



Welcome to the Reception Network

Strong Starts, Shared Success

Network 1: *20th May 4-5:30pm and 17th June 4-5:30pm*

Welcome: please add your name and the name of your school in the chat



Department for Education



Today's Agenda



Agenda Item	Time
Welcome and Introductions	4.00-4.10pm
Network purpose and expectations	4.10-4.20pm
Lead School introduction and context	4.20-4.30pm
Network school introductions (chat activity)	4.30-4.45pm
The DfE offer- support to strengthen reception practice	4.45-5.00pm
Transitions and summer planning	5.00-5.10pm
Transitions- reflection and discussion	5.10-5.20pm
Questions and reflections	5.20-5.30pm
Closing and next steps	5.30pm

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Welcome and Introductions



Housekeeping:



Please keep microphones muted unless speaking.



Turn cameras on where possible.



Use the chat to contribute throughout or raise your virtual hand.



There will be time for questions at the end.



Welcome and Introductions

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- Thank you for making time to join today's network meeting.
- Meet the Reception Network Team.



Victoria Day
Assistant Head EYFS



Emily Page
EYFS Team Leader



Sian Lavery
Reception Teacher

- This is the first of many sessions designed to support reception practice across our region.
- Today is about connection, clarity and setting shared foundations.



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Why the Reception Network exists

- To support strong, inclusive reception practice across schools.
- To create a safe space for sharing challenges and successes.
- To focus on practical evidence-informed improvement.

What the network is

- ✓ Supportive, collaborative and school-led.
- ✓ Focused on improving outcomes for children.

What the network will offer

The network will aim to:

- **Explore key priorities for reception together**
- **Share practical approaches that can be adapted to different contexts**
- **Create space to reflect with peers and learn from one another**
- **Signpost useful resources and examples to support your work.**



Expectations of schools in the network



Participation in the reception network is designed to support schools in strengthening the quality and consistency of their reception provision.

We invite schools to:

- Engage openly and professionally in all network activity
- Respect the range of starting points and contexts across participating schools
- Attend and contribute to half-termly virtual network meetings
- Take part actively in discussion, reflection and collaborative problem solving
- Engage with shared practice and consider how it can inform their own improvement priorities
- Trial ideas and approaches in their own setting where appropriate
- Share experiences with peers, including what is working well and what is more challenging
- Where possible, participate in visits or open days hosted by Lead Schools, using these opportunities to observe practice, reflect and identify clear next steps
- Ensure there is a clear 'so what?' from network participation, leading to reflection, planning and action
- Align network activity with the school or trusts wider Early Years strategy and support coherence and sustained impact.

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Lead School introduction and context

Who are we as the Lead School

- Brief overview of our school context
- Our experience of leading and developing reception practice
- Why we value collaboration and shared learning

Our role within the network

- To coordinate and host network sessions, ensuring meetings are purposeful, well structured and focused on shared priorities.
- To facilitate discussion rather than provide all the answers, creating space for schools to share experience, challenge thinking and learn from one another.
- To bring together ideas, themes and questions from across the network and help shape future sessions in response.
- To learn alongside you, recognising the expertise that exists across schools and shape the network together over time.



Network school introductions -Chat Activity 1

Getting to know our network:

To help us understand who is in the room and surface shared priorities, please introduce yourself in the chat or by raising your virtual hand to share:

- **School name**
- **Your role**
- **One word or short phrase describing your current focus in reception**

(for example: transitions, communication and language, independence, parental engagement)

There are no right or wrong answers — this is simply a way to get to know one another and identify common themes across the network.



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The DfE offer- support to strengthen reception practice



Reception is a national priority within RISE, with free DfE support to help schools improve provision and contribute to the ambition for 75% of children to reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) by 2028. The full DfE reception offer can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-improvement-offer/reception-improvement-offer>

What support is available from DfE?

Universal support- for all schools

- **Reception Networks:** opportunities to connect with other local schools, share practice, and learn together, led by accredited Lead Schools.
- **National webinars and training materials** focused on Reception priorities.
- **‘Compare your GLD data’ reports** to help schools reflect on strengths and areas for development.

Targeted and specialist support – where needed

- **Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)** – fully funded early language support for Reception children.
- **English Hubs Reception offer (from September 2026):**
 - Reception-focused audits of early language, reading and writing
 - CPD and intensive specialist support for schools with greatest need.
- **Maths Hubs Reception support:**
 - Mastering Number (Reception & KS1)
 - Specialist Knowledge for Teaching Mathematics (SKTM)
 - Intensive one-to-one support where required.

Professional development for leaders and teachers

- Reception-focused training and resources
- Expanded early years content within NPQs
- A new national Reception teacher training course (from autumn 2026)

Supporting strong transitions

- National guidance, resources and examples to support transition into Reception
- Focuses on:
 - Early and purposeful planning
 - Strong partnerships with families and early years settings
 - Inclusive, strengths-based approaches for all children

Support to strengthen reception practice -Chat Activity 2



***"What would you see
in an Early Years
classroom
that would signal
that high-quality
practice is being
delivered?"***

Support to strengthen reception practice -Chat Activity 2

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"What would you expect to see in an Early Years classroom that would signal that high-quality practice is being delivered?"

- Enabling Environment "The Third Teacher" -indoors & outdoors
 - Narrative-Driven Learning
 - Scaffolding 'that's pitched just right'
 - Parent Partnerships
 - Inclusion - high ambition for all children
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - Tier 2 -language rich conversations
 - Effective Pedagogy and ambitious curriculum
 - Maths Mastery
 - Phonics Integration
- High Levels of sustained involvement and wellbeing
- Self-regulated-happy and calm children (and adults)
 - Assessment:
- Reduced Documentation, Increased Impact
 - Robust Transition and Induction
- High Quality Interactions and teaching



Support to strengthen reception practice -Chat Activity 2

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Small changes can have a big impact... when they are well-sequenced, thoughtful and focused on what helps children feel secure, confident and ready to learn.

Support to strengthen reception practice



Today is about connection, clarity and setting shared foundations.

- **One thing to keep**

An aspect of current practice that is working well and supports children and families effectively.

- **One thing to adjust**

An element that may need refining, strengthening or approaching differently to better support children's transition into reception

- **One new thing to try**

A realistic change or new approach inspired by the guidance that could be trialled in the next transition cycle.



Todays Agenda



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Focus for today- transitions and summer planning



Why this matters

- Supporting children's emotional and academic readiness
- Ensuring continuity across reception and into year 1
- Strengthening communication with families

DfE published guidance ***Getting children ready for Reception: supporting effective transition*** on 16 April 2026.



Guidance
**Supporting a smooth transition
into reception**
Published 16 April 2026

Full guidance:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/getting-children-ready-for-reception-supporting-effective-transition>

Transitions guidance- core principles

Transition is a process, not a single event

- Transition should begin early, build through the summer term and continue into the first weeks of Reception.
- Gradual, well-planned transitions help children feel secure, confident and ready to learn.

Targeted and specialist support – where needed

- Children settle best when families feel known, supported and confident.
- Clear, consistent communication throughout the summer reduces anxiety for children and parents.

Partnership with early years settings is essential

- Close working with nurseries and childminders helps children feel recognised and understood.
- Information sharing should be purposeful, strengths-based and focused on wellbeing and learning.

Transitions guidance- core principles

Reception is a continuation of the EYFS

- Transition should avoid a 'reset' in September, and should build on what children already know and can do.
- Familiar routines, language and approaches help children feel safe and ready to engage.

School readiness is broader than academic skills

- Focus on confidence, communication, independence, relationships and emotional security.
- Everyday routines and experiences play a key role in helping children feel ready.

Inclusive and early planning supports all children

- Early identification of additional or emerging needs (including SEND) allows for smoother transitions.
- Inclusive planning benefits all children, not only those with identified needs.

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Transitions- reflection and discussion - breakout rooms



Reflective questions to consider:

- What transition practices are working well in your school?
- What feels particularly challenging this year?
- How early do you start transition conversations with families and early years settings?
- How effectively are you sharing information across settings?
- How are you supporting children's confidence and emotional security?
- How do you ensure transition continues beyond the first day or week of term?
- How are you identifying and planning for additional or emerging needs?
- How can summer transition activity align with your wider Early Years strategy?



How this activity will work:

- We'll now have a short, focused discussion in breakout room.
- Use the time to share key ideas and reflections, rather than 'perfect' practice (either in the chat, as a whole group or in breakout rooms).
- Talk about what you've tried, what's worked, and what's been challenging.
- Keep contributions practical and realistic, focusing on approaches that are achievable in your context.
- Be prepared to capture one or two ideas to take away and build on.

Transitions- practical actions schools can take this summer



- Start transition planning early in the summer term, with clear sequencing of activities.
- Strengthen communication with families through meetings, visits, or regular updates.
- Work closely with feeder early years settings to share key information and build continuity.
- Offer opportunities for children to become familiar with adults, spaces and routines.
- Use strengths-based information to plan support for children's wellbeing and learning.
- Continue transition support into the first weeks of Reception, adapting provision responsively.

Transitions- summary

In summary, effective transition is.....

Early

Planned and purposeful, starting well before September and building across the summer term so children and families have time to become familiar with people, routines and expectations

Relational

Grounded in strong relationships with children, families and early years settings, so children feel known, safe and confident as they start school.

Inclusive

Designed for all children, with early identification and thoughtful planning for additional or emerging needs, ensuring no child is left feeling unsupported.

Joined-up

Built on clear communication and partnerships between schools, early years providers and families, with shared information, consistent messaging and aligned approaches.

Small changes can have a big impact when they are well-sequenced, thoughtful and focused on what helps children feel secure, confident and ready to learn.



Transitions- Resources

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Guidance

Supporting a smooth transition into reception

Published 16 April 2026

Getting children ready for reception

How schools and early years settings can work together with families to support transition into reception

April 2026

Small changes can have a big impact when they are well-sequenced, thoughtful and focused on what helps children feel secure, confident and ready to learn.



Transitions- Resources

**BEST
START
IN LIFE**

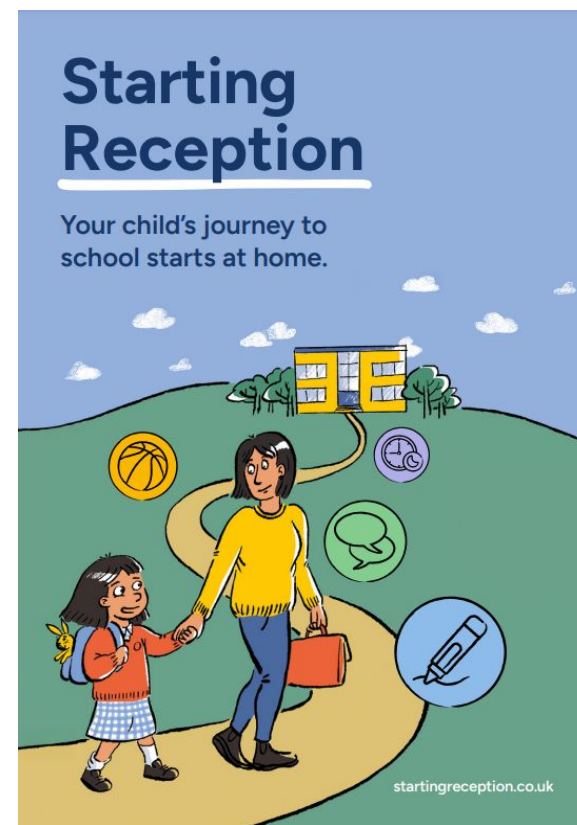
Advice and support for your child's development
From pregnancy to childcare right through to starting school.

**NHS**

For parents' questions, BIG & small.


beststartinlife.gov.uk

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**BEST
START
IN LIFE**

Preparing for school

Preparing for school

Helping your child feel ready for school is a team effort – find out more.



Preparing for school

Starting school is an exciting milestone – for your child and for you. Find out how everyday moments at home can help your child feel confident and prepared, whatever stage they're at.

Last updated: 16 April, 2026

The definition: skills to practise before starting Reception

New skills take time to learn. Practising at home will help your child move into school more easily and with confidence.

Growing independence

Taking care of themselves

- Putting on/taking off their coat and shoes
- Using the toilet and washing their hands
- Getting dressed with little help, e.g. after using the toilet or doing PE
- Using cutlery (e.g. fork and spoon, chopsticks) and drinking from an open cup
- Spending time away from you, learning they can be looked after by caring adults

Play, creativity and curiosity

- Taking part in imaginative play (e.g. role play)
- Drawing, painting, colouring and sticking
- Counting, building and doing puzzles
- Sharing story books with caregivers, looking at pictures and talking about the characters
- Exploring the world around them (e.g. looking closely at the natural world, noticing numbers, patterns and shapes, playing safely with objects at home)



Transitions- Resources



Key Messages for families: What does preparing for school mean?

Preparing for school – sometimes called school readiness – isn't about knowing the alphabet or being able to count to ten.

It's about your child building the confidence, skills and habits that will help them to feel like they belong, make friends and get the most out of their learning opportunities.

The Starting Reception website has a wealth of information and advice to support parents to help their children prepare for school. This includes hints and tips that will help with:

- **Communication** – skills that will help them communicate their needs and experiences, in whatever way works for them, and being able to listen and follow simple instructions.
 - **Independence** – skills to help children take care of themselves, like using the toilet, with a little help where needed.
- **Social and emotional skills** – beginning to understand their own feelings and those of others, and to play and share with other children.
- **Physical development** – developing strength and skills through activity such as running, climbing, jumping, crawling or moving parts of their body. This could be with support for children with limited mobility.
- **Healthy routines** – Building healthy routines that will help children stay healthy, such as limiting screen time to an hour a day or less for 2 to 5 year olds, brushing teeth twice a day and going to bed around the same time each night.

Transitions- Resources

GETTING MY CHILD READY FOR STARTING SCHOOL...

What I can do as a parent to support them:



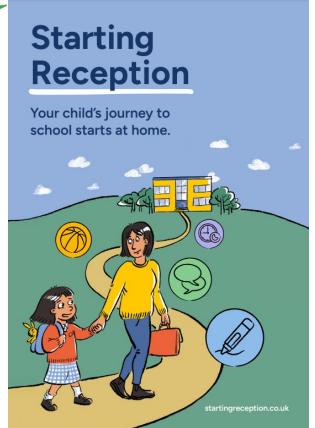
- Register with my local *Best Start in Life* Family Hub ✓

- Practice skills to support your child starting Reception
<https://startingreception.co.uk/> ✓

- Register with School Nursing Team ✓

- Download the Cbeebies Parenting App ✓

- Complete the Best Start in Life Preparing for school Activities ✓



Transitions- Resources

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What to expect in the Early Years
Foundation Stage:
a guide for parents

What happens early, matters for a lifetime

- [Research](#) tells us that what happens at home makes the biggest difference to your child's early learning and development.
- Playing together, singing, enjoying books, visiting the library, painting, drawing and finding out through play about letters, numbers and shapes are important activities to do at home. These activities are learning opportunities.
- These learning activities will make a difference to your child's learning right up to secondary school.



Transitions- Resources

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How much screen time should my child have?

Limit total screen time for young children, wherever possible.

- **Under 2 years:** Avoid screen time other than for shared activities with family that encourage bonding, interaction and conversation.
- **2-5 years:** Try to keep it to 1 hour a day. Less if possible.



Safe Screen Swap

Shared activities could include video calling with friends and family or looking through digital photo albums together.

Screen time guidance for under 5s

Juggling family life and raising children in a digital world can be challenging. Find out more about how to support healthy screen habits for children under 5.

Last updated: 27 March, 2026

BEST START IN LIFE

CBeebies PARENTING

Looking for parenting and pre-school tips? Maybe you're after ideas for a creative activity, delicious recipe or the perfect party? You'll find all these here, along with insights into our CBeebies shows and how they support your child's development.

Chat, Play, Read

Fun and simple activities to support babies' and toddlers' communication and language development

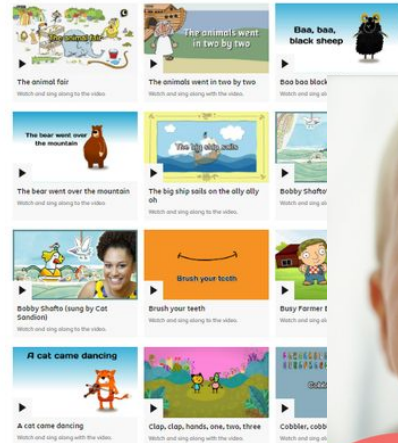
National Literacy Trust
Change your story

In partnership with
BEST START IN LIFE

Nursery Rhymes and Songs - A to Z

School Babes - Backstage / EYF5 - Nursery Rhymes and Songs

100+ ideas of traditional nursery rhymes with lyrics and images. All videos include the words on screen and a lyric sheet to print out.



National Literacy Trust
Change your story

Sing With Me

Nursery rhymes for you and your little one

National Literacy Trust
Change your story

Walk and Talk

Use these cards to help you talk to your baby or child while you are out and about. This will help develop their speech and communication skills.

In partnership with
BEST START IN LIFE



Look, listen and

Preparing for school

Starting school is an exciting milestone – for your child and for you. Find out how everyday moments at home can help your child feel confident and prepared, whatever stage they're at.

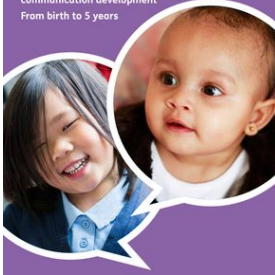
Last updated: 16 April, 2026

The Potty Training Guide



Universally Speaking

The ages and stages of children's communication development
From birth to 5 years



Transitions- action planning

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To help turn learning into action, take a few minutes to reflect on your own transition practice and identify:

- **One thing to keep**

An aspect of current practice that is working well and supports children and families effectively.

- **One thing to adjust**

An element that may need refining, strengthening or approaching differently to better support children's transition into reception

- **One new thing to try**

A realistic change or new approach inspired by the guidance that could be trialled in the next transition cycle.

Please capture these reflections and revisit them as part of your wider Early Years and reception planning, considering how transition activity aligns with your overall strategy and priorities.



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Questions and reflections

This is an opportunity to pause and reflect together. Please feel free to:

- Ask any questions about today's theme, including how it might apply in your own context.
- Seek clarification about the network, upcoming sessions or how the network will work
- Share initial reflections — what resonated, what surprised you, or what you're still thinking through
- Suggest areas or themes you'd like the network to explore next, based on current priorities or challenges
- Share any existing local support, networks or programmes you are aware of that could support reception improvement, and how we might make these more visible or accessible across the network
- Reflect on how we can co-construct the direction of the network together, rather than it being led by one school— this is a network, a shared space for collaboration, not a hub model.
- Consider how we might stay connected between meetings, for example through shared platforms, messaging groups or information communication.



Questions are expected and welcomed!

This is a supportive learning space, not a forum for judgement or 'perfect' answers.

Uncertainty and reflection are a normal part of developing practice and many questions will be shared across schools.

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Closing and next steps: Google form

Thank you for your engagement and openness today.

We really appreciate the time, contributions and reflections you have all brought— this is what makes the network meaningful and helps it work well for everyone.

We hope you have found the session useful.

As this is a learning process, we would really welcome your feedback on what worked well today, as well as any ideas for things we might change or try in future sessions.

Please scan the QR Code below to complete this short feedback form:

<https://forms.gle/jTRi2L5T1oeF7K8d7>



Closing and next steps

Face to Face Sessions:

Tuesday 30th June 9.30-11.30am
at Ryders Hayes School

This face to face session will focus on:

- **An introduction to Ryders Hayes School**
- **An opportunity to network with other schools within our region**
- **A tour around our EYFS environment**
- **Time to talk to other EYFS practitioners about EYFS practice and provision**

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Closing and next steps

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- **Network 1: 17th June 4-5:30pm 2026 (Repeated)**
- **Face to face Session 1: Tuesday 30th June 9.30-11.30am
at Ryders Hayes School**
- **Network 2: Wednesday 7th October 2026 4-5.30pm**
- **Network 3: Wednesday 9th December 2026 4-5.30pm**



Following today's session, we will share the slides *plus links to the resources share today*

Thank you again, and we look forward to continuing the conversation at our next meeting.

Please remember to read and use the transitions guidance and EYFSP materials in the next few weeks!

DfE published materials to support judgements...

The materials provide assessment support that brings together guidance, videos, practical examples and key messages for anyone who completes the EYFS profile assessment.

Department for Education

Help for early years providers

Home

Support for practitioners

Areas of learning

Health and wellbeing

Home

Support for practitioners

EYFS profile assessment support

EYFS profile assessment support

Find EYFS profile guidance, bite-sized videos and case studies for school leaders and practitioners.

EYFS profile assessment support

Overview

EYFS profile for headteachers and school leaders

Making best fit judgements

Inclusive assessment strategies and examples

Importance of the EYFS profile for transition

ELG: Speaking

ELG: Self-Regulation

ELG: Gross and Fine Motor Skills

ELG: Writing

ELG: Word Reading

ELG: Number

ELG: Natural World

Contents on this page

What is the EYFS profile?

What these resources contain

How to use these resources

Further learning and support

Print this page

Children’s early years are crucial to their future development, health and life chances. This assessment support is designed to build further confidence and consistency in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile assessment and good level of development (GLD) measure.

What is the EYFS profile?

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile is a statutory assessment of child development at the end of the academic year in which children turn 5. It summarises children’s development against 17 early learning goals (ELGs).

For each ELG, children are judged as either:

- meeting the ‘expected’ level
- ‘emerging’ if they do not yet meet the ‘expected’ level

Children have reached a GLD at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved the expected level for the ELGs in the prime areas of learning (communication and language, personal, social and

DfE have published materials to support judgements..

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EYFS profile assessment support

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ELG: Speaking

ELG: Self-Regulation

ELG: Gross and Fine Motor Skills

ELG: Writing

ELG: Word Reading

ELG: Number

ELG: Natural World



Case studies:

Arjun is working at the expected standard.

Arjun can correctly respond with the correct sound for each letter of the alphabet. He can quickly identify over 10 digraphs. He can read many words in isolation, including 'splashes', 'trains', 'growl' and 'balloon'. This shows that he can blend effectively using the sounds he knows. Arjun applies this knowledge successfully to his reading and demonstrates increasing fluency. He is reading books matched to his phonics level. He reads almost every word accurately, pointing to each word as he follows the text. He recognises the common exception words he has been taught automatically. With minimal adult support, he reads confidently and fluently. Therefore, Arjun is assessed as working at the expected level.

Chloe is working at the expected standard.

Chloe responds quickly and accurately with the correct phoneme (sound) when shown any letter of the alphabet. She can identify more than ten digraphs. She can use these to read simple words such as 'morning', 'sport', 'spoon' and 'crowds'. Occasionally, Chloe needs a prompt to remember that she can use her blending skills when she encounters an unfamiliar word. She has knowledge of some common exception words, including 'the', 'I', 'no' and 'you'. Chloe reads decodable books that match her phonic knowledge. She reads each word with a slight pause in between, often blending aloud when she sees a word for the first time but blending in her head when reminded. Therefore, she is assessed as working at the expected level.

Sienna is working at an emerging standard.

Sienna can respond with one correct sound for over 20 letters of the alphabet and can read 5 digraphs – she does not do this slowly but is accurate. Sienna is beginning to blend known sounds into consonant sound, vowel sound, consonant sound (CVC) words independently. She struggles to read common exception words. As Sienna has not met any of the three criteria for the Word Reading ELG, a best-fit judgement places her at an emerging level.

The materials provide assessment support that brings together guidance, videos, practical examples and key messages for anyone who completes the EYFS profile assessment.

DfE have published materials^{OFFICIAL} to support judgements...

EYFS profile assessment support

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ELG: Speaking

ELG: Self-Regulation

ELG: Gross and Fine Motor Skills

ELG: Writing

ELG: Word Reading

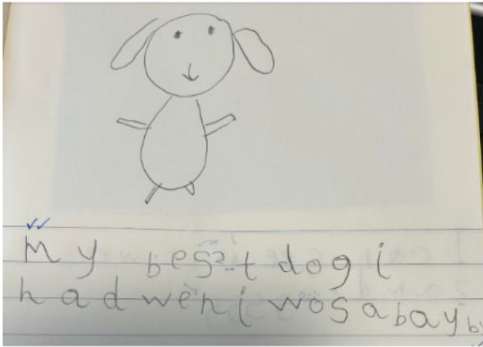
ELG: Number

ELG: Natural World

Case studies

For illustrative purposes, the following writing case studies show one example per child. Remember, overall assessment should be based on a best-fit judgement rather than isolated examples.

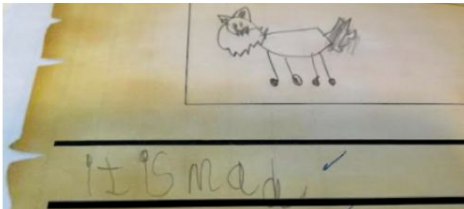
Taylor is working at the expected level



'My best dog I had when I was a baby.'

Taylor is at the expected level for writing. In this example, they wrote about a favourite toy. Taylor has demonstrated she can write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. They have not formed their letter 's' correctly in the word 'best'. They then realised and wrote the letter 's' again. Although not all spellings are correct, they has demonstrated they can spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. The words they have written are phonetically plausible and legible. They used finger spaces between most words. Although a capital letter has been used at the start of the sentence, it does not have a full stop at the end.

Harper is working at the expected level



The materials provide assessment support that brings together guidance, videos, practical examples and key messages for anyone who completes the EYFS profile assessment.



- Following today's session, we will share the slides *plus links to the resources shared today*
- Thank you again, and we look forward to continuing the conversation at our next meeting.
- **Please contact Natalie Davies to book your place at future Network Events and Host visits:**
- N.Davies@ryders-hayes.co.uk

*Small changes can have a big impact...
when they are well-sequenced,
thoughtful and focused on what helps
children feel secure, confident and ready
to learn.*