**Important changes to the EYFS as of 1st September**

On the 1st September 2021 the Department of Education launched a new and revised EYFS Statutory Framework 2021. The aim of the 2021 EYFS reform is to strengthen the current early years curriculum we have in place and to improve practice for all children.

**What is the EYFS?**

The EYFS framework:

* sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well
* ensures children are kept healthy and safe
* ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school

The [EYFS](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework/) is a play based nursery curriculum allowing children to explore, learn and develop in an environment that is safe and secure, yet challenging.

The principles which guide the work of our Early Years Professionals are grouped into four themes:

**A unique child** – every child is a competent leaner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured

**Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or key person

**Enabling Environments** – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning

**Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different times; all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

There are three prime areas of learning in which our Early Years Professionals support children to learn and develop. These are:

* Personal, social and emotional development
* Communication and language
* Physical development

Plus four specific areas of learning. These are:

* Knowledge and understanding of the world
* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Expressive arts and design

## **Why Is the EYFS Framework Being Changed?**

The reasons behind the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework are that they:

* Are expected to improve outcomes for all children at age five, but particularly the outcomes for disadvantaged children, and in the areas of language and literacy.
* Will reduce workload, including unnecessary paperwork, so that those working in the early years sector can spend more time with the children in their care.

[**Development Matters**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2) is the non-statutory curriculum guidance to be used alongside the EYFS framework. This is recommended, but not compulsory. At Planet Tiny we will be using Development Matters alongside the EYFS and our own curriculum to meet the learning outcomes for all children.

* It has been revised for 2021 in line with the EYFS changes, and the main motivation behind the changes is to give practitioners more room to use their professional judgement – **based on their knowledge and experience** – and to avoid development being overly tracked or monitored.

As a result, the guidance is:

* Shorter – it is about two-thirds of the length of the previous version, with more freedom to develop the right broad curriculum for individual children.
* Simplified – the age bands have been made much broader. **There are now only three age bands: birth to three, three- and four-year-old’s,** and children in reception, which replace the old **Birth-11 months, 8-20 months ,16-26 months ,22-36 months ,30-50 months ,40-60 months.**

In the three Prime Areas there are ‘observation checkpoints’ that can be used to assess if children are on track and developing as expected.

**Checkpoints:**

**Example of observational checkpoint (Communication and language 3 and 4 year old’s)**

Observation Checkpoint Around the age of 3, can the child shift from one task to another if you fully obtain their attention, for example, by using their name? Around the age of 4, is the child using sentences of four to six words – “I want to play with cars” or “What’s that thing called?” Can the child use sentences joined up with words like ‘because’, ‘or’, ‘and’? For example: “I like ice cream because it makes my tongue shiver.” Is the child using the future and past tense: “I am going to the park” and “I went to the shop”? Can the child answer simple ‘why’ questions?

Over the past few months, we have been training the team on how to implement the new EYFS alongside developing our own nursery curriculum and the focus of our training sessions on the 23rd will primarily be on this.

Each child will continue to have their own key person to enable them to feel reassured, safe and cared for within our setting.

This person also keeps a detailed learning journey of the child’s progress during their time with us. These records are available to be viewed and discussed at any time by parents, who are always encouraged to add details of their child’s experiences from home. With the emphasis being on reduced paperwork, staff will continue to observe your child as follows:

* One detailed narrative observation per month highlighting the key areas in which the child is doing well and in which they may require additional support.
* 4 spontaneous observations during your child's focus week. Less informative but still using the EYFS to highlight areas of the EYFS
* A termly assessment at the end of each month which will be shared with you each term.

The EYFS emphasises that parents are a preschool age child’s primary educator, we therefore encourage parents to interact with us and contribute to their child’s learning. There is a new section in Famly where parents can add their own observation of their child. This may be something you have enjoyed together or something special you feel you would like to share with us.

If you have any questions regarding the EYFS and the new changes please do not hesitate to ask either a member of staff or email Deepa - info@planettiny.co.uk