



## Early Years Foundation Stage ('EYFS') – Frequently asked questions

### What is EYFS?

EYFS, is how the Government, and early years' professionals, describe the time in your child's life between birth and age 5.

**This is a very important stage in your child's development as it helps your child get ready for school as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born, up until the age of 5, the child's early years' experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support his/her development, care and learning needs.**

Nurseries, preschools, reception classes and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the EYFS Framework.

#### *It sets out:*

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child **safe** and promote their welfare;
- The '**7 areas of learning and development**' which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge;
- Assessments that will tell you about **your child's progress** through the EYFS; and
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the "**Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**".

There is also guidance for the professionals supporting your child on planning the learning activities, and observing and assessing what and how your child is learning and developing.

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### What does it mean for me as a Parent or Main Carer?

Much thought has been given to making sure that your child is as safe as possible. Within EYFS there is a set of welfare standards that the staff within the Nursery must follow. These include the ratio of staff required in the Nursery, based on the numbers of children registered to attend on any given day, and things like administering medicines and carrying out risk assessments.

#### **Quality**

You can find out about the quality of your child's nursery and other early years providers in relation to the EYFS Framework by checking what the Government's official inspection body for early years - Ofsted, has to say about it. You can find this information at:

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report).

## How will my child be learning?

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development. Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, there are a further four prime areas of learning, these will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

These 7 areas of learning are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals at the Nursery who will be teaching and supporting your child, will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like the curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests. Children with childcare providers who follow the EYFS framework learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

## As a Parent or Main Carer, how can I help my child learn?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner:

- Sing nursery rhymes;
- Talk about the numbers, colours, words and letters you see when you are out and about;
- Help your child to cut out pictures from magazines; ask your child what they can see in the pictures;
- Cook and bake together;

- Use the weather – shadows, rain puddles, snow, wind, mist and sun – to extend your child’s vocabulary;
- Explore the park at different times of the year; talk about the changes they can see;
- Read to them often; point to each word as you read;
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### How can I find out how my child is developing?

It is important that we work together. You need to feel comfortable about exchanging information and discussing things that will benefit your child. Your child’s *key person* is the person who:

- Is your main point of contact within the Nursery;
- Helps your child to become settled, happy and safe;
- Is responsible for your child’s care, development and learning; and
- Takes a careful note of your child’s progress, sharing this with you, and giving you ideas as to how to help your child at home.

You are able to get information about your child’s development at any time from your child’s *key person*. We also hold two Parents Evening a year when you will have the opportunity to discuss your child’s care, and receive a written report about how your child is developing.

### Where can I go for further information?

The most important place to find out more is your child’s *key person* at the Nursery. We are happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

You can find more information about EYFS, which includes the early learning goals, at [www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage](http://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage) or [www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk).

The foundation years’ website also includes a range of resources and contacts.