



Guidance

Quality assurance of EYFS profile data

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Pattern of outcomes for an individual child
3. Schools and settings' responsibilities
4. Local authority responsibilities
5. 'Parent' – a definition
6. Statements to support level setting

1.

Introduction

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile is a statutory data collection.

Each child's records are combined at setting, local authority (LA) and national level to produce a dataset which has national statistics status and informs a range of processes.

Practitioners, school managers, setting leaders and LAs are responsible for ensuring the quality, accuracy and reliability of data arising from EYFS profile assessment.

EYFS profile data must be sufficiently reliable and accurate to meet the purposes described in this handbook. Quality assurance activities are in place to check this is the case. These include:

- teachers and practitioners meeting within a school and between schools or settings, to develop a consistent understanding of the early learning goals (ELGs)
- external moderation visits organised by a LA
- LAs carrying out a quality assurance review of settings' data after it has been submitted

Quality assurance of EYFS profile data ensures that:

- the pattern of outcomes for an individual child makes sense in relation to wider knowledge of children's learning and development
- the resulting data is an accurate record of practitioner judgements

2.

Pattern of outcomes for an individual child

LAs are responsible for providing a robust moderation process which evaluates practitioners' judgements in line with statutory requirements. This process includes LA moderators considering the pattern of attainment for a sample of children during a moderation visit.

It is important that settings carry out a 'sense check' of outcomes for all children for whom they have made EYFS profile judgements. This helps to make sure [parents](#) and year 1 teachers are given an accurate picture of children's learning and development.

Consideration of any EYFS profile outcome must include:

- the judgements made against the ELG statement of the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS
- the narrative record of the child's characteristics of effective learning

Practitioners should use the information in the narrative to put patterns of attainment in context and evaluate the accuracy of EYFS profile outcomes.

Any exploration of patterns of attainment should take into account the contextual information for individual children which underpin accurate assessment. For example you should remember that children with specific educational needs and development may be assessed in relation to their ability to communicate without the need for speech.

You can use the [statements](#) to support level setting quality assurance processes.

3.

Schools and settings' responsibilities

3.1 Headteachers and managers

You are responsible for submitting accurate, reliable and high quality EYFS profile data to your LA. To achieve this, you need to make sure that:

- staff understand your setting's systems for recording children's profile outcomes and submitting data to your LA
- practitioners clearly record EYFS profile information
- staff responsible for data collection and submission understand the nature of EYFS profile data
- data is transcribed from your setting's records to electronic records accurately
- entered data is checked against what was originally provided by the practitioner
- information which accompanies EYFS profile data is accurate, eg postcode and unique pupil number
- you check and sign-off data before it is submitted to your LA

You should also be involved in quality assurance processes before data is submitted to your LA. You should make sure your staff have enough time for resolving queries.

You should only sign off item level data, and permit onward transmission to your LA, once you have checked that the data is:

- free of errors
- an accurate reflection of the attainment of the cohort

You are also responsible for resolving any queries your LA may have as a result of their processes.

3.2 Practitioners and year 1 teachers

Practitioners have a central role in ensuring judgements are reliable and accurate. You need to be familiar with the ELGs and their exemplification in order to apply them consistently.

Practitioners and year 1 teachers should work together to build a consistent, shared understanding of what the ELGs mean via internal moderation activities. Practitioners in groups of schools may also wish to work together in this way.

It is particularly important that year 1 teachers understand the EYFS profile, so that they can make effective use of it to inform their teaching. Year 1 teachers should be encouraged to be moderators.

4.

Local authority responsibilities

4.1 Data collection

The data collection, entry and submission processes should be planned in advance. You should give clear information to settings so that they understand how data should be formatted.

4.2 Quality assurance of data

LAs should scrutinise the validity and accuracy of EYFS profile data before they submit it to the Department for Education (DfE). The dataset should be checked by moderation and data professionals. Each team's focus may be different, but best practice involves combined processes with shared responsibility.

Effective quality assurance rests on LAs' knowledge both of EYFS profile assessment and of the schools and settings which are returning data. Your

quality assurance activity could include a 'first cut' data analysis followed by feedback to the setting. This can help a setting's internal evaluation and transition processes.

You should explain your quality assurance processes to settings early in the data collection cycle. This will ensure timescales and expectations are well established, and appropriate activity planned at setting and LA level.

Timelines should allow time for:

- scrutiny of data by LA data and moderation teams
- queries to be raised with settings and resolved
- settings to amend submitted data, if required

If you find potential inconsistencies in a setting's dataset, you must ensure headteachers and managers have enough time to discuss this with their staff and provide an appropriate response. If settings need to change their data this must be completed before the end of the summer term. Moderation managers must co-ordinate with their data teams so that the final submission to the DfE only contains correctly amended data.

You can use the following questions to check the accuracy of your EYFS profile dataset prior before you submit it to the DfE. They are designed to prompt conversation rather than rules which data must obey.

1. Does the setting's data reflect the LA's knowledge of the cohort or outcomes of moderation?
2. Is there a difference in data between classes where there is multiple form entry?
3. Is the setting's data significantly or unexpectedly adrift from LA data?
4. Are there patterns of attainment which are unexpected in terms of what is known about children's learning and development in general?
5. Are trends from year to year unexpected?

You should submit data to the DfE using the COLLECT data collection

system. The DfE will give you instructions before the national data collection takes place. Data must pass a range of validation checks in order to be accepted by the DfE.

After data validation has taken place, LA moderation managers should check that their local dataset presents an accurate picture of children's learning and development at the end of the EYFS. You could do this by looking at a further sample of outcomes, or cross checking outcomes against those anticipated as a result of moderation. The nature of any sampling should be shared with settings prior to data collection.

5.

'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

6.

Statements to support level setting

Each child's pattern of attainment will reflect their learning and development outcomes so an unexpected pattern of attainment doesn't necessarily mean that their EYFS profile outcome is inaccurate. These prompts may provide a starting point for a conversation with the practitioner who made the judgement, if a pattern doesn't match what you anticipated.

6.1 Statement 1

A child's outcomes consistently exceed the ELGs but the characteristics of effective learning describe a child who lacks interest and excitement to learn. This scenario is possible however high attainment is often associated with interest in learning. It is essential that the commentary within the characteristics of effective learning is linked to the attainment of the ELGs.

6.2 Statement 2

A child's ability to communicate effectively threads through many of the ELGs. A child whose outcome for Speaking is at the 'emerging' level may also show emerging attainment for those ELGs with a significant communication element.

These include:

- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Understanding
- Shape, space and measures
- People and communities
- Knowledge of the world

6.3 Statement 3

A child meets the level of development expected at the end of EYFS for Reading but not for Listening and attention. This is despite the Reading ELG

including elements which rely on a child using significant skills relating to Listening and attention.

6.4 Statement 4

A child meets the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS for Writing but not Physical development (moving and handling). The ability to hold and manipulate a pencil effectively is only part of the Physical ELG. Therefore a child whose physical development in relation to fine motor movements is at the 'emerging' level may not be a confident and independent writer as expressed by the Writing ELG.

6.5 Statement 5

Some elements of the Expressive arts ELGs depend on a child's physical ability to explore and manipulate media with confidence, including construction materials. A child with emerging physical (moving and handling) skills may not attain the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS in relation to these creative ELGs.

6.6 Statement 6

A child who is at the 'expected' level for Shape, space and measures and Knowledge of the world is likely to be using the skills and attributes which would contribute towards attainment of the 'expected' level for Understanding.

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