



Glossary for EYFS

Achievement

Takes account both of a child's attainment and progress over time.

Active learning

Refers to motivation comprising three aspects:

- being involved and concentrating
- keeping on trying
- enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

Area of learning

Refers to the grouping of children's learning and development into seven areas.

There are three prime areas which focus on the earliest experiences which are foundations for learning: Personal, social and emotional development, Communication and language and Physical development. There are four specific areas in which the prime skills are applied:

Literacy, Mathematics, Expressive arts and design, and Understanding the world.

Aspect of learning

The strand of specific focus within an area of learning. For example, Personal, social and emotional development has three aspects: Self-confidence and self-awareness, Managing feelings and Behaviour and making relationships.

Assessment

Involves analysing and reviewing what is known about each child's learning and development to reach informed decisions about the child's level of attainment.

Attainment

What a child knows, understands and can do.

Best fit

Making a judgement as to whether the child's learning and development is best described by:

- the expected description for each ELG;

- not yet at the expected level (emerging); or
- beyond the level expected at the end of the EYFS (exceeding).

Characteristics of effective learning

The three characteristics of effective learning comprise playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. The characteristics describe the different ways children learn rather than what they learn. They begin at birth and are lifelong characteristics which are critical for building children's capacity for future learning. These characteristics need to be understood by practitioners working across all seven areas of learning.

Child initiated

The action of a child choosing to extend, repeat or explore an activity. This activity may or may not have been introduced or prompted by an adult. It is the child's innovation within or of the activity which is important and relevant to child initiation. An adult may be present and may be supportive but not directive. For example an adult may be supporting the child to realise an idea by providing necessary resources, or by engaging in thought provoking conversation. Child initiated activity and exploration provides an important insight into the depth of a child's learning. When learning is fully mastered the child is able and motivated to employ that learning unprompted.

Creating and thinking critically

Refers to thinking comprising three aspects:

- having their own ideas;
- using what they already know to learn new things; and
- choosing ways to do things and finding new ways.

Early learning goal (ELG)

A collection of statements which sets out the expected level of attainment at the end of the EYFS. There are 17 ELGs drawn from seven areas of learning.

Embedded learning

The learning that is demonstrated without the need for overt adult support. Where learning is secure, at whatever level, it is likely that children often initiate the use of that learning.

Emerging development

Describes attainment at a level which has not reached that expressed by the ELGs. Practitioners should refer to the descriptors of age bands in Development matters to determine which age band best describes a child's development.

Evidence

Any material, knowledge of a child, specific anecdotal incident, observation or information from additional sources that supports the overall picture of a child's attainment. There is no expectation or requirement that such evidence is always formally recorded or documented.

Practitioners may choose to record specific evidence in order to secure their own judgements.

Expected development

Is the development expected by the end of the EYFS and is described by 17 ELGs drawn from seven areas of learning.

Exceeding development

Describes attainment beyond that which is expected by the end of the EYFS.

Formative assessment

Ongoing observation and assessment of children in order to make professional judgements about children's achievements and decide on the next steps in learning.

Internal moderation

Practitioners' agreement of assessment judgements with others within their own settings.

Measuring progress

Involves comparing assessments of a child's attainment at different points in time to determine whether that child has made gains in learning and development.

Moderation

The dialogue based on a representative sample of judgements between moderators and practitioners which establishes:

- the consistency and accuracy of judgements made by different practitioners;
- whether the judgements about children's learning and development are in line with the nationally agreed exemplification; and
- whether the process of assessment provides for reliable, accurate and secure data.

Observation

Reaching an understanding of children's learning by watching, listening to, and interacting with children as they engage in activities and experiences and demonstrate their specific knowledge, skills and understanding.

Parents

The term 'parent' is used to refer to:

- parents of a child;
- any person who is not a parent of a child but who has parental responsibility for the child; and
- any person who has care of the child.

Playing and exploring

Refers to engagement comprising three aspects:

- finding out and exploring;
- using what they know in their play; and
- being willing to have a go.

Practitioner

Any adult who works with children in a setting.

Practitioner knowledge

Refers to the understanding reached about a child's attainment through observation of everyday activities and experiences. It is underpinned by specific examples and demonstrations of a child's attainment which may not be formally recorded.

Reception class

An entry class to primary school for children who have their fifth birthday during the school year and, where it is appropriate, including children who are younger or older than five. Defined by Section 142 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Setting

Any out-of-home provider of Early Years provision for children from birth to five, such as childminders, local authority nurseries, nursery or Early Years centres, children's centres, playgroups, pre-schools, or schools in the independent, private or voluntary sector and maintained schools.