



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Foundation Phase Profile

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Foundation Phase Profile?

The Foundation Phase Profile (FPP) is an assessment tool being developed to provide schools and settings with a consistent approach that aligns assessment at the beginning and the end of the Foundation Phase. The FPP will be statutory from September 2015. It will assess children's abilities and development in four Areas of Learning (AoLs):

- Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity (PSDWCD)
- Language, literacy and communication skills (LLC)
- Mathematical development (MD)
- Physical development(PD)

Assessment information in the form of observations and formative assessments will be gathered through everyday holistic activities across the seven Foundation Phase Areas of Learning (six in Welsh medium settings/schools), through continuous, enhanced and focused provision.

2. What will the FPP look like?

The FPP tracks children's progress throughout their time in the Foundation Phase, in settings and schools. There are two parts to the FPP being trialled (in spring term 2015, please see question 6), called the Compact Profile and the Full Profile. Each allows children's development to be tracked on a series of skills ladders that are exemplified with guidance.

For baseline assessment in Reception there is a smaller (Compact) profile. The skills that have been included in the Compact Profile have been chosen on the grounds that they are easy to observe after a short while with a child new to the school or setting and they provide useful information about the child for supporting their early development.

The other proposed part of the FPP is to support assessment at the end of Year 2. This will be a more detailed (Full) Profile, establishing the end-of-Phase Outcomes. It may also be used to provide more information on children for whom there are concerns.

The Compact Profile at baseline, during the child's first six weeks, and the Full Profile at end-of-Phase will be the minimum statutory requirements for using the FPP. In addition, schools and settings may chose to use either Profile annually for their own tracking purposes.

3. Is the FPP the same as the EYDAF?

No. The Foundation Phase Profile is only one element of a wider programme of work being undertaken by the Welsh Government to produce an Early Years Development Assessment Framework (EYDAF). In developing the EYDAF we aim to bring together information and approaches from all sectors to develop a unified approach to the assessment of children from birth to age 7 and provide practitioners with the information they need to support children's development and learning. The FPP will cover the assessments in the Foundation Phase and these will link to assessments undertaken for 0-3 year olds, for example by health visitors and Flying Start practitioners as well as other available information for 3-7 year olds, such as that available from school nurses.

The work to develop the EYDAF is currently at the scoping stage and further information on the future approach will be available early in the New Year.

4. How will the FPP benefit children, and in turn, parents/carers?

The tool will support more effective transition arrangements and enable settings and schools to monitor, track and support children's learning and development on-entry until the end of the Foundation Phase.

Children's progress can be tracked and early interventions can be put in place for those children needing additional support or practise of particular skills. The information gathered will aid practitioners' discussions with parents on their child's development and how they may support them.

5. How will the FPP benefit schools / settings, Local Authorities, Regional Consortia and the Welsh Government?

The FPP will provide an assessment system that promotes and supports Foundation Phase pedagogy and enable schools to track children's progress from entry to the end of Foundation Phase.

It will help to identify children who may need additional support, benefit from early intervention or need further support or observation from child development specialists, such as speech or play therapists or educational psychologists.

The FPP will support the consistent collection and sharing of information, including 'value-added' data which will support policy and operational decisions at a local and national level. The FPP will support and provide evidence for end-of-Phase assessments which in turn will strengthen the process of transition into KS2.

6. How can we test that the FPP will be fit for purpose?

We shall be trialling the approach with schools and settings from January to March 2015.

The trialling comprises 4 aspects:

- Data trial – around 150 schools will assess a sample of their children for all years of the Foundation Phase for 2 of the 4 Areas of Learning (AoLs). This will provide information on the effectiveness and consistency (the validity) of the various elements of the FPP in assessing the development of children. This will inform which aspects need refining, replacing or dropping for the final version of the profile.

- Process trial – around 50 schools and settings will assess all their children for the proposed statutory elements of the baseline (Reception) and end-of-Phase (Year 2). This will provide information on the manageability of the draft assessment process, and will inform the final design of the administration of the assessment.
- Link between the FPP and the Schedule of Growing Skills (SGS) – around 300 children assessed as part of the data trial will also be assessed using the SGS assessment used in Flying Start settings in Wales. This will inform how the FPP can ‘map’ to the SGS as part of the development of the EYDAF for 0-7 year olds.
- A review of the draft guidance that will accompany the FPP, to ensure that referral information follows appropriate guidelines from health agencies, to support schools and settings in making appropriate choices for the children in their care.

The schools and settings chosen for the trials have been selected to ensure that there are representative samples from all types of schools and settings, for example English and Welsh medium and differing Free School Meal levels.

7. What has been learnt from the previous project to introduce the Child Development and Assessment Profile (CDAP)?

The Welsh Government is very aware of the need to learn the lessons from the Child Development and Assessment Profile (CDAP). We continue to draw on the independent Rapid Review of CDAP which we commissioned to ensure that the FPP does not experience the same difficulties. In particular, we are very mindful that it should have a consistent approach to assessing and scoring, not be over-burdensome and there should be a clear link between baseline assessments and those for the end-of-Phase.

8. Who has been consulted during the development of the FPP?

A task and finish group comprising representatives from CSSIW, Estyn, local authorities, the childcare sector, the teaching profession including head teachers, Flying Start and maintained and non-maintained Foundation Phase settings have overseen the development of the FPP. The group have reviewed and critiqued the FPP and supporting materials throughout the development.

The group will be consulted further to develop the final version of the FPP once the information from the trial is available. Further work will also be undertaken with experts on specific aspects of the profile such as language development, additional learning needs, specific learning difficulties and physical development.

9. What training will be available to practitioners and when?

Training for the trial will begin in the New Year of 2015, and trial settings and schools have already been sent details of this. Full training for the roll out of the FPP will be in the summer term of 2015 and will be supported by regional consortia’s Foundation Phase Training and Support Officers. Details of this will be available in the coming months.

10. What guidance material is available to practitioners?

A User’s Guide is under development, which will also be tested as part of the trial, and this will be used during the roll-out of training in the Summer Term 2015. It will also be made available on the Welsh Government’s website, along with other supporting information before the full roll-out of the FPP in September 2015.

11. What data will be collected, when and how will it be used?

Assessments will take place to form a baseline in Reception, and at the end of Foundation Phase to establish end of phase Outcomes. These assessments will be carried out by teachers and teaching assistants. Full details of how this data will be collected will be made available in the coming months.

12. How will the FPP be recorded and will it be paper-based or electronic?

The Welsh Government is currently exploring options on how the information could be collected electronically with the minimum disturbance to existing approaches locally. The emphasis will be on ensuring that electronic means of entering information are available, whilst also recognising that not all organisations will have ready access to technology and may also need paper-based approaches. More information will be available early in 2015 once further scoping work has been done.

13. How does the FPP align with the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)?

In October 2014 the revised AoLs for LLC and MD were published on a non-statutory basis. They were revised in order to align the skills in the AoLs with the LNF as well as to create an LNF for nursery stage learners. The LLC and MD elements of the FPP have been developed using the revised AoL and so the LNF will be reflected in the FPP.

14. Do the assessments map to Areas of Learning and the Foundation Phase Outcomes?

Yes, the skills ladders within the FPP were developed to reflect the skills and outcomes as laid out on the Learning Wales site at <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/revised-areas-of-learning-and-programmes-of-study/?skip=1&lang=en>.

15. How will Donaldson's Review of Assessment and the National Curriculum for Wales impact on the FPP?

Professor Donaldson is currently leading a review of assessment and the curriculum (not including LLC and MD) in Wales. He is due to report in the spring of 2015 whilst the FPP is being trialled.

Any changes following Professor Donaldson's review may take some time to implement and given the need to continue progress on the Foundation Phase and the urgency of raising standards in literacy and numeracy, we have decided to implement the changes to the revised Areas of Learning and Programmes of Study, as part of Phase 1 of the curriculum review. These revisions are reflected in the FPP. Given the timeframes suggested by Professor Donaldson, these revised Areas of Learning and programmes of study will be secure.

16. How will teacher assessments be moderated to ensure consistency across Wales and validity of data?

The FPP has been designed to support consistency in teacher judgements and assessments.

Teacher moderation across the stages of education in Wales is currently undergoing review and a consultation is available at the following link - <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/education/teacher-assessment-strengthening-arrangements/?lang=en>. This also includes plans for the Foundation Phase and will support end of phase teacher moderation as well as the FPP.

17. Will the FPP add further burden to practitioners' workloads?

The FPP is not intended to add to a practitioner's workload. It has been designed in a way that formative assessments and observations can be easily recorded in order to support judgements and track children's progress. Practitioners should already be gathering information in this manner, therefore it is not anticipated that workload will increase. The process trial includes end of phase as well as baseline assessments and will look closely at the time it takes to use the profile; practitioners in trial schools and settings will be asked about this element of the FPP.

18. How will we see the value-added?

As the FPP uses the same measurement scale for on entry and end of phase assessments, it is possible to record, track and monitor value added data.

19. How are the baseline and end of phase assessments linked?

The proposed on entry assessment is made up of a subset of the skills included in the proposed end of phase assessment. The skills chosen for assessment on entry and at baseline were carefully selected in order to be easy to consistently observe when a child has just joined a school or setting. For the end of phase assessment, a wider range of skills have been included that are possible to assess once a child has been in a school or setting for a longer period of time to give a fuller picture of their development.

20. Will children be assessed in the language of instruction at the setting or school or in the child's home/first language?

The assessments will be carried out in the language of the setting or school.

21. How will the end of phase assessments be aligned with Key Stage 2?

We will consider this aspect in detail once we see the recommendations from the Donaldson Review.

22. Is the FPP able to be used for learners with additional learning needs?

The FPP is being designed to cover the majority of learners and contains indicators which suggest that practitioners need to consider further whether children may need additional support and whether they need to seek more specialist support. This will aid the identification of additional learning needs (ALN). However, it is not the intention that the FPP will have sufficient detail to fully assess the nature of children's additional learning needs. Practitioners would need to use the appropriate assessments designed for that specific purpose, such as Routes for learning for pupils with the most profound and complex learning difficulties, take advice from ALN coordinator/Special Educational Needs coordinator and, if required, refer to appropriate professionals.

23. Who can practitioners contact if their questions are not answered here?

For technical queries about the FPP please contact Incerts at lucy.ridley@incerts.org.
For queries about the January trials, please contact Incerts at trial@incerts.org.

For general queries about the EYDAF project and policy aspects of the FPP please contact the Early Years team at Welsh Government at earlyyears@wales.gsi.gov.uk.