

# EYFS review: 'Slimmed down' EYFS and payment by results for Sure Start children's centres <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

The number of early learning goals in the EYFS will be radically reduced, in plans set out by the Government in its response to the Tickell review.

The aim is to make the EYFS less bureaucratic and repetitive and help to involve parents more in how their children learn.

The proposals for a revised EYFS are out for consultation today by the Department for Education.

The reforms are part of a range of wider policy announcements due in the next few weeks regarding support for parents and pre-school children, under the banner 'Families in the Foundation Years'.

Ministers have accepted Dame Clare Tickell's recommendations in her review of the EYFS published in March, including bringing the number of goals in the EYFS down from 69 to 17 and a focus on three 'prime' areas of learning, in place of the current six areas.

Children will continue to be assessed at the end of the EYFS, but the scale point assessment will be simpler and restricted to 17 goals.

Other proposals outlined today include £3m to pilot payment by results in children's centres in 30 local authority areas, and a consultation in the autumn on plans to make the free entitlement for nursery education more flexible for parents.

### 'School readiness'

The revised EYFS, which will come into force in September 2012, will focus on three 'prime' areas of learning to enable children to be ready and able to learn at school. They are personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language.

The department said that the early learning goals will also be more closely aligned with Key Stage 1 to smooth the transition from Reception to Year 1.

In response to another Tickell review recommendation, every two-year-old in a pre-school setting will have a development check, to help identify as early as possible those children who are at risk of developmental delay or have special educational needs. In addition, the Government will require all early years settings to provide this information to parents.

Children's minister Sarah Teather said, 'The first five years of a child's life, the Foundation Years, are absolutely critical. We want a system where every child can thrive, regardless of their social background. If we are to tackle the attainment gap and raise life chances, we must start in the earliest years.

'We know experiences in these first years have the biggest impact on how a child's brain develops. It's when children grasp the fundamental skills needed to do well at school and develop as happy, confident individuals.

'That's why I am today setting out a much slimmer, easier to understand early years curriculum. It will give professionals more freedom in how they work with children, and will involve parents more in their child's learning. Fundamentally, it will make sure we are preparing our children for the challenges of school and beyond. This isn't just about making sure they can hold a pencil, children need the resilience, confidence and personal skills to be able to learn.

### Sure Start

The trials of payment by results will look at how to reward local authorities and children's centres according to how well they reach and support the most vulnerable families, which the Government said will narrow gaps in child development, raise attainment at the end of the Foundation Years and improve family health and wellbeing.

Children's centres will also be given a 'new core purpose', with a stronger focus on school readiness and supporting families, with the Government setting out the outcomes which children's centres should be supporting.

Ministers also want to look at new ways of running children's centres, such as mutuals and co-operatives, giving parents and communities more control over how services at centres are run.

Ms Teather said, 'That's why we are looking at how to give parents more say in the running of their local children's centre. This could be

through governing bodies, or a co-operative approach where parents are involved in day to day decisions.'

She added, 'We are also providing £3m this year for up to 30 new pilots where local councils will be paid for the results they achieve.'

Local authorities will also be required to publish details on how much they are spending on children's centres in their area, to make them more accountable.

### Free entitlement

Parents will also gain more flexibility about how they access nursery education. The Government will hold a consultation in the autumn around proposals to let parents use the free entitlement from 7am to 7pm, stretched over two days a week. Currently rules in the Code of Practice for nursery education stipulate that the offer must be taken over a minimum of three days.

The children's minister said the aim was to help ensure more children benefited from early education and help parents to juggle their working hours better with family life.

Commenting on the proposals, Dame Clare Tickell said, 'I am very pleased that the Government has accepted the recommendations of my review in such a comprehensive way. As well as the agreement to slim down the bureaucracy, I know that the decision to support my recommendation for a check for all two-year-olds will make a real difference. We now have a golden opportunity to identify not only any potential developmental and special educational needs children have, but crucially to help parents who need additional support too.'

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-reprinted from Nursery World

**Region:** Europe <sup>[2]</sup>

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