

A Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reforms for Parents



What is the EYFS?

The EYFS is the statutory framework for all early year's providers in England including nurseries, childminders, after school clubs and school reception classes. It was originally launched in 2008 and has been updated several times since.

The Statutory Framework for the EYFS includes:

- Learning and development requirements
- Assessment requirements
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements

This is the framework that Ofsted inspects all providers against to ensure children are kept safe, healthy and that their learning needs are met.

Learning and development requirements

The three prime areas of learning these are:

- Communication and language, this supports your child's listening, speech, and language development.
- Physical development supports your child's gross (large body) and fine (hand) motor skills and learning about health, safety and wellbeing.
- Personal social and emotional development supports your child to learn to make friends, work in a group, become independent, share, and express themselves in an appropriate way.

These form a firm foundation for further learning to build upon

There are also four specific areas of learning

- Literacy, this includes reading and writing
- Mathematics, this includes numbers, shape, size, measure
- Understanding the world is learning about the world around us and technology
- Art and design, this is exploring arts and crafts, music, dance and using their imagination

The specific areas of learning help children to strengthen their learning and skills for the future.

All those areas of learning are connected together. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning weave through them all. That's because children in the early years are becoming more powerful learners and thinkers. These characteristics develop as they learn to do new things, acquire new skills, develop socially and emotionally, and become better communicators. (Development Matters 2020)



The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things and ‘have a go’
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing this.

What are the changes?

- A reduction in paperwork to allow staff to have more time to provide quality interactions, by supporting and engaging with the children and their learning and development.
- The new framework will better prepare the children for their journey onto key stage 1
- Staff will use their professional knowledge and judgement to monitor that your child’s learning and development is age and stage appropriate rather than matching them to a list of statements.

What does this mean for parents and carers?

- You should not see many changes to the experiences offered to your child in the setting as most importantly this is still a play-based curriculum.
- There may be less observations and assessments shared with you in a written format, but the staff will still be continuously assessing your child’s learning and development to ensure they are making progress.

How can you help your child at home?

- **Speech and language** - talk to your child about what they see and what they are doing, these conversations will increase your child’s vocabulary increasing the number of words they use and understand.
- **Songs and rhymes** - from birth include these at various opportunities through your daily routines such as nappy changing and bath time. As children get older continue to include these as much as possible and encourage your child to make up their own silly rhymes.
- **Stories** - enjoy a book everyday with your child, even very young children enjoy the closeness of a parent reading a story to them and if the book has no words talk about what they can see in the pictures. As children get older encourage them to guess what the next part of the story could be.
- **Number** - use everyday opportunities to practice counting, encourage children to find numbers when you are out and about such as on car number plates or house doors, can they find their age number.
- **Healthy food** - support your child to make healthy food and drink choices and to understand how this can affect their teeth, encourage brushing their teeth twice a day at home. Oral health is now included in the EYFS
- **Physical** - support your child to develop core strength through large body movements such as playing on the park, this will help them to be able to sit at a table and write as they get older

Keeping you informed

Settings and schools are required to keep you informed about what is happening in their provision, this may be through a variety of methods such newsletters, electronic systems, or noticeboards.

For more EYFS information

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - www.gov.uk

Development Matters - www.gov.uk

Birth to 5 Matters - www.birthto5matters.org.uk

Special Educational Needs

Early Years providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. If a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff must discuss this with the child’s parents/carer and agree how to support the child. Further information can be found by contacting:



Cumbria SEND Information Advice and Support

www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/parentpartnership/contact.asp

SEND Code of Practice www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25