

# Managing Assessment Information in the EYFS

## Nursery aged children in schools and settings



September 2015

## The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

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The [EYFS framework](#) is mandatory for all early years providers (from 1 September 2014) - maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools, and all providers on the Early Years Register. The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

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

Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must consider the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

## Early Years Outcomes

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[Early Years Outcomes \(September 2013\)](#) is a non-statutory guide for practitioners and inspectors to help inform understanding of child development through the early years. Oxfordshire County Council recommends the use of 'Development Matters' as it gives a more extensive explanation of the developmental levels, detailing how practitioners can support children's next steps. 'Early Years Outcomes' is an extract from this document.

## Development Matters

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[Development Matters \(March 2012\)](#) is non-statutory guidance material that supports practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS. It states that: “Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements and their order should not be taken as necessary steps for individual children. They should not be used as checklists. The age/stage bands overlap because these are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.” These statements can be used throughout the EYFS as a guide to making ‘best fit’ judgements about whether a child is showing typical development for their age, may be at risk of delay or is ahead for their age.

Individual observations may be linked to Development Matters bands as part of formative assessment. It is recommended that, in addition to an approved Baseline Assessment tool, judgements across all areas of learning should be made on entry and at several points throughout the year in order to consider the overall progress a child is making, and whether progress is generally in line with what is typical for a child of that age. Learning and development is compared with the most appropriate band(s) of descriptors and the band which most closely describes the child’s developmental stage is identified.

Using ‘A’, ‘B’ or ‘C’, a level can be awarded within each developmental age/stage band using a ‘best fit’ approach.

- if the child is working just within the band record as a ‘C’ (beginning):
- if the child is working comfortably within the age band record as a ‘B’ (secure)
- If the child is very proficient within the band record as an ‘A’ (high)

Because this is a ‘best fit’ judgement it does not involve recording evidence for or highlighting every single ‘Development Matters’ statement. Rather the child’s key person and the class teacher, in discussion with all others involved with the child, will make professional judgments about which level of development best describes the child at that moment on their developmental journey. These professional judgements will be based upon on-going observational assessment of the child as he/she engages with the environment and interacts in their play and planned activities. It will take account of information from the parents/carers about what the child does outside school.

To track and support the development of the whole child it is important that practitioners identify children’s level of development on entry and progress made throughout the year across all 7 areas of learning within the EYFS curriculum and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

## Baseline Assessment on entry to Reception

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Practitioners in Nursery classes and in settings with children of nursery age will need to know what assessments will be made in Reception and what their role is in sharing information with colleagues in Reception classes. The new baseline check will be used to assess children starting in Reception in September 2016 and beyond, though many schools have chosen to introduce the assessments from September 2015. Some

baseline assessment tools are task based and assess a child's development on the day of the assessment. Others are observation based and are informed by information from parents and practitioners from the child's previous provision.

“The content of the assessment will reflect the knowledge and understanding of children at the start of Reception and the idea is to use the assessment as a starting point from which to measure the progress that schools make with their pupils. It will be carried out by reception teachers within the first half term of a pupil's entry to school.”

From 'Reforming assessment and accountability for Primary Schools. Government response to consultation on primary schools assessment and accountability March 2014'

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/297595/Primary\\_Accountability\\_and\\_Assessment\\_Consultation\\_Response.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297595/Primary_Accountability_and_Assessment_Consultation_Response.pdf)

## National expectations on entry

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Ofsted no longer refer to 'on entry' benchmarks of 30-50 months for Nursery children. A child entering Nursery at the age of three working proficiently within 22-36 months could be considered as 'age typical', depending upon their date of birth. The common inspection framework which comes into effect from 1 September 2015 states:

“Inspectors will take account of current standards and progress, including the provider's own data, and make a relevant judgement on academic and other learning outcomes for children and learners by evaluating the extent to which they:

- progress well from their different starting points and achieve or exceed standards expected for their age”

Individual children may be:

- operating at a level **below** that typical for their age **but not significantly so** (this may reflect a lack of pre-school experience)
- showing a **typical level of development** for their age
- operating at a level **above** that typical for their age (indicating the potential to exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception).

Others may be operating at a level significantly below that which is typical for their age. Such children may be at risk of delay, or may have a particular disability or special educational need that has already been identified. The Early Years inspection Handbook 2015 states that:

“The inspector must evaluate

- whether children are working at typical levels of development for their age, including whether they are exceeding or reaching or are likely to reach typical levels of development for their age

- whether children who are disadvantaged or under-performing are catching up quickly”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

## National expectations on exit

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There are no set National expectations for children’s attainment at the end of the nursery year. Summative attainment is measured at the end of EYFS (the end of the child’s Reception year) using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. This will remain a statutory requirement for 2016 and from that point will become non-statutory.

For children in their nursery year the expectations are that they will be at or above the level of development for their age on exit. This will differ for individual children depending on their term of birth. The suggested age related expectation for entry into Reception, and therefore at the end of Nursery, is 30-60a or 40-60c.

## Assessing Progress

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The [Early Years Inspection Handbook September 2015](#) states that

“Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by evaluating the extent to which:

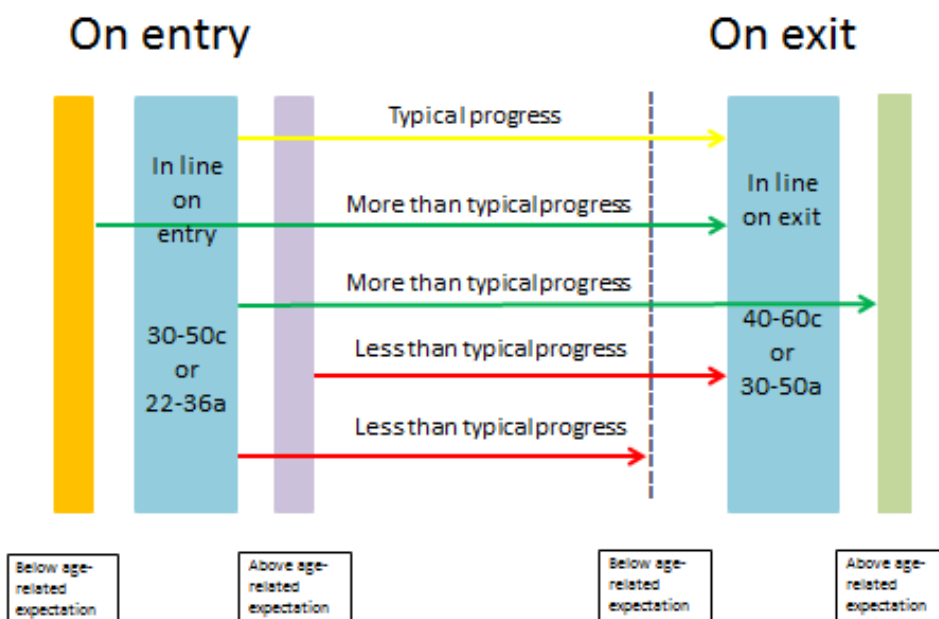
- assessment information is gathered from looking at what children and learners already know, understand and can do, and is informed by their parents/previous providers as appropriate
- assessment information is used to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies, including to identify children and learners who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support, enabling children and learners to make good progress and achieve well

Inspectors should take account of all the judgements made across the evaluation schedule. In particular, they should consider:

- the progress all children make in their learning and development relative to their starting points and their readiness for the next stage of their education including, where appropriate, readiness for school”

Where children progress steadily against what is a **typical level of development** for their age, they can be said to have made **typical progress**. Children are working at age related expectations but who started at a lower level of development than is typical for their age might be said to be making **more than typical** or **rapid progress**. However, a child starting school at a higher level of development, who is working at age related

expectations but not beyond this level on exit, **is unlikely to have made enough progress.**



E.g. A child who enters Nursery, at a level 'typical' for their age e.g. just beginning to work within the 30-50 months age banding / working proficiently within the 22-36 months age banding (depending on their age) and leaves being proficient within 30-50 months age banding or just beginning to work within the 40-60+ months age band, will have made 'typical progress'. This child will be seen as on track to achieve the 'expected' level when assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

## Tracking tools

- **Oxfordshire Pupil Tracker (OPT)** is designed to help primary, infant and junior schools record and track pupil development from EYFS (nursery) to KS2– this operates using SIMS or RM Integris.
- Contact the [ICT.Service@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ICT.Service@Oxfordshire.gov.uk) or tel: 0845 052 1000 for more details.
- **eProfile** is designed to help teachers and practitioners record and track development through the Early Years Foundation Stage framework from Birth to 5, using 'Development Matters' indicators. It operates using Microsoft Windows.

Tracking sheets to support more detailed assessment of level of development and progress made are available from the [early education tool](#) kit eg. Nursery class (Nursery age children) tracker by term of birth

In addition, a range of electronic tools are available for practitioners working in the EYFS to help record observations, photographs and videos, creating Learning Journals/logs such as 2Simple's '2 Build a Profile', 'Tapestry' from Foundation Forum, 'Fingertips Online' and 'Orbit'. Costs vary (some are free). They allow practitioners to involve parents/carers in contributing to the child's journal electronically.

## Identifying and reporting on specific groups of children

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### **SEN, EAL, Early Years Pupil Premium, significant ethnic groups, more able**

Practitioners must identify these children in order to track, monitor and report upon their progress as distinct groups. The [Early Years Inspection Handbook September 2015](#) states that the inspector should discuss with the provider the relevant children's starting points, looking at any assessment evidence the setting provides and the children's progress. This will include:

- the impact of any early years pupil premium funding on the children's progress
- whether children who are disadvantaged or under-performing are catching up quickly
- how well disabled children and those with special educational needs are supported to make progress
- how quickly children who speak English as an additional language gain the skills they need to communicate effectively.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/323495/EY\\_Funding\\_ConDoc\\_-\\_Branded\\_final\\_with\\_foreword.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/323495/EY_Funding_ConDoc_-_Branded_final_with_foreword.pdf) gives information about eligibility for Early Years Pupil Premium and how providers could use this funding.

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

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Children within the Early Years Foundation Stage with SEND are entitled to high-quality Early Years provision based on the EYFS framework, its principles and commitments. They should be supported in pursuing unique paths in their learning and development toward the early learning goals. Assessment of their progress should take account of the developmental bands described in Development Matters / Early Years Outcomes, recognising that progress is not linear.

## Early Support Developmental Journals

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Developmental Journals are available for young children with very specific needs e.g. Down's syndrome/autism etc. The Early Years Developmental Journal has been produced to help families find out more about early development and to track change and progress over time. It helps everyone involved with a child to share what they know and discuss how best to work together to support development and learning.

[http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/884631/early\\_years\\_developmental\\_journal2013.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/884631/early_years_developmental_journal2013.pdf)

[http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/884281/how\\_to\\_use\\_the\\_early\\_years\\_developmental\\_journal\\_v2.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/884281/how_to_use_the_early_years_developmental_journal_v2.pdf) provides guidance on use of the early years developmental journal

## Children who speak English as an additional language

“Children learning to speak English as an additional language is not a special educational need. Practitioners should assess the development of children who speak English as an additional language in their home language as well as in English, where possible. While the children’s skills in communication, language and literacy must be assessed in relation to their competency in English, the remaining areas of learning may be assessed in any language”. Please refer to [Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook](#) for more details.

The booklet [Identifying Children who are Learning English as an Additional Language and who may also have Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities](#) provides templates for tracking children’s language development over time.

## Responding to analysis of assessment information

After entering and recording data, at each given review point, practitioners should ensure that actions are planned in response to trends identified e.g. intervention groups such as ‘treasure trove’ for children who are working below their typical level of development in communication and language. Examples of intervention programmes for children with SEND can be found on: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/early-years-sen-toolkit>

EYFS Co-ordinators should analyse achievement data each year. Suggestions for analysis are:

### A Good Level of progress:

- How many children are working at or beyond their individual age related expectations? What is this as a percentage?
- How many of these children were boys, girls, autumn/spring/summer born, EAL, SEND, Pupil Premium, FSM, GRT, LAC, more able, forces families; consider children’s starting points
- Were there any children who would be at age related levels of development had it not been for one or two areas of learning? What were these AOLs? Is there a pattern?
- How does the number of children working at or beyond their individual age related expectations in your school/setting compare to county and other providers?

### Areas of Development and age-related levels of development:

- Look at those children who working at or beyond their individual age related expectations. Are there any patterns in attainment? e.g. Are there any correlations between different areas of learning such as Literacy and Communication and Language?



- Do children with high outcomes also have high scores in PSED and demonstrate this through the characteristics of effective learning?
- What aspects of breadth/depth of EYFS provision need further development?
- What are the strengths and key aspects for improvement across the areas of learning and development for this year's cohort?

#### Other:

- Are there differences in the data between classes (if applicable)?
- What does the data tell us about the attainment and needs of individual children e.g. SEND/EAL/Early Years Pupil Premium/more able?
- How are Reception colleagues using the data to inform planning for the start of the next academic year? Do they have copies of 'Development Matters'/Early Years Outcomes?
- What does the data tell us about priorities for the EYFS? Add any specific actions in response to data analysis to your Action Plan.

#### References

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- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Early Education May 2012)
- Early Years Outcomes (DfE September 2013)
- The Common Inspection Framework: education, skills and early years (Ofsted September 2015)
- Early Years Inspection Handbook (Ofsted September 2015)
- Identifying children who are learning English as an additional language and who may also have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Oxfordshire County Council January 2009)