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Guidance

Moderation of the EYFS profile

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1.

Purpose of moderation

Local authorities (LAs) are responsible for providing a robust moderation process so that practitioners' judgements are evaluated in line with statutory requirements.

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Moderation of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile:

- secures the consistency and accuracy of judgements made by different practitioners
- reassures practitioners that their judgements are accurate, valid and consistent with national standards
- assures moderators that an acceptable level of accuracy and validity has been achieved for assessments recorded and reported by the settings for which they have responsibility

Moderation of the EYFS profile is a sampling process – unlike testing. It is not a method for checking each child’s attainment. LA moderation visits check practitioners’ ability to make accurate assessments and apply them consistently.

Moderation involves both internal moderation activities and professional dialogue between moderators and practitioners. This ensures that:

- practitioners’ judgements are comparable and consistent with national standards
- the assessment process is reliable, accurate and secure

2.

Internal moderation

Moderation of EYFS profile assessments begins within each individual setting. It is supported by LAs or LA approved agencies through a programme of visits and meetings.

Within your own setting, you can informally agree assessment judgements with other practitioners, eg discussing an observation about a child’s

development with a year 1 teacher.

Staff meetings or training days can be an opportunity for more formal agreement processes. For example practitioners could discuss planned paired observations or the development of a group of children in relation to 1 of the ELGs. The focus for planned work should be clear and manageable. LA external moderators will support this work during visits or meetings.

3.

Inter-school moderation

It is important for practitioners to build a shared understanding of the ELGs and the national exemplification of standards. They should have opportunities to discuss their assessment of children's attainment with colleagues against the national standard. Settings should work together so that practitioners can share experiences and develop their assessment skills. Outcomes of discussions could be recorded and referenced during moderation visits.

4.

Local authority moderation

4.1 Responsibilities

Section 13 of the Childcare Act 2006 requires LAs to undertake moderation activity, including:

- recruiting and training moderators with appropriate experience of the EYFS and the ELGs to secure consistent standards in assessment

judgements

- regularly visiting all providers as part of a cycle of moderation visits
- moderating EYFS profile assessment judgements
- notifying providers about whether they are carrying out the EYFS profile assessment in accordance with requirements

You must have regard for moderation guidance produced by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) and exercise your powers and duties according to the guidance. This can be found in the 'Moderating the EYFS profile' section of the EYFS [Assessment and reporting arrangements](#) (ARA). If you choose to use a moderation model which isn't reliant on moderation visits, you must be able to demonstrate that all the statutory elements of the moderation visit are protected. Any deviation which doesn't have regard to our guidance will be deemed as not meeting statutory requirements.

LAs must moderate all 17 ELGs annually in a minimum of 25% of all settings which implement the EYFS profile.

Moderation focuses on a professional dialogue between moderators and practitioners. It involves a suitably experienced and trained moderator, who is external and independent to the setting, validating practitioners' judgements. LA external moderators will seek to confirm that practitioners':

- judgements are consistent with the national exemplification of standards
- assessment of children's attainment is reliable, accurate and secure

LA external moderators may judge that assessments aren't in line with the exemplified standards. If so, you can require the provider to:

- arrange for the practitioner to take part in further training or moderation activities
- reconsider their assessments as advised by the LA external moderator

All practitioners implementing the EYFS profile are required to take part in

either a moderation visit or EYFS profile training (including agreement trialling activities) each year. Visits will take place on a four-year cycle within each LA.

The [‘ARA’](#) gives specific guidance about moderation measurements, including requirements for academies.

4.2 How local authorities are moderated

STA visits a sample of LAs during the summer term, to moderate their approaches and procedures.

If you are selected, our external moderators will:

- meet with your EYFS profile moderation manager and appropriate personnel to discuss the approaches to moderation, training and support
- attend one or more of your moderation visits
- report to STA on the your approach to moderation and the robustness of the moderation model you use

4.3 Carrying out moderation activity

You should inform settings that are to receive an EYFS profile moderation visit by the end of the spring term. These settings will need to complete interim judgements against all the ELGs at the beginning of May for children in the final year of the EYFS. Individual settings can be added to the LA sample after this date, if particular issues arise.

This Handbook includes summary tables showing moderation requirements and effective practice for LAs and schools. These set out requirements for

robust LA moderation and identify important elements and examples of effective practice. They are designed to help you plan and carry out your moderation duties. You can cross reference them against the planning forms which we will send you in the autumn term.

The moderation sample

Moderators must review a sample of completed EYFS profiles.

In single-form entry schools you will moderate 17 ELGs from 1 practitioner. You should expect to see some 'emerging', some 'expected' and some 'exceeding' outcomes from across the 5 children.

In a multi-form entry school you should ensure that all 17 ELGs are moderated. You should see at least 1 judgement at each of the 3 outcome levels from each practitioner within the sample.

You must establish whether practitioners have made an accurate judgement based on correct understanding of:

- what constitutes an appropriate outcome
- the thresholds between the outcomes

If you aren't confident in a practitioner's judgements you may increase the sample of completed profiles which you look at. You must make sure you see enough to be confident about the practitioner's accuracy.

There may be some overlap to confirm accuracy of judgements, for example ELG 02: Understanding may be scrutinised at 'expected' in 1 class and 'exceeding' in another.

Where practitioners are released for parts of the moderation visit, it may be helpful for 1 member of staff to be present for the whole of the visit.

4.4 Moderating children in the ‘emerging’ band

Where a practitioner’s judgements are that the child is at an ‘emerging’ level of development, the moderation dialogue must reference both the description of the expected level of development (the ELG) and the child’s previous development continuum. This is so the moderator can evaluate the practitioner’s understanding and application of the threshold between an ‘emerging’ and ‘expected’ outcome. Evaluation must be applied on an individual ELG basis.

An outcome of ‘emerging’ may be clear-cut so that only a limited moderation dialogue is needed to establish the accuracy of a best-fit judgement. Alternatively, a child’s specific circumstances may mean their development doesn’t follow a linear path. Making a best-fit judgement about the child’s level of learning and development may be both difficult and of limited meaning.

In these situations, discussion between a moderator and practitioner may be especially helpful. The moderation process should aim to ensure that the characteristic of effective learning narrative highlights aspects of the child’s learning and development which may be masked by the 17 ELG outcomes.

Children with special educational needs and disability (SEND)

These children will be at the ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’ level of development for some ELGs. However they will be at an ‘emerging’ level for ELGs where their specific condition has an impact on their learning and development. Practitioners should provide additional detail to support the child’s successful transition to year 1 and enable the year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum. If you consider this information within the moderation dialogue it will strengthen the outcome of moderation. Dialogue will focus on the holistic picture of the child and the professional knowledge of the practitioner. It will also help to develop a

shared understanding of how the EYFS profile can be used to support successful transition for children with SEND.

Children whose outcomes are all ‘emerging’

There will be children whose outcomes at the end of the EYFS are at the ‘emerging’ level for all ELGs. It is important that moderation of this pattern of outcomes is also a meaningful process.

4.5 Moderating children in the ‘exceeding’ band

Where a practitioner’s judgements are that the child is at an ‘exceeding’ level of development, the moderation dialogue must reference the:

- description of the expected level of development (the ELG)
- area of learning ‘exceeding’ descriptors included in this Handbook

The moderation process must be applied on an individual ELG basis as children may be at an ‘exceeding’ level for some ELGs but at ‘expected’ for others.

4.6 Providing moderation training for practitioners

Each academic year you must provide training for the 75% of practitioners who are not at a setting which is receiving a moderation visit. Training will focus on all 17 ELGs over a three-year cycle, (see the table below). This training should be in addition to support that your LA is providing for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and those new to Reception. Training should include the opportunity for agreement trialling.

School year	Prime area of learning	Specific area of learning
2013-2014	Communication and language development	Mathematics
2014-2015	Physical development	Understanding the world and expressive arts and design
2015-2016	Personal , social and emotional development	Literacy
2016-2017	Communication and language development	Mathematics

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