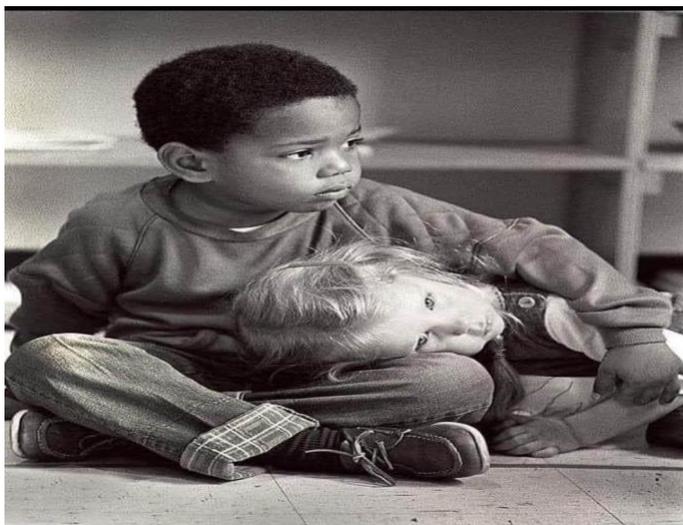


Changes to the EYFS

Latest News!



Preparing for the new EYFS

The new statutory framework applies from 1 September 2021. Until then, the current framework applies.

Read it here: [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)

Or you can [read a summary of the EYFS changes here](#).

The government says the changes will improve outcomes for all children, but particularly the language and literacy outcomes for disadvantaged children and reduce teacher workload.

Deborah Udakis Consultancy Ltd – www.deborahudakis.co.uk

Changes to the educational programmes

The new Early Years Foundation Stage comes into effect on 1 September 2021.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

Educational programmes, referred to by some as the 'early years curriculum', are the areas of learning and development which must shape the activities and experiences that children have in your early years setting, at all ages. Your setting should use the educational programmes to decide the approach to curriculum that is right for you.

The 7 areas of learning and development remain the same.

The 3 prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The 4 specific areas:

- literacy
- maths
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage

Setting the standards for learning,
development and care for children from
birth to five

Published: 31 March 2021

Effective: 1 September 2021

The changes

Changes have been made to the wording in the educational programmes.

Specifically, this means:

- they are longer, there is more depth, and they contain examples of things that you can do with children
- there is a new focus on early language and extending vocabulary, with more examples on how to embed and develop vocabulary skills across all 7 areas, because this improves child development in a broad curriculum



Changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework – section 3

The principal changes to the EYFS from September 2021 are to the learning and development requirements and the inclusion of the Reception Baseline Assessment. Additionally, there are some small changes to the safeguarding and welfare requirements, following feedback from the sector, to:

- clarify existing policy and address commonly asked questions,
- provide links to new or updated guidance that may be useful, for instance around preparing food safely for children of different ages, and
- reflect updates in legislation and systems that have taken place since the EYFS framework was updated in 2017.

The table below summarises the section 3 changes.

EYFS reference	Change	Rationale
Paragraphs 3.4 & 3.5	Removed references to Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Replaced with “local safeguarding partners” (LSP).	LSCBs have been replaced by “local safeguarding partners” (LSP). This is an update to reflect current policy.
Paragraph 3.4	Added: To safeguard children and practitioners online, providers will find it helpful to refer to “Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations”. Footnote with link to the guidance. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations	This guidance was published in 2019, so is not included in the 2017 framework. This is an update to signpost providers to guidance they may find helpful in implementing the EYFS requirements to safeguard children and practitioners.
Paragraph 3.9	Replaced “is likely to” with “may”. The relevant sentence reads: “Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable.”	This change is to clarify that all people who may come into regular contact with children are included in this requirement and is intended to assist providers in interpretation.
Paragraph 3.10 (second bullet point) – suitable people	Amended to clarify that a criminal record check is not needed for someone living on the premises by adding: “unless there is no access to the part of the premises when and where children are cared for”	Ofsted carries out checks in respect of all providers on domestic premises rather than non-domestic. The amendment is to make clear that where there is no access to children by someone who lives on the premises no criminal record check is required.

1



Paragraph 3.11 & footnote 26	Changed “before an individual starts work with children” at the end of the first sentence in footnote 26. To “before an individual has unsupervised contact with children”	This is an update to clarify that providers can allow someone to start work even if the DBS check has not come back as long as that person is supervised. This change ensures alignment between paragraph 3.11 and footnote 26.
Paragraph 3.14 (footnote 28), 3.15, 3.17	For childcare on non-domestic premises removed the references to disqualification for a provider or staff member who lives with a disqualified person, or because they live in the same household where a disqualified person is employed. Removed reference to the 2016 disqualification consultation in footnote 28.	Following a consultation, this group were removed from the disqualification regulations from 01/09/18: The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. This update aligns the EYFS framework with the updated legislation.
Paragraph 3.19	Changed “practitioner” to “staff member”.	Practitioner changed to “staff member” for consistency.
Paragraph 3.20 suitable people	Amended to make clear that providers must comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the fair and equal treatment of practitioners of different gender, race, and sexual orientation etc.	This addition signposts the Equality Act 2010 that all providers must comply with and reflects to the importance of ensuring a diverse early years workforce, which better reflects wider society.
Paragraph 3.28	Amended the first phrase “In group settings” to “settings on the early years register”.	This is to be clear that this requirement only applies to early years settings on the early years register and does not apply to schools.
Paragraph 3.28 – footnote 36	New footnote: <i>Capable and qualified</i> includes having necessary skills and knowledge to deputise. A deputy does not have to have any specific qualification.	The EYFS makes clear that deputies are not required to have specific qualifications to take on this role. It is for providers to use their judgement to determine capability.
Also Paragraph 3.28 – Qualifications (see also paras 3.32 to 3.38)	Removed the phrase “full and relevant” in respect of qualifications and changed to ‘ <i>approved</i> ’ qualifications. New footnote added to provide a link to approved qualifications. Footnote 35 added to say that “These qualification requirements do not apply to out-of-school provision for reception aged children” Check early years qualifications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	The phrase ‘full and relevant’ applied when the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC) were responsible for qualifications and their criteria, so this wording is now outdated. Qualifications must be approved by DfE. Footnote 35 has been added to ensure alignment with paragraph 3.41 which sets out the qualifications required for before and after school care and holiday provision.

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Paragraph 3.29	Makes clear that supervision of children includes whilst eating.	The supervision of children whilst they are eating is important to help prevent choking and to detect signs of choking so rapid action can be taken if and when needed.
Paragraph 3.30	Amended to clarify that 17 year olds and students must be suitable, which means they must have obtained an enhanced criminal records check before being left unsupervised.	This is to clarify existing EYFS policy to ensure consistent interpretation by early years providers and ensure the safety of children.
Paragraph 3.31	Makes it clearer that, for all providers, exceptions to ratios may be made exceptionally and where the quality of care and safety of children is maintained.	This clarifies existing EYFS policy. Some providers reported needing further clarity on this exception.
Paragraphs 3.35 to 3.38	Replaces references to 'or another <u>suitable</u> level 6 qualification' to 'or another <u>approved</u> level 6 qualification'. Check early years qualifications - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	This is to clarify that this refers to another level 6 qualification that has been approved by DfE and to avoid the use of ambiguous terminology.
Paragraph 3.39 and footnote 48 - reception ratios for academies	Added to footnote: 'In an academy a teacher can have whatever qualification the trust regard as appropriate to teach an infant class, in line with admissions law'.	This update is to align with existing admissions law.
Paragraph 3.41 – before & after school	Added footnote 49 that says that 'school' means maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools and academies.	This change is to clarify the type of providers that this paragraph applies to.
Paragraphs 3.42 & 3.43	Made clear that the exceptions for 3, 4 & 5 year olds in wraparound and school holiday care are examples of flexibility. A footnote now defines what is meant by a school day.	There has been confusion over the application of exceptions to childminder ratios in paragraph 3.42. This change is to add clarity.
Paragraph 3.42	Made it clearer that childminders must not exceed 6 children under the age of 8, per adult.	The ratio requirement is the most commonly asked question received by Ofsted. This change is to clarify existing policy. Exceptions to ratios for childminders are the flexible application of the ages of children allowed within the maximum of 6 children under the age of 8.
Paragraph 3.45	"Oral health" added to current requirement to promote children's health.	This change is to make it an explicit requirement to promote the good oral health of children and was consulted on alongside the wider reforms to the EYFS in 2019.

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Paragraphs 3.46 & 3.47 – Footnote 55	Amended to further clarify that non-prescription medicines do not need a GP prescription before providers can administer them and what constitutes non-prescription medicines. Link added to BMA guidance.	Clarifies further what is meant by non-prescription medicine. The 2017 requirements have been found to be not clear enough for all users. GPs have continued to find that providers have been requiring parents to get prescriptions when not required
Paragraph 3.48	Additional wording added: <i>Fresh drinking water must be available and accessible to children at all times.</i>	Additional wording for clarification.
Paragraph 3.49 (footnote 56)	Addition on where to find guidance on food preparation: This includes preparing food safely for children of different ages.	Added to ensure providers are aware of where to go to for further guidance on the safe preparation of food in early years settings. This signposts guidance published by PHE in 2017.
Paragraph 3.53	The first sentence has been made a standalone paragraph. The remaining sentence has been incorporated into paragraph 3.53 as they are both about corporal punishment.	This change is to separate requirements on corporal punishment from general behaviour management requirements and is intended to add clarity.
Paragraph 3.57	Added a link to government advice on vaping and e-cigarettes. Use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces.	The previous version of the EYFS did not include explicit guidance on vaping and e-cigarettes. This addition is to signpost providers to Public Health England guidance on the <i>Use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces</i> (page 8)
Paragraph 3.58	Added: "Where the space standards are applied providers cannot increase the number of children on roll because they additionally use an outside area. Forest and other exclusively (or almost exclusively) outdoor provision is not required to meet the space standards above as long as children's needs can be met for this kind of provision. Indoor space requirements can be used as a guide for the minimum area needed."	Clarification added on outdoor space requirements for providers that are exclusively or almost exclusively outdoor – for example if provision is a forest school.
Paragraph 3.60	Added additional words to beginning of paragraph and a footnote to link to guidance on safety checks for sleeping children. "Sleeping children must be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe. Being safe includes ensuring that cots/bedding are in good condition and suited to the age of the child, and that infants are placed down to sleep safely in line with latest government	This is to signpost providers to existing guidance on unexpected infant death and add clarity on safety checks for sleeping children.

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	safety guidance https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/reduce-the-risk-of-sudden-infant-death-syndrome/	
Paragraph 3.68 (footnote 63)	Added footnote 63: "Guidance on sharing information with relevant services when there are safeguarding concerns is available via: Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) "	This is to signpost providers to helpful guidance and aligns the EYFS with advice given to schools.
Also: 3.69 and footnote 65	Removal of requirement for providers to get permission from Ofsted to store records off-site. Updated footnote on data protection regulations.	This is to remove an outdated requirement and clarify that data protection of records is a provider responsibility. The footnote has been added to refer to current data protection legislation that has been updated since the former EYFS framework was published in 2017.
Paragraph 3.70	Added a footnote 66 to provide a link: The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has published helpful guidance on cyber security: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-practitioners-using-cyber-security-to-protect-your-settings	This is to signpost providers to helpful guidance that has been published since the former EYFS framework was published in 2017.
Additional paragraph – 3.80	Added a paragraph explaining that the EYFS sits alongside other legal requirements which providers are still required to meet.	This addition makes clear to providers that other legislation applies alongside the EYFS.
Annex A – paragraph 6 Footnote 71	Added that the emergency skills in the full Paediatric First Aid course (set out in paragraph 5) should be delivered face to face. The footnote defines what face to face means.	This amendment is to clarify that for full PFA courses, the emergency PFA skills should be delivered face to face and not virtually.

Changes to Development Matters

Many settings / childminders / schools use the development matters framework for continual assessment and tracking of children up to the end of the foundation stage. Typically this involves statements that build a profile towards each of the early learning goals, and a series of categories in the form of subdivided month bands (e.g. 30-50D, 40-60E). The new Development Matters guidance, published in September 2020, is a significant departure from that approach. The new handbook provides criteria for the seven areas of learning of EYFS, but not for the individual ELGs. Also, it has dispensed with the original ages and stages (month bands) in favour of a broader approach involving just three categories: birth to three, three to four, and reception. This does not provide the granular detail of the previous framework and as development matters is non-statutory, settings / childminders / schools are free to adopt the new system, adapt it, or develop their own approach.

However, many early years experts have voiced disappointment in the latest version of Development Matters which they say does not champion the child. Since its publication on 3 September 2020, concerns have been growing that the guidance does not champion the 'needs of the individual child', or reflect or respect practitioner expertise.

Dr Sue Allingham, early years author, trainer and consultant, found that throughout the document 'the image of the child is of deficit.' She said: 'Even though the introduction acknowledges that children develop at different rates, we move into a body of text that separates child development into three arbitrary sections. 'When we are told that it isn't 'neat and orderly', we are given a linear progression,' she said. She added that the creation of a section for 'Reception' – 'is not helpful as the children will vary in age from just four to nearly six'. Sue was quick to pick up on language such as "finding out where difficulties lie" and children who may need extra help to become secure in areas of development,' focusing on learning deficits rather than on what children can do and what they already know.

The Early Years Sector Coalition, which is made up of 13 organisations representing the early years sector, said the new document presented ‘a prescriptive, simplistic, limited curriculum and pedagogy, and does not reflect and respect practitioner expertise and excellent practice in the sector’. ‘It also fails to recognise all children as active and capable learners and does not provide for the breadth of challenges they will face in a complex and unknown future.’ ‘As such, this document does not provide a sound foundation for providers to build a curriculum in the best interests of children,’ the coalition said.

The coalition has developed ‘guidance for the sector, by the sector: resulting in the New “Birth to Five Matters”’. The coalition has taken the opportunity to revise existing guidance to develop an evidence-informed document for our times that addresses practitioners’ needs and concerns about doing what is best for children.

Birth to 5 Matters <https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk>



Realising the Ambition <https://education.gov.scot/media/3bjpr3wa/realisingtheambition.pdf>

Realising the Ambition: Being Me. Designed to guide and support all those who work with babies and children in the early learning and childcare sector and beyond into the early years of primary school in Scotland. Threaded throughout the document is updated information, detailed advice based on recent research and signposting to a wide range of professional development resources.

Realising the Ambition: Being Me builds on the premise that babies and children deserve the very best experiences throughout their learning journey; before birth and beyond. Realising this ambition can only be achieved if all of our services aspire to provide our babies, children and their families with flexible, accessible and affordable provision of the highest quality.



Both Birth to Five Matters and Realising the Ambition: Being Me documents can help inform your approach to curriculum, putting the educational programmes into practice.

Key Changes to safeguarding and welfare

The changes

There are some minor changes to the safeguarding and welfare section, including a new requirement to promote the good oral health of children.



What this means in practice

This could include things like talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things, or the importance of brushing your teeth.

Adding this requirement does not mean that you must carry out supervised toothbrushing. You will not be required to assess children's oral health.

However, you can decide how this requirement is met, for example, there are various schemes around the country that support supervised toothbrushing. You may want to speak to your local authority about this.

If supervised toothbrushing is something you decide to introduce, you should also read the [guidance on supervised toothbrushing during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#). **Assessment arrangements**

Age 2 progress check

No changes have been made to the progress check at age 2.

This remains the only statutory assessment that people working with pre-reception children will need to carry out. The purpose of the 2 year check is to help identify strengths and any areas where progress is less than expected. It is not a requirement to identify a child as exceeding, emerging or expected for the 2 year check.

Changes to the early learning goals (ELGs)

The early learning goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the academic year in which they turn 5.

While we should have knowledge of the early learning goals, early years practitioners do not need to use the early learning goals in conducting assessments. Remember, the ELGs are what the DfE want children to achieve at the end of the foundation stage.

However, I have included the changes here so you can see a child's expected level of development by the time they turn 5 years of age.

The early learning goals should not be used as a curriculum. They should be used as an assessment during the summer term of the reception year.

The changes

The early learning goals have been changed to make them clearer and more specific. They are more focused on the main factors that support child development at age 5. The 7 areas of learning and development remain unchanged:

- communication and language
- personal, social and emotional development
- physical development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

The goals are there to be used to assess children at the end of reception year, rather than for pre-school children.

Whilst there are still 17 ELGs in the new EYFSP, some of these have changed and do not necessarily map to the old ones. The following table provides a comparison with the ELGs used to define the Good Level of Development measure highlighted.

Current Area	Current ELG	New Area	New ELG
Communication & Language	Listening and Attention	Communication & Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding
	Understanding		Speaking
	Speaking		-
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-confidence and Self-awareness	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-regulation
	Managing feelings and behaviour		Managing Self
	Making Relationships		Building Relationships
Physical Development	Moving and Handling	Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills
	Health and Self-Care		Fine Motor Skills
Literacy	Reading	Literacy	Comprehension
	Writing		Word Reading
	-		Writing
Mathematics	Number	Mathematics	Number
	Shape, space and measures		Numerical Patterns
Understanding the world	People and communities	Understanding the world	Past and Present
	The world		People Culture and Communities
	Technology		The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	Exploring and using media and materials	Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials
	Being imaginative		Being Imaginative and Expressive

One key change in terms of data collection is the removal of the 'exceeding' grade. Under the new framework, schools will only assess whether a pupil has met (i.e. expected) or not met (i.e. emerging) the criteria of each Early Learning Goal (ELG). There is also an 'A' value for instances where there is not enough information available to make an assessment.

The Journey to the New EYFS

The DfE's consultation in 2019 covered:

- proposed revisions to the educational programmes
- proposed revisions to the Early Learning Goals
- proposed changes to the assessment and moderation process for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- and a proposed change to the safeguarding and welfare requirements to promote good oral health.

The DfE said that the proposals were intended to:

- make all 17 ELGs clearer, more specific and easier for teachers to make accurate judgements
- focus on strengthening language and vocabulary development to particularly support disadvantaged children
- strengthen literacy and numeracy outcomes to ensure all children have a good grasp of these areas of learning in preparation for year 1
- ensure the ELGs are based on the latest evidence in childhood development
- ensure they reflect the strongest predictors of future attainment.

The government's response to the consultation

The DfE sought responses to these proposed changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) between 24 October 2019 and 31 January 2020.

The consultation received a total of 2,452 responses to the consultation, including 69 responses from practitioners working in the PVI early years sector and 41 childminders.

On 1 July, 2020 the government published its response to the EYFS Reforms consultation.

Educational programmes

Following the consultation, the DfE said that it would make a number of changes to the reformed education programmes including:

- PSED will include additional information on self-care and healthy eating.
- Physical Development will be strengthened to include a greater focus on development from birth to reception and on the link between gross and fine motor skills.
- Literacy will include a stronger emphasis on pre-reception literacy learning, and the link between language comprehension and later reading and writing.
- Mathematics will include a greater detail on the importance of shapes, spatial reasoning and measure as part of early maths learning, and how children can foster a love of maths.
- Understanding the World will include wider experiences for children.

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

The Communication and language programme will remain as originally proposed.

Early Learning Goals

The DfE said proposed changes to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) would also go ahead, largely as planned, with the following changes made:

- Communication and Language will include focus on adult-child interactions, and the word ‘accurate’ has been removed from the Speaking ELG when referring to tenses.
- Mathematics will include greater clarity to counting and comparing quantities in the Numerical Patterns ELG. Government will proceed with its focus on number and numerical patterns within the mathematics ELGs as the strongest predictor for later maths outcomes. This also reflects government’s continued commitment to strengthen the teaching of early numeracy so that all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are able to start year 1 with a strong and confident foundation in number. 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 will include a change in relation to the Past and Present ELG to further clarify the expectation of children understanding the concept of ‘past’.
- Expressive Arts and Design will include reference to a greater variety of use of tools, materials and techniques that children will need to demonstrate for the Creating with Materials ELG.

The ELGs for Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; and Literacy will remain as proposed.

EYFSP moderation

The proposal to remove the statutory duty for local authorities to moderate the EYFSP in 25% of schools each year will go ahead.

Schools will still be required to submit EYFSP data to their local authority and this will still be collected nationally.

Exceeding judgement

The government has removed the “exceeding” judgement criteria from the EYFSP and says that this will “free up teachers’ time”.

Teachers will be expected to continue to identify and stretch more able children.

Oral health

A need to include oral health alongside the requirement to “promote the good health of children” will be added to the EYFS framework.

Individual settings and schools will need to determine how to meet this requirement and practitioners will not be required to assess this.

Protected characteristics

The DfE says that it will work with sector experts to review the EYFSP Handbook and ensure that it is clear on how practitioners should complete the Profile for children with SEND, EAL and who are summer-born, including signposting to additional advice and support where appropriate.

Changes to Development Matters: non-statutory curriculum guidance

The DfE has republished [Development Matters](#). While it's not compulsory, the DfE recommend that you use it with the new statutory framework.

However, you may decide to use Birth to Five Matters or Realising the Ambition, and that is totally fine too!

In the EYFS, and Inspection Handbook, Ofsted has made it absolutely clear that Development Matters is non-statutory. It is for you, as early years providers / leaders and practitioners to decide their preferred guidance – and importantly use their professional judgements and expertise to assess children's learning and development.

Changes to Development Matters

It's shorter, about two-thirds of the length of the previous version. Supposedly to allow for more freedom to develop the right broad curriculum for the children you work with.

The age bands have been 'simplified' to avoid tracking activities that do not support child development. There are now 3 instead of 6:

- birth to 3
- 3 and 4-year-olds
- children in reception

There's more room for professional judgement. You can make more judgements based on your knowledge and experience, instead of using the early learning goals or age bands in the framework to track children's progress.

What you need to do before September 2021

Make plans to implement the changes / new requirements from September 2021.

Take time to read the [early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) framework](#) and [Development Matters](#).

Nursery leaders

If you are a nursery leader or manager design your curriculum around the new educational programmes, not the early learning goals.

You may also find it helpful to:

- brief your staff about the changes
- contact [your local authority](#) or support groups to find out what advice they can offer

Nursery practitioners

If you are a practitioner in a nursery you may find it helpful to speak to your manager about how your work needs to adapt to the changes.

Childminders

You may find it helpful to:

- start planning for the changes coming in September 2021
- contact [your local authority](#) who may be able to offer advice and support about implementing the changes to the EYFS
- seek advice from an association you're a member of
- consider contacting other childminders in your area, for example by joining a childminder support group to share experiences

What you need to do from September 2021

From September 2021, all early years providers must follow the new [early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) framework](#). Whatever your role and type of setting you work in, you'll need to be working to the new framework.

Ofsted inspections from September 2021

How and when you'll be inspected by [Ofsted](#) depends on whether you're on the childcare register or the early years register.

You can read [Ofsted's inspection framework](#) to be aware of the processes and procedures under the education inspection framework (EIF).

As Ofsted is about to recommence its inspection activity it is useful to review the information from the regulator about how they have applied exceptions / disapplications about specific aspects of the early years foundation stage.

6.1 Assessment - progress check at age 2

The change

The progress check at age 2 will not need to be undertaken during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

What this means in practice

Providers would normally need to undertake a progress check when a child is aged between 2 and 3. This provides parents and carers with a short, written summary of their child's development in the prime areas.

Where the criteria at paragraph 2.2 are met, there is no requirement for providers to undertake this check, but providers should still remain alert to any emerging concerns about any child in their care, and endeavour to provide or seek additional support if needed. It is expected that the checks will take place as soon as is practical once the child returns to, or joins, the early years setting, including where a child has turned 3 if it is considered appropriate and useful in the provider's professional judgement and in discussion with the child's parents or carers.

6.2 Assessment – early years foundation stage profile

The change

The early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) assessment was not undertaken in the academic year 2019 to 2020.

In January 2021, in light of the introduction of new national restrictions, where schools should allow vulnerable children and children of critical workers to attend, the Secretary of State for Education decided that it will not be mandatory to complete the EYFSP assessment in 2021. However, we will be requiring schools to use 'best endeavours' to undertake it.

What this means in practice

The decision that the EYFSP will not be mandatory in 2021 is in recognition of the additional pressures, and uncertainties, that teachers are facing during this challenging time and aligns with the approach taken for other statutory assessments this year.

However, we recognise that the EYFSP is a valued assessment by teachers and early years professionals and is a crucial tool in supporting children's development and the transition from reception to year 1. It is for that reason we are requiring teachers and early years practitioners to use their best endeavours to still complete the EYFSP for children in the summer term, if at all possible, and to provide this important information to parents and to year 1 teachers, should the situation at the time allow.

This will be a judgement for schools and teachers depending on their individual circumstances and will, in many cases, depend on the coming weeks and months. Schools who decide they are able to complete the EYFSP this year and provide this information to parents and year 1 teachers will not be subject to

statutory external moderation. There will be no requirement to submit data to the local authority or to confirm whether they have completed the EYFSP to the Department for Education.

7.1 Staff qualification and ratios

The change

Ratio requirements stay the same in the majority of cases (see [maintained nursery schools](#) for the only exception) but, during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19), exceptions can be made to the qualifications that staff hold in order to be counted in the ratio requirements. Providers should use reasonable endeavours to ensure that at least half of staff (excluding the manager) hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification to meet staff: child ratio requirements, but this will not be a legal requirement.

What this means in practice

Ratio requirements remain the same, except for maintained school nursery classes with no school teacher, with the existing flexibility set out at paragraph 3.30 of the EYFS: 'Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made.'

Providers still need to ensure that there is always a member of staff in a setting which is open and providing care, who holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

We expect providers to try and meet existing requirements for staff at level 2 as far as is possible. For example, if staff with level 2 qualifications are available, they should work with the children. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where staff absence due to the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) means this is not possible.

The qualifications of staff depend on the type of setting and the numbers of staff: child ratios in the EYFS. These are set out in the section on [staff qualifications and ratios during any period of intervention related to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

7.2 Paediatric first aid

Providers remain responsible for ensuring all children in their care are kept safe at all times.

The changes

The requirement for at least one person who has a full PFA certificate to be on the premises at all times when children are present remains in place at all times where there are children below the age of 24 months. Paragraph 3.25 and annex A of the EYFS set out more detail.

During any period of intervention relating to coronavirus (COVID-19), if children are aged 2 to 5 within a setting, providers must use their 'best endeavours' to ensure one person with a full PFA certificate is on site when children are present. If after using best endeavours they are still unable to secure a member of staff with full PFA to be on site then they must carry out a written risk assessment and ensure that someone with a current first aid at work or emergency PFA certification is on site at all times children are on premises.

Please note that this change does not apply for childminders, who must already have a full PFA certificate as part of registration requirements.

‘Best endeavours’ means to identify and take all the steps possible within your power, which could, if successful, ensure there is a paediatric first aider on site when a setting is open, as per the usual EYFS requirement on PFA.

New entrants (levels 2 and 3) will not need to hold a PFA certificate within their first 3 months in order to be counted in staff: child ratios, during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Requalification

Previously, if PFA certificate requalification training was prevented for reasons associated directly with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, or by complying with related government advice, the validity of current certificates could have been extended to 31 March 2021 at the latest. This applied to certificates expiring on or after 1 October 2020. This extension period has ended and practitioners must attend PFA certificate requalification training in order to have a valid certificate if their previous certificate has expired.

What this means in practice

For providers with children below the age of 24 months in their care, the requirements around PFA remain the same as in the current EYFS framework at all times. This is in recognition of the greater risk factors for babies and young children in this age bracket, including choking risks and different cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) procedures for those aged 0 to 1 as set out by the NHS.

During any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID 19), new entrants do not need to have a PFA certificate to be counted in ratios.

Also, for providers who have children aged 2 to 5 in their care, they must use ‘best endeavours’ to have one person with full PFA, as set out in the EYFS, on site. By best endeavours, we mean providers must be able to demonstrate they have identified and taken all the steps possible to appoint a suitable person.

This should include:

- liaising with their local authority to find a suitable person, this could include identifying and looking to appoint either:
 - a person with a PFA certificate and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check from a local provider who has closed
 - a registered local childminder with a PFA certificate and DBS check who is approved to work on non-domestic premises
- looking to secure full PFA training for staff that includes the specific risk factors and techniques required for the care of young children including but not limited to choking, seizures, and issues related to sleeping – annex A of the EYFS statutory framework sets out the criteria for effective PFA training

After these actions have been carried out and if it is still not possible for someone with a full PFA certificate to be on site at all times children are present, providers must undertake the following actions in order to remain open:

- carry out a written risk assessment to consider and mitigate the likely occurrence of a serious incident
- ensure at least one person with a current first aid at work or emergency PFA certification is on site at all times children are on premises and must accompany children on outings

- paragraph 3.65 in the EYFS continues to apply and outings should only be undertaken if it is safe to do so
- providers must take account of any government advice in relation to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The written risk assessment should take into account all relevant factors with the aim of enabling the setting to ensure they can provide the safe care needed during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19), including:

- the number of children on the premises
- the staff to child ratio
- the types of activities undertaken with the children on the premises
- the likely need for first aid based on the needs of the children attending the premises
- first aider knowledge among staff on the premises
- the mitigations available to reduce the risk of such an incident

Providers will need to ensure the written risk assessment is kept available in the setting. This does not need to be sent anywhere but must be available on request.

Providers could help members of staff who have a first aid at work or emergency PFA certificate to help bridge the gap between their current qualification and full PFA by looking to secure online training to cover elements required for the care of young children.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides [guidance on choosing a first aid training provider](#). As set out in HSE guidance, any training in relation to paediatric CPR and choking should be in line with the [Resuscitation Council's guidance](#) and [NHS England guidance](#). The practical elements of PFA courses should be delivered face to face, so that competency can be properly assessed, as set out in annex A of the [statutory framework for the EYFS](#).

7.3 Safeguarding and welfare

All other aspects of the safeguarding and welfare section of the EYFS framework still apply, including requirements relating to child protection arrangements. Providers will want to consider whether any refresh or review is needed of their child protection arrangements, policy and procedures, in light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Settings must continue to have a practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding. It is acceptable for the safeguarding lead to not be based on site if this is not practical, for example, they may be working from home, or be based at another setting, as long as they are still available to provide support, advice and guidance to staff.

See the [statutory guidance on keeping children safe in education](#) for more information.

Staff qualifications and ratios during any period of intervention related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

8.1 All group settings

(See EYFS paragraph 3.23.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says the:

- manager must hold at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff must hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- manager should have at least 2 years' experience of working in an early years setting or have at least 2 years' other suitable experience
- provider must ensure there is a named deputy who, in their judgement, is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least half of all other staff (excluding the manager) hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification. However, meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

All other requirements remain.

8.2 All settings

(See EYFS paragraph 3.25.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- at least one person who has a current PFA certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when children are present and must accompany children on outings
- all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who have completed a level 2 or level 3 qualification must also have either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within 3 months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in an early years setting

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

The requirement for all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce to have a full PFA or emergency PFA certificate within 3 months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios at level 2 or level 3 will be disapplied.

There will remain a requirement for at least one person who has a current PFA certificate to be on the premises and available at all times when children aged below 24 months are present.

Where a provider has only children aged 2 to 5 in their care they must use 'best endeavours' to have one person with PFA on site.

All other requirements remain.

8.3 All providers (other than childminders) caring for children under 2

(See EYFS paragraph 3.31.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 3 children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification and must be suitably experienced in working with children under 2
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification
- at least half of all staff must have received training that specifically addresses the care of babies
- where there is a room for children under the age of 2, the member of staff in charge of that room must, in the judgement of the provider, have suitable experience of working with under 2s

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least half of other staff, excluding the member of staff who holds a level 3 qualification, hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification, but meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

All other requirements continue to apply.

8.4 All providers (other than childminders) caring for children aged 2

(See EYFS paragraph 3.32.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 4 children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least half of other staff, excluding the member of staff who holds a level 3 qualification, hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification, but meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

All other requirements remain.

8.5 Providers caring for children aged 3 and over where a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children

(See EYFS paragraph 3.33.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least one other member of staff, excluding the member of staff who holds a suitable level 6 qualification, holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification, but meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

All other requirements remain.

8.6 Providers caring for children aged 3 and over when a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children

(See EYFS paragraph 3.34.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 8 children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least half of other staff, excluding the member of staff who holds a level 3 qualification, hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification but meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

All other requirements remain.

8.7 Independent schools (including in nursery classes in free schools and academies) caring for children aged 3 and over where a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable level 6 qualification, an instructor, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, is working directly with the children.

(See EYFS paragraph 3.35.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- for classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, there must be at least one member of staff for every 30 children
- for all other classes there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children
- at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification

Change for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Providers should use their 'reasonable endeavours' to ensure that at least one other member of staff, excluding the member of staff who holds a suitable level 6 qualification, an instructor, or another suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification but meeting this will not be a legal requirement.

Requirements placed on these providers remain subject to any permitted exceptions under The Schools Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) Regulations 2012 S.I. 2012/10.

All other requirements remain.

8.8 Independent schools (including in nursery classes in academies) caring for children aged 3 and over where there is no person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, early years teacher status or another suitable level 6 qualification, no instructor, and no suitably qualified overseas trained teacher, working directly with the children

(See EYFS paragraph 3.36.)

Current requirement

The current requirement says:

- there must be at least one member of staff for every 8 children
- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

I hope that the information contained in this latest newsletter will help you understand the key changes so far and prepare for the new EYFS from September.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Bets wishes

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References:

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)

[read a summary of the EYFS changes here.](#)

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