

AUGUST  
2021



**ParentZone**

# The Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

A guide for parents and carers

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A guide for parents and carers

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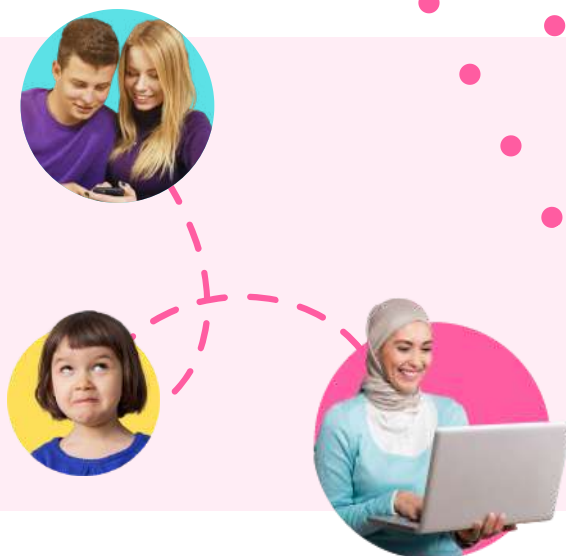
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# What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?



**If your child attends an Ofsted registered early years setting, your setting will be following a set of legal requirements produced by the Department of Education called the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). These standards are put in place to make sure that children aged from birth to 5 learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.**

It's important to note that the EYFS was first published by the Government in 2014 but has recently been updated. So from September 2021, all early years providers must follow the **new** early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework.

**You can familiarise yourself with the new EYFS framework here:**



[Read more](#)

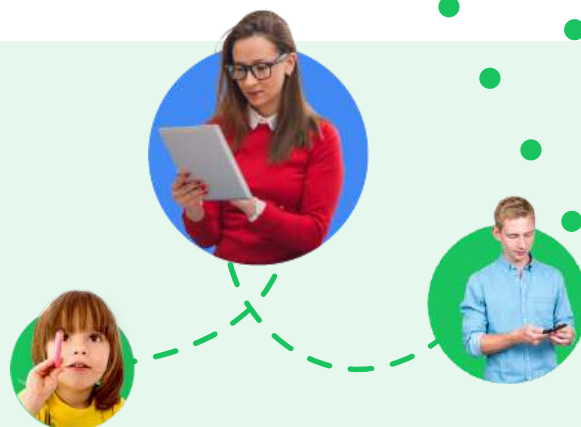
However, if you want to save yourself from reading all 53 pages, we've summarised the main points for you in this document.

## Who is the framework for?

- local authority-maintained schools
- non-maintained schools (schools not maintained by a local authority)
- independent schools
- academies and free schools
- nurseries
- private day nurseries
- private nursery schools
- pre-schools/playgroups
- childminders

Ofsted will carry out inspections and report on the quality and standards of your early years setting against the Early Years Foundation Stage. If you would like to check a settings Ofsted report, these are published at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

# What does the EYFS mean for parents/carers?



**The EYFS is in place to ensure your children get the best start to life. When your child first starts their journey with their childcare provider, your provider must make the following information available to you as a parent/carer:**

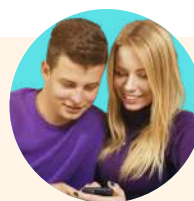
- how the EYFS will be delivered in the setting
- how parents and/or carers can access more information about the EYFS
- the range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home
- how the setting supports children with special educational needs and disabilities
- food and drinks provided for children
- details of policies and procedures
- staffing in the setting; the name of their child's key person and their role; and a telephone number for parents and/or carers to contact in an emergency

Early Years Providers must work in partnership with parents and/or carers, to promote the learning and development of all children in their care, and to ensure they are ready for year 1.

They must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them. This is set out into the 'learning and development requirements.'



# Learning and development requirements for your child



The EYFS learning and development requirements are made up of:

## The seven areas of learning and development

and the educational programmes

[READ MORE ON PAGE 6](#)

## The early learning goals

which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year

[READ MORE ON PAGE 9](#)

## the assessment requirements

when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers

[READ MORE ON PAGE 14](#)

Childcare providers have the freedom to create their own curriculum which will lay out what they want the children to learn in the time they are with the setting. It must be based on the statutory early years foundation stage (EYFS), which gives a framework to build on, through the 7 areas of learning.

# The seven areas of learning and development

There are **3 prime areas**. These are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

## COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their practitioner, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives<sup>7</sup>. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye coordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

There are **4 specific areas** through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

## LITERACY

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

## MATHEMATICS

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

## UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them - from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

## EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.



## The Early Learning Goals

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs) which are set out below.

### COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

#### **ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole-class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their practitioner and peers.

#### **ELG: Speaking**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their practitioner.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### **ELG: Self-Regulation**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the practitioner says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

### **ELG: Managing Self**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

### **ELG: Building Relationships**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### **ELG: Gross Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

### **ELG: Fine Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

## LITERACY

### **ELG: Comprehension**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

### **ELG: Word Reading**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

### **ELG: Writing**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

## MATHEMATICS

### **ELG: Number**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

### **ELG: Numerical Patterns**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

## UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

### **ELG: Past and Present**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

### **ELG: People, Culture and Communities**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

### **ELG: The Natural World**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

## **EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN**

### **ELG: Creating with Materials**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role-playing characters in narratives and stories.

### **ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their practitioner;
  - Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.



# Assessment Requirements



**Reducing unnecessary paperwork is a key aim of the new early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework. This is so your child's practitioners can spend more time engaging with your child.**

**It is so important that practitioners spend quality time with children scaffolding their learning and building strong attachments with them. So the number of formal updates you receive from your provider will vary depending on the plan for the day and how busy the practitioners are.**

Assessment plays an important role in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. So settings are required to provide **3 main assessments.**

## What assessments should I expect from my childcare setting?

Practitioners will review your child's progress in the form of Assessment. They will provide you with a short written summary of your child's development in the prime areas.

This progress check must identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support your child's future learning and development involving you and other professionals (for example, the provider's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate. Practitioners must discuss with you how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home.

## The 3 Main Assessments are:

### A progress check when your child is aged between two and three – Usually called ‘the Two Year Check’

If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three it is expected that the progress check would usually be undertaken by the setting where the child has spent most time.

### Assessment at the start of the reception year – usually called the ‘Reception Baseline Assessment’

This is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

### Assessment at the end of the EYFS – usually called the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage Profile’ (or EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child.

The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and practitioners with a well rounded picture of a child’s knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.

Each child’s level of development must be assessed against **the early learning goals**. Some providers may choose to provide a short commentary on each child’s skills and abilities in relation to the three key **characteristics of effective teaching and learning**.

# Keeping in touch with your Childcare Provider



**Research shows that involving parents and carers in a child's learning is the most important factor in enabling children to do well regardless of their background.**

**Your setting will offer a range of opportunities for you to become involved in your child's learning. They might invite you to share all you can about your child, including your family, community culture, and personal histories. This will help them to overcome any barriers they may have to work in partnership. For example, your experiences of nursery, separation, language, culture and different values. The relationship might begin with you visiting the setting which will help inform them how to sensitively settle your child.**

## **Other ways to involve you may include:**

- daily chats with your key persons
- time for your child to settle in
- viewing photos and videos of your child so you can continue your child's learning at home
- attending a workshop on different areas of learning
- going on trips with the setting
- home visits
- volunteering
- phone calls home
- community projects
- documenting your child's personal histories
- being parent governors or steering group members
- using the ParentZone app.

Your setting may also invite you to set up a two-way dialogue about your child's learning. They may share observations of your child learning something new in the setting and ask you to share your experiences. For example, if your child becomes interested in lining things up in the setting then this could indicate an interest in number or positioning. Sharing this information with you will encourage you to offer something similar in the home environment which will further the child's development and learning.



## Using ParentZone to Communicate with your Childcare Provider

When your child's at nursery, they spend all day learning, exploring and experimenting, whether they're trying new foods or taking their first steps, with the **ParentZone smartphone app**, you won't miss a single moment.

Throughout the day, your Key Person will observe and record your child's progress in their very own ParentZone Learning Journal. An update might include pictures or videos of them doing something fun, or notes keeping you up to date on daily activities. Each Learning Journal entry also keeps track of all the basics, from nap times and nappy changes to what your child ate for lunch.

However they spend the day, all of your child's experiences will be recorded on ParentZone. You can access their Learning Journal anywhere, anytime. Plus, you can post your own comments and observations from home. Making it a quick and easy way to stay in touch with your Key Person, swap ideas, or share something the nursery might need to know. After all, no one knows your child better than you.

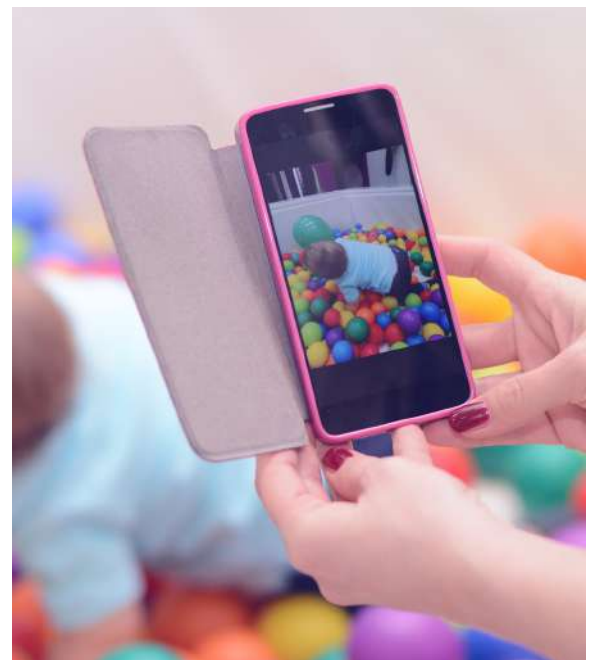
The ParentZone app is developed by Connect Childcare who have been in the industry for over 15 years, they have won a number of awards and are loved and trusted by Over 3,400 nurseries, 77,000 practitioners & 180,000 parents.

### Is your childcare provider using ParentZone to communicate with you?

**YES** - Find resources by clicking the button below.

» Resources

**NO** - Then send them THIS website link to see how ParentZone could help them nurture a closer relationship with their parents and children.





**For more information  
about the EYFS, speak to  
your Childcare Provider.**



**ParentZone**

[www.ParentZone.me](http://www.ParentZone.me)



See more at [www.connectchildcare.com/information-for-parentzone-users/](http://www.connectchildcare.com/information-for-parentzone-users/)