is around children with similar needs and as a parent, I feel confident to share my views as well as listening to theirs when it comes to health of my child and choosing a school setting. I enjoy the sessions as I can see how my child would be at a nursery setting and how he would progress.

I know that my daughter has had the specific vital support needed from birth to aid learning and development to allow her to have the best start in life. That her physical and learning abilities won't stop her from growing into the best possible person functioning to the best of her abilities. Knowing to implement this from birth has allowed us as parents to envision a future where she can be part of the community, living her best life to the fullest.

Attending DS Centre and different sessions has made a real difference to both me and my son. The support, guidance, and resources provided have helped me better understand his needs, strengths, and potential. I feel much more confident supporting his development at home and using the strategies and resources shared during the sessions. The group sessions are always welcoming, supportive, and enjoyable, and the staff create a lovely environment for both children and parents. As a result of attending, I feel much more positive about my son's future and the opportunities available to him. We really value the support we receive and would love to be able to attend for longer. Thank you for everything you do for us all. Wendy is an amazing knowledgeable person always going over and beyond to support us when we struggle with schools.

Greatly impressed by the loving and really qualified staff. My child has learnt a few words with sign language . My child started speaking a few words aswel and this is because of the sounds learing in the class.

Counting, speach and general understanding what is happening around is a base to function in society.

Filled me with confidence, gave me tips , tweaks to compliment our home work. Made me realise that we were doing a good job and that our child was thriving.

The staff have been incredibly helpful in supporting our understanding of our child's needs and how we can best support his development both at home and within the group setting.

I feel that my child benefits from the group because he warms to the teacher and because I have found that he learns best in specific ways which are quite difficult to understand, but are much better understood here. My child enjoys the sessions.

Very positive help, support and advice has made so much difference to my child.

Early Development Group Evaluation: our groups 2026

Is there anything you think we could do to improve the Early Development Groups? (e.g. timing, resources, general organisation etc.)

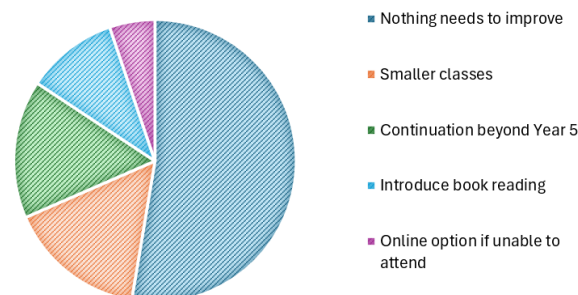
Data
I wouldn't change a thing!
Everything is good 🍷
No!
No. Everything is done at A's pace.
No, the sessions are great!
Everything good nothings need sto change every thing good
I think they are doing really well.
I am happy with how the sessions are progressing. The box provided to us at the beginning of the session has a wealth of information and resources to work through with my son. It is helpful that the information contained are DS specific.
Everything is perfect, but it would be great if we could carry on for longer, especially since there is no support from the NHS. It's also time for us parents to share our thoughts and worries.
The only improvement we would suggest is the development of these Early Development Groups for children to continue attending a development group throughout their school years. While the transition into school is very important, and O has coped remarkably well (thanks to your service!), the move to the national curriculum and the expectations in KS1 and KS2 present far greater challenges, in some ways. A group that supports children through these later stages of development would be highly beneficial. Funding from EHCPs could be used to support this. Many services that support children in school are not specialist in Down syndrome, and having continued input from the Down Syndrome Training and Support Service would help address this gap. With SEN provision in schools increasingly stretched, ongoing support would ensure that children with Down syndrome are effectively supported and that staff feel confident and equipped to meet their needs. It is also important to recognise the changing cultures within schools and ensure that EHCP funding is used effectively. The Development Service could play a key role in achieving this. We are extremely grateful for all of your support, which has not only enhanced O's learning but has also contributed significantly to the professional development of our staff and the support of many other children in our school.

Is there anything you think we could do to improve the Early Development Groups? (e.g. timing, resources, general organisation etc.)

Data
Book reading should be added
Maybe smaller groups as can get a bit overwhelming for the children if there is a big turnout
I personally think there should be more sessions as my daughter enjoys going like once weekly would be really good for the children as they learn alot and enjoy the session very much as a parent I enjoy going too meeting new parents 😊 also the staff are so friendly and over all brilliant
Maybe smaller groups as if it full capacity can get a bit overwhelming for the children
If we can't attend group in person due to illness or hospital appointments have the option to join via Zoom, maybe?
Book reading should be added in sessions .
The staff make every effort to ensure the session times work around parents' schedules and family commitments.We also appreciate how the group goes above and beyond by organising additional activities, such as the monthly group sessions. For example, the Go Wild session was highly interactive and supported the children's development in many different areas.
Timing and organisation are fine
Smaller classes and children that are at the same level together as some time my child doesn't like waiting around after she has completed her task. This can cause her to lose interest

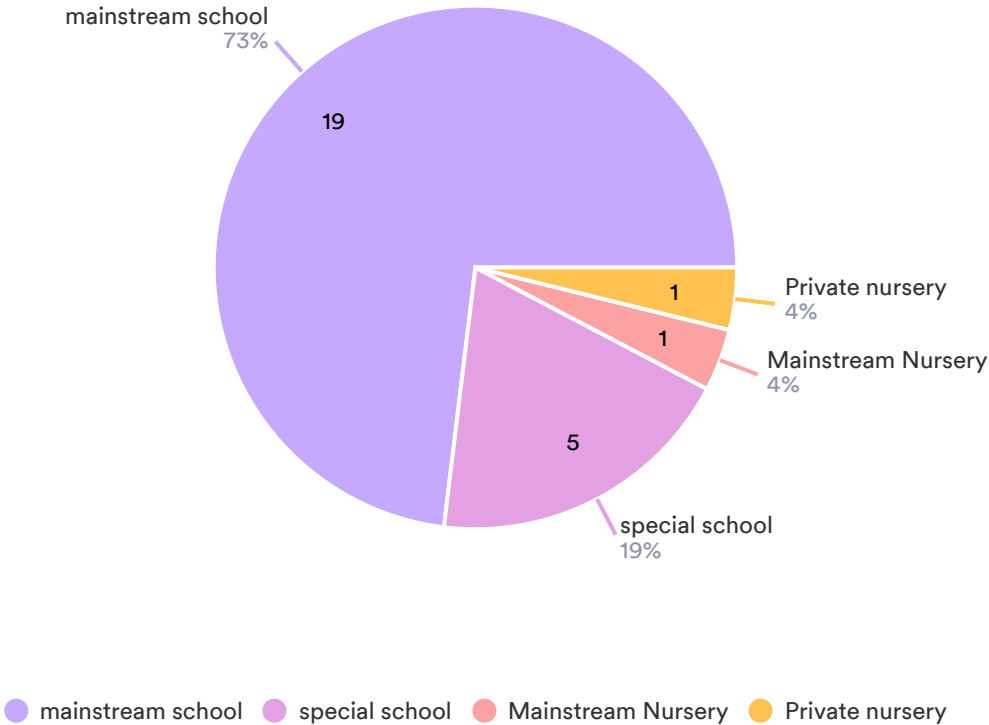
Overall, 53% of families felt that there was nothing which could be improved out the sessions. 16% felt that they would like the sessions to continue beyond Year 5 or be more frequent, with a further 16% preferring groups to be smaller. All of these suggestions would require additional staffing capacity which we are currently unable to facilitate.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE OUR EDGS?



Which type of school does your child attend/are you planning for your child to attend?

26 Answers



I feel the targets are appropriate for my child's needs



Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	9	90%
★★★★☆	1	10%
★★★★☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%

I feel they are making a difference



Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	9	100%
★★★★☆	0	0%
★★★★☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%

What progress have you seen?

Data
My son can recognise numbers 1-5 and has basic understanding about "objects to words connection"
My child is 21 months old. I have seen his confidence grow in his social and communication interaction.
Learning how to sit, listen, focus, follow instructions, colour sort & counting.
We have seen our child become much more socially confident during the group sessions.He is now familiar with the routine and especially looks forward to activities such as the magic bag and phonics sessions.
Recognising her name. Learning sounds and numbers and signing. Signing has been a great help with my child as she can get frustrated when she can't explain. When she doesn't have the words she can use her signs to help me understand. It may not be such a big thing but for me it's been life changing.



Do you feel empowered and more able to meet the needs of the child you are supporting as a result of our early intervention programme?



4.80

Avg. Response

10

Responses

Has whole school inclusion improved?



Data	Answer	%
★★★★★	4	50%
★★★★☆	2	25%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★★☆☆	0	0%
★★☆☆☆	2	25%

Please state the number of school staff who have benefitted form our support, either directly or indirectly

Data
2
Unfortunately they refuse to participate in the sessions.
20+
4

Moving forward, this is a key area which we aim to improve in the future.

Thank You!

Early Development Group Evaluation: 2026

