

Revision to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

I am pleased to advise you that the revised EYFS has now been published and the following documents can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk. From the home page, select "Teaching & Learning" from the left hand column; then select "The EYFS".

The second bulleted list on the page provides links to:-

- EYFS Statutory Framework
- EYFS Practice Guidance
- Letter from Sheila Scales
- EYFS table of changes
- Frequently asked questions

There are more changes than I anticipated, although many of them are more relevant for private, voluntary and independent sectors and childminders. The document tries to make clearer the different requirements for schools compared to any other provider. Regrettably it is still very confusing in parts.

Interestingly, EYFS is no longer part of the National Curriculum and to reinforce this, the word "curriculum" has been removed "to avoid confusion". EYFS is, of course, a legal requirement from September 2008.

The most significant change for schools is regarding *nursery* classes with more than 26 pupils in a session. I have spoken in detail with our legal department and will be writing to Headteachers of schools with nursery classes to provide more detailed advice in the next few days.

The table of changes referred to in the bulleted list above, itemises the changes page by page and is a useful reference document that will enable practitioners to determine whether any change is significant for them.

Of particular relevance to Headteachers are:-

- pages 49-51 of the Statutory Framework, which deal with the legal requirements regarding ratios and qualifications;
- pages 17 -18 of the Practice Guidance, which covers class sizes, integrated provision* and classes with nursery and reception children mixed. If you have mixed age nursery and reception classes (often referred to as Foundation Stage Units) I would urge you to refer to pages 19–20 for examples of staffing requirements. It would be useful if you could let me know if you are operating with mixed nursery and reception classes in order that I can confirm that your staffing arrangements meet the legal requirements;
- the new paragraphs on page 7 (1.19 and 1.20) of the Practice Guidance which describe the balance of adult directed and child initiated activity;
- the revised section on quality on pages 8 and 9 (1.23 -1.27) of the Practice Guidance which provides useful potential for self-evaluation.

* Integrated provision is where a maintained nursery class and a private or voluntary pre-school group are working together in a seamless way, sharing themes, planning, activities, resources, assessments etc In Wigan this is a feature of the provision in some Children's Centres.

The FSP becomes the EYFSP from September and this is being launched next week. I understand that revised guidance from NAA will be incorporated. The scales booklet will no longer be available in hard copy – it will only be available electronically. Once I have information about how to access it, I will advise you.

There is still a legal requirement for a practitioner working in the Foundation Stage to be trained in paediatric first aid and for a paediatric first aider to accompany children in this age group on educational visits. Courses are available via PDC. The requirement to keep medicines locked away has been removed.

It is probably worth reminding you about the terminology used in the requirements in the Statutory Framework as there are distinct sections:

Specific legal requirements – are just that i.e. In statute and required by law for all settings (including schools).

Statutory Guidance – is guidance to which providers (including schools) must have regard. This is not a legal requirement but you must take it into account and if you decide to depart from it you must have clear reasons for doing so and be able to demonstrate that the alternative approach achieves the ends described in the guidance. (see *Statutory Framework* page 8 paragraph 1.8.)

The separate booklet, the *non-statutory guidance* is advice and detailed information on meeting the requirements.

I would strongly recommend that you order hard copies of the revised guidance as printing off pages where revisions have been made is an extremely time consuming job. There is the facility to order direct from the website. Please note copies will not be sent to the LA for distribution to schools.

If you require further clarification on any aspect of the revised guidance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be grateful if you would ensure that all Foundation Stage practitioners in your setting have access to this letter.

Yours sincerely



Val Lewis
School Improvement Adviser - Early Years