# Curriculum: what we want children to learn

The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.

Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.

The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.

Young children’s learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.

Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider’s web with many strands, not a straight line.

Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

| **Areas to consider about your setting** | **Supporting Evidence** | **Links to support and identify improvements** | **Actions you have identified** | **Date actions need to be completed** |
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| Do all staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) including the four guiding principles? |  | [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)  [Help for early years providers : Training, qualifications, support and guidance (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/support-for-practitioners/training-qualifications-support-and-guidance) |  |  |
| Do all staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS? |  | [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf) |  |  |
| Do you have opportunity to regularly review the role of the learning environment to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the children within your setting? |  | [Learning environments – Birth To 5 Matters](https://birthto5matters.org.uk/learning-environments/#:~:text=Such%20an%20environment%20will%20support,well%20as%20the%20social%20world) |  |  |
| Is your outdoor area used as an integral part of the provision and seen as of equal importance as indoors?  How do you know?  How do you ensure that children are [physically active](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report)? |  | [Early Years Foundation Stage: learning through playing outside - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maximising-the-use-of-the-outdoor-environment-for-young-children#:~:text=Details,social%2C%20emotional%20and%20physical%20development.)  [Physical activity guidelines for children (under 5 years) - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-under-five-years/) |  |  |
| Do staff understand the importance of the role of the adult in providing warm responsive relationship between adults / children? |  | [Help for early years providers : Interactions (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/communication-and-language/interactions) |  |  |
| Do staff understand their role in supporting children to acquire the communication and language skills and develop the physical, personal, social and emotional skills they need for the next steps in their learning? |  | [Early Years Evidence Store | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store)  [Help for early years providers : Curriculum planning (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/support-for-practitioners/curriculum-planning) |  |  |
| Does the settings curriculum support children to develop their knowledge and skills in the prime and specific areas of learning? |  | [Early Years Evidence Store | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store)  [Best start in life part 2: the 3 prime areas of learning - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-start-in-life-a-research-review-for-early-years/best-start-in-life-part-2-the-3-prime-areas-of-learning) |  |  |
| Do all staff have a good understanding of children’s prior experiences and are these built on within the settings curriculum? (Cultural Capital) |  | [Best start in life part 1: setting the scene - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-start-in-life-a-research-review-for-early-years/best-start-in-life-part-1-setting-the-scene#curriculum) |  |  |
| How is your curriculum shared with parents? |  | [Help for early years providers : Working in partnership with parents and carers (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/support-for-practitioners/working-in-partnership-with-parents-and-carers) |  |  |
| How does your curriculum support staff to understand their role in actively challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping and help children gain an understanding of people, families and communities beyond their immediate experience? |  | [Help for early years providers : Diverse world (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/understanding-the-world/diverse-world) |  |  |
| Does your curriculum consider the cohort of children within your setting and what you want them to learn?  Consider:   * Children with EAL * Children with SEND * Children with 2-year-funding * Demographic of children and families |  | [Help for early years providers : Meeting the needs of all children (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/support-for-practitioners/meeting-the-needs-of-all-children) |  |  |

**\* Definition of Curriculum from the Early Years Curriculum and Pedagogy- Best Start in Life research part 1: 8 Sept 2023**

The areas of learning and development in the EYFS must shape the educational programmes or curriculum for children in all settings. It is crucial that all providers carefully consider what children need to learn over time so they are able to reach ambitious end points by the end of their time in the early years. High-quality curriculums are coherently planned and well sequenced. Although the EYFS framework enables practitioners to decide on the detail of the curriculum they teach, it is important that they plan and sequence what they intend all children to learn, rather than it happening by chance or for some children and not others. A coherently planned and well-sequenced curriculum enables children to make progress by knowing more, understanding more and being able to do more. In the early years, the curriculum enables all children to make progress in the areas of learning. In this way, early education provides the building blocks of knowledge for subjects that children will study in later years. The early years curriculum does not include formal subjects. However, it does prepare children for later learning in those formal subjects.