

Section 3: Universal inclusive practice

This section of the toolkit is about high quality inclusive practice for all children.

This is important because high quality inclusive practice is responsive to individual children and differentiates and personalises provision to meet the needs of all children including disabled children and children with SEN.

Every child

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential (*Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*, para 1)

The EYFS Statutory Framework provides the framework for all young children. There are four guiding principles:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

DfE (2014) *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*, para 6

High quality teaching

The Code of Practice: High quality provision to meet the needs of children

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this....

DfE and DH (2015) *SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years*, para 1.24

High quality teaching is key to children's learning and development and forms the basis for any *additional or different* provision for children with SEN. High quality teaching is based on the highest expectations for individual children, draws on what staff know about children's learning and development, is differentiated for individual children and uses a range of pedagogic approaches.

Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and the stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

DfE (2014) *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*, para 1.6

High quality teaching is adapted to the different ways in which children learn. Dr Lovaas put it this way:

If they can't learn the way we teach, we teach the way they learn. O. Ivar Lovaas

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

DfE (2014) *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*, para 1.9

Ofsted makes it clear that the term *teaching* should be thought of as being all the ways in which adults help young children to learn.

Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' or formal way of working. It is a broad term which covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment they provide and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do as well as take account of their interests and dispositions to learning (characteristics of effective learning), and use this information to plan children's next steps in learning and monitor their progress.

Ofsted (2014) *Evaluation schedule for inspections of registered early years provision*

Key person

Each child must be assigned a key person. This is an EYFS learning and development requirement and an EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirement.

Providers must inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting.

- The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
- The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.
- They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

DfE (2014) *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage*, para 1.10

Observation, assessment and planning

Observation, assessment and planning are central to tailoring every child's learning to meet their individual needs. The non-statutory *Early Years Outcomes* can be used throughout the early years as a guide to making best-fit judgements about whether a child is showing

typical development for their age, may be at risk of delay or is ahead for their age. Based on the *Early Years Outcomes, Development Matters* supports practitioners in planning ways to extend children’s learning and encourages a cycle of action:

- Observation: Look, listen and note. Describing.
- Assessment: Analysing observations and deciding what they tell us about children.
- Planning: What next? Experiences and opportunities, learning environment, resources, routines, practitioners’ role.

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice.

Practitioners can:

- Observe children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities and planned activities, and learn from parents about what the child does at home (observation).
- Consider the examples of development in the columns¹ headed *Unique Child: observing what children can do* to help identify where the child may be in their own developmental pathway (assessment).
- Consider ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development, reflecting on guidance in columns headed *Positive Relationships* and *Enabling Environments* (planning). These columns contain some examples of what practitioners might do to support learning. Practitioners will develop many other approaches in response to the children with whom they work.
- Where appropriate, use the development statements to identify possible areas in which to challenge and extend the child’s current learning and development (planning).

Early Education (2012) *Development Matters*

Every child included and supported

EYFS sets the standards for all early years providers. One of the purposes of the EYFS is to provide:

Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The SEN and disability code of practice highlights the UK Government’s commitment, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to inclusive education of disabled children and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. These rights are secured in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010, see *Section 2: Statutory requirements*.

Rights are enshrined in the legislation but the experiences of disabled children and their families are determined by the people with responsibilities towards them, including those in early years settings. The Council for Disabled Children has an inclusion policy based on 6 key principles, see activity page 5. It encourages settings to consider the quality of their provision in the light of children’s experiences.

¹ The columns referred to are those in: Early Education (2012) *Development Matters*

Reflecting on your own setting and practice

Good practitioners are by definition reflective practitioners – they strive for progression in their practice, they challenge and question themselves and look for new and better ways of working. We know that young children are affected by everything around them. Practitioners who are in the habit of reflecting on their own practice, hold the key to the continuous improvement of children’s experiences.

A good place for practitioners to begin to reflect is by asking some simple questions such those found on the following chart. The manager might undertake this review with key colleagues or it might be undertaken with all staff.



Use the diagram to RAG rate your setting. Colour the circle

- **RED** if this area needs attention
- **AMBER** if some consolidation is needed in this area
- **GREEN** if you feel sure your setting does this already

Date the diagram and follow up with an action plan.

Review this regularly

How inclusive are policies and practices?

In some areas of the review activity, above, more information may need to be gathered. The Council for Disabled Children Inclusion Policy can be used to provide a framework for gathering and reflecting on the experiences of disabled children and their families.

Inclusion is a journey with a clear direction and purpose: equality of opportunity for all children and young people. CDC believes that the following factors are crucial to the development of inclusion:

- a welcome for all disabled children, secure relationships and support for families when they need it;
- respect for difference and a commitment to building friendships and community to the benefit of everyone;
- equality of access to play, learning, leisure and all aspects of life;
- the active participation of children and their families in decision-making;
- a proactive approach to identifying and removing barriers;
- timely access to information and to people with empowering attitudes, supportive skills and expertise.

Council for Disabled Children (2008) *Inclusion Policy*

How do disabled children, children with SEN and their families experience our setting? How do we know?

Do disabled children, children with SEN and their families experience	How do we know?
...a welcome, secure relationships and support for families when they need it?	
...respect for difference and a commitment to building friendships and community to the benefit of everyone?	
...equality of access to play, learning, leisure and all aspects of life?	
...the active participation of children and their families in decision-making?	
...a proactive approach to identifying and removing barriers?	
...timely access to information and to people with empowering attitudes, supportive skills and expertise?	

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/inclusion-policy>