



Guidance

EYFS profile purposes, principles and processes

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Purposes and main uses of the EYFS profile

1.

The statutory [early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) framework](#) requires the EYFS profile assessment to be carried out in the final term of the year in which a child reaches age 5, and no later than 30 June in that term.

The main purpose of the EYFS profile is to provide a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS.

EYFS profile data is used to:

- inform [parents](#) about their child's development against the early learning goals (ELGs) and the characteristics of their learning
- support a smooth transition to key stage 1 (KS1) by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and KS1 teachers
- help year 1 teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children

In addition, the EYFS profile provides an accurate national data set relating to levels of children's development at the end of the EYFS. The Department for Education uses this to monitor changes in levels of children's development and their readiness for the next phase of their education both nationally and locally. (School-level results won't be published in the Performance tables.)

2.

Principles of EYFS profile assessments

2.1 How an EYFS profile is completed

Reliable and accurate assessment at the end of the EYFS is underpinned by the following principles:

- Reliable and accurate assessment is based primarily on the practitioner's knowledge of the child. Knowledge is gained predominantly from observation and interaction in a range of daily activities and events.
- Responsible pedagogy must be in place so that the provision enables each child to demonstrate their learning and development fully.
- Embedded learning is identified by assessing what a child can do consistently and independently in a range of everyday situations.
- An effective assessment presents an holistic view of a child's learning and development.
- Accurate assessments take account of contributions from a range of perspectives including the child, their [parents](#) and other relevant adults.

2.2 Observational assessment

Practitioners can use observational assessment to understand children's learning. Practitioners watch, listen and interact as children engage in everyday activities, events and experiences, and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding.

Observational assessment is the most reliable way of building up an accurate picture of children's development and learning. This is especially true where the attainment demonstrated is not dependent on overt adult support. Observational assessment is central to understanding what children really know and can do.

Some observations will be planned but some may be a spontaneous capture of an important moment. It is likely that observations of everyday activities will provide evidence of attainment in more than 1 area of learning.

Observational assessment doesn't need prolonged breaks from interaction with children, or excessive written recording. It is likely to be interwoven with high quality interactions or conversations in words or sign language with children about their activities and current interests.

2.3 Responsible pedagogy

Responsible pedagogy enables each child to demonstrate learning in the fullest sense. It depends on the use of assessment information to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child. Effective assessment can only take place when children have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding, learning and development in a range of contexts.

Children must have access to a rich learning environment where opportunities and conditions allow them to flourish in all aspects of their development.

The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning. Integral to this is an ethos which:

- respects each child as an individual
- values children's efforts, interests and purposes as instrumental to successful learning

When practitioners are evaluating the effectiveness of their assessment processes they should consider:

- child development, both the biological and cultural aspects, and its impact on how learning may best be supported
- planning which ensures a relevant, motivating, flexible and interesting curriculum

- provision of an environment which truly enables successful learning by all children in their care
- the need for detailed understanding of the framework for assessment in order to gather accurate, reliable and meaningful information
- the importance of high quality adult interaction which is sensitive and adaptive to the needs of individual children and capable of promoting learning
- organisational aspects of provision, resources, curriculum and people

Successful implementation of these aspects of pedagogy and provision will enable practitioners' to make an accurate, reliable and consistent assessment of children's learning. This will inform planning for year 1.

2.4 Child initiated activity

Children with effective learning characteristics:

- are willing to have a go
- are involved and concentrating
- have their own ideas
- choose ways to do things
- find new ways of doing things
- enjoy achieving what they set out to do

To accurately assess these characteristics, practitioners need to observe learning which children have initiated rather than only focusing on what children do when prompted. Children need rich opportunities to initiate ideas and activities so that they can develop the learning characteristics which are assessed by the EYFS profile. These characteristics also support lifelong learning.

2.5 Embedded learning and secure development

Children can demonstrate embedded learning and secure development without the need for overt adult support. Where learning is secure it is likely that children often initiate the use of that learning. Practitioners' will make judgements by observing behaviour that a child demonstrates consistently and independently, in a range of situations. Attainment in this context will assure practitioners of the child's confidence and ownership of the specific knowledge, skill or concept being assessed. Skillful interactions with adults and learning which is supported by them are necessary on the journey to embedding skills and knowledge.

2.6 Links in the areas of learning

Areas of learning, and therefore the ELGs, are often interlinked. These may also be related to the characteristics of effective learning. If practitioners can see these links it will join up the assessment process. You will be able to capture each child's learning more effectively and genuinely.

You can also reflect on these links when you quality assure your assessment judgements. When the different aspects and levels of attainment are considered together – do they make sense?

2.7 Practitioner knowledge

Most evidence for EYFS profile judgements will come from practitioners observing a child's self-initiated activities. Adult-led activities can offer insight into children's attainment. Make sure the child has the opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

Much of your knowledge of what children know and can do will be gathered from your day to day interactions with them. This isn't often formally recorded, however it:

- provides the basis for making judgements
- provides a focus for moderation dialogue
- informs future practice and provision

2.8 Contributions to the assessments

Accurate assessment will depend on contributions from a range of perspectives including the child's. Practitioners should involve children fully in their own assessment by encouraging them to communicate about and review their own learning. Assessment should build on the insights of all adults who have significant interactions with the child. Adults with different roles will be able to make different contributions.

Accurate assessment requires a two-way flow of information between setting(s) and home. A review of a child's achievements should include those demonstrated at home. Assessments which don't include the [parents'](#) contribution give an incomplete picture of a child's learning and development.

3.

EYFS profile assessment processes

During the final year of the EYFS, practitioners must carry out ongoing (formative) assessment to support each child's learning and development. There is no requirement for how you record this or specifically when assessments take place. You should be mindful of your professional

responsibility for the learning and development of children in your care and plan the provision needed to enable them to take the next steps in their learning.

In the final term of the EYFS you must review information from all sources to make a judgement for each child for each ELG. The judgement must say whether the child's learning and development is:

- best described by the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (expected)
- not yet at the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (emerging)
- beyond the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (exceeding)

You must refer to the [exemplification material](#). This illustrates the standard expected for each ELG at the end of the EYFS.

You must consider the whole of each ELG when making your decision. Avoid splitting the descriptor into sections and 'ticking them off'. The most accurate picture of the child's overall embedded learning will come from an holistic view of the descriptor.

3.1 Judging whether to use the 'expected' category

If the ELG description and accompanying exemplification best fit your professional knowledge of the child then the child's learning and development can be judged as 'expected'.

However, children don't necessarily achieve uniformly. You should judge whether the description within the ELG best fits the child's learning and development, taking into account their relative strengths and weaknesses.

'Best fit' doesn't mean that the child has equal mastery of all aspects of the ELG. You should look at the whole of each ELG description when making this summative judgement.

You should use the best fit model to judge whether a child's learning and development is 'exceeding'. You will need to be confident that the child has moved beyond the 'expected' level. When finalising your judgement you should:

- refer to the area of learning 'exceeding' descriptors which form part of this handbook
- discuss with year 1 teachers whether a child is 'exceeding' in any ELG

4.

Evidence and documentation of the EYFS profile

Over the course of the year, practitioners should build their knowledge of what each child knows and can do. This will help you to make an accurate end of year judgement. You are not required or expected to carry out other assessments in addition to the EYFS profile.

Settings can record children's learning in any way which helps practitioners to support children's learning and development and make accurate summative assessments.

You must make your final EYFS profile assessments based on all your evidence. 'Evidence' means any material, knowledge of the child, anecdotal incident or result of observation, or information from additional sources that supports the overall picture of a child's development. There is no requirement that evidence should be formally recorded or documented. You should keep paperwork to the minimum you need to illustrate, support and

recall your knowledge of the child's attainment.

You may include the following to support your judgements:

- knowledge of the child
- materials which illustrate the child's learning journey, such as photographs
- observations of day to day interactions
- video, tape or electronic recordings
- the child's view of his or her own learning
- information from [parents](#)
- information from other relevant adults

An EYFS profile completed by a practitioner alone only offers a partial picture of a child's attainment. Practitioners must actively engage children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with the child in the assessment process.

You should use your professional knowledge, and the exemplification of standards set out in this handbook, to judge whether a child's learning:

- meets the level expected at the end of the EYFS
- exceeds that level
- is best described as 'emerging'

You should also use the information in this handbook to help describe each child's characteristics of effective learning. Your judgements will be subject to moderation in order to ensure national consistency and accuracy.

5.

Transition to year 1

Practitioners and year 1 teachers should work together to ensure that a

child's transition between the EYFS and year 1 is seamless. You should make sure children's experiences in the final year of the EYFS are valuable in themselves, and prepare the ground for year 1. It is important that year 1 builds on the successful principles and approach encapsulated in the EYFS.

It is crucial that EYFS practitioners and year 1 teachers are given time to discuss and expand on the information presented in the EYFS profile. In particular, the characteristic of effective learning narratives will give teachers significant details about each child's learning and development. The narratives must feature in conversations between practitioners and teachers.

Practitioners may provide additional information about each child's attainment to help teachers plan an effective curriculum and make provision for all children. Decisions about this additional information should be made by each setting and reflect the characteristics and requirements of that setting. This will enable the year 1 teacher to have a fully rounded picture of the attainment of each child in order to plan the curriculum. Year 1 teachers should be involved in EYFS profile moderation so that they understand the judgements made by early years practitioners.

6.

'Parent' – a definition

The term 'parent' is used here as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as:

- parents of a child
- any person who is not a parent of a child but who has parental responsibility for the child
- any person who has care of the child

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