



Information about the changes to The Early Years Foundation Stage

We are sending you some information about a few changes to The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). EYFS covers the first stage of a child's care from birth to five years old. It sets the standards to ensure that all children learn and develop, as well as keeping them healthy and safe. All schools and Ofsted registered early years providers in England must follow the EYFS. Also included in the EYFS are the seven Areas of Learning and Development. They are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

In 2019, the government proposed changes to the EYFS. These changes have now been made and all early years settings and schools will follow the new EYFS from **September 2021**. The aim of the changes is to improve the learning for all children and better prepare them for the move into Year 1. The changes also hope to give children the best start in life and set them up well for their future. Not all parts of the EYFS have changed, some elements have remained the same or similar.

Some key changes:

1. Reduce the amount of unneeded written recordings and assessment of children by staff.
 - This means staff do not need to keep a large amount of written evidence that proves children are able to do lots of things.
 - Staff still know the abilities and skills of each child, and know how to support them to develop. However, now they do not need to write this down unnecessarily. This frees up more time for staff to spend directly with the children.
 - By taking away the need for constant recording, it helps to develop more natural play, conversations and interaction between adults and children.
 - We will continue to use Tapestry as our online Learning Journal. We will focus on 'WOW' moments or moments that tell us something new about your child's learning and development for observations.

2. There is more of an emphasis on the importance of developing communication and language skills.
 - Children should be supported in building up vocabulary by increasing the amount of words they know and can use.
 - Encourage more conversations between adults and children, but also children and their peers.
 - Good language skills are the basis for all other learning and social interaction, so this is vital to focus on.

3. There is a focus on how reading stories is important to help children develop in all areas of learning.
 - Daily reading of stories encourages an enjoyment of reading from a young age.
 - Lots of other learning opportunities happen when looking at books, for example comparisons of culture or the past.
 - Listening to stories develops imagination, ideas and language.
 - Reading is an essential skill and so should be shown to children, as well as practised by them regularly.
 - Children are also encouraged to use story ideas in their play.

4. There is more focus on encouraging healthy choices overall and an understanding of oral health.
 - Required to teach children the importance of brushing teeth.
 - Supervised toothbrushing is not expected in settings and schools.
 - Focus on helping children to understand which choices to make that will help them to be healthy, for example which foods to eat and why.
 - Getting into good routines from a young age is important as these often continue into adult life.

At the end of the reception year, children are assessed against the **17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**. It is important to remember that the ELGs are not a test. Staff will use what they already know about a child to make their decisions. Changes have been made to the Early Learning Goals so that they are now clearer, easier to use and understand.

They have also been adapted to better match up with the national curriculum in year 1. This will help children to be better prepared for their move to the next key stage.

Exceeding judgements have also been removed. Children are now encouraged and challenged to have a greater depth and understanding of things before moving onto new learning.

We hope that you have a better understanding of the changes that have been made to the Early Years Foundation Stage. We also hope you feel reassured that the wellbeing and care of the

children is still the main priority of the EYFS. Children in Reception are still learning and developing through play and exploration. The adults support this through guidance and teaching of skills.