

You Can... **Include the six Areas of Learning and the Early Learning Goals**

A broad and balanced curriculum is the right of every child in the Foundation Stage. It is the responsibility of the practitioners to take note of the Early Learning Goals and organise activities around these while also meeting the children's individual needs. It is vital that the structure of the Foundation Stage curriculum is known and understood.

Thinking points

- There are six Areas of Learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum and there are clusters of Early Learning Goals for each Area. The Areas of Learning are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Mathematical development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development.

- The Foundation Stage is aimed at three- to five-year-olds. A well-balanced Foundation Stage curriculum will provide opportunities that address the Early Learning Goals over that two-year period.

- Does your curriculum take into account specific times of the year when certain Areas of Learning will take precedent? September, for example, is a time when children experience change: they will be starting in a new room or beginning at the setting, so it is a crucial time for Personal, social and emotional development. The Early Learning Goal clusters for this are concerned with self-confidence, making relationships and self-care.

General requirements

- The quality of children's learning is categorised under the outcome helping children to 'enjoy and achieve' (one of the four relevant outcomes in *Every Child Matters*) and in the National Standard 3 'Care, learning and play'. Inspectors look for evidence and make judgements as to how well the children are making progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Tips, ideas and activities

- When putting together your long-term plan, look at the Early Learning Goals together with your staff. Check for any gaps and goals that have not been covered by your setting and imbed these into your future plans.

- Use a spare Foundation Stage document and cross out Early Learning Goals when they are covered. Gaps soon become evident using this visual method.

- Conduct an audit of your resources – a broad and balanced curriculum requires adequate resources for the Early Learning Goals in the six Areas of Learning.

- You should provide activities for physical development throughout the year, as children need to be healthy all year around. There are many physical activities that can be organised in accordance with the relevant Early Learning Goals.

- Weave creative opportunities into all Areas of Learning. Children with limited communication skills can respond to experiences and express themselves with a wide range of materials, imaginative play and movement.