**Revised EYFS 2021**

**What’s Changing?**

In October 2019, the Government launched a consultation on reforms to the current EYFS. The consultation looked at changes to the learning and development and assessment requirements as set out in the EYFS statutory framework as well as a single change within the safeguarding and welfare requirements section.

The proposals were:

* Revisions to the Educational Programmes;
* Revisions to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs);
* Changes to the assessment and moderation process for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP);
* A proposed change to the safeguarding and welfare requirements to promote good oral health.

**Educational Programmes:**

Communication and Language - The educational programme for Communication and Language focuses on the development of children’s spoken language and promotes a language-rich environment.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Aspects of health and self-care are now included within the educational programme for PSED rather than Physical Development. It includes building relationships with those around them along with healthy eating and managing personal needs independently.

Physical Development - Both fine and gross motor skills are central to the educational programme for Physical Development. It also includes a greater focus on development from birth to Reception.

Literacy - Within the educational programme for Literacy, there is now a greater emphasis on pre-Reception literacy learning and also the link between language comprehension and later reading and writing.

Mathematics - The education programme for Maths is built around supporting children to develop a strong grounding in number. It also includes greater detail on the importance of shapes, spatial reasoning and measure as part of early maths learning.

Understanding the World - This section aims to guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community. It includes wider experiences for children and promotes visits in the local area and from important members of society.

Expressive Arts and Design - Expressive Arts and Design includes a wider variety of ways children can develop their creative skills.

**Revisions to the Early Learning Goals:**

The Early Learning Goals are defined as ‘the level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS’. There are 17 Early Learning Goals, as described below. Reception teachers are required to assess each child against these goals. In a change from previous guidance, teachers are now only required to judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected) or not yet reaching this level (emerging). In this new framework, there is no longer a requirement to report against the ‘exceeding’ level as there has been previously.

**What are the new Early Learning Goals?**

Communication and Language - Listening, Attention and Understanding; Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Self-Regulation; Managing Self; Building Relationships

Physical Development - Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills

Literacy – Comprehension; Word Reading; Writing

Mathematics – Number; Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World - Past and Present; People, Culture and Communities; The Natural World

Expressive Arts and Design - Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive

Some differences are clear straight away - there are now only two goals for Communication and Language and aspects of hygiene and self-care are now found in PSED rather than Physical Development.

**Main Changes:**

Communication and Language - ‘Listening, Attention and Understanding’ are now combined into one goal for Communication and Language with the other goal focusing on speaking.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Self-regulation is a hot topic recently and we can see this reflected in the new Early Learning Goal focus. The new ‘Managing Self’ goal covers many aspects previously covered within PSED. The ‘Building Relationships’ goal is very similar to the existing ‘Making Relationships’ goal.

Physical Development - The Early Learning Goals for Physical Development have shifted from including health and self-care to just focusing on moving and handling skills. There is now a goal for gross motor skills and a separate goal focusing on fine motor skills.

Literacy - In the new framework, there are now three early learning goals for Literacy, with the reading focus being split into comprehension and reading words.

Mathematics - The new Mathematics Early Learning Goals focus on number and numerical patterns. Although there is no longer a goal for shape, space and measure the [Government consultation response](https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/early-years-foundation-stage-reforms-t-slt-1212) states, ‘Practitioners and teachers will still be required to teach children about shape, space and measures, as part of a well-rounded curriculum as set out in the revised mathematics educational programme.’

Understanding the World - Perhaps the most noticeable change to the Early Learning Goals for Understanding the World is the inclusion of ‘Past and Present’ and the removal of the ‘Technology’ goal. 'People and Communities' is now 'People, Culture and Communities', whilst 'The World' is now 'The Natural World'.

Expressive Arts and Design - Expressive Arts and Design has seen changes to both of the the existing goals. 'Exploring and Using Media and Materials' is now 'Creating with Materials', whilst 'Being Imaginative' is now 'Being Imaginative and Expressive'.

**Changes to the Assessment and Moderation Process for the EYFSP:**

* Progress check at age two: remains in place.
* Assessment at the start of the Reception year (the Reception Baseline Assessment)
* Assessment at the end of the EYFS (the EYFS Profile):

**Changes to the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements:**

* As research by Public Health England suggested that more than 1 in 5 children age 5 have experienced tooth decay, the promotion of good oral health has now been included explicitly within the new EYFS framework. This is with the aim of reducing tooth decay and hospital admissions. Ideally, this requirement should be met by working alongside parents and healthcare professionals. These requirements remain unchanged for early adopter purposes.

**Development Matters:**

* As part of recent changes therefore, the Development Matters document has also been revised (although still called “Development Matters. Indeed, one of the main aims of updating the document was to address the data-driven workload that was becoming unmanageable in many settings, with a constant need to record data on development almost to the detriment of other areas.
* Other reasons for updates include a desire to improve children’s communication, especially their spoken language and the need to ‘close the gap’ where children are at risk of falling behind their peers.
* It is recommended that practitioners understand the 7 key features of effective practice in depth as a priority.

These are outlined as:

* The best for every child
* High-quality care
* The curriculum: what we want children to learn
* Pedagogy: helping children to learn
* Assessment: checking what children have learnt
* Self-regulation and executive function
* Partnership with parents

It also recommends that practitioners are familiar with the 3 characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

* Playing and exploring
* Active learning
* Creating and thinking critically
* The observation checkpoints under each heading say that children in each age group “will be learning to” as opposed to saying “will have achieved” so that the emphasis is on individual development rather than getting all children to meet a particular benchmark at a certain age.
* Settings must develop their curriculums with these things in mind, and then, depending on the ages of the children in the setting, the document can then be read in age-stages, focusing on the needs of different age groups at different times.
* In the previous version, the demarcation of children’s development included overlapping age bands such as birth to 11 months and 8 – 20 months, 16 – 26 months for example. The new guidance is split into 3 main groups with subdivided “observation checkpoints” at various stages along the way. However, the age ranges are now less-specific with fewer defined periods in the ‘birth to 3’ age range. This is to reflect the research suggesting that children’s development is not linear, but ‘more like a spider’s web with many strands’.

The age ranges are now:

* Birth to three – babies, toddlers and young children (Baby & Toddler Room)
* 3-4-year-olds (Pre-School Room)
* Children in reception

The observation checkpoints are to help staff notice whether a child is at risk of falling behind in their development, and not just data collection points for data collection’s sake. The document instead emphasises the value of ‘professional judgement’ which highlights the need to develop professional, reflective practitioners across the board.

#### **Assessment:**

With the emphasis on professional judgement, there is a clear attempt to make sure that assessment of children does not become just ‘something that needs to be done’ and therefore ineffective in promoting progress, or identifying children at risk of falling behind. Children would be served better if practitioners were able to use their professional judgement about which children need assessing, and in which areas, which may result in less assessment for some children and a greater amount of more effective, intervention-driven assessments for those who need it most.

**Birth to Five Matters:**

### Birth to 5 Matters provides comprehensive guidance, drawing on previous guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which has been updated in order to reflect recent research, to meet the needs of practitioners, to respond to current issues in society, to meet the needs of children today and to lay a strong foundation for their futures.

The purpose of the guidance includes reaffirming core principles which recognise:

* the child at the centre of practice
* the child’s connections within family, communities, cultures and the natural world
* the need to consider the whole child: physical, social and emotional wellbeing, health, and learning
* the [child’s rights](https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Childrens-rights-for-Birth-to-Five-Matters.pdf)as a member of society under the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)](https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNCRC_summary-1_1-1.pdf), including:
* Non-discrimination (article 2)
* Best interest of the child (article 3)
* Goals of education (article 29)
* Right to be heard (article 12)
* Right to play (article 31)
* Right to freedom of expression (article 13)
* Right to freedom of thought, belief and religion (article 14)
* Right for children with a disability to live a full and decent life (article 23)
* Right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family (article 30)
* the sector’s responsibilities under the United Nations Sustainability Goals and UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development
* the statutory requirements of the SEND Code of Practice.

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