



Department
for Education

Early years qualification requirements and standards

For group and school based providers, and
awarding organisations and training
providers offering qualifications in early
years

Effective: 4 January 2024

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Summary

About these requirements and standards

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework**¹ sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to help children thrive and to give them a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide a foundation for good future progress through school and life.

This document sets out the minimum qualification requirements that staff must meet to be recognised as level 2, level 3 or level 6 members of staff for the purpose of working within the **EYFS staff:child ratios**. Providers must refer to these requirements to determine at which level a member of staff can be included in the **staff:child ratios**.

This document also sets out the criteria that Early Years Practitioner (level 2) and Early Years Educator (level 3) and other qualifications of level 4 or higher must meet to be recognised as **full and relevant** by the Department for Education. These criteria outline the minimum skills, knowledge and understanding that a practitioner must demonstrate to deliver the **EYFS** and support the learning and development of young children. To ensure quality across early years settings in England, awarding organisations and training providers should seek the Department for Education's approval of their Early Years Practitioner and Early Years Educator qualifications against these criteria.

This document uses the word "must" where the requirement is mandatory.

Words and phrases written in bold throughout this document are defined in the Glossary of Terms.

Expiry or review date

This guidance remains in force until further notice.

What legislation does this guidance refer to?

The qualification requirements are given legal force by Regulations² made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006.

Who is this publication for?

Section 1 of this publication covers the qualification requirements that staff must meet to work as qualified staff within the **EYFS** in early years settings in England. It is for:

- Group and school based early years settings³; and

¹ The EYFS statutory framework can be located here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>.

² The Early Years Foundation Stage (Welfare Requirements) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/938), as amended.

³ This includes providers of childcare on domestic premises. However, this publication is not for childminders, who must comply with the training and ratio requirements set out in the EYFS for childminders.

- early years staff who hold **full and relevant** qualifications.

Section 2 of this publication sets out the criteria that early years qualifications must meet to be recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant**. It is for:

- awarding organisations; and
- training providers⁴.

⁴ Qualifications delivered and awarded outside of the United Kingdom are not automatically recognised by the Department for Education as full and relevant. See paragraph 1.20 of this document.

Glossary of Terms

Adaptation period – a period of supervised practice at an early years setting. This usually takes place over several months, or until the candidate has successfully demonstrated the skills and knowledge defined in the criteria that are not covered by their early years qualification gained outside of the United Kingdom.

Appropriate to early years practice – where a qualification is relevant to working in an early years setting that delivers early education and childcare for the 0 to 5 years age range.

Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria - the criteria that qualifications must meet to enable holders to work as level 3 members of staff for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework – sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that young children from 0 to 5 years learn and develop well.

Early Years Practitioner (level 2) criteria – the criteria that qualifications must meet to enable holders to work as level 2 members of staff for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) – an award allowing holders to work as level 6 members of staff for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

EYFS staff:child ratios – the minimum number of early years staff that must be available per child, depending on staff qualification and the age of the child. The ratio requirements can be found in the EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers.

Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) – an award allowing holders to work as teachers in early years settings, counting as level 6 members of staff for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

Early Years Qualifications List (EYQL) – list of early years qualifications that are recognised by the Department of Education as full and relevant.

Full and relevant – a qualification that meets all of the Early Years Practitioner (level 2) or Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria, as well as EYTS, Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and EYPS, are recognised as full and relevant by the Department for Education. Holders of a full and relevant qualification can be included in the staff:child ratios at the level appropriate to the relevant criteria.

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) – an award allowing holders to work as teachers in early years settings, counting as level 6 members of staff for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

Section 1: Early Years Qualification Requirements

- 1.1. The **EYFS statutory framework** sets out the requirements for **staff:child ratios** in settings delivering the **EYFS** and the qualification levels practitioners must hold to be included within those requirements.
- 1.2. This document defines the qualifications that practitioners must hold to be included in the specified **staff:child ratios** at levels 2, 3 and 6 of the **EYFS**.
- 1.3. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 2, level 3 or level 6, staff must hold a qualification that is recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** at the appropriate level. Any individual that does not hold a **full and relevant** qualification can only work as an unqualified member of staff in an early years setting and therefore cannot count in the **staff:child ratios**.
- 1.4. Providers must refer to the **Early Years Qualifications List (EYQL)**⁵ to determine if a qualification is recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** and therefore allows the holder to be included within the **staff:child ratios**.
- 1.5. This section outlines the minimum qualification requirements that staff must meet to work within the **staff:child ratios**. However, employers may set their own higher qualification requirements if they wish. If doing so, employers must ensure that staff holding higher-level qualifications still meet all requirements necessary to be included in the **staff:child ratios**.
- 1.6. Providers must refer to the **EYFS statutory framework** for any additional requirements that staff must meet to be included in the **staff:child ratios** (for example, Paediatric First Aid training).

Qualifications achieved in the United Kingdom

Qualifications started before 1 September 2014

- 1.7. Qualifications started in the United Kingdom⁶ before 1 September 2014 must meet the Department for Education's **full and relevant** criteria for early years qualifications⁷, for holders to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 2 or level 3.
- 1.8. The **EYQL** contains a complete list of all pre-September 2014 qualifications that are recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant**. This includes qualifications from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. A qualification started before 1 September 2014 does not allow the holder to be included in the **staff:child ratios** if:

⁵ The Early Years Qualifications List can be located here: [Early years qualifications achieved in the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298242/early_years_qualifications_list.pdf).

⁶ This includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

⁷ See Annex B.

- it is not listed in the **EYQL**;
- it is listed in the **EYQL** but does not meet specified additional requirements;
- it does not match exactly the title in the **EYQL** (including information contained in brackets)⁸.

Qualifications started after 1 September 2014

Qualifications achieved in England

Working at level 2 within the staff:child ratios

1.9. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 2, staff must hold either:

- a **full and relevant** level 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8⁹ qualification; or
- a qualification at level 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 that is not **full and relevant**, provided that the qualification was started between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2019, is related to early years (0 to 5 years) and is **appropriate to early years practice**.

1.10. For level 2 qualifications started between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2019 to be **full and relevant**, they must be:

- related to early years (0 to 5 years) and **appropriate to early years practice**; and
- Ofqual-approved and included on Ofqual's list of regulated qualifications¹⁰.

1.11. Level 2 qualifications started on or after 1 September 2019 must meet the **Early Years Practitioner (level 2) criteria**¹¹ to be **full and relevant**. Level 2 qualifications that are recognised by the Department for Education as meeting these criteria are included in the **EYQL**.

Working at level 3 within the staff:child ratios

1.12. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3, staff must hold a **full and relevant** level 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 qualification and a suitable level 2 English qualification.

1.13. Suitable¹² level 2 English qualifications are:

- Functional skills qualification in English at level 2;
- GCSE or International GCSE qualification in English language and/or

⁸ Bracketed information indicates the pathway or specialism necessary for a qualification to meet the early years criteria.

⁹ See Annex A for a summary of the different types of qualification at each qualification level.

¹⁰ See: <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk>

¹¹ See Annex C.

¹² Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalents are also recognised. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualifications and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) qualifications are not recognised.

literature to at least grade 4 (or grade C);

- Key skills qualification in communication at level 2;
- A Level or AS Level qualification in English language and/or English literature to at least grade E;
- O Level qualification in English to at least grade C;
- CSE grade 1 English (language);
- Basic skills certificate L2 – certificate in adult literacy;
- British Sign Language (BSL) for people who use BSL as their primary language.

1.14. Level 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 qualifications must meet the **Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**¹³ to be **full and relevant**. Level 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 qualifications that are recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** are included in the **EYQL**.

1.15. For level 6 qualifications started on or after 1 September 2014 to be **full and relevant**, therefore allowing holders to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3, they must:

- be fully consistent with the QAA subject benchmark statement for Early Childhood Studies;
- include an element of assessed practice¹⁴ in an early years setting.

Working at level 6 within the staff:child ratios

1.16. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 6, staff must hold one of the following or another approved level 6 qualification:¹⁵:

- **Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)**;
- **Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS)**;
- **Early Years Professional Status (EYPS)**.

Qualifications achieved in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

1.17. Qualifications gained in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are not automatically recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** to the **Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3, staff holding a qualification from Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland may need

¹³ See Annex D for the Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria: from 1 September 2014, and Annex E for the Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria: from 1 September 2024.

¹⁴ Suitable elements of assessed practice include: direct observation of the learner's practice in the workplace; documented accounts of the learner's practice; professional discussion, recorded oral or written questions relating to the learner's practice; work plans or work-based products created by the learner; case studies, working journals, assignments or projects recording the learner's practice in the workplace; and simulated exercises demonstrating the learner's ability to cope with specific events, for example fire drills or confidential meetings.

¹⁵ QTS, EYTS and EYPS also allows holders to count as level 3 members of staff. However, staff cannot access both levels simultaneously, and must be counted as either level 3 or level 6 for the purpose of the staff:child ratios.

to take additional modules as part of their course.

1.18. Staff holding a level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development qualification (Wales and Northern Ireland) started on or after 1 September 2014 must have achieved the following units to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3:

- R/504/2191: Support children's language, literacy and communication;
- L/504/2190: Support children's mathematical development;
- A/601/0121: Work with babies and young children to promote their development and learning;
- M/502/3812: Engage with parents in their children's early learning.

1.19. Staff holding Vocational Qualification 3: Children's Care, Learning and Development (Scotland) at SCQF level 7 must have achieved the following units to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3:

- DA09 04 (CCLD 345): Support literacy development;
- DA0A 04 (CCLD 346): Help pupils to develop their numeracy skills;
- DT1N 04 (CCLD 325): Support children and young people during transitions in their lives;
- DT1G 04 (CCLD 321): Support children with additional support needs and their families;
- DR8M 04 (CCLD 309): Plan and implement curriculum frameworks for early education.

1.20. To gain recognition as a qualified member of staff in England¹⁶, staff holding a qualification from Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland must apply to the Department for Education (or a body contracted by the Department for Education to make assessments on their behalf), or undertake a full qualification that is recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant**, if:

- they do not hold a level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development (Wales and Northern Ireland) qualification or Vocational Qualification 3: Children's Care, Learning and Development (Scotland) at SCQF level 7;
- they hold one of the above qualifications but do not hold the required units to count as level 3 members of staff for the purpose of the **staff:child ratios**.

Qualifications achieved outside the United Kingdom

1.21. Qualifications gained outside of the United Kingdom are not automatically recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** to the **Early Years Practitioner (level 2)** or **Early Years Educator (level 3)** criteria. Staff holding a qualification achieved outside of the United Kingdom must gain recognition to work as a qualified member of staff in order to be included in

¹⁶ For more information see 'Qualifications achieved outside the United Kingdom', p9 of this document.

staff:child ratios in early years settings in England.

- 1.22. To gain recognition to work as a qualified member of staff in England, candidates with a qualification from outside of the United Kingdom must submit details of their qualification to the Department for Education, or a body contracted by the Department for Education to make assessments on their behalf, for assessment against the **Early Years Practitioner (level 2) criteria** or the **Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**¹⁷. Recognition is granted if a qualification is judged by the Department for Education to fully meet the relevant criteria. Where a qualification is judged as not fully meeting the criteria, but as meeting at least 50% of the sub-criteria, candidates may undertake the following options to demonstrate the skills and knowledge missing from their qualification:
- completion of an **adaptation period** at an Early Years setting in England;
 - completion of standalone units with a registered provider.
- 1.23. Once the Department for Education has verified that the **adaptation period** or standalone units successfully make up the criteria which the qualification did not originally meet, candidates can be recognised as qualified members of staff and be included in the relevant **staff:child ratios**.
- 1.24. In cases where the Department for Education judges that a qualification gained outside of the United Kingdom does not meet at least 50% of the sub-criteria, candidates must undertake a qualification that is recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** in order to be included as qualified members of staff in the **staff:child ratios**.
- 1.25. Staff holding a teaching qualification from outside the United Kingdom must gain **QTS**¹⁸ or **EYTS**¹⁹ to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 6.

Level 2 English and maths

- 1.26. To be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3, staff who achieved their **full and relevant** level 3 or above qualification on or after 1 September 2014 must also hold a suitable level 2 English qualification²⁰.
- 1.27. Staff who achieved their **full and relevant** level 3 or above qualification on or after 1 September 2014 but who do not hold a suitable level 2 English qualification may

¹⁷ For more information about overseas practitioners gaining recognition to work as a qualified member of staff in a setting in England, see: [How you make an application for recognition of overseas qualifications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

¹⁸ Staff holding a teaching qualification from outside of the United Kingdom should refer to the Department for Education's professional recognition service to apply for QTS in England. See: [Routes to qualified teacher status \(QTS\) for teachers and those with teaching experience outside the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

¹⁹ For more information about gaining EYTS, see: [Become an early years teacher | Get Into Teaching GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

²⁰ See paragraph 1.12 of this document. As with staff who gained their qualification from the United Kingdom, staff holding an overseas qualification achieved before 1 September 2014 do not need to hold a level 2 English qualification to count within the staff:child ratios at level 3 (even if granted recognition by the Department for Education as qualified after 1 September 2014).

only be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 2.

- 1.28. Staff holding **QTS**, **EYTS** or **EYPS** do not need a separate level 2 English qualification to be included in the **staff:child ratios** at level 3 or level 6. This applies to staff who achieved their qualification before and after 1 September 2014.
- 1.29. Setting managers appointed on or after 4 January 2024 must hold a suitable level 2 qualification in maths or must achieve one within two years of starting in the position.
- 1.30. Suitable²¹ level 2 maths qualifications are:
 - Functional skills qualification in maths at level 2;
 - GCSE or International GCSE qualification in maths to at least grade 4 (or grade C);
 - Key skills qualification in application of number at level 2;
 - A Level or AS Level qualification in maths or pure maths and/or further maths to at least grade E;
 - O Level qualification in maths to at least grade C;
 - CSE grade 1 maths;
 - Basic skills certificate L2 – certificate in adult numeracy.

²¹ Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalents are also recognised.

Section 2: Early Years Qualification Criteria

- 2.1. This document defines the minimum requirements for what early years staff must know, understand and be able to do in order to be considered qualified to support young children in the **EYFS**. It does this by setting out the criteria that qualifications must meet to enable practitioners to demonstrate their competence.
- 2.2. The criteria included in this document are:
 - Department for Education **full and relevant** criteria for early years qualifications started before 1 September 2014 (Annex B)
 - **Early Years Practitioner (Level 2) criteria** (Annex C)
 - **Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**: from 1 September 2014 (Annex D);
 - **Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**: from 1 September 2024 (Annex E).
- 2.3. Qualifications that meet the appropriate²² criteria are recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant**. Holders of a **full and relevant** qualification can be included in the **staff:child ratios** in an early years setting at level 2 or level 3.

Approving early years qualifications

- 2.4. Awarding organisations should refer to the appropriate qualification criteria when developing any qualification that intends to qualify candidates to work in an early years setting in England and within the **staff:child ratios**. To meet the Early Years Practitioner (level 2) or Early Years Educator (level 3) requirements, all criteria, including sub-criteria and range²³, must be covered.
- 2.5. To determine if a qualification can be approved as **full and relevant**, the Department for Education assesses the course content against the **Early Years Practitioner (level 2) or Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**²⁴. Qualifications that meet all of the relevant criteria (including sub-criteria and range) are confirmed as **full and relevant** and added to the **EYQL**²⁵. Holders of qualifications on the **EYQL** can count as qualified members of staff and be included in the relevant level **staff:child ratios**.
- 2.6. Awarding organisations can use 'Early Years Practitioner' or 'Early Years Educator' in the title of courses that have been recognised by the Department for Education as **full and relevant** against the **Early Years Practitioner (level 2) or Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria**. 'Early Years Practitioner' or 'Early Years Educator' should be included on the certificate upon achievement of an approved level 2 or

²² According to the date and level of the criteria.

²³ 'Range' refers to bullet points included in some sub-criteria.

²⁴ Applications for assessing qualifications against the criteria will only be accepted by the Department for Education if submitted by the awarding organisation or training provider. For more information on submitting an application, please contact the Department for Education.

²⁵ Qualifications must also be approved separately by Ofqual and listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ) before they can be added to the EYQL. This does not apply to qualifications developed and delivered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Ofqual uses its own criteria to approve qualifications. The RRQ can be located here: [The Register of Regulated Qualifications: Home page \(ofqual.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofqual.gov.uk/register-of-regulated-qualifications/).

level 3 qualification. Where mandatory units and optional units together make up a specified Early Years Educator pathway, the qualification must not use 'Early Years Educator' in the title. Instead, 'Early Years Educator pathway' should be included in brackets on the certificate upon achievement.

- 2.7. For qualifications already on the **EYQL**, it is essential that the awarding organisation or training provider informs the Department for Education if the qualification title changes. If significant changes are made to course content, it is essential that the awarding organisation or training provider seeks approval from the Department for Education that the qualification can still be recognised as **full and relevant**.

Annex A: Summary of qualification levels

The following sets out the qualifications associated with each qualification level, defined by Ofqual in the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)²⁶:

Entry Level:

- Entry level award
- Entry level certificate (ELC)
- Entry level diploma
- Entry level English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Entry level essential skills
- Entry level functional skills
- Skills for Life

Level 1

- First certificate
- GCSE – grades 3, 2, 1 or grades D, E, F, G
- Level 1 award
- Level 1 certificate
- Level 1 diploma
- Level 1 ESOL
- Level 1 essential skills
- Level 1 functional skills
- Level 1 national vocational qualifications (NVQ)
- Music grades 1, 2 and 3

Level 2

- CSE – grade 1
- GCSE – grades 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 or grades A*, A, B, C
- Level 2 award
- Level 2 certificate
- Level 2 diploma
- Level 2 ESOL
- Level 2 essential skills
- Level 2 functional skills
- Level 2 national certificate
- Level 2 national diploma
- Level 2 NVQ
- Music grades 4 and 5
- O level – grade A, B or C

Level 3

²⁶ Source: [What qualification levels mean: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/what-qualification-levels-mean) (accessed 16 October 2023).

- A level
- Access to higher education diploma
- Advanced apprenticeship
- Applied general
- AS level
- International Baccalaureate diploma
- Level 3 award
- Level 3 certificate
- Level 3 diploma
- Level 3 ESOL
- Level 3 national certificate
- Level 3 national diploma
- Level 3 NVQ
- Music grades 6, 7 and 8
- T level
- Tech level

Level 4

- Certificate of higher education (CertHE)
- Higher apprenticeship
- Higher national certificate (HNC)
- Level 4 award
- Level 4 certificate
- Level 4 diploma
- Level 4 NVQ

Level 5

- Diploma of higher education (DipHE)
- Foundation degree
- Higher national diploma (HND)
- Level 5 award
- Level 5 certificate
- Level 5 diploma
- Level 5 NVQ

Level 6

- Degree apprenticeship
- Degree with honours – for example bachelor of the arts (BA), bachelor of science (BSc) honours
- Graduate certificate
- Graduate diploma
- Level 6 award
- Level 6 certificate
- Level 6 diploma
- Level 6 NVQ
- Ordinary degree without honours

Level 7

- Integrated master's degree, for example master of engineering (MEng)
- Level 7 award
- Level 7 certificate
- Level 7 diploma
- Level 7 NVQ
- Master's degree, for example master of arts (MA), master of science (MSc)
- Postgraduate certificate
- Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE)
- Postgraduate diploma

Level 8

- Doctorate, for example doctor of philosophy (PhD or DPhil)
- Level 8 award
- Level 8 certificate
- Level 8 diploma

Annex B: Department for Education ‘full and relevant’ criteria for early years qualifications started before 1 September 2014

These qualification criteria lay out the minimum requirements for what Early Years Practitioners (level 2) and Early Years Educators (level 3) must know, understand and be able to do to be considered qualified to support young children from 0 to 5 years in the EYFS.

Short criteria

1. Demonstrate depth and level of learning appropriate to specified outcomes of full early years, childcare or playwork qualifications.
2. Demonstrate it has valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures.
3. Include an element of assessed performance evidence.

Extended criteria

1. Demonstrate depth and level of learning appropriate to specified outcomes of full early years, childcare or playwork qualifications.

Comment/detail

Qualifications will be mapped using Skills for Health level descriptors:

- Level 2 Working knowledge of: the application of factual knowledge in a manner that takes account of widely understood principles and implications within the field of practice;
 - Level 3 In-depth understanding of: a broad and detailed understanding of the theoretical underpinning of an area of practice including conflicting theories and constructs;
 - Level 4 Critical understanding of: the ability to evaluate and devise approaches to situations that depend on the critical application of theories and conceptual constructs within the area of practice.
2. Demonstrate it has valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures.

Comment/detail

Qualifications will be mapped using Skills for Health level descriptors:

- Assessment by individual who is professionally competent and knowledgeable
- Process and methodology appropriate to nature and size of qualification externality

- Awarding procedures reflect achievement
3. Include an element of assessed performance evidence.

Comment/detail

This could be:

- Observed performance
- Work products
- Child observations and assessments
- Curriculum plans
- Individual learning/play plans
- Etc

Annex C: Early Years Practitioner (Level 2) criteria: from 1 September 2019

These qualification criteria lay out the minimum requirements for what an Early Years Practitioner (level 2) must know, understand and be able to do to be considered qualified to support young children from 0 to 5 years in the **EYFS**. They are divided into 2 sections:

Section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria

Section ii: Minimum content requirements for Early Years Practitioner (level 2) qualifications

Section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria

A: Qualification content

All Early Years Practitioner (level 2) qualifications will require candidates to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

1. Knowledge of child development
2. Safeguarding
3. Health and safety
4. Wellbeing
5. Communication
6. Support the planning and delivery of activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes
7. Support children with special educational needs and disabilities
8. Own role and development
9. Working with others – parents, colleagues, other professionals

Full details of required qualification content are shown in Section ii on the following pages.

B: Accreditation

From 1 September 2019 all Early Years Practitioner (level 2) qualifications must meet the criteria set down in this document. They must also be regulated by Ofqual onto the current national qualifications framework.

Section ii: Minimum content requirements for Early Years Practitioner (level 2) qualifications

1. Knowledge of child development

- 1.1. Describe how children learn and the expected pattern of babies and children's development from 0 to 5 years and their further development from age 5 to 7. Areas of development to include:
 - cognitive
 - speech, language and communication
 - physical
 - emotional
 - social
 - brain development
 - literacy and numeracy
- 1.2. Understand the importance to children's holistic development of:
 - speech, language and communication
 - personal, social and emotional development
 - physical development
 - literacy and numeracy
- 1.3. Explain how babies' and young children's learning and development can be affected by their stage of development, wellbeing and individual circumstances.
- 1.4. Describe the significance of attachment, the key person's role and how transitions and other significant events impact children.
- 1.5. Demonstrate how to support babies and young children through a range of transitions.

2. Safeguarding

- 2.1. Know the legal requirements and guidance on safeguarding, security, confidentiality of information and promoting the welfare of children.
- 2.2. Understand safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection and online safety.
- 2.3. Explain own role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and security, including child protection, reporting and confidentiality of information.
- 2.4. Recognise when a child is in danger, at risk of serious harm or abuse and explain the procedures to be followed to protect them. Types of abuse including:
 - domestic
 - neglect
 - physical
 - emotional
 - sexual abuse

3. Health and safety

- 3.1. Outline the legal requirements and guidance for:
 - health and safety
 - security
- 3.2. Identify risks and hazards in the work setting and during off site visits.
- 3.3. Describe own role and responsibilities, including reporting, in the event of:
 - a baby or young child requiring urgent medical/dental attention
 - a non-medical incident or emergency
 - identifying risks and hazards
- 3.4. Demonstrate skills and understanding for the prevention and control of infection, including:
 - hand washing
 - food preparation and hygiene
 - dealing with spillages safely
 - safe disposal of waste
 - using correct personal protective equipment
- 3.5. Explain the work setting's procedures for receiving, storing, recording, administering and the safe disposal of medicines.
- 3.6. Use equipment, furniture and materials safely, following the manufacturers' instructions and setting's requirements.
- 3.7. Identify the signs and symptoms which may indicate that a child is injured, unwell (including common childhood illnesses and allergies) or in need of urgent medical/dental attention.
- 3.8. Demonstrate how to encourage children to:
 - be aware of personal safety and the safety of others
 - develop personal hygiene practices (including oral hygiene)

4. Wellbeing

- 4.1. Understand the impact of health and wellbeing on children's development.
- 4.2. Understand the current dietary guidance for early years and explain why it is important for babies and young children to have a healthy balanced diet and be

physically active.

- 4.3. Promote health and wellbeing in settings by encouraging babies and young children to:
 - consume healthy and balanced meals, snacks and drinks appropriate for their age
 - be physically active through planned and spontaneous activity throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors
- 4.4. Demonstrate how to share information with parents/carers about the importance of healthy balanced diets, looking after teeth and being physically active.
- 4.5. Carry out respectful care routines appropriate to the development, stage, dignity and needs of the child, including:
 - Eating (feeding and weaning/complimentary feeding)
 - nappy changing procedures
 - potty/toilet training
 - care of skin, teeth and hair
 - rest and sleep provision

5. Communication

- 5.1. Demonstrate how to communicate with all children in ways that will be understood, including verbal and non-verbal communication.
- 5.2. Demonstrate how to extend children's development and learning through verbal and non-verbal communication.
- 5.3. Explain ways to communicate with all children appropriate for all their stages of development, including those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) or who have delayed speech.
- 5.4. Encourage babies and young children to use a range of communication methods.
- 5.5. Demonstrate a range of communication methods to exchange information with children and adults.

6. Support the planning of and deliver activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes

- 6.1. Describe the statutory framework, including the learning and development requirements for babies and young children that must be implemented by your setting.

- 6.2. Demonstrate inclusive practice ensuring that every child is included and supported.
- 6.3. Explain the terms:
 - Adult led activities
 - Child initiated activities
 - Spontaneous experiences
- 6.4. Work with colleagues to identify and plan enabling environments, activities (both indoors and outdoors), play opportunities and educational programmes (both adult led and child initiated) to support children's holistic development through a range of play, creativity, social development and learning.
- 6.5. Implement and review activities to support children's play, creativity, social development and learning and clear up after activities.
- 6.6. Describe the key stages in the observation, assessment and planning cycle and explain the value of observation for:
 - the child
 - the parents/carers
 - the early years setting in planning the next steps
- 6.7. Observe children, assess, plan and record the outcomes, sharing results accurately and confidentially in line with expected statutory framework and setting's requirements.
- 6.8. Describe how to refer concerns you may have about a baby's or child's development.
- 6.9. Demonstrate how to use learning activities to support early language development.
- 6.10. Support children's early interest and development in mark making, writing, reading and being read to.
- 6.11. Support children's interest and development in mathematical learning including numbers, number patterns, counting, sorting and matching.

7. Support children with special educational needs and disabilities

- 7.1. Describe statutory guidance in relation to the care and education of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 7.2. Explain partnership working (including parents/carers) in relation to working effectively with children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 7.3. Support the assessment, planning, implementation and reviewing (the graduated approach) of each baby's and young child's individual plan for their care and

participation.

- 7.4. Work in ways that value and respect the developmental needs and stages of babies and children.
- 7.5. Describe what specialist aids, resources and equipment are available for the children you work with and how to use these safely.

8. Own role and development

- 8.1. Explain own role and expected behaviours and the roles of colleagues and the team.
- 8.2. Explain how to access work place policies and procedures and your own responsibilities and accountabilities relating to these.
- 8.3. Explain, with examples, how your behaviour can impact on babies and children and influence them.
- 8.4. Identify own responsibilities when following procedures in the work setting for:
 - reporting
 - whistleblowing
 - protecting and promoting the welfare of children
 - safeguarding
 - confidentiality
 - information sharing
 - use of technology
- 8.5. Explain the importance of reflective practice and continued professional development to improve own skills and early years practice.
- 8.6. Engage in continuing professional development and reflective practice to improve own skills, practice, and subject knowledge.
- 8.7. Use feedback, mentoring and/or supervision to identify and support areas for development, goals and career opportunities.

9. Working with others – parents, colleagues, other professionals

- 9.1. Understand the roles and responsibilities of other agencies and professionals that work with and support your setting, both statutory and non-statutory.
- 9.2. Explain the importance of the voice of the child, parental/carer engagement, the home learning environment and their roles in early learning.

- 9.3. Work co-operatively with colleagues, other professionals and agencies to meet the needs of babies and young children and enable them to progress.
- 9.4. Work alongside parents and/or carers and recognise their role in the baby's/child's health, well-being, learning and development.
- 9.5. Encourage parents and/or carers to take an active role in the baby's/child's care, play, learning and development.

Annex D: Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria: from 1 September 2014

These qualification criteria lay out the minimum requirements for what an Early Years Educator (level 3) must know, understand and be able to do to be considered qualified to support young children from 0 to 5 years in the **EYFS**. They are divided into 2 sections:

Section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria

Section ii: Minimum qualification content requirements for Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications

Section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria for Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications

A: Qualification content

All Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications will require candidates to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of early years education and care, including that they can:

1. Support and promote children's early education and development
2. Plan and provide effective care, teaching and learning that enables children to progress and prepares them for school
3. Make accurate and productive use of assessment
4. Develop effective and informed practice
5. Safeguard and promote the health, safety and welfare of children
6. Work in partnership with the key person, colleagues, parents and carers or other professionals

Full details of required qualification content are shown in Section ii.

B: Accreditation

All Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications must meet the national requirements set by Ofqual for valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures. They must also be regulated by Ofqual onto the Qualifications and Credit Framework or National Qualifications Framework.

Section ii: Minimum qualification content requirements for Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications

1. Support and promote children's early education and development

- 1.1. Understand the expected patterns of children's development from 0 to 5 years, and have an understanding of further development from age 5 to 7.
 - Children's development patterns to include:
 - cognitive
 - speech, language and communication development
 - literacy and numeracy
 - physical
 - emotional
 - social
 - neurological and brain development
- 1.2. Understand the significance of attachment and how to promote it effectively.
- 1.3. Understand a range of underpinning theories and philosophical approaches to how children learn and develop, and their influence on practice.
- 1.4. Analyse and explain how children's learning and development can be affected by their stage of development and individual circumstances.
- 1.5. Understand the importance of promoting diversity, equality and inclusion, fully reflecting cultural differences and family circumstances.
- 1.6. Understand the importance to children's holistic development of:
 - speech, language and communication
 - personal, social and emotional development
 - physical development
- 1.7. Understand systematic synthetic phonics in the teaching of reading, and a range of strategies for developing early literacy and mathematics.
- 1.8. Understand the potential effects of, and how to prepare and support children through, transitions and significant events in their lives.

Transitions and significant events include:

- moving to school
 - starting and moving through day care
 - birth of a sibling
 - moving home
 - living outside of the home
 - family breakdown
 - loss of significant people
 - moving between settings and carers
- 1.9. Understand the current early education curriculum requirements.

1.10. Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

2. Plan and provide effective care, teaching and learning that enables children to progress and prepares them for school

2.1. Plan and lead activities, purposeful play opportunities and educational programmes which include the learning and development areas of current early education curriculum requirements.

To include:

- communication and language (extending vocabulary, language structure, and dialogue, for example)
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

2.2. Ensure plans fully reflect the stage of development, individual needs and circumstances of children.

2.3. Provide learning experiences, environments and opportunities appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children.

2.4. Encourage children's participation, ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

2.5. Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.

2.6. Support and promote children's speech, language and communication development.

2.7. Support children's group learning and socialisation.

2.8. Model and promote positive behaviours expected of children.

2.9. Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

2.10. Understand when a child is in need of additional support.

2.11. Plan and provide activities to meet additional needs, working in partnership with parents and/or carers and other professionals, where appropriate.

3. Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- 3.1. Understand how to assess within the current early education curriculum framework using a range of assessment techniques.
- 3.2. Carry out and record observational assessment accurately.
- 3.3. Identify the needs, interests and stages of development of individual children.
- 3.4. Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities.
- 3.5. Discuss children's progress and plan the next stages in their learning with the key person, colleagues, parents and/or carers.

4. Develop effective and informed practice

- 4.1. Demonstrate a good command of the English language in spoken and written form.
- 4.2. Explain the importance of continued professional development to improve own skills and early years practice.
- 4.3. Engage in continuing professional development and reflective practice to improve own skills, practice, and subject knowledge (for example, in English, mathematics, music, history or modern foreign languages).

5. Safeguard and promote the health, safety and welfare of children

- 5.1. Know the legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- 5.2. Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- 5.3. Plan and carry out physical care routines suitable to the age, stage and needs of the child.
- 5.4. Understand why health and well-being is important for babies and children and promote healthy lifestyles.
- 5.5. Understand how to respond to accidents and emergency situations.
- 5.6. Demonstrate skills and knowledge for the prevention and control of infection.

Prevention and control of infection including:

- hand washing
- food hygiene
- dealing with spillages safely
- safe disposal of waste
- using correct personal protective equipment
- knowledge of common childhood illnesses and immunisation
- exclusion periods for infectious diseases

- 5.7. Carry out risk assessment and risk management in line with policies and procedures.
- 5.8. Understand safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them.

Types of abuse including:

- domestic
- neglect
- physical
- emotional
- sexual abuse

- 5.9. Maintain accurate and coherent records and reports and share information, only when appropriate, to ensure the needs of all children are met.

Records and reports include:

- medication requirements
- special dietary needs
- planning
- observation and assessment,
- health, safety and security
- accidents
- daily registers

6. Work in partnership with the key person, colleagues, parents and/or carers or other professionals

- 6.1. Work co-operatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of babies and children and enable them to progress.
- 6.2. Work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them recognise and value the significant contributions they make to the child's health, well-being, learning and development.

- 6.3. Encourage parents and/or carers to take an active role in the child's play, learning and development.

Annex E: Early Years Educator (level 3) criteria: from 1 September 2024

These qualification criteria lay out the minimum requirements for what an Early Years Educator (level 3) must know, understand and be able to do to be considered qualified to support young children from 0 to 5 years in the **EYFS**²⁷. They are divided into 2 sections:

- section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria
- section ii: Minimum qualification content requirements for an Early Years Educator (level 3) qualification

Section i: Summary of qualification content and assessment criteria for Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications

Qualification content

1. Plan and provide effective early years education that enables children to progress and prepares them for school
 - A: Child development: what to expect and when
 - B: Curriculum: what we want children to learn
 - C: Pedagogy: helping children to learn
 - D: Assessment: checking children's learning and development
2. Supporting children with special educational needs and disability (SEND)
3. Safeguarding
4. Health wellbeing and safety
5. Work in partnership with the key person, colleagues, parents, carers or other professionals and agencies
6. Own role, practice and development.

Accreditation

All Early Years Educator (level 3) qualifications must meet the national requirements set by Ofqual for valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures. They must also be regulated by Ofqual onto the qualifications and credit framework or national qualifications framework.

Section ii: Minimum qualification content requirements for an Early Years Educator (level 3) qualification

²⁷ See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

1. Plan and provide effective early years education that enables children to progress and prepares them for school

A: Child Development: what to expect and when

Educators will learn that:

- 1.1. All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential, as set out in the Equality Act 2010²⁸.
- 1.2. An effective Early Years Educator knows the expected patterns of babies' and children's development from 0 to 5 years old, and has an understanding of further development from 5-7 years.
- 1.3. An effective Early Years Educator understands babies' and children's development patterns, including:
 - cognitive
 - speech, language, and communication development
 - physical
 - emotional
 - neurological and brain development.
- 1.4. Self-regulation changes according to a child's age and development. Children are in the early stages of learning to self-regulate and it is something that is developed throughout the early years. Co-regulation (the support we provide to children to help them understand, express and regulate their feelings) is a vital building block towards the ability to self-regulate.
- 1.5. There is a range of evidence-based theories, philosophical approaches and research that underpin early years development. Some approaches are not evidence-based and do not support childhood development.
- 1.6. Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for babies and children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. The important attachments that shape their social world underpin babies' and children's personal development.
- 1.7. The ways babies' and children's learning and development can be affected by their individual circumstances and significant events in their lives.
- 1.8. Different cultural backgrounds and family circumstances can impact babies and children's learning and development.
- 1.9. Physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing are important and can impact

²⁸ For guidance on the Equality Act 2010, see: www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

on babies' and children's development.

Educators will learn how to:

- Promote equality of opportunity in the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Identify, help and work appropriately with others to provide children and babies with any additional support they may need.
- Apply evidence-based theories and philosophical approaches in practice, and as appropriate, based on a clear understanding of cognitive science.
- Support children to develop a positive sense of self and to recognise, understand and manage their emotions, including supporting a child's understanding of differing emotional reactions and what may or may not be appropriate
- Use co-regulation to support children when they are experiencing any range of emotions, by providing warm, responsive interactions to help support the development of self-regulation.
- Support children to form positive attachments, including how to develop warm and responsive relationships with other children, with clearly established and age-appropriate boundaries.
- Avoid stereotypes, for example those based on gender, culture, or race, and explain how they can cause damage (e.g. how they might encourage prejudice)
- Prepare and support babies and children through transitions and significant events in their lives, such as:
 - moving school
 - starting and moving through and/or between early years settings
 - birth of a sibling
 - moving home
 - family breakdown
 - living outside of the home
 - loss of significant people / bereavement
 - social events that impact their lives, such as Covid-19
 - adoption and care; and including the significance of adverse childhood experiences and trauma.
- Analyse and explain how cultural background and family circumstances can impact on babies' and children's learning and development.
- Interact with babies and children with confidence to positively impact their health and wellbeing.

- Promote health and wellbeing in settings by implementing strategies to encourage babies and children to:
 - consume healthy and balanced meals, snacks, and drinks appropriate for their age and that support good oral health²⁹³⁰
 - be physically active through planned and spontaneous activity throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors³¹
 - be aware of personal safety and the safety of others
 - develop personal hygiene practices, including oral hygiene³².

B: Curriculum: what we want children to learn

Educators will learn that:

1.10. The Early Years Foundation Stage sets out the early education curriculum requirements from 0 to 5 years. These are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design.

1.11. The content of the curriculum is planned for all children. The carefully planned and sequenced curriculum recognises that some forms of knowledge are important, useful and interesting. These forms of knowledge help prepare children for future learning and are not learned or discovered without explicit teaching.

1.12. Children are likely to have different levels of prior experience and knowledge. The curriculum should take account of this prior knowledge and be planned accordingly. Pedagogical approaches to teaching may need to be adapted because of this.

1.13. Communication and language is the cornerstone of an early years curriculum, which can provide all children with an equal chance of success.

1.14. The impact of an effective communication and language curriculum shows positive benefits for young children's development, including their spoken language skills,

²⁹ For example menus for early years settings, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

³⁰ For guidance on healthy eating for young children, see: <http://foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/>

³¹ For guidance on physical activity, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report

³² For guidance on young children's oral hygiene, see: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/oral-health>

their understanding of language, and their early reading skills, including for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- 1.15. Some children are at an earlier stage of language development and/or experience speech and language difficulties.
- 1.16. There are ways to communicate with all children, appropriate for their stages of development. This may include those who have speech or language differences, such as some SEND or neurodivergent children, and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL).

Educators will learn how to:

- Plan an educational programme, reflecting the child's:
 - stage of development
 - individual interests, needs and circumstances
 - entitlement to new, important and interesting knowledge.
- Use appropriate curriculum and practice support, such as the non-statutory Development Matters guidance³³.
- Choose, plan and sequence what all children need to learn.
- Develop, support and promote babies' and children's speech, language, and communication through effective planned adult interactions, such as:
 - reading aloud stories and talking about them to build familiarity and understanding
 - exploring vocabulary in wider contexts once children know a story well through conversation and sensitive questioning, using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures
 - supporting awareness of sounds through rhymes and songs.
- Communicate with all children in ways that will be understood, including verbal and non-verbal communication, to extend their learning and development.
- Help children to catch-up with language development through planned use of pronunciations, words, and phrases.
- Identify delays in communication development and describe appropriate support services for babies and children.

C: Pedagogy: helping children to learn

Educators will learn that:

³³ See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2

1.17. There are different pedagogical approaches and what these are, such as:

- play
- direct teaching
- adult explanations
- adult modelling
- learning from peers
- guided learning.

1.18. An effective Early Years Educator makes adaptations to their teaching (adaptive pedagogy): these changes promote learning for all.

1.19. The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is a resource that supports the implementation of the curriculum.

Educators will learn how to:

- Select and combine the best pedagogical approaches, based on the curriculum and children's prior knowledge, considering an appropriate balance of adult and child-led activities, for example:
 - role modelling and supporting children's group learning and socialisation
 - reading a story with expression and clarity
 - explaining new concepts with clarity and precision
 - using strategies for supporting early literacy and mathematics.
- Adapt teaching to suit babies' and children's different starting points, experience and knowledge, ensuring that it goes beyond their existing interests and gives them the best chance of success now and later.
- Utilise and resource the learning environment to help babies and children progress against the planned curriculum.
- Respond to the needs and interests of the child, to support intended learning, including:
 - giving encouragement
 - introducing the child to new interests
 - applying strategies to develop and extend children's development, learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.
- Communicate with all children in ways that will be understood. Adapt teaching approaches as appropriate to ensure children with speech and language difficulties and those with whom English as an Additional Language (EAL) are supported to catch up.

D: Assessment: checking children's learning and development

Educators will learn that:

- 1.20. Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan and provide activities and support.
- 1.21. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing what children can and can't do, and then shaping teaching and learning so that children develop the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes they need as foundations for future progress.
- 1.22. An effective early years educator considers when and why to carry out accurate and proportionate assessment. Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence. It should not involve taking lots of time away from teaching and supporting children or have a disproportionate impact on workload.
- 1.23. There are different assessment methods and techniques, which inform what we know about children's progress and the planning cycle. These should be based on age and stage of babies' and children's development. There are benefits and limitations of assessment.
- 1.24. The key stages in assessing children's progress, including the progress check at age 2, the reception baseline assessment, the early years foundation stage profile and the value these have for:
 - the baby or child
 - the parents or carers
 - curriculum adaptation
 - the early years setting and key stakeholders in planning the next steps.

Educators will learn how to:

- Carry out assessment effectively, plan and record the outcomes, and share results accurately and confidentially in line with the early years foundation stage statutory framework and setting's requirements.
- Discuss children's progress and plan the next stages in their learning with the key person, colleagues, parents or carers.
- Work with colleagues to identify efficient approaches to assessment.
- Use information from assessment to adjust curriculum and plans so that any gaps in children's learning are addressed and support the child's development.

2. Supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Educators will learn that:

- 2.1. All children and young people are entitled to a quality education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential.
- 2.2. There are four general areas of need, and how to balance these against a detailed understanding of an individual baby or child's needs:
 - communication and interaction
 - cognition and learning
 - social, emotional and mental health
 - physical and/or sensory needs.
- 2.3. There are appropriate strategies for supporting a baby or child with SEND.
- 2.4. A delay in a baby or a child's learning and development does not necessarily indicate a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision. The delay may be due to a gap in a baby or child's knowledge and understanding.
- 2.5. Difficult or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a baby or child has SEND.
- 2.6. There are specialist aids, resources, and equipment available to support babies and children with SEND.

Educators will learn how to:

- Explain and apply the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework and SEND code of practice³⁴ in relation to the care and education of babies and children with SEND through a graduated approach.
- Work effectively in partnership with others, including parents and/or carers, to promote and implement appropriate strategies for supporting the progress of babies and children with SEND.
- Promote and encourage a working environment that values and respects the individual developmental needs and stages of babies and children with SEND.
- Effectively carry out a child's care plan alongside parents and carers, including the initial assessment, implementation, and ongoing review.
- Use specialist aids, resources and equipment available to support babies and children with SEND.

3. Safeguarding

Educators will learn that:

- 3.1. Safeguarding and security systems are an important part of keeping babies and

³⁴ See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

children safe³⁵.

- 3.2. An effective Early Years Educator understands their own role and responsibilities, including appropriate supervision of others, in relation to safeguarding and security, including child protection, duty of care, reporting, and confidentiality of information³⁶.
- 3.3. An effective Early Years Educator knows about employer, local and national safeguarding policies and procedures as set out in statutory and non-statutory guidance and the need to stay updated on changes to legislation³⁷.
- 3.4. An effective Early Years Educator knows the signs of harm and the different types of abuse and what these are, including but not limited to: neglect, physical, emotional, online, domestic and sexual abuse.

Educators will learn how to:

- Recognise when a baby or child is in danger or at risk of abuse, including online, and know how to act to protect them.
- Carry out own role and responsibilities, including providing appropriate supervision of others, in relation to safeguarding and security including child protection, duty of care, reporting and confidentiality of information and acting upon.
- Find and stay updated on employer, local and national safeguarding policies and procedures as set out in statutory and non-statutory guidance.
- Follow Ofsted's whistleblowing policy³⁸ to pass on information that, where it is reasonable to believe, shows wrongdoing or a cover up by an employer's organisation. This might be about activity that is illegal, risks others' health and safety, is about poor practice or fails to meet statutory requirements.

4. Health, wellbeing and safety

Educators will learn that:

- 4.1. Safeguarding and security systems are an important part of keeping babies and children safe.
- 4.2. It is important to know what the signs and symptoms are which may indicate that a child is injured, unwell (including common childhood illnesses and allergies) or in

³⁵ For statutory guidance on keeping children safe in education, see:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

³⁶ For Prevent duty guidance, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales

³⁷ For statutory guidance on safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, see:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

³⁸ See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/whistleblowing-about-childrens-social-care-services-to-ofsted/sharing-concerns-and-information-with-ofsted-about-childrens-social-care-services#:~:text=Whistleblowing%20is%20when%20an%20employee,about%20poor%20practice%20or%20leadership

need of urgent medical/dental attention.

- 4.3. It is important to prevent and control infection.
- 4.4. There are different stages of weaning and it is important to keep knowledge up-to-date, including knowledge of food allergies/anaphylaxis³⁹.
- 4.5. Mealtimes can be a high-risk environment for babies and young children in regard to choking, the signs of choking, that choking can be completely silent, therefore children should be supervised closely when eating⁴⁰⁴¹.
- 4.6. It is important to ensure equipment, furniture, and materials are used safely and the dangers for not doing so.
- 4.7. It is important for babies and children to have a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet⁴²⁴³, to be physically active⁴⁴ and to have good oral health⁴⁵.

Educators will learn that:

- Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, confidentiality of information and promoting the welfare of babies and children.
- Carry out risk assessments and risk management in line with employer, local and national requirements, policies and procedures.
- Respond and take appropriate action to accidents and emergency situations, including:
 - a baby or young child requiring urgent medical/dental attention
 - a non-medical incident or emergency
 - identifying risks and hazards
 - receiving, storing, recording, administering and the safe disposal of medicines.
- Implement effective strategies for preventing and controlling infection⁴⁶, including:
 - handwashing

³⁹ For guidance on weaning, see: www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/weaning/

⁴⁰ For guidance on food safety in early years settings, see: [Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/food-safety-help-for-early-years-providers-education.gov.uk)

⁴¹ For guidance on choking hazards, see: <https://foundationyears.org.uk/2021/09/food-safety-advice-on-choking-hazards-in-settings/>

⁴² For example menus for early years settings, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

⁴³ For guidance on healthy eating for young children, see: <http://foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/>

⁴⁴ For guidance on physical activity, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report

⁴⁵ For guidance on young children's oral hygiene, see: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/oral-health>

⁴⁶ For guidance on health protection in children and young people, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities

- food hygiene
 - dealing with spillages safely
 - safe disposal of waste
 - using correct personal protective equipment
 - knowledge of common childhood illnesses and immunisation
 - exclusion periods for infectious diseases.
- Maintain accurate and coherent records and reports and share information, when appropriate, to ensure the needs of all children are met. Records and reports include:
 - medication requirements
 - special dietary needs
 - planning
 - observation and assessment
 - health, safety, and security
 - accidents and near misses
 - daily registers.
- Use equipment, furniture, and materials safely, following the manufacturer's instructions and setting's requirements, with regard for sleep safety. Assist others in the safe use of equipment, furniture, and materials.
 - Use current dietary guidance for early years and be able to explain why it is important for babies and children to have a healthy balanced diet and be physically active.
 - Share information with parents/carers about:
 - the importance of healthy balanced diets,
 - looking after teeth and oral health,
 - and being physically active.
 - Explain, plan, and carry out respectful care routines appropriate to the development, stage, dignity and needs of the child, including:
 - eating (feeding and weaning/complimentary feeding)
 - nappy changing procedures
 - potty/toilet training
 - care of skin, teeth, and hair
 - rest and sleep provision.
 - Find and apply the most up-to-date advice on weaning provided by the NHS.
 - Prepare food that is suitable for the age and development of babies and children, referring to the most up to date guidance.

- Supervise children effectively when eating.

5. Work in partnership with key person, colleague, parents and/or carers or other professionals and agencies

Educators will learn that:

- 5.1. It is important to develop and maintain good relationships and partnerships in an early years setting to ensure the needs of all children are met.
- 5.2. Parent and/or carer engagement is consistently associated with ensuring their child's subsequent academic success.
- 5.3. Effective engagement with parents and/or carers is important and that working effectively with parents and/or carers may be challenging and is likely to require sustained effort and support.
- 5.4. Setting leaders need to collaborate and work with colleagues and other relevant professionals within and beyond their setting to ensure babies and children progress well in their learning.
- 5.5. It is important to be an advocate for the child's learning and development, parental and/or carer engagement, the home learning environment, and their roles in early learning.
- 5.6. There are other agencies and professionals that work with and support early years settings and children, both statutory and non-statutory, including local authorities and other relevant agencies and bodies. These all have different roles and responsibilities.
- 5.7. Ofsted is responsible for the regulation and inspection of early years provision. It carries out inspections and reports on the quality and standards of provision⁴⁷⁴⁸.

Educators will learn how to:

- Work co-operatively and communicate effectively with key persons, colleagues, other professionals, and agencies to meet the needs of babies and children and enable them to progress.

⁴⁷ For guidance on inspection of safeguarding in early years settings, see: [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-settings)

⁴⁸ For guidance on Ofsted inspections in EY settings, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-eif-inspections-and-the-eyfs

- Work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them recognise and value the significant contributions they make to the child's health, wellbeing⁴⁹⁵⁰, and learning and development.
- Encourage parents and/or carers to take an active role in their baby's/child's care, play, and learning and development.
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of other agencies and professionals that work with and support the setting and children, both statutory and non-statutory, and be familiar with statutory and non-statutory guidance to support this.
- Make additional provisions to support babies' and children's education and development where they lack this support from parents and/or carers.
- Work effectively and confidently with Ofsted including having confidence in using Ofsted's Early Years Inspection framework⁵¹.

6. Own role, practice and development

Educators will learn that:

- 6.1. There are expected behaviours in a professional and early years setting.
- 6.2. A Level 3 Early Years Educator may be expected to supervise staff or lead a setting.
- 6.3. Supervision is an opportunity for staff to discuss any issues, identify solutions to address issues as they arise and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of babies and children.
- 6.4. There are procedures that must be adhered to in the work setting and the importance of these for:
 - reporting
 - whistleblowing
 - protecting and promoting the welfare of children
 - safeguarding
 - confidentiality
 - information sharing
 - use of technology
 - referring development concerns
 - protecting practitioners, for example media and online presence

⁴⁹ For statutory guidance on safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

⁵⁰ For statutory guidance on keeping children safe in education, see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

⁵¹ See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework

- staff health and safety, including mental health and wellbeing support.
- 6.5. Engaging in reflective practice and evidence-based, continuous professional development can improve own skills, practice, and subject knowledge, increase career opportunities and help children’s academic outcomes, especially in areas of disadvantage.
- 6.6. Respecting and promoting diversity and inclusion, cultural differences and family circumstances is an important part of your role.

Educators will learn how to:

- Use and model good communication skills, including a good command of the English language in spoken and written form - for example, when working with children, emails, in meetings and discussions.
- Foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement that encourages confidential discussion of sensitive issues, through effective supervision at all stages of a career.
- Follow procedures in the work setting, including where appropriate updating and developing policies and procedures, for:
 - reporting
 - whistleblowing
 - protecting and promoting the welfare of children
 - safeguarding
 - confidentiality
 - information sharing
 - use of technology
 - referring development concerns
 - protecting practitioners, for example media and online presence
 - staff health and safety, including mental health and wellbeing support.
- Explain own role, responsibilities and expected behaviours, and the roles of colleagues in the setting and team.
- Seek out feedback from others to identify and support career development goals, for example through mentoring and/or supervised observations.
- Explain how our own and others’ behaviour can impact on babies and children and the importance of role-modelling positive behaviours.
- Be confident in supporting or challenging the practice of colleagues.



Department
for Education

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