

Tickell Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage – Call for Evidence

Call for Evidence Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 30
September 2010

Your comments must reach us by that date.

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If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

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Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

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Organisation (if applicable)	On behalf of the Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment (AAIA)
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If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the Call for Evidence you can contact PCU helpline on:

Telephone: 0807 000 2288

or contact us on: www.education.gov.uk/contactus/

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288

e-mail: consultation.unit@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

DRAFT

Please tick one category that best describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained school	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent school
<input type="checkbox"/> Childminder	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Early years sector representative	<input type="checkbox"/> Play sector	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast/after school club
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-school/playgroup	<input type="checkbox"/> SEN provision	/ Other

Please Specify:

The Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment (AAIA) is a professional association for anyone with an interest in educational assessment. Its members include local authority advisers and officers, education consultants, teachers and lecturers in higher education. Many of our members are involved in the moderation processes for the Profile (some as Profile Moderation Managers) and working in other ways in the delivery of the EYFS.

Provider - practitioner questions

How many children are currently cared for by you or in your setting aged 0-5?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-15
<input type="checkbox"/> 15-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 20+	

How long have you been registered as a provider/practitioner?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 5+ years		

Call for Evidence

The first part of this questionnaire is designed for parents or carers to answer, the remainder for schools, other early years providers and practitioners, local authorities, academics and sector representative bodies. However, please don't be constrained by the different sections of the questionnaire - if you have views on any of the questions here, then Dame Clare would like to hear from you.

There is a lot to consider in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so this questionnaire is long and you may not have a view on all questions. You might want to focus on the questions that are most relevant to you - you do not have to fill in the whole questionnaire in order to submit this to Dame Clare. There is space at the end of each section for you to write anything that you think is important but which isn't covered by the questions.

Thank you for taking the time to submit your views.

Questions for Parents

1 How many children do you have aged between birth - 5 who are looked after in any form of early learning or childcare provision? Please include children who go to nursery or reception class in a school as well as other types of early years provision.

One

Two

Three

Four

Five+

Comments:

2 What type of early years provision do you use for your children?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery school | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery class | <input type="checkbox"/> Reception class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Playgroup/preschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Childminder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast/after-school club or activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Special day school or activity for SEN | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday club/scheme |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Other -please specify | |

Comments:

3 What kind of information would you look at to help you choose early learning and care provision for your child? Please tick your most important 3.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ofsted inspection reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation | <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Activities and daily routines of the provision | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff qualifications | <input type="checkbox"/> Opening hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> Support for children's learning & development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other -please specify | | |

Comments:

4 The EYFS sets out the standards that should be in place to help create a safe, healthy environment in early learning and childcare settings. What are the most important things to you when it comes to protecting your child's safety and supporting their health in a nursery or reception class in school or another early years setting? Please tick your most important 3.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff knowing local safeguarding procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and secure premises & equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of healthy meals & drinks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good behaviour management | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe recruitment of staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Having staff with early years qualifications, training skills & knowledge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The number of staff to children | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to an outdoor play area | <input type="checkbox"/> The amount of space available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Each child having a 'key person' | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify | |

Comments:

5 Young children can learn incredibly quickly from birth, and need lots of interesting things to do as they develop and learn. What are the most important things that you think schools or other settings should be required to do to support your child's learning and development? Please tick your most important 3.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help them to build good personal, social and emotional skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Help to develop their communication, speaking & listening skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Begin to support them to read & write |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support them in problem solving & numeracy | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop the knowledge to help children make sense of the world | <input type="checkbox"/> Support their physical development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide them with opportunities to explore creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify | |

Comments:

6 Would you want all schools and early years settings to have to do the same things? If no, please say which types of provider you think should not have to do them.

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

7 The practitioners who work in schools and other early years settings are uniquely placed to talk to you about your child's development. What information, if any, would you like them to give you about your child's learning and development?

Achievements

Interests

Learning style

How their development compares to other children of the same age

Other-please specify

Comments:

8 At what point would you like them to give you this information?

Informally when appropriate

At the end of each term/every three months

On a yearly basis

Just before they move into year 1

When they first start going to a nursery or reception class

Other - please specify

Comments:

9 Do you think that it would be useful for early years practitioners to, with your permission, talk to other professionals such as health visitors about your child's development?

Strongly agree

Partly agree

Neither agree or disagree

Partly

Strongly

disagree

disagree

Comments:

10 Parents and carers have the biggest influence on their children's learning and development. Do you think there's a role for early years practitioners to work with parents and carers to help improve children's learning and development at home?

Strongly agree

Partly agree

Neither agree or disagree

Partly disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

11 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Comments:

Questions for practitioners, owners/managers, schools, academics, sector representative bodies, training providers, local authorities etc.

12 Many people have views about the EYFS. Many think that it has been very successful and would like it to remain unchanged. Others think parts of it need changing, or that there shouldn't be a mandatory framework at all. What is your overall view of the EYFS?

Comments:

The EYFS has been an invaluable development tool for practitioners in the early years. While there may be a case for reviewing some aspects of the framework, this would need to be done with care. Practitioners have shown substantial commitment in the implementation of the EYFS. What is needed now is continuity rather than changes as we are at a point where the EYFS is **having a** substantial impact on the outcomes for young children.

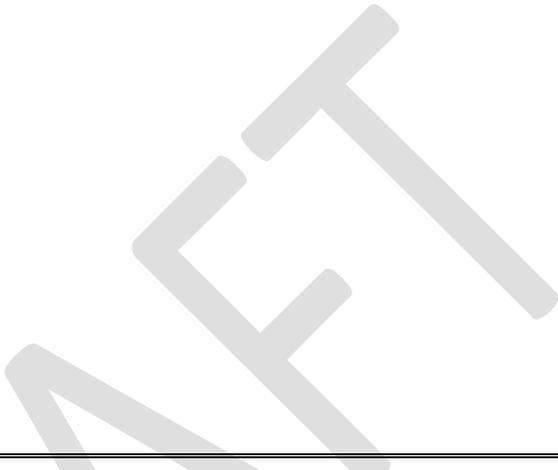
One of the aims of the EYFS was to bring together learning and care requirements, because the evidence suggests that this helps to raise the quality of early learning and childcare provision. It was also felt that it would be easier for practitioners and parents/carers if all the guidance on early years services was brought together in a single framework.

13 Do you think there should be a framework that covers both welfare requirements and learning and development requirements? If you have views on

the content of the welfare or learning and development requirements, note there are specific questions on this later on in the questionnaire.

<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree or disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> Partly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	

Comments:



14 Some providers argue that they should not have to deliver the learning and development requirements of the EYFS - for example, independent schools, parts of the play sector/out of school care, and some childminders. What are your views on moving away from a single framework and having different or lighter touch requirements for some types of provider?

Comments:

It is possible that, for childminders, a case for lighter touch requirements could be made. However, children have entitlements to provision tailored to their needs, regardless of whether they attend an independent, maintained, voluntary or play sector setting, and/or receive care from a child minder. Independent schools can be very variable in the quality of learning environments and resources they provide for young children. This strengthens the argument for their full involvement in the EYFS rather than for exceptions to be made.

15 What providers, if any, do you think should have fewer learning and development requirements? (**In this questionnaire, where children attend a*

range of settings we have called the settings where they spend the majority of their time between 8am and 6pm the 'primary setting', and the other settings they attend 'secondary settings'. E.g. if a young child attends a nursery class during the day, and an after school club for two hours after school, then the nursery class would be their primary setting and the after school club their secondary setting).

<input type="checkbox"/> / None	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary providers*	<input type="checkbox"/> Providers who don't receive government funding
<input type="checkbox"/> Providers whose philosophy conflicts with the EYFS	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	

Comments:

The notion of secondary and primary providers with different responsibilities for children is impractical and potentially divisive. At one setting, some children may be of 'primary' status and others of 'secondary status'. Picking through the bureaucratic tangle would constitute an unnecessary complication.

16 It could be argued that if providers receive government funding - for example for delivering free nursery education for 3 and 4 year olds - then they should be required to deliver the things that Government thinks are important and sets out in the EYFS. What are your views on this?

<input type="checkbox"/> / Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Partly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree or disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> Partly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	

Comments:

The rights of children to receive consistent, high quality provision for their learning and development, regardless of whether the setting is in receipt of government funding or not, must be preserved.

17 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Comments:

The themes and objectives of the EYFS

18 The EYFS is currently based around four themes that are designed to provide a context for the EYFS requirements, and describe how practitioners should provide good quality and consistent support for the learning, development and care of young children. These themes are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

Would you take a different approach to these themes and underpinning principles? If yes, please specify what approach you would take.

Yes

/

No Not Sure

Comments:

These themes and principles are totally appropriate for the learning and development of all young children. They cover all of the key aspects that providers and settings need to consider in order to ensure the best possible provision for young children.

19 The overarching aim of the EYFS is to improve children's developmental outcomes and to reflect that it is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. Do you think the EYFS should have a different aim? If yes, please specify what aim you would have.

 Yes

/

No Not Sure

Comments:

These rights are indisputable and non – negotiable; they express the outcomes we would wish for every child.

20 a) Underneath this overarching aim, the objectives of the EYFS are to:

- Objective 1: Set the standards for early years providers
- Objective 2: Provide for equality of opportunity
- Objective 3: Create the framework for partnership working

- Objective 4: Improve quality and consistency
- Objective 5: Lay a secure foundation for future learning.

Do you think these objectives are the right ones? If no, please specify what you think the objectives of the EYFS should be.

Yes
 No
 Not sure

Comments:

Given the aim of the EYFS and the irrefutable rights of children considered in question 19, it is difficult to see how any other objectives for the EYFS could be contemplated. The EYFS is delivered through a wide variety of providers. Children have an entitlement to provision which is tailored to their particular needs and interests, regardless of the setting they attend. Therefore it is essential that these different settings develop their provision within a common framework that ensures quality. Only then can there be a guarantee of future progress for all children through the best possible opportunities during their early years. We know only too well that disparities in attainment and progress between children from different backgrounds emerge early in life. To remove or alter the five objectives expressed in the EYFS will only damage the opportunities of those children who are disadvantaged and do nothing to improve the provision for all children.

20 b) Which of these objectives do you think is the most important of all?

Objective 1
 Objective 2
 Objective 3
 Objective 4
 Objective 5

Comments:

The question is not meaningful as it fails to appreciate that the objectives are interrelated and interdependent. It could be argued that a secure foundation for future learning (objective 5) is of key importance, although of course childhood is something to be enjoyed in itself, as much as being a preparation for the future. Identifying this objective as a priority is dangerous and could lead to focussing the activities and concerns of childhood exclusively on the future. It ignores that fact that any reforms must promote learning and development and enjoyment of the present. In any case, secure foundations for the future cannot be laid without improved quality and consistency in provision, clear standards, equality of opportunity and effective partnership working.

21 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Comments:

Enjoying, learning and developing

22 The six areas of learning and development are well established areas that are intended to provide a structure for young children's development and learning. Do you think they achieve this? If no, please specify what structure you think should be used.

/ Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

The six areas of learning provide a sound and well-researched basis for the planning and delivery of a broad, balanced framework, able to be flexible and responsive to children's needs. Practitioners have worked hard to understand and implement this framework and its associated pedagogy. Our education system is prone to recurrent reviews and changes that are frequently disruptive to the continuity that is essential to the successful embedding of good provision and practice. Structural and directional changes are not only unnecessary, but would undermine the sterling work of practitioners since the EYFS (and before that, the Foundation Stage) was introduced. Not only would it affect adversely those teaching in the early years, but also, and more importantly, the children with whom they work day by day.

23 One of the aims of this review is to identify the knowledge and skills that are most important for young children to develop and thrive, particularly so that when they move into Year 1 they will continue to make good progress and achieve well

in later school life. What do you think are the most important skills, knowledge, attitudes and dispositions that children need to develop from birth to five years?

<input type="checkbox"/> / All of the current six areas of learning	<input type="checkbox"/> A subset of the six areas of learning - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify
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Comments:

As identified in Q. 22 above, the six areas of learning are interrelated and reflect all aspects of children's development, as well as their integration into and interaction with the world into which they were born. For example, children's dispositions and attitudes are expressed through the ways in which they learn about the world around them and through the opportunities that they have for creative expression. Children's communication and language skills are used in all of their learning and are not something that can be developed in isolation and without reference to their overall development. With regard to disadvantaged children, the whole point of the six areas of learning is that an emphasis on them all compensates for the impoverished life experiences that they may otherwise have. Failing to emphasise them all through first hand experiences and play would compound their disadvantage rather than support their development.

24 Currently, the EYFS says that children should be supported to develop equally across all six areas of learning at all ages. Neurological evidence suggests that there are some things it's important for young children to learn when they're very young - for example emotional control - and other things that they can pick up at an older age - for example peer social skills. Should the areas of learning be tailored for specific ages and stages?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	/	No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

The content of the areas of learning should clearly be tailored to specific ages and stages (although flexibly to allow for individual differences) but not the areas of learning themselves. The six areas of learning reflect all aspects of children's learning (regardless of age) and to restrict the curriculum for young children would be artificial and counterproductive. Young children do not make the distinctions between areas of learning that are helpful to adults in planning for and supporting children's development. To children, the world is something to experience and enjoy in its entirety and even where their learning is focused on a particular area (for example, numbers and counting), this is likely to be in the context of other areas of learning such as creative activities and would certainly involve language and communication. Even where adults make distinctions between areas of learning, the interrelationships between them must be acknowledged when planning appropriate learning opportunities.

The assertion concerning neurological evidence is puzzling. The source of this evidence requires a reference for readers to access so that they can acquaint themselves with it. It is certainly not the case that emotional control in some way precedes the development of peer social skills. Children's social skills develop from birth and, in any event, the two are interrelated.

25 The early learning goals (ELGs) set out the things that most children should be able to do by the age of 5. The goals provide a structure for early years practitioners to work towards, but some people have told us that there are too many goals, with some duplication, and that some of the goals are too hard for some 5-year-old children. Do you think there should be a structure for practitioners to work towards?

Strongly agree

Partly agree

Neither agree or disagree

Partly disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

Given that there are six areas of learning covered by the EYFS, the number of early learning goals is manageable and the majority of practitioners would support this view. In the early days of the Profile's implementation, there were some complaints about manageability. Members of AAIA have worked with many practitioners, training and supporting them and moderating their assessments and continue to do so. In addition some members work with the QCDA monitoring the implementation of Profile moderation in LAs across the country. Therefore we have a considerable and long standing evidence base on which to judge this issue. Concerns about too many goals and issues of manageability from practitioners are encountered much less frequent than in earlier years and are often linked to misunderstanding of what is needed. The Profile was designed to be built gradually over time through observation and through their interactions with children. As a result, practitioners gradually accumulate evidence that children have achieved in relation to particular scale points/ELGs. Completed in this way, the Profile is entirely manageable and 'at one' with quality Early Years practice. The task is facilitated by the fact that there are many links between the Profile scale points, and evidence for the attainment of one scale point can often contribute to evidence for the attainment of others. Where practitioners find the Profile difficult to manage, it can be because they are unfamiliar with it, because they are using single items on the scales as individual teaching points or because they are trying to record all of the children's attainments towards the end of the reception year rather than gradually over time as intended, i.e. they are not using it correctly. Additionally, problems have often been linked to a perceived need to collect evidence. As practitioners have become more confident in summarising their judgements without feeling they need to have excessive documentation, issues of manageability have declined.

The pitch of the early learning goals varies. For example, scale point data show that Writing 8 is not within the scope of many children at the end of reception. Where evidence indicates that some scale points do not reflect reasonable expectations for many children by the end of the EYFS, they could be removed or they could be left in place in order to reflect the attainment of some children who do achieve them. If the latter decision is made then all of those involved with reception children (practitioners, senior managers in schools/settings, LA staff, Ofsted inspectors, policy makers) need to understand this and be clear about the reason for the lower outcomes for some Profile scales such as reading and calculating.

With reference to the Development Matters, it would have been preferable if these had been expressed in a way similar to the level descriptions in the National Curriculum. As it is, many practitioners are trying to record children's attainment in relation to each of the development matters as they progress, rather than make periodic judgements about children's development in relation

to the age related bands on a 'best fit' basis. Development Matters were never intended to be the basis of a system where the attainment of each item is recorded separately.

26 If you think there should be a structure for practitioners to work towards, what do you think this should include?

Comments:

The structure that is currently in place works well as it has prompted practitioners to consider and plan for children's learning using a broad and rich spectrum of opportunities. Practitioners have worked tirelessly to implement the EYFS, and to make changes to what exists currently would undermine the good practice that is now embedded and is hugely beneficial to young children.

By the end of the EYFS, significant gaps in development emerge between the most disadvantaged children and their peers from more affluent families, and this gap widens as children grow older. One of the aims of this review is to identify what practitioners could do to help narrow this gap.

27 What do you think are the most important areas to focus on to support disadvantaged children to progress? Please tick your most important 3.

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|----------------------|
| / | Personal, social & emotional skills | / | Communication, speaking & listening skills | / | Reading & writing |
| / | Problem solving & numeracy | / | Knowledge to make sense of the world | / | Physical development |
| / | Opportunities to explore creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other - please specify | | |

Comments:

It is not meaningful or possible for three aspects of learning and development to be identified as most important for the most disadvantaged children. All children have the same entitlements. Nor is it helpful to suggest concentrating on three areas will alleviate disadvantage. As argued in response to question 23, one of the reasons for having the six areas of learning is that an emphasis on them all compensates for the impoverished life experiences that disadvantaged children may otherwise have. To narrow that emphasis would compound their disadvantage rather than support their development.

28 Parents have the biggest influence on their children's learning and development. Do you think there's a role for early years practitioners to work with parents to help improve children's learning and development at home?

/ **Yes**

No

Not Sure

Comments:

The central role of parents in supporting their children's learning and development is clearly emphasised in the EYFS, as is the importance of settings and all practitioners making sure that parents are fully engaged. With parents having such a pivotal function in the learning process, encouraging parents to support children's learning both in the classroom and at home requires thought, care and commitment and the building of mutual trust by practitioners. However, this is not an issue that is specific to early years. Teachers of children of any age should work as closely as possible with parents in order to support their learning.

29 Learning and development in the early years is complex. Do you have any further comments on the current six areas of learning and development, ELGs and educational programmes in the EYFS?

Comments:

As already noted in response to question 24, children do not make the distinctions into areas of learning that adults use to plan for broad and balanced provision. Given that learning and development in the early years is complex, (and this has been endorsed and explored in much reputable research) there needs to be a framework that supports practitioners in their planning while recognising the complexity involved. The EYFS achieves this successfully.

Assessing children's progress

30 It's an integral part of caring for young children that practitioners should, on an ongoing basis, observe and understand what children are capable of and enjoy, and tailor what play and activities they do with them to reflect this. This cycle of observation and assessment, known as formative assessment (or 'Listen, Look and Note') informs or guides everyday planning. What do you think of this approach?

Comments:

Formative assessment (i.e. assessment that identifies what children understand and can do at any age. This process is integrated with everyday learning and teaching and gradually provides two purposes of assessment are therefore interrelated. Nevertheless formative assessment is

When evidence from observational assessment is used over time cumulatively, it provides a holistic picture of a child's competence. A child's response to a single activity cannot provide such a picture of competence. Neither is learning initiated through which children can develop as active and engaged learners. It is well understood and misrepresented as involving children 'just playing'. In fact, such an approach does not meet the expectations of the outcomes for children.

31 Summative assessment is a summary of all the formative assessment done over a long period and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is a way of capturing this at the age of 5. It is intended to provide Year 1 teachers with each child's level of learning and development as they reach the end of the EYFS, so that they should be able to tailor learning to individual children's abilities, and to inform parents/carers how their child is developing.. However,

some practitioners tell us that this takes up too much time, and that not all Year 1 teachers find the EYFSP useful. What are your views on the EYFSP?

I like it as it is

I think it should be slimmed down - please specify how

I think it should be non-statutory

I think it should be got rid of completely - please specify why

Comments:

It is unclear as to what “takes up too much time” refers to in the above question. If this is with reference to building the Profile itself, then practitioners making this comment are completing the Profile incorrectly (see response to question 25). If this comment is made with reference to sharing the outcomes with year 1 teachers, then the simple answer is that detailed discussion with the next teacher is a fundamental part of good professional practice. A reluctance to participate in such discussion is a reflection of inadequate practice. The Profile provides a vehicle for this discussion and allows for a dialogue in relation to particular scale points/ELGs that can inform the identification of next steps by the year 1 teacher. This dialogue supports the year 1 teacher in developing familiarity with the Profile and analysing its outcomes and making links to the curriculum in Key Stage 1. Many schools have blurred the boundaries between the EYFS and Key Stage 1 by taking both early years practice and the early years curriculum into the initial months of year 1. This supports children in making the transition into Key Stage 1 seamlessly, and supports year 1 teachers in developing their familiarity with the EYFS and its approach to learning and teaching and the Profile. In addition, it provides both a learning framework and pedagogy that continues to be appropriate for many children beyond the EYFS. In some schools and LAs, year 1 teachers have also been involved, very profitably, in Profile moderation. Where year 1 teachers do not find the Profile useful, it is because steps have not been taken to develop their practice and understanding.

32 a) Young children go through a number of transitions. As well as the transition from early years provision to Year 1, other examples of transition are between different early years providers, and into nursery classes in schools at the age of 3. Do you think there should be a summative assessment of a child's learning and development to help inform parents and to help support transition?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

In principle this would be welcome, although a common system/format would be difficult to implement given the range of providers that there are for young children. For children moving into year 1, the Profile already provides a basis for informing the next teacher about each child and a basis for discussion between practitioners. For younger children, such a summative assessment should give a broad picture of the child. It should be manageable but informative. (See response to question 33.) Given the difficulties of introducing a common assessment and reporting system across the variety of early years settings, it might be more appropriate to have a central government steer for processes that could be developed and implemented locally.

32 b) If yes, when do you think this should take place?

Comments:

At any point of transition.

33 If you think there should be a summative assessment of a child's development, what do you think this should cover? Please tick your most important 3.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal, social and emotional development | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication, speaking & listening skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading & Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving, reasoning & numeracy | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge & understanding of the world | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative development | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify | |

Comments:

The notion of the three most important areas is totally inappropriate. For example, this could be being and involvement. Practitioners regard receiving a holistic picture of the child as more important than letter names they can identify. Therefore all of the areas above are important.

34 Adults who work with young children are uniquely placed to recognise and understand how children are developing. Many practitioners work closely with other agencies to help to identify children with special educational needs (SEN) before they reach compulsory schooling in Year 1. Do you think that identification of possible SEN could be integrated more explicitly into the cycle of early years observation and assessment? If yes, how do you think this should work?

Yes

/ No

Not sure

Yes in principle but not in practice

Comments:

Conversations about special needs already arise following assessments using the age-related bands from Development Matters and the initial scale points from the EYFS Profile. An explicit requirement to identify children is likely to lead to over-identification and misidentification. For example being summer born is not a special need but such a child may require time for skills and knowledge to be fully developed compared to their older peers. Any additions to the current arrangements in an attempt to identify specific special educational needs would not be appropriate, would add little that the current observation and assessment requirements do not already identify and would not result in greater accuracy in identifying these needs.

35 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Comments:

The EYFS and The EYFS Profile have raised the status of early years and those who work within it. They have increased markedly an appreciation of the value and importance of the foundations for learning that are laid for young children. They have had a very positive impact on early years practice. They have ensured that children's next steps in their 'learning journey' are based on an accurate assessment of what they already know, understand and can do. To dismantle or restrict the early years framework would be destructive and retrograde steps.

Specifically with regard to the Profile, the EPPI Centre reviews of research related to teacher assessment (2002)

(<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=116> and <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=119>) identified some key findings. One was that such systems needed time to develop so that practitioners can develop understanding and ownership. This is the point that we have now reached with the Profile. It also highlighted research evidence about the impact that moderation processes can have on learning and teaching as well as assessment. The Profile moderation processes provide an invaluable vehicle for professional development supporting teachers in developing their practice and understanding. It would be deeply regrettable if the Profile and the moderation processes associated with it were lost.

Safe, happy and healthy children

36 The welfare requirements in the EYFS currently cover a lot of things, from child protection, to supporting children's health, to the safety of premises and equipment. The five areas under which the welfare requirements are grouped are safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, suitable people, suitable premises, environment and equipment, organisation, and documentation. Which of the welfare requirements do you think are essential?

Comments:

37 Some providers have told us that certain welfare requirements are overly burdensome, and that there's too much paperwork and box ticking included in the EYFS. Do you think any of the welfare requirements should be removed or simplified? If yes, please specify.

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

38 Currently, the EYFS sets out only very high level requirements on supporting children's health - for example it says that children should be given nutritious meals and snacks, but doesn't include nutritional guidelines. What do you think the EYFS requirements should be in relation to children's health?

Comments:

39 The staff to child ratio and qualification requirements are included within the welfare requirements. How have you found implementing the ratio and qualification requirements?

Comments:

40 Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Comments:

DRAFT

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply /

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

/ Yes

 No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Donna Harrison, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 794304 / email: donna.harrison@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this Call for Evidence.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 30 September 2010

Send by post to:
Department for Education
Consultation Unit Area Ground B
Castle View House
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 2GJ

Send by e-mail to: EYFS2010.REVIEW@education.gsi.gov.uk

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