

Accompanying information for staff working in early learning and childcare settings and the early stages of primary schools

The Inspection Advice note 2014-15 provides the updated expectations on the curriculum and covers all sectors. The following information is provided to support the delivery of the early level curriculum. It is intended to support staff with curriculum planning and delivery. It is an accompaniment to help further illustrate the result of increased expectations in previous years and the current updated [illustrations for 5.1 and 5.9](#). The early level curriculum will continue to be strongly underpinned by the clear philosophy that learning for young children is more relevant when based firmly on play and planned to meet the needs of the developing child.

Early learning and childcare takes place in a variety of settings. It is important that other relevant local and national guidanceⁱ is understood and shared by staff working in these settings. The rationale and design of the curriculum will reflect the particular setting. Staff need to have a clear shared strategy for the development of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. Staff should be able to clearly demonstrate how all children will achieve and how this will be supported by adults. Planning children's learning and developing the curriculum needs to take account of the child and what they bring to the setting, what their interests are and what barriers may have to be addressed. Assessment should be based on observation of key elements of development and progress. It is important that children are able to communicate and have a well-developed vocabulary in relation to their learning and development.

Staff need to ensure a continuum of learning for children with no artificial stops and starts as they begin their learning journey, move rooms or provisions. The Children and Young People's Act 2014 impacts on provision for young children through the increase to 600 hours and the additional places for eligible children aged 2 years. The landscape of early years is changing and the biggest message has to be that the focus remains on providing high quality early learning and childcare.ⁱⁱ

Staff should be aware of the relevance of interdisciplinary learning (IDL) in the early level curriculum. Care must be taken in interpreting the term IDL for use in early learning and childcare settings. There should be a shared understanding of IDL in each setting in order to provide continuity, progression and relevance to all children's learning. Staff should consider the appropriateness of including all areas of the early level curriculum into one context. What is important is that well-considered opportunities are developed to allow children to make progress in the identified curricular areas, make links in their learning or apply their learning and skills in new motivating challenging contexts. This may include focussed interdisciplinary approaches and skilful interventions in learning through play whilst following children's interests.

Depth and challenge in the early level may mean children building on their learning over time, exercising choice about what and how they learn. At times, children need to be able to revisit experiences in order to develop deeper understanding and make meaningful links in their own learning. Progression in children's learning cannot be viewed in isolation and will require meaningful links within and between settings. It is essential prior learning is identified and built upon. Staff need to ensure children have opportunities for applying, consolidating and reinforcing their learning.

Children's profiles remain a focus for recording and tracking children's individual progress.

It is important to remember that early level and before should continue to be based on:

- active and experiential learning;
- a holistic approach to learning;
- smooth transitions and
- learning through play.

The cross cutting themes provide interesting and relevant opportunities for young children to progress. It is important to think about how well

- Creativity
- Enterprise
- Citizenship
- International Education and
- Sustainable development

provide children with rich, meaningful and challenging learning experiences.

ⁱ Pre- birth to three: Positive outcomes for Scotland's Children and families(2010)

ⁱⁱ Building the Ambition National Practice Guidance (2014)