



Parents' Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

AND how you can contribute to the assessment of your child's learning and development

Exciting times ahead for you and your child...



What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Welcome to the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, which 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 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, their early years experience should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

Nurseries, pre-schools, reception classes and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

What is the EYFS Framework – why do we have one?

The EYFS Framework exists to support all professionals working in the EYFS to help your child, and was developed with a number of early years experts and parents.

In 2012 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This new framework also has a greater emphasis on your role in helping your child develop.



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
- 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.

How my child will 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, the prime areas 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 are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes **place** both indoors and outside.

When your child is 5

At the end of the EYFS – in the summer term of the reception year in school – teachers complete an assessment which is known as the **EYFS Profile**. This assessment is carried out by the reception teacher and is based on what they, and other staff caring for your child, have observed over a period of time.

Another important part of the **EYFS Profile** is **your knowledge about your child's learning and development**, so do let your child's class teacher know about what your child does with you: such as how confident your child is in writing their name, reading and talking about a favourite book, speaking to people your child is not so familiar with or their understanding of numbers.

In order to help you communicate with us (in addition to the **informal conversations** with staff and the **reading diaries** which many of you are completing in very helpful detail already) we are sending home with this letter a set of slips that you can fill in, cut out and return to your child's class teacher whenever you observe something **significant**:

- What a lovely surprise! I had no idea my child could...
- I was so happy with my child because...
- I was over the moon with my child today because...
- What a brilliant time we had together recently...

Observations should be about:

- New learning
- Progress
- Developing interests
- **SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS**

What kind of observations would be useful?

See enclosed sheet for a brief list of examples – be as creative as you like! To be significant a number of these will be 'firsts'

We'll be delighted to supply you with more slips as and when you require them – please ask! We'll also put the pro-forma on our website and have a pack of spare slips on each classroom door.

All of the information collected is used to judge how your child is doing in the 7 areas of learning and development. Finding out at this stage how your child is doing will mean that the teacher your child has in their next school year – year 1 – will know what your child really enjoys doing and does well, as well as helping them decide if your child needs a bit of extra support, what that support should be and if they are already getting it.

The school will give you a report of your child's progress, including information from his or her EYFS Profile.

If you have any further questions or require help in how to best complete observations at home please don't hesitate to speak to myself or one of the Reception Team.

Regards,

Atwood Reception Team