

Reflective toolkit for practitioners in
Early Years
Settings and Childminders
to review or further develop an
effective curriculum
linked to the EYFS Statutory Framework.



This reflective toolkit includes:

- What do we mean by curriculum?
- How to talk about your unique curriculum
- How curriculum links to the 3 I's:
Intention, Implementation and Impact
- Understanding a Sequenced Curriculum
- An Ofsted audit tool linked to the Education Inspection Framework for EYs settings and Childminders

How to use this reflective toolkit:

- This toolkit has been created to guide thinking for EYs practitioners to design and review the curriculum in place for the children they work with.
- It offers prompts for team discussion and encourages a reflective, confident approach to planning in a simple framework.
- It links to the Ofsted EIF for EYs settings.

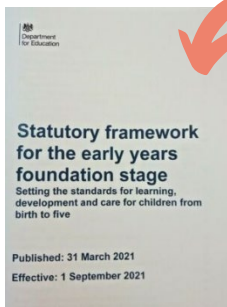
Getting it right in the early years

Your Early Years curriculum will be unique to your setting and will unfold and change as staff get to know children and learning needs progress. It should be responsive and reflect the unique families and community you work with. Your professional knowledge will guide decisions about what a child needs to learn based on what they already know and their developing interests. The practitioner's role is to widen experiences and prepare children for what comes next in their learning and development journey. An effective curriculum will be motivating, exciting, creative, meaningful and support children to make sense of the world. It will also be inclusive and provide all children the skills and knowledge they need to improve outcomes, tackle inequality and help close the disadvantage gap.

What do we mean by Curriculum?

Curriculum

The curriculum consists of everything you want children to experience, learn and be able to do.
Development matters, 2021



It **must** meet the requirements of the educational programmes in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).



These are Non- Statutory Guidance documents

(you don't have to use them but they could be really helpful to support child development knowledge)

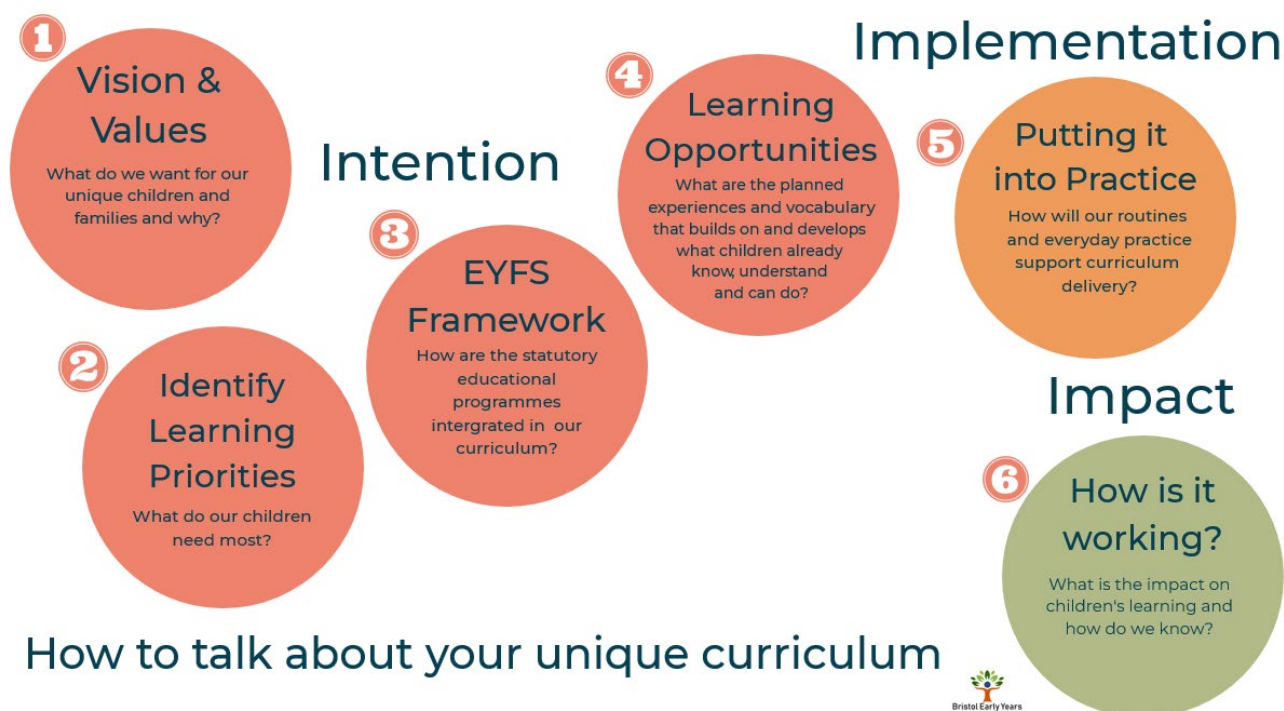
What do Ofsted say? (For more detail refer to attached Ofsted audit)

Intention- What do we want our children to learn? **Implementation-** How will we make this happen?

Impact- How do we know it is working?

- Your curriculum should be **unique to your setting**. Watch your children, studying how they lead their own play. Talk to parents and carers to find out their interests.
- Your curriculum should be **coherently planned and sequenced**. It builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning.
- Practitioners and leaders should **create an environment that supports the intent** of an ambitious and coherently planned and sequenced curriculum.
- Practitioners and leaders must use assessment well to **check what children know and can do to inform teaching**. This includes planning suitably challenging activities and responding to specific needs.
- The provider's curriculum intent and implementation should be **embedded securely and consistently** across the provision

START HERE



Intention- What do we want our children to learn?

- 1 VISION and VALUES- What do we want for our children and families and why?**
The children we work with are **UNIQUE** and come to us with **UNIQUE** life experiences and cultural capital.

Cultural Capital-*what children bring with them, and develop from their experiences and opportunities* (Birth to 5 Matters definition, 2021)

What do we want for our children and families while they are with us? Why is this important to us as a team? This will link with your whole setting vision for children and their learning.

The Principles of the EYFS are a great starting point for reflection



- 2 IDENTIFY LEARNING PRIORITIES-What do our children need the most?**
Getting to know what our **UNIQUE** children need to learn about the most

Perhaps many of the children we work with live in flats with no garden-what might they need most? Maybe they have had limited opportunities to learn about life beyond where they live- what might they need more of? They may have a different home language and little experience of stories in English. They may have never eaten a wide variety of healthy foods or balanced on a bike. This is a great starting point to think about what your cohort of children need and identify these learning priorities as part of your curriculum.

3

EYFS FRAMEWORK-How are the Statutory Programmes integrated in to our curriculum?

Using the Educational Programmes to plan our curriculum across all 7 areas of learning (3 Prime areas and 4 Specific areas) [EYFS Statutory Framework 2021](#) (P8-10)

These are a statutory requirement of the EYFS that we MUST use as a starting point for planning. However, they are not enough on their own. Our job is to use this top-level plan to meet the strengths and needs of our children so that they are included, motivated and develop confidence as a learner. We can add experiences and opportunities so that children's learning is meaningful and links together.

4

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES-What do I plan to do with children so that they learn more as well as what they already know? What do I need to think about?

Once we know children well through spending time together and observing, we are in a strong position to make professional judgements about curriculum planning. We will know more about what children already know, understand and can do. We can then offer experiences that are well matched, expand vocabulary and build on existing skills and knowledge. **Ofsted considers the curriculum as a progression model.** "By progress, we mean that children know more, remember more and can do more of what was intended in the curriculum". (Guidance for EYs registered providers 2023)

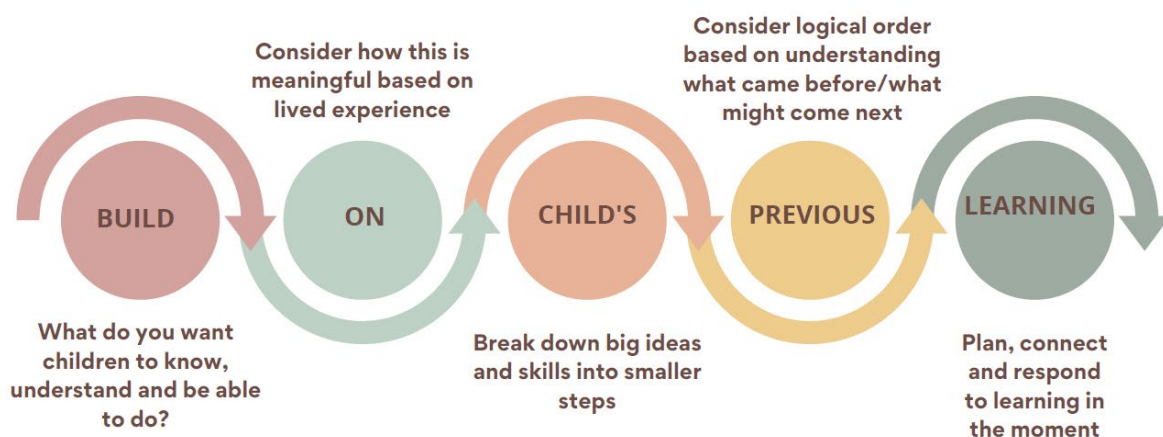
Sequenced Learning

Teaching and learning needs to be sequenced logically for children so that they can make sense of it eg. learning how to speak in sentences so that you can explain something well to someone else or learning when and how to wash your hands as part of a routine. Ofsted will ask what you want the children to learn and why, as well as **how you are helping children know more and remember more.**

The provider's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. It builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning. Children benefit from meaningful learning across the EYFS curriculum. (Ofsted, 2021)

A Sequenced Curriculum coherent, logical, introduced and revisited

Why this?
Why now?



Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments = Learning and Development

5 Implementation- How will we make this happen?

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE-How do every day routines and experiences support our curriculum and meet the needs of ALL children?

Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.

Development Matters, 2021

Use the following questions to reflect on how you put your curriculum into practice every day:

- What does learning look like in everyday routines and experiences?
- How does your daily plan for children link to your curriculum?
- What about the Characteristics of Effective Learning? [Bristol C of EL Guidance](#)
- How do you ensure that the flow of the day matches children's learning needs and sense of well-being?
- How does the environment inside and out tune into and support children's learning needs?
- How are the adults used to support your curriculum intent and implementation?

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021

6 Impact- How do we know it is working?

HOW IS IT WORKING?- What is the impact on children's learning and development and how do we know?

Responsive pedagogy is needed to recognise what children know, understand, and can do

Birth to 5 Matters, 2021

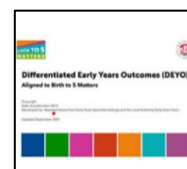
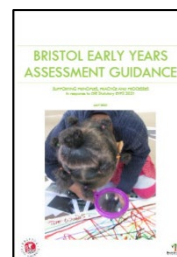
Some reflective questions to support thinking:

- How and when do we reflect on our curriculum as a team? What do we need to think about?
- What are we noticing about children's learning? What is going well? What do they need next?
- What are my children and families telling me?
- What does our ongoing assessment tell us?
- Are children making progress in their learning and development?
- What might we need to change, develop further?
- How might we support, extend and deepen play, interactions and learning in partnership with children?
- Have we noticed the things that are important for our quality improvement journey? What training or professional development might further support?
- How does our approach to curriculum, support transitions for children in their learning journey?

Useful Links



(For more information talk to your Lead Teacher)



[Progress Check at age 2](#)

[Positive Transitions Guidance](#)

[Bristol Standard Outdoor Play & Learning Reflective Framework](#)

How will I document my curriculum in a meaningful way?



What does Ofsted say? (Updated Jan 2023)

- The EYFS's educational programmes provide the framework for the curriculum. It is for providers to decide how to expand, extend and broaden these.
- It is for you to decide what guidance to use when developing and shaping your curriculum, and how to talk about that information with inspectors. Some providers may choose to map this out, but others may present what they do in a different way.
- It is up to providers to determine the format of their planning, and it is up to leaders to justify these plans based on what you want children to encounter, explore and learn in the setting.
- Inspectors do not expect to see documentation other than that set out in the EYFS framework. They will use the evidence gathered from discussions and observations to judge the overall quality of the curriculum provided for children.

Our inspection handbook for registered early years providers and for schools makes it clear that curriculum planning does not need to be in any specific format.

Your curriculum will be unique to your setting, context, children, families and community

This toolkit does not, therefore include an example proforma for an EYs curriculum. However, in Bristol we are busy gathering a range of different examples of what an EYs curriculum could look like and will be collecting these case studies on the curriculum page of the Bristol Early Years Website soon to support further thinking.

