

Annex 2: Summary of Recommendations

An inclusive, accessible and flexible EYFS

I recommend any revised welfare requirements are checked against the Independent School Standards to ensure there is no conflict between the two.

I recommend that there should continue to be a framework that applies to all providers working with children in the early years.

I recommend that Government consider whether the learning and development exemptions process could be widened to allow professional organisations representing groups of independent schools to seek exemptions on behalf of the schools they represent who do not wish to deliver the EYFS learning and development requirements. This would apply in circumstances where the professional organisations can show both support from parents whose children attend the schools seeking the exemption, and demonstrate how the professional organisations would continue to ensure delivery of high quality early years provision.

I recommend that the Government extend the exemptions from these early learning goals to all settings within the Steiner-Waldorf Foundation.

I recommend simplifying the procedure for exemption applications for providers meeting the existing stringent criteria – by replacing the requirement to consult local authorities with a requirement to inform them.

I recommend that guidance for wraparound and holiday provision is embedded in the EYFS and that Ofsted continues to ensure that it is embedded throughout the inspection process.

I recommend that the Skillsactive playwork level 2 award is included as a relevant early years qualification for holiday providers.

Recognising that there will be less support in the future to help early years providers improve, the EYFS must be redrafted in such a way that the framework is easy to access, understand and navigate, incorporating what is known about how young children learn and develop and highlighting the importance of protecting their welfare.

I recommend that any revised EYFS and guidance for inspectors are both subject to a plain English review, and should seek to be awarded the plain English crystal mark.

I recommend the development of a high-quality and interactive online version of the revised EYFS, with clear navigation to help people find what they are looking for.

I recommend that when a child starts in an early years setting, their parents should be provided with a brief, simple, explanation of what the EYFS is and what they can expect.

I recommend that the Government increases the emphasis within the EYFS on the role of parents and carers as partners in their children's learning, and in addition ensures that all practitioners continue to have access to the necessary resources needed to support the incorporation of effective parental engagement into their practice.

Equipped for life, ready for school

I recommend that personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development are identified as prime areas of learning in the EYFS.

I recommend that the EYFS should include a requirement for practitioners, including childminders, to provide on request to parents and carers, at some point between the ages of 24 – 36 months, a short written early years summary of their child's development in the prime areas.

I recommend that an insert is added to the early childhood health record, known as the Red Book, to encourage parents and carers, or their nominee, to enter information arising from this early years summary and from children's interaction with other professionals, for example speech and language therapists.

I recommend strongly that the Government works with experts and services to test the feasibility of a single integrated review at age 2 to 2½.

I recommend that the Government investigate urgently how the development of children's English language skills can be effectively supported and assessed.

Alongside the three prime areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development, I propose four specific areas in which the prime skills are applied: literacy, mathematics, expressive arts and design, and understanding the world.

I recommend that playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically are highlighted in the EYFS as three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

Practitioners have told me how helpful they find the non-statutory guidance on ongoing, formative assessment, Development Matters, in tracking children's learning and development from birth through to reception. I therefore

recommend that this is retained but is reviewed and slimmed-down, and is aligned with my proposed new areas of learning.

I recommend no changes to the EYFS requirements on formative assessment...[but] that the EYFS explicitly states that paperwork should be kept to the absolute minimum required to promote children's successful learning and development.

I recommend that the Government adopt the reduced set of early learning goals to provide a framework which defines the expected level of children's development by the end of reception year.

I recommend that for each early learning goal a simple scale is established. This should define what emerging, expecting and exceeding means for each early learning goal. I also recommend that the level of exceeding the early learning goals is set to be consistent with expectations in the current National Curriculum, and evolves in a way that is consistent with expectations to be set out in the new National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 in the relevant subjects.

I recommend that, as part of the review of the Development Matters guidance, the Government develops an additional column setting out clearly the key milestones of development for children aged under 24 months.

I recommend that the EYFS is made more explicit about the different approaches to assessment that practitioners may wish to consider for those children with special educational needs.

I have concluded that the assessment at the end of the EYFS, the EYFS Profile, should be significantly slimmed down and made much more manageable, based on my 17 proposed new early learning goals, and have clearer links into the National Curriculum.

I recommend that guidance sets out that assessment should be based primarily on the observation of daily activities that illustrate children's embedded learning.

I recommend that the EYFS requirement relating to delivery through play is clarified, including emphasising that this does not preclude more adult direction or teaching, and by setting out what playful adult-directed learning looks like.

Keeping children safe

I recommend that the welfare section of the EYFS is renamed the 'safeguarding and welfare requirements' and that the welfare requirements are redrafted to improve their clarity.

I recommend that the safeguarding and welfare requirements are made more explicit about warning signs in the behaviour of adults working in a setting.

I also recommend that the EYFS sets out clearly the high level content of the child protection training that lead safeguarding practitioners are required to attend. This should align with the *Working together to safeguard children* guidance, and include content on safeguarding within early years settings.

I do not recommend banning mobile phones in early years settings.

I recommend that the Government act on the report of the Advisory Panel for Food and Nutrition in Early Years and consider providing further advice and good practice for practitioners.

I recommend that the Government research as a matter of importance the ratios currently used in reception classes. This should include the use of support staff and identifying and sustaining current good practice if needed.

I recommend that the Government should take the opportunity when redrafting the EYFS to reflect the parity between the ratio requirements for independent and maintained schools which has been in place since 2009.

I recommend it is made clear in the EYFS that, when ratios are met and maintained across the whole provision within an early years setting, it is left to the professional expertise of staff, and the leaders and managers of settings, to work with parents and carers to agree exactly how staff are deployed within the setting throughout the day.

However, it should also be made clear that the majority of practitioners' time should be spent working directly with the children.

I recommend that clear guidance is included in the EYFS about the amount of paperwork that should be kept in relation to risk assessments. I also recommend that practitioners should not have to undertake written risk assessments in relation to outings, but instead be able to demonstrate, if asked – for example, by parents or during inspection – the way they are managing outings to minimise any risk.

A professional, well-supported workforce

I recommend that the Government retain a focus on the need to upskill the workforce, to commit to promoting a minimum level 3 qualification and to maintain the ambitions for a graduate led sector.

I recommend the Government discusses with the Careers Profession Alliance how to ensure that careers professionals are well informed about careers in the early years.

I recommend that the Government review the content of early years training courses to test the strength and quality of these qualifications.

I recommend that the Government consider how the best-performing settings could help to support introduction of the known model of Teaching Schools to the early years.

I recommend that the Government build on existing work to draw together a progression structure for qualifications, linking these to leadership qualifications and identifying clear career pathways for practitioners.

I recommend that work continues to develop qualifications to meet the needs of all learners, including young people undertaking full-time college courses and those who have worked in the early years for a long time who wish to evidence their expertise and progress along the structure of qualifications discussed above.

I recommend that the Government ensures that new entry qualifications are of a high standard and, once introduced, reviews whether they succeed in conferring the equivalent status of the NNEB qualification.

I recommend that the EYFS is clear what supervision means in practice, including some good practice examples, and that settings should agree their own procedures for supervision. Childminders should also have access to the challenge and professional support that supervision can provide.

I recommend that the Government should consider how peer networks, such as childminder networks, and national organisations can provide this kind of support.

I recommend that Ofsted and local authorities work together to produce clear, consistent information for early years providers and communicate this effectively to all practitioners.

I recommend that Ofsted reviews the training, capacity and capability of the current early years inspectorate and existing guidance to inspectors.

I recommend that, as with Ofsted, local authorities avoid creating burdens for practitioners arising from requests to collect unnecessary data and information, and to keep paperwork that is not required by the EYFS. Instead, they should find other ways of testing the strength of practitioners' ability to support children's development.