

1. INTRODUCTION

The Foundation Stage has been the first stage of the National Curriculum since 2002. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) took its place in 2008, and the revised statutory framework now published by the Department for Education (DfE) is scheduled to take effect from **September 2012**. It follows the publication in March 2011 of the Tickell Report, *The Early Years: Foundations for Life, Health and Learning* [see Document Summary Service summary DSS 10/11 39, April 2011].

The document is in three main sections with five Appendices:

Section 1	The Learning and Development Requirements
Section 2	Assessment
Section 3	Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
Appendix 1	Legal basis of EYFS
Appendix 2	Duties on Local Authorities
Appendix 3	Development at 24-36 and 36-48 months
Appendix 4	Early Learning Goals
Appendix 5	EYFS Profile

The revised framework is for consultation until **30 September 2011**.

2. KEY PROPOSALS

These include:

- A new focus on three prime areas of learning in the EYFS so children are ready and able to learn at school. These areas are: personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language.
- A slimmed down EYFS, cutting the number of learning goals from 69 to 17. The learning goals will be more closely aligned with Key Stage 1 to smooth the transition from reception class to Year 1.
- Assessment at age five will remain but instead of the current complicated scale point assessment children will be judged against 17 learning goals.
- A new check for every two-year-old in pre-school settings to pick up early any problems in a child's development or special educational needs. Going further than Tickell's recommendation, the Government will require all early years settings to provide this information to parents.
- New plans, to be consulted on in the autumn, to enable parents to access their free entitlement hours from 7am-7pm, and take the full 15 hours over two days rather than a minimum of three days.
- A new core purpose for children's centres, with a stronger focus on school readiness and supporting families. It clearly sets out the outcomes which children's centres should be supporting.
- Exploring how we can find new ways of running children's centres, such as mutuals and co-operative approaches, so parents and communities can be more involved in local decision making and services.
- New requirement on all local authorities to publish data on how much they are spending on children's centres in their area to improve local accountability.

3. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The statutory framework sets out three **prime areas** and four **specific areas** of learning and development, each sub-divided into two or three **aspects** (17 aspects in total).

Prime areas

Personal, social and emotional development

Aspects

- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Making relationships

Physical development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving and handling • Health and self-care
Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and attention • Understanding • Speaking
Specific areas	Aspects
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Shape, space and measures
Understanding the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and communities • The world • Technology
Expressive arts and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and using media and materials • Being imaginative

For each prime and specific area **aspect** there are specified **early learning goals (ELGs)** which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of 5. Descriptors for the ELGs are given in **Appendix 4** at three levels: **Emerging**, **Expected** (the ELGs) and **Exceeding**.

4. ASSESSMENT AT 24 – 36 MONTHS

Practitioners must review progress in the prime areas when a child is between 24 and 36 months old, and supply parents or carers with a short written summary of their child's development. The development and progress check at 24 -36 months must identify any areas where the child's progress is less than expected, and should shape a targeted plan to support that child's future learning and development in the setting.

5. ASSESSMENT AT THE END OF EYFS (EYFS PROFILE)

A report on progress is required in the final term of the year in which the child reaches age 5, and no later than 30 June in that term. At this point, the EYFS Profile covering the 17 aspects of the seven areas of learning (see **Appendix 5**) must be completed for each child.

Providers must supplement the Profile assessment with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning *[see paragraph 1.11]*:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

6. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REQUIREMENTS

This part of the revised framework sets out a range of statutory requirements relating to:

- Safeguarding
- Suitable people for staffing, and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosure requirements
- Staff qualifications, training, support and skills
- Staff:child ratios, (including in childminding settings)
- Health, (including administration of medication to children, and paediatric first aid certificate holder requirements)
- Children's behaviour

- Safety, and suitability of premises, environment and equipment
- Outings
- Key Persons. (Each child must be assigned a key person [see paragraph 1.12])
- Equal Opportunities
- Information documentation requirements about each child and about the provider
- Information to be made available to parents/carers
- Written procedures required for dealing with concerns/complaints
- Changes that registered providers must notify to Ofsted
- Disqualification
- Inspection and enforcement

7. RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Responses to the consultation can be made directly online or by completing a downloadable Word format document for mailing. Access to these is via the website address given below.

The deadline for responses is 30 September 2011.

The complete revised draft statutory framework for EYFS, and consultation response information can be viewed/downloaded at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/> > Selecting 'Consultation on a Revised Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS)' in the list of 'All live consultations'.