

Don't you just hate it when you've just got your head around something and then the Government comes along and changes things again?

Well, as you probably know, they're about to do it again ... out will go the Birth to three framework and Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and in comes the shiny new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

So what's it all about and, more importantly, is it worth having a good moan about?

It comes into force in September 2008 so there's plenty of lead in time. There'll also be a lot of training available, so no need to worry on that score either.

Here's a brief summary covering what's involved

The EYFS is a single development and learning framework for children aged from birth to five years. It draws from Birth to Three Matters, the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and the National Standards for under 8's Day Care and Childminding into the one framework (so you'll be familiar with the terminology).

Principles

The principles behind the guidance are the same – such as the importance of parents as educators, key person for every child, relationships between adults and children, planning for the individual child, role of indoor and outdoor play etc etc.

What will be in it?

The framework will have two parts to it – the EYFS document itself (in other words what you must do to deliver early years provision) and a CD-Rom (this will have the EYFS Profile and training clips).

So what does the EYFS look like?

Well, quite honestly, it doesn't look all that different. There are still a range of Early Learning Goals as you'd expect. The Areas of Learning are now called Areas of Learning and Development. There are six and the headings are slightly different:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

As before, none of the six Areas of Development and Learning can be isolated and delivered on its own. There is an emphasis on assessing children's progress (Look, Listen and Note), thinking about planning for their development (Planning and Recording) so that you can put this in place (Effective Practice).

Look, Listen and Note

Those of you who use *Trackers* to observe and record children's progress will be familiar with assessment based on observations. When the DfES produce the final EYFS documentation a new version of *Trackers* will be produced that will reflect the changes. The observations that you record in *Trackers* will help you with your

planning – so important in making the children’s learning exciting, varied and, of course, progressive.

Inclusion

There is, as you would expect, a good deal of emphasis in the framework on your teaching (and your early years setting as a whole) being inclusive. This means that you need to have a good working policy covering issues like special needs, anti-discrimination, behaviour, bullying, disability and equal opportunities.

If you want to be kept up to date with what’s happening as far as the EYFS is concerned, fill in the Feedback form on the website and we’ll keep you up to date.



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