

# The impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage

A good start

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This survey evaluated the impact that the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage has had on provision and developmental outcomes for young children, with a particular focus on their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills. It also considered a range of other factors that are drivers or barriers to improvement.

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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# Contents

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<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>The impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>10</b>
Provision and outcomes	10
Personal, social and emotional development	13
Communication, language and literacy	16
Assessment	20
Meeting the needs of different groups	22
<b>Drivers for improvement</b>	<b>25</b>
Commitment to professional development and improvement	26
External support and challenge	28
<b>Barriers to improvement</b>	<b>30</b>
Summary	30
Self-evaluation	30
Partnerships with parents	31
Communication between Early Years Foundation Stage providers	34
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Further information</b>	<b>38</b>
Publications by Ofsted	38
Other publications	39
Acts of Parliament	39
<b>Annex A. The Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Annex B. Early Years Foundation Stage providers</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Annex C. Contextual data</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Annex D: Local authorities and providers surveyed</b>	<b>53</b>

## Executive summary

This survey evaluates the impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage on the quality of provision and developmental outcomes for young children from birth to five years. It examined the work of providers across the sector from large primary schools to childminders working alone with one or two children. The survey focused particularly on two areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. In July 2010 Children's Minister Sarah Teather asked Dame Clare Tickell to carry out a review of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and this report is intended to inform that review.

At an early stage in the survey, inspectors held discussions with local authority officers from 12 local authorities to gain their perspective on the impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage in their area. Between September and December 2010 the survey team visited 68 early years providers, including 20 childminders, 23 childcare providers on non-domestic premises and 25 schools, in nine of these 12 local authorities. The views of 140 parents of young children were gained through Ofsted's Parents' Panel. The survey also drew on data from almost 54,000 routine inspections of early years provision since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage in September 2008, and took account of national data on children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Maintained schools have sustained a high quality of early years provision. Because of their starting points and previous experience in delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum, schools usually deliver the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage well. This was particularly evident in some of the areas of focus in this survey, including developing children's communication, language and literacy skills, and in the activities of assessing children's progress and self-evaluation by providers.

Nevertheless, Ofsted's evidence from inspections carried out since September 2008 and this survey shows that all types of providers can, and do, deliver the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage well. The proportion of registered providers in the early years and childcare sector<sup>1</sup> judged to be good or outstanding has increased since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the end of August 2008, 59% of childcare providers were judged to be good or outstanding. At the end of August 2010, this figure had risen to 68%.

There are differences in quality between the different types of childcare provider. Overall 71% of childcare providers on non-domestic premises, inspected from the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage up to September 2010, were judged to be good or outstanding, compared with 67% of childminders. This gap in quality is

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<sup>1</sup> These are the providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register. The two main categories are childminders and childcare providers on non-domestic premises, which together are referred to as childcare providers for the purpose of this survey, to distinguish them from maintained schools.

relatively small in more affluent areas, but grows larger as the level of deprivation increases.

Ofsted's inspection data show that 16% of providers who left the sector following an inspection under the Early Years Foundation Stage framework had been judged inadequate. In comparison, just 2% of providers who had an Early Years Foundation Stage judgement and remained active were inadequate. This suggests that a combination of the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage and inspection against its requirements have contributed to an overall improvement in quality.

Overall, Early Years Foundation Stage profile results have improved nationally since 2008.<sup>2</sup> The proportion of children working securely in communication, language and literacy has risen by six percentage points to 59% in 2010. In personal, social and emotional development the figure was 77%, a rise of five percentage points. The rate of improvement, for some traditionally lower-performing groups, has been greater than that seen nationally. However, there are some groups of children who, despite an improvement in the proportion reaching a good level of development, lag behind the majority. Girls outperform boys. The rates of improvement for Traveller children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have not been as good as for other children.

This survey looked in depth at outcomes in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy.<sup>3</sup> In the schools visited, the outcomes in these two areas of learning were very similar. However, in the childcare providers visited for the survey, inspectors judged outcomes in personal, social and emotional development to be good or outstanding in around two thirds of the providers, while outcomes in communication, language and literacy were good or outstanding in less than half.

There were two key reasons for this relative difference in outcomes between the schools and the childcare providers visited. First, the childcare providers were often relying on daily routines rather than specifically planning activities to promote children's learning and development. This was more successful for children's personal, social and emotional development than their communication, language and literacy skills. Second was the schools' greater success with developing early reading and writing skills. Across all types of provider visited, including some of the good or outstanding ones, inspectors found that children's use of language for thinking was not as well developed as their use of language for communication.

Providers' views about the value and impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage varied. Many were positive, and talked about how it had raised the status of early

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<sup>2</sup> The Early Years Foundation Stage profile measures children's achievements at the end of the academic year in which they reach their fifth birthday. Achievement in this context describes the level that a child reaches and does not take account of their starting points.

<sup>3</sup> Outcomes in this context take account of how well young children are developing age-appropriate skills and the progress that they have made in relation to their capabilities and starting points.

education, made them more ambitious for themselves and for children, and had given them a clearer idea of what they should be doing and how to improve their practice. However, these views were not shared universally. The childminders visited more often expressed negative views about the Early Years Foundation Stage than other types of providers. These were almost exclusively childminders that had remained satisfactory between their last two inspections and thought of themselves more as carers than educators.

Concerns were raised when the Early Years Foundation Stage was introduced that it would be too formal and put too much pressure on young children. However, the children that the inspectors observed during the survey were, almost without exception, enjoying their time, whatever type of Early Years Foundation Stage setting they were in.

## Key findings

### Provision and outcomes

- Outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were satisfactory or better in all the schools and childcare providers visited.
- The keys to good outcomes in personal, social and emotional development in the childcare providers surveyed were the routines that practitioners established and the high expectations that they had of children's behaviour. In this area of learning, outcomes were very similar for the childminders and childcare providers on non-domestic premises.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development was better where the providers visited were clear about the stages of learning and development and specifically planned activities to cover all aspects of this area of learning.<sup>4</sup>
- Outcomes for communication, language and literacy were good or outstanding in 42 of the 68 providers visited. This was because practitioners were specifically planning opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening, and early reading and writing skills. This could often be traced back to specific training, for example, in developing children's language skills or in delivering phonics.
- In 18 of the 43 childcare providers visited, children's speaking and listening skills were stronger than their early reading and writing skills, while in the others they were similar. This was more because conversation was part of everyday activities, than because providers intended to prioritise this.
- Children's language for thinking was weaker than their language for communication in 13 of the providers surveyed, including some good and outstanding providers. This was usually because practitioners missed

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<sup>4</sup> The strands of personal, social and emotional development set out in the *Practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* are: dispositions and attitudes; self-confidence and self-esteem; making relationships; behaviour and self-control; self-care; and sense of community.

opportunities to encourage children to explain and extend their thinking, or simply did not allow time for children to think.

- Assessment of children's learning and development was good or outstanding in 21 of the 25 schools visited, but only in 15 of the 43 childcare providers. It was inadequate in seven childcare providers but no schools.
- Inspectors found that where assessment was underdeveloped it tended to focus more on children's welfare or their interests, rather than their learning.
- Provision for different groups of children was variable in the providers visited. Schools were more likely to be evaluating the performance of different groups and to be familiar with strategies to overcome barriers to learning, particularly for boys. However, inspectors found that the extent to which schools identified and met the specific needs of different groups was mixed.
- The childcare providers visited, particularly childminders, tended to focus on children as individuals rather than consider the specific needs of different groups, other than those with identified additional needs, in which case they knew how to access external support or advice.

### **Drivers for improvement**

- Inspectors identified two important drivers for improvement: the commitment of practitioners to professional development and improvement; and external support and challenge for providers.
- Nine of the 12 childminders that were found to be good or outstanding, when visited for this survey, had achieved early years qualifications above the minimum required. Ten of the 12 were members of local networks of childminders. In all the childcare providers on non-domestic premises that had improved between their previous two full inspections, qualification levels exceeded the minimum requirements.

### **Barriers to improvement**

- Self-evaluation and action planning were judged to be good or outstanding in only just over a third of the childcare providers visited. Self-evaluation was inadequate in four of the 20 childminders and three of the 23 childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited. In contrast it was good or outstanding in 22 of the 25 schools visited.
- Self-evaluation and action planning were too often seen by childcare providers as something that had to be done rather than a means of improving outcomes for children. However, outcomes for children were no better than satisfactory in any of the providers where self-evaluation was inadequate.
- A difficulty for all types of providers visited, including the good or outstanding ones, was involving parents in ongoing assessments of their child's learning.
- Inspectors found little evidence of ongoing communication about children's learning between the different Early Years Foundation Stage providers that a child might use during the course of a day or week.

## Recommendations

Any changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage should:

- reflect that provision and outcomes in the early years have improved overall, and all types of providers can and do deliver the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage well
- consider how to address the existing differences in capacity and quality of provision between the different types of providers
- take account of the importance of good qualifications for all types of providers
- be clear that good quality assessment is an integral part of effective planning for young children's learning and development
- recognise the currently slow rate of improvement in outcomes for some groups of children, including Traveller children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- be clear that self-evaluation is a weakness in some types of provision and is at the heart of improving outcomes for children
- consider how to promote more effective partnership working and especially the exchange of information between the different providers that a child may encounter in the course of a day or a week.

Local authorities should:

- consider how training, support and challenge can be targeted to address the existing differences in capacity and quality of provision between the different types of provider.

All providers should:

- consider how to develop more effective partnership working between the different providers that a child may encounter in the course of a day or a week.

Childcare providers in particular should:

- take account of the links between good quality assessment and planning for children's learning and development and better outcomes
- take account of the fact that self-evaluation and action planning are integral to improving outcomes for children.

## Context

1. The introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage ended the distinction between care and learning in previous legislation and set universal standards for learning, development and care for young children, regardless of the setting that they attend. It aims to give parents the assurance that whatever provider they choose – whether childcare or school – will keep their child safe and help them to thrive.
2. Prior to September 2008, the Foundation Stage began when a child reached three years of age. Only maintained schools and those independent schools, day-care providers and childminders in receipt of nursery education grant funding were required to take account of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.<sup>5</sup>
3. The learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage comprise the early learning goals, or knowledge, skills and understanding, which children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they turn five, and the educational programmes to be taught. These cover six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; problem solving, reasoning and numeracy; creative development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical development.<sup>6</sup> The learning and development requirements also set out how children's learning should be assessed.
4. The same Act that introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage placed statutory duties on English local authorities to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities for young children and to provide information, advice and training to their early years workforce. The previous government's goal was for the whole workforce to achieve, as minimum, a relevant level 3 qualification (broadly equivalent to A level) by 2015.
5. This survey took place at the same time as the Government's review of the Early Years Foundation Stage.<sup>7</sup> The review was based on consultations with

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<sup>5</sup> Prior to September 2008 day-care providers (such as nurseries, playgroups and crèches) and childminders had to meet the national standards for under eights day care and childminding. Only those providers in receipt of nursery education grant funding for three- and four-year-olds were required to help children make good progress towards the early learning goals set out in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. The 'Birth to three matters' framework provided guidance for practitioners with responsibility for the care of babies and children from birth to three years.

<sup>6</sup> More information about the requirements for each area of learning can be found at:

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/earlyyears/eyfsareasoflearninganddevelopment>.

<sup>7</sup> On 6 July 2010 the Department for Education announced a review of the Early Years Foundation Stage led by Dame Clare Tickell, Chief Executive of Action for Children. Dame Tickell has been asked to provide a final report in spring 2011. The Government will then consult on any proposed changes and develop any legislation necessary to support them prior to their introduction from September 2012.

early years practitioners, other experts in early years, and parents and carers. However, the survey focused on inspectors' first-hand judgements of the quality of provision and outcomes for young children to evaluate the impact that the Early Years Foundation Stage has had for young children.

6. The survey focused primarily on the learning and development requirements, and specifically on children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy skills. When the Early Years Foundation Stage was introduced, meeting the learning and development requirements was potentially more challenging for those childcare providers that did not previously deliver funded nursery education: this primarily means some childminders and childcare providers on non-domestic premises as opposed to schools. The survey therefore evaluated provision and outcomes in providers across the early years and childcare sector.

## The impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Provision and outcomes

7. The proportion of childcare providers – that is non-school settings – judged good or outstanding by Ofsted inspection has increased year on year since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage.<sup>8</sup>
  - In 2007/08 56% of providers were judged good or outstanding and 5% were inadequate.<sup>9</sup>
  - In 2008/09 the proportion of providers judged good or outstanding had risen to 65%.
  - In 2009/10 68% of providers were judged good or outstanding and the proportion judged inadequate had fallen to 3%.
  - Between 2008/09 and 2009/10 the proportion of outstanding providers improved from 4% to 10%.
8. Experience appears to make a difference to the quality of provision. Seventy-four per cent of childcare providers previously funded to provide nursery education that have since been inspected under the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, were judged good or outstanding compared with 64% who were not funded.
9. Childcare providers on non-domestic premises perform better on average than childminders. For the period of the Early Years Foundation Stage childcare on non-domestic premises was better than provision by childminders: 71% of

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<sup>8</sup> See Annex C, Figure 1.

<sup>9</sup> Inspection data from 2005/06 to 2007/08 are based on the Inspecting Outcomes for Children framework 'quality of care' judgement.

childcare providers were judged to be good or outstanding compared with 67% of childminders.

10. The overall quality of childcare provision is less good in deprived areas. Inspection data show that the more deprived the area, the lower the average quality of the provision. This is largely due to the difference in quality of childminding, where the relationship between deprivation and lower quality is particularly marked.<sup>10</sup> For the period of the Early Years Foundation Stage, 65% of childcare providers on non-domestic premises in the most deprived areas were judged to be good or outstanding compared with just 55% of childminders.
11. Almost half of childcare providers that were judged to be satisfactory at their last inspection have not improved. Providers in the most deprived areas are more likely to have remained satisfactory than those in less deprived areas. Once again, this picture is less positive for childminders than for childcare provided on non-domestic premises; 23% of childminders in the most deprived areas remained satisfactory compared with 18% of childcare on non-domestic premises.<sup>11</sup>
12. Maintained schools have sustained a generally high quality of provision for young children, following the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of those inspected since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage, early years provision has been judged good or outstanding in 78%. For independent schools the figure is 76%.<sup>12</sup>
13. Inspectors found that 10 of the 25 schools visited for this survey had done more than sustain good-quality provision. In six where early years provision was judged to be good prior to the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage, it was outstanding at their most recent full inspection. In another four that were good at their most recent inspection against the Early Years Foundation Stage, inspectors found when they visited for this survey that they were outstanding in meeting the children's communication, language and literacy needs and their personal, social and emotional development needs.
14. Nationally, children's attainment at age five, as measured by the Foundation Stage Profile, has also improved since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage.<sup>13</sup>
  - The proportion of children working securely in personal, social and emotional development has risen from 72% in 2008 to 77% in 2010.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Annex C, Figure 2.

<sup>11</sup> See Annex C, Figures 3 and 4.

<sup>12</sup> See Annex C, Tables 3 and 4.

<sup>13</sup> *Department for Education: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data:* [www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml](http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml). (Also see Tables 5 and 6 in Annex C of this report.)

- The proportion of young children working securely in communication, language and literacy has risen from 53% in 2008 to 59% in 2010.
  - The proportion of young children reaching a good level<sup>15</sup> of development has risen from 49% in 2008 to 56% in 2010.
  - The achievement gap between lower and middle attaining children has narrowed from 36% to 33%.<sup>16 17</sup>
15. In the childcare providers visited for the survey, outcomes for children were better in personal, social and emotional development than in communication, language and literacy. In the schools visited there was very little difference between the two areas of learning.
16. Overall, in the providers surveyed, opportunities for children to learn and develop outdoors were not as good as those available inside. In the childcare providers visited, where the outdoor provision was a relative weakness, it was because activities lacked structure or there was no immediate access to an outdoor space. In the schools visited where outdoor provision was not as good, it was because activities or the intended learning were not thought through well enough, or opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills were missed.

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<sup>14</sup> Children achieving six or more points in all scale(s) within an area of learning are working securely in that assessment area.

<sup>15</sup> Children who achieve at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least six in each of the scales in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy are said to have reached a good level of development.

<sup>16</sup> The percentage gap in achievement between the lowest 20% of achieving children in a local authority (mean score), and the score of the median child in the same authority expressed as a percentage of the same median score.

<sup>17</sup> *Department for Education: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data:*

[www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml](http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml).

(Also see Table 8 in Annex C of this report.)

## Personal, social and emotional development

### Summary

- Outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were satisfactory or better in all the schools and childcare providers visited.
  - The keys to good outcomes in personal, social and emotional development in the childcare providers surveyed were the routines that practitioners established and the high expectations that they had of children's behaviour. In this area of learning, outcomes were very similar for childminders and childcare providers on non-domestic premises.
  - Children's personal, social and emotional development was better where the providers visited were clear about the stages of learning and development and specifically planned activities to cover all aspects of this area of learning.
17. In 13 of the 20 childminders visited, outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were good or outstanding. In the childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited, outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were good in 15 of the 23 settings visited.
  18. Inspectors found that even in the eight of the 20 childcare providers visited that were satisfactory overall, outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were good. This was a result of intuitive care, the routines that providers established and the high expectations they had of young children's behaviour.
  19. However, inspectors found that where children made particularly good or outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development it was because the providers visited were clear about the stages of learning and development and had often had specific training or support in this area. They referred to the practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to check children's developmental level and tracked their progress. Practitioners made sure that they planned activities specifically to cover all aspects of children's personal, social and emotional development, often making use of guidance provided by the National Strategies to do so.

In one setting, children were making excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development with the childminder. This was due to her noting all their personal, social and emotional needs when they joined, and the high-quality interaction and planning and good knowledge of child development that she used throughout the day. The childminder had high regard for the children's well-being. She kept abreast with training in this area and had recently attended a workshop on helping children to cope with bereavement.

Staff in a privately run nursery paid a great deal of attention to children's emotional development and were strongly influenced by the Early Years Foundation Stage principle of 'positive relationships'. This was implemented well through the key person<sup>18</sup> scheme and teamwork by staff. Of the oldest children, three had developed skills that would normally be expected at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their self-confidence was evident in the way that they set up activities for themselves and included other children. Children's individual records were updated from observations by key workers. Progress in personal, social and emotional development was broken down into the strands so that key persons had a good idea of the strengths and needs of each of the children attending.

In one school there were three waves of support for children's personal, social and emotional development. The first wave was the universal whole-class provision, which included 'emotions boards' in each classroom for the children to show how they were feeling and lots of circle time activities. Wave two was a focus group for those children who had been identified as needing additional small-group input to strengthen their personal, social and emotional skills. The third wave was the group work targeted at children who, because of significant emotional and social needs, required more extended opportunities to develop their self-confidence.

20. Outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were satisfactory or better in all the schools and childcare providers visited. However, where outcomes were satisfactory rather than good it was because of inconsistencies in practitioners' approach, or because providers did not have systems in place to ensure that they were covering all the strands of personal, social and emotional development.

In a childcare setting that had remained satisfactory since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's progress in their emotional development was weaker. The provider thought that the reason could be a lack of consistent reinforcement of behaviour at home, combined with children watching television for much of the time and not having to relate to others. However, the inspector found that it was due to a lack of consistency in approach by staff across the setting, particularly with the older children, and a lack of recognition of potential trigger and flash points. This was further exacerbated by some limited resources, such as only one scooter. In addition, limited time was allowed for tasks such as

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<sup>18</sup> The Early Years Foundation Stage defines a key person as the named member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with that child's parents.

children fastening their coats, which frustrated the children if they had to hurry or it was done for them.

21. Both providers and local authorities involved in the survey raised concerns about provision for, and assessment of, young children's understanding of, and respect for, cultures and beliefs. Nursery and Reception classes in the schools surveyed were least likely to find making provision for learning about cultures and beliefs difficult. Provision in this context was usually better in the schools and childcare providers visited which had high minority ethnic populations, where valuing children's backgrounds and home languages had a high profile.

Staff in a day nursery were very confident in developing the language skills of children through modelling, using both the home language and English. There were good displays of words in a range of languages and good use was made of rhymes and songs in home languages, particularly for the younger children.

The vast majority of children in one school were from minority ethnic backgrounds, and most spoke a language other than English at home. The school ensured that children, and their parents, knew that their home languages and backgrounds were valued. Welcome notices at each classroom door were personal to each class. They were made by the parents and greeted those that entered in the actual languages spoken by the children in the class. Information for parents about the Early Years Foundation Stage was displayed in the five main languages represented in the school and was available in others. Parent ambassadors, recruited either from within the staff or parents themselves, acted as translators. Children were encouraged to use their home language in the classroom, alongside English, to chat with their friends or make their needs known. Staff used their own languages, for example to teach rhymes in Urdu. The school had done a lot of work with parents to develop their understanding that it is good to be bilingual.

22. The childcare providers visited in areas with low numbers of minority ethnic groups were more likely to find developing children's understanding of, and respect for, cultures and beliefs difficult, particularly if practitioners' own knowledge was limited. Nevertheless providers in these areas were seen who managed this aspect of children's development well, especially when they developed links with local schools or children's centres.

An experienced childminder took the children in her care to a local children's centre regularly so that children could develop positive relationships with others in the community and experience a wider range of cultural events than she could provide alone. As a result, the children developed an interest in differences between themselves and others. They understood that people have different needs, cultures, languages and religions and developed respect. The childminder commented:

'I mind for families from so many different backgrounds. I know my equipment represents and reflects a fair amount of diversity but I cannot represent everyone in my own environment. It's good for the children to go to the centre and see the changing images and join in with events like the Eid party. Their awareness grows so much stronger as we chat about different ways people dress and why some people have disabilities. They know a lot more about different people in the community than I knew until a few years ago. It only happens because we go to the children's centre. That wouldn't happen if we just stayed in my home.'

## Communication, language and literacy

### Summary

- Outcomes for communication, language and literacy were good or outstanding in 42 of the 68 providers visited. This was because practitioners were specifically planning opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening, and early reading and writing skills. This could often be traced back to specific training, for example in developing children's language skills or in teaching phonics.<sup>19</sup>
  - In 18 of the 43 childcare providers visited, children's speaking and listening skills were stronger than their early reading and writing skills, while in the others they were similar. This was more because conversation was part of everyday activities than because providers intended to prioritise this.
  - Children's language for thinking was weaker than their language for communication in 13 of the schools and childcare providers surveyed, including some good and outstanding providers. This was usually because practitioners missed opportunities to encourage children to explain and extend their thinking, or simply did not allow time for children to think.
23. Outcomes were good or outstanding in 10 of the childminders and nine of the childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited. In 10 of the 43 childcare providers surveyed outcomes in personal, social and emotional development were good or outstanding, while in communication, language and literacy they were satisfactory. Good outcomes in communication, language and literacy are more dependent on systematic and effective planning.

Pre-school children in one nursery generally had quite good language for communication. Skills for early reading and writing were less well-developed because they were less planned for and less frequently recorded. The manager said that she thought the children were 'doing

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<sup>19</sup> This mirrors findings in another recent report by Ofsted. Inspectors found that poor development of speaking and listening skills at an early age is holding children back from learning to read and write and highlighted the importance of the systematic teaching of phonics. *Removing barriers to literacy* (090237), Ofsted 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090237](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090237).

pretty well', but she had not looked at assessments or monitored provision to confirm this view.

In one childminding setting there was little sign of opportunities for mark-making<sup>20</sup> and although the childminder said that she shared books and read stories, on the day of the visit appealing books were not readily available or drawn to the children's attention. Critically, the childminder had no way of assuring that provision was suitably balanced across the different strands of communication, language and literacy.<sup>21</sup>

24. In some childcare providers and schools visited where outcomes in communication, language and literacy were not as good as in personal, social and emotional development, it was because the provision was too adult-led. There were not enough opportunities for children to mark-make, or read and write independently.
25. Occasionally, speaking and listening were weak, because the provider was relying on learning happening incidentally. In one nursery, for example, there was an expectation that staff were speaking with, and listening to, the children all the time but the quality was not consistent. One childminder visited did not engage the children very much in conversation. Another did not plan activities to build on children's speaking and listening skills and she was unclear as to what language for thinking was. She did not see herself as an educator, but as a carer, which restricted what was done and what the children learnt.
26. Inspectors found a relative weakness in children's language for thinking compared with their language for communication in 13 of the schools and childcare providers visited, including some of the good and outstanding ones. Sometimes this was because adults did not model it themselves or missed incidental opportunities. In the main, it was because practitioners did not encourage children to explain or expand their thinking, or quite simply did not give them time to think. Too often adults would immediately follow up one question with another, or would answer their own question.
27. Where language for thinking was developed well it was because adults knew what they were doing and often planned for it specifically. The following examples show this in action.

One childminder used an imaginative 'role play' game to encourage language for thinking when playing with a train track. She introduced a game of 'I wonder who broke the wheel', exploring scenarios in different

<sup>20</sup> As children make marks with different materials and tools and ascribe meaning to their marks they are developing early writing skills.

<sup>21</sup> The different strands of communication, language and literacy set out in the *Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* are: language for communication; language for thinking; linking sounds and letters; reading; writing; and handwriting.

roles and voices until the child was stimulated to put forward a theory and his reasons.

In one school lots of opportunities for speaking and listening were built into daily activities. However, the key to children's progress in this strand was the teaching methods, which ensured that staff had time to join children's self-chosen activities and have extended conversations with them. The promotion of language for thinking was particularly strong. Teachers identified clear learning objectives for planned activities on a weekly basis.

28. Inspectors found that where children made good or outstanding progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, the key factor was the explicit planning of activities to promote children's skills across all aspects of communication, language and literacy. This was often the result of specific training, for example in developing children's language skills or in teaching phonics, or areas identified for improvement at inspection. Practitioners understood why they were doing particular things and were knowledgeable about how young children learn and develop. They made use of the practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to check children's developmental level and tracked their progress.

A wonderful example seen in one of the schools visited developed from staff following children's interest in the police. A report was received of stolen flowers and the children were quick to set about finding clues as to the identity of the thief. Some made model binoculars to help in the search. The teacher was on the telephone to the police, the victim and witnesses at frequent intervals, modelling the use of language for communication. This was further enhanced by drawing in another teacher as a 'witness'. After searching for clues outside, children came indoors and created 'wanted' posters, maps of the area of the theft, and handprints to compare with those of various suspects. They were developing their use of language for communication and thinking and their ability to ascribe meaning to marks, because the teacher was highly skilled at judging how and when to step in to push their learning forward through their self-initiated activities.

In a nursery, progress in communication, language and literacy was broken down into the different strands so that key persons had a good idea of the strengths and needs of each of the children attending. The setting had been working with the local authority development worker to devise suitable recording methods.

29. Conversely, where staff did not have sufficient knowledge about how young children learn, and their stages of development, this had an adverse impact on

children's progress in communication, language and literacy. Staff missed opportunities to develop children's skills.

Opportunities to promote learning were missed in one nursery. For example, a child in the toddler room was holding a paintbrush in a fist grip but the key person working with him did not steer him towards a pincer grip. The key person reading a story to a group held the book for them to look at while she read, but at such an angle that at least a quarter of the children could not see it. When children told their news using their less formal speech, adults did little to extend the children's vocabulary; while phonic skills were taught, little was done to encourage children to apply them in writing and mark-making.

30. Inspectors found that systematic phonics teaching, adapted to meet the needs and interests of the children, had a particularly positive impact in many of the schools found to be good or outstanding in this survey, and in three of the seven good childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited.<sup>22</sup>

In one school the structured teaching of letters and sounds had produced a highly beneficial effect on children's progress in the Nursery and Reception years. While using national guidance and the Letters and Sounds programme, the staff amended and adapted the content to meet the needs of the children and to reflect current interests. This was typified in a session for Reception children led by the class teacher where the well-thought-out structure, lively pace and stimulating content caught and sustained the children's attention and led to new learning. The children knew the flashcard routine where the showing of a picture preceded the recognition of the initial sound. The teacher was quick to remind children not to oversound, to model and then to praise the children when they got the letters right, including the letter 'h' which was introduced the day before. The introduction, via entertaining interactive whiteboard slides of another new sound, 'a little tricky but part of our Christmas play', heightened children's attention and all joined in as the graphics showed how 's' and 'h' combine to give 'sh'. There was rapt attention, one child spoke out to link the sound to when a character sneezes, and a couple more commented that they knew that sound. The children were then asked to help the character Shamus use a shovel to get Father Christmas on the move again, and this led to finding a shiny box under the teacher's seat. The children were invited to guess what might be in the box – children suggested 'ship', 'cash' and 'fishing rod', which led to discussion about where the sound 'sh' occurred in the words. There were 'oohs' and 'ahhs' as the box was opened to reveal many items including 'shoes',

<sup>22</sup> This mirrors a finding in another recent report by Ofsted. Inspectors found that the diligent, concentrated and systematic teaching of phonics was central to the success of all the schools surveyed that achieve high reading standards in Key Stage 1. *Reading by six: how the best schools do it* (100197), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100197](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100197).

'sheep' and 'Shrek', as well as some mentioned by the children. The session ended with children being invited to see how, as part of self-chosen activities, they might use the glitter tray to form the letters 'sh'. Several children opted for this activity and later some went on to paint 'sh' in the snow outside.

In another school the structured use of letters and sounds has had a marked impact on outcomes for children linking their sounds and letters. The proportion achieving six or more points rose from 65% in 2007 to 82% in 2010. The school followed the programme phases systematically but adapted delivery to reflect the current themes and interests of the children, for example using current story content as the basis for identifying words that begin with 's', 'p', 't' and 'a'.

Children in a privately run nursery made good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy because planning was comprehensive and covered all areas of learning systematically. There was freedom for children to choose their own activities. Speaking and listening skills were promoted well through a wide variety of activities. Early literacy skills were also promoted through adult-led activities, including phonics sessions for the older children.

## Assessment

### Summary

- Assessment of children's learning and development was good or outstanding in 21 of the 25 schools visited, but only in 15 of the 43 childcare providers. It was inadequate in seven childcare providers but no school.
- Inspectors found that where assessment was underdeveloped it tended to focus more on children's welfare or their interests, rather than their learning.

31. The Early Years Foundation Stage expects practitioners to:

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles
- use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- match their observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

32. Where assessment was inadequate in the childcare providers visited, it was because they were not making any assessments of children's learning needs when they joined, or on an ongoing basis. As a result, providers were not

planning activities that were specific to the learning needs of the actual children in the setting.

33. Where assessment was judged satisfactory in the childcare providers visited, practitioners knew their children well. They made sure that they understood children's care and welfare needs when they joined the setting. Practitioners knew the children's likes and dislikes and interests. However, they did not generally see assessment as an integral part of planning provision to impact on children's learning. As a result, while practitioners were planning activities to promote enjoyment, they did not take sufficient account of learning. Some childminders visited found it difficult to differentiate activities for different ages and abilities. Thus, while almost all children observed during the course of the survey appeared happy and to be enjoying their time in their setting this was not necessarily an indication that they were learning as well as they could.
34. Inspectors judged assessment to be good or outstanding in 15 of the 43 childcare providers and in 21 of the 25 schools visited. Where assessment was good or outstanding staff were making initial assessments of children's individual learning needs through a combination of their own observations and discussions with their parents. Once the children had joined, staff regularly assessed individual children's learning and used the information to plan the next steps. These activities were not burdensome or bureaucratic: they were focused on the needs of the child and helped the providers meet these needs more effectively.

One childminder assessed the starting points of children by gaining detailed information from the family about the child's development. She also carried out observational assessment over the first week or so of a new child's attendance to ensure that she had a good understanding of the child's abilities and needs. From this, she planned activities that met the child's and other children's needs.

Another childminder had increased her capacity to carry out assessments by employing an assistant so that she had more time to observe and assess children without detracting from their learning. Initial meetings were arranged with parents to gather information; the childminder carried out short, initial observations and shared these with parents to check their accuracy when compared with home behaviour.

One nursery assessed children's learning well. 'Learning journeys' were completed for all areas of learning with observations, samples of children's work and photographic evidence. These were dated clearly and annotated to show children's achievements. Next steps in learning were clearly identified for each child and the adults' roles in promoting the next steps were clearly identified in planning.

In a school where assessment was an integral part of the Early Years Foundation Stage each adult had specific times when they would be observing their key children at play. Together with assessments of children engaged in adult-led activities and incidental observations this ensured an all-round picture of each child. Moderation meetings within and between classes ensured accuracy and 'No child left behind' meetings led by the deputy headteacher picked up children who were not making progress and identified action to be taken. The school was very conscious of the potential confusion between special educational needs and/or disabilities and learning English as an additional language. It made excellent use of bilingual staff and parent ambassadors to assess children in their home language as well.

## Meeting the needs of different groups

### Summary

- Provision for different groups of children was variable in the providers visited. Schools were more likely to be evaluating the performance of different groups and to be familiar with strategies to overcome barriers to learning, particularly for boys. However, inspectors found that the extent to which schools identified and met the specific needs of different groups was mixed.
  - Childcare providers, particularly childminders, tended to focus on children as individuals rather than consider the specific needs of different groups, other than those with identified additional needs, in which case they knew how to access external support or advice.
35. Nationally, the proportion of young children who reached a good level of development rose from 49% in 2008 to 56% in 2010; over the same period the achievement gap for the lowest attaining children narrowed from 36% to 33%.<sup>23</sup> However, there are still differences between groups of children in the proportion that reach a good level of development. Data for 2010 show that since the Early Years Foundation Stage was introduced:<sup>24</sup>
- the rate of improvement since 2008 for some lower performing groups was greater than for all children, namely children of Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage, children from 'Any Other Black Background' or 'Any Other Ethnic Background', those speaking English as an additional language and those known to be eligible for free school meals.

<sup>23</sup> Local authorities had a target under the previous government to narrow the inequality gap in achievement by raising the results for the poorest performing 20% of children faster than the rest.

<sup>24</sup> *Department for Education: Foundation stage profile attainment by pupil characteristics in England, 2009/10*. [www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000979/index.shtml](http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000979/index.shtml).

- girls outperform boys
  - around one in five children who were Travellers of Irish heritage or from a Gypsy/Roma background, or who had special educational needs and/or disabilities achieved a good level of development, compared with over half of all children
  - the rate of improvement for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities at school action was close to that for all children;<sup>25</sup> however, the rate of improvement for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities at school action plus and Gypsy/Roma children was less than for all children, and for children with a statement of special educational need or Travellers of Irish heritage the rate of improvement was much less.<sup>26</sup>
36. The childminders visited for this survey thought of children as individuals, but rarely as belonging to any particular group. They did not formally consider the specific needs of different groups of children, other than those with identified additional needs. In these instances, the childminders visited had liaised with other professionals and parents to meet the individual child's needs.
37. The childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited also focused primarily on children as individuals, although there were a few instances where they had evidently taken the needs of different groups into account when planning. In one nursery, for example, staff used various strategies to encourage boys to engage in writing, such as mobile easels and wall areas that could be drawn on. In another, outdoor sessions were focused on particular children who had restricted access at home to the outdoor environment and helped to develop their dispositions and attitudes to learning and communication skills.
38. Inspectors found that even the large childcare providers on non-domestic premises rarely did any formal analysis of the performance of different groups, usually because they did not see the value of doing so. Where childcare providers did consider the outcomes for different groups, they were not always clear whether they were comparing attainment or progress. For example, in one nursery the manager felt that boys made less progress in communication, language and literacy than girls, but this was not supported by the evidence seen by the inspector. A high proportion of children with low social

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<sup>25</sup> Definitions of the different levels of special educational need and/or disability can be found in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*: <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DfES%200581%202001>.

<sup>26</sup> The effect of this is that the gap between children with special educational needs and/or disabilities without a statement and all children has widened over the period 2008–10. Ofsted's *Special educational needs and disability review* (2010) found that the proportion of children and young people identified in mainstream schools as having special needs and/or disabilities varies widely across the country from over 70% in some schools to less than 5% in others. The review also found that additional provision for children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities was often not of good quality and did not lead to significantly better outcomes for the child or young person; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090221](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090221).

development were boys, but this group of children had made satisfactory progress from their starting point.

39. The schools surveyed were more likely to be aware of the potential gender gap. Six of the 25 schools raised the lower attainment of boys compared with girls as either a current or historical issue. Staff knew about nationally and locally recommended strategies to engage boys and the impact could be seen in the gap narrowing between girls' and boys' attainment in three of the six schools where it was raised as an issue. However, inspectors also found that relying on recommended strategies to address boys' underachievement meant that schools did not always probe their data far enough.

One school's own analysis had identified that, having not previously been an issue, boys' attainment was lagging behind girls and behind boys nationally. They were taking positive action to engage boys through outdoor play and a plan to use a male dance company to encourage their creative development. Local authority data seen by the inspector showed that the gap for boys was particularly marked in emotional development and language for communication and thinking. What the school had not done was to carefully analyse which scale points boys were not achieving to see if they could target their intervention even more carefully.

40. Schools were more likely than the other providers visited to be analysing the performance of different groups of children. Fourteen of the schools mentioned one group or more as underperforming. The focus tended to be on gender and, to a lesser degree, those children entitled to free school meals, those learning English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The schools were more likely than childcare providers to focus on progress when discussing differences in outcomes, but there were a few that referred to attainment data. In some instances, the schools' analyses were incisive and led to action. For example, one school's analysis showed that children from Chinese, Polish and African backgrounds made more progress than those from Bangladeshi or Pakistani backgrounds. Consequently, the school had employed two bilingual classroom assistants to support children from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds in their learning.
41. In other instances, the schools had data but it was not clear what use they had made of them, or the analyses did not go far enough. For example, in one school the lower attainment of children entitled to free school meals was acknowledged but not probed further because they were seen as only a small group.
42. Similarly, some schools were responsive to the very specific needs of their communities, others less so. Inspectors found that in one school serving a Traveller community, staff visited the local site to dispel prejudices and to try to engage parents. A school with a women's refuge in its catchment area offered 'home' visits in the same way that they did for all parents of new children. However, other schools referred to what they saw as negative social factors

impacting on children's attitudes and progress without explaining what they were doing to meet the needs of these children.

43. Inspectors found that where children had additional needs, practitioners in the schools and childcare providers knew how to get support from other professionals to meet the individual's needs. The schools and childcare providers visited had at least satisfactory and often good links with other professionals within the local authority and health and social care services. Just one school mentioned difficulties in getting a prompt response from some professionals.
44. In two of the childcare providers on non-domestic premises and three of the schools visited inspectors found that more able children were either not being identified or not being sufficiently challenged. In only one school was specific reference made to the progress of more able children. This suggests that the main focus of the providers visited had been on improving the proportion of children reaching the threshold of a good level of development.
45. Inspectors found that the local authorities contacted for the survey were very much focused on the performance of boys and children in the most deprived areas. Eight of the local authorities suggested that the gender gap was inevitable due to boys' slower pace of development, particularly in writing. Five authorities talked about specific projects that they were undertaking to improve boys' attainment. These focused on how boys learn, and on their interests to help to engage them in writing, for example through outdoor play. National data show that four of these five authorities had shown year-on-year improvement in Early Years Foundation Stage profile results since 2007. All five had improved boys' writing between 2007 and 2009; four had improved it in relation to boys' writing nationally.
46. Eleven of the 12 local authorities highlighted the link between low attainment and high deprivation. References to minority ethnic groups were general rather than specific. Only two local authorities gave any detailed analysis of the groups specific to their area. Of two local authorities, both with almost 90 languages spoken, one did no analysis of the performance of children learning English as an additional language or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The other made no reference to any analysis of groups beyond looking at White British boys' and girls' entitlement to free school meals.

## Drivers for improvement

### Summary

- Inspectors identified two important drivers for improvement: the commitment of practitioners to professional development and improvement; and external support and challenge for providers.
- Nine of the 12 childminders that were found to be good or outstanding when visited for this survey had achieved early years qualifications above

the minimum required. Ten of the 12 were members of local networks of childminders, and in all the childcare providers visited for this survey that had improved between their previous two full inspections, qualifications levels exceeded the minimum requirements.

## **Commitment to professional development and improvement**

47. Around half of the schools and childcare providers visited had improved between their previous inspection and their latest inspection against the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Almost without exception, these providers were positive about the Early Years Foundation Stage. Qualification levels in the childcare providers that had improved exceeded the minimum requirements.
48. Inspectors found that good or outstanding practitioners had a strong commitment to professional development and improvement and, in many cases, had used the Early Years Foundation Stage as part of this process. During the course of this survey, inspectors received positive comments from providers of all types about the Early Years Foundation Stage covering the period from birth to age five years.

As one childminder explained, 'The Early Years Foundation Stage had enabled me to understand why I do the things that I have always done.'

Nursery managers commented that since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage, being involved with the local authority has raised their profile as managers and nursery staff, so that they feel part of a professional body rather than carers.

One school felt that the Early Years Foundation Stage had given them permission to promote learning through play. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader joined the school in 2007. On arrival, she found that there was a lack of continuity between Nursery and Reception. Reception was considered part of Key Stage 1, and, as a result, the teaching methods were unduly formal. In the first year, she modelled good practice in the Nursery, before moving on to ensure a smooth introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage to Reception, building a sense of Nursery and Reception as a single key stage. There was a lot of training for staff, including attendance at the local authority's early years conference and visits to other successful schools. Staff were further supported by a programme of weekly and monthly team meetings for familiarisation with new requirements, planning and review.

49. Inspectors found the greatest diversity of views about the Early Years Foundation Stage among childminders. Highly positive views were expressed by good or outstanding childminders.

A childminder had developed her work to meet all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to which she was highly committed. She was very concerned that it might become voluntary for childminders and felt that this would undermine the progress that had been made in the last two years. She said she would consider giving up if that happened as she thought childminders' status had improved significantly as a result of the 'equal playing field' of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

50. Conversely, negative comments came mainly, but not exclusively, from childminders who had remained satisfactory between their last two inspections<sup>27</sup> and saw their role more as carers than educators. They often felt that the expectations were too much for childminders and that the requirements were more appropriate for Nursery- and Reception-aged children.
51. One of the key drivers of improvement is practitioners, including leaders and managers, who have a good level of understanding of how young children learn and develop. Inspectors found that outcomes for children were good or outstanding where practitioners were well-qualified or trained. They used more than intuition; they knew why they were doing what they were doing, and what they needed to do next to promote children's learning. This was particularly important for childminders who were usually working alone. As one childminder said:

'How to assess progress and plan for more development in each child has finally clicked. I have completely changed the way I think about planning now, especially for communication, language and literacy. Since my training I am more confident in my assessment. I wish I had worked like this 10 years ago when I first started childminding. I can help the children so much more now, which is all I want to do in my work.'

52. The following examples are illustrative of the importance attached to relevant training and development by successful providers.

A childminder recognised that her capacity to improve was limited by her knowledge and skills. She planned for further training to pursue her goal and achieved the qualification she wanted at level 4.

A nursery only recruited staff with relevant early years qualifications and the highly professional workforce was encouraged to undertake further training.

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<sup>27</sup> Their latest inspection had been since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The governing body and senior leadership team in a school took much care in appointing a nursery teacher with experience and expertise. Candidates were asked to teach a session as part of the interview and were also observed in their own schools. The headteacher had drawn up a comprehensive induction programme for the new teacher, which included a visit to an outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage provider.

Another school had entered into a close working relationship with a higher education institution, participating in a taught programme of professional development which focused on acquisition of language. This had a significant impact on up-skilling all staff within the school and particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage where improved provision had led to noticeably improved outcomes for children.

53. Provision and outcomes for children were more likely to be good or outstanding in those childcare providers and schools led by someone knowledgeable about, and experienced in early years and young children’s learning and development. Conversely, provision and outcomes were no better than satisfactory in those childcare providers visited where there had either been frequent changes in manager or where managers did not have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## External support and challenge

54. Inspectors found that all the improving childcare providers and schools visited had received some form of training or support from their local authority, a professional association or another external organisation, in implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage, and were able to explain how this had supported their improvement. This support included: initial training to introduce the Early Years Foundation Stage; ongoing training, including targeted national programmes; involvement in specific projects; support through childminder networks and from children’s centres; and direct support from local authority advisers and consultants or childminder mentors. However, only three of the local authorities contacted could readily quantify the impact of their support and challenge.<sup>28</sup>

Analysis of data in 2009 highlighted concerns and led to the school making a successful request to be one of eight schools to be included in the communication, language and literacy development pilot starting in September 2009. A lead teacher from one of the Reception classes was identified and a training programme put in place, led by the local authority

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<sup>28</sup> This mirrors a finding in an earlier report by Ofsted. Inspectors found that evaluation of the impact of the National Strategies’ many programmes was a weakness at national and local level. *The National Strategies: a review of impact* (080270) Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080270](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080270).

consultant. The consultant demonstrated good practice and carried out observations to inform next steps; these were discussed with the lead teacher. Learning walks were carried out by the consultant to observe the environment, children's engagement and opportunities for children to practise their skills in order to enhance good practice. This was fed back to the lead teacher who distributed key information to the Early Years Foundation Stage team. Alongside the work centred on letters and sounds was an increased focus on shared and guided reading. In 2010 the school exceeded for the first time national averages in all strands of communication, language and literacy.

The whole package of support to help one childminder acquire skills and knowledge and access others' good practice added to the childminder's own commitment to learning and had brought about improvement. Partnership with other childminders was a significant factor. In her first years of practice, she had a childminding mentor and went to childminding groups that shared good practice. The quality of her work had been recognised and she had been appointed as a mentor to new childminders.

55. The local authorities contacted suggested that childminders were the least likely to attend their training. Inspectors' discussions with childminders showed that some found it difficult to attend training, even when it was arranged in the evening or at weekends, due to travel or other commitments. Two childminders visited had not had any training related to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
56. Inspectors found evidence among the schools and childcare providers visited that inspection against the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage had driven improvement, combined with local authority support where provision was judged inadequate.

Inspection had had a considerable impact on the quality of provision and outcomes in one nursery. The setting was judged satisfactory with inadequate safeguarding and organisation just prior to the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Following this inspection, the local authority had provided good support to the setting to address the action points and recommendations identified through inspection. This had brought about improvements in staff knowledge and management, and, through providing capital funding, good improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning environment. At its most recent inspection the nursery was judged satisfactory in all aspects.

Writing was previously a weak area in one nursery. The last inspection identified the need to plan more opportunities to develop mark-making, drawing and early writing. The setting now provides more opportunities for children to use small pens, chalks and pencils indoors and outdoors.

There were writing areas in both rooms so that children's writing development had improved.

57. Ofsted's inspection data show that 16% of childcare providers who left the sector following an inspection under the Early Years Foundation Stage framework had been judged inadequate.<sup>29 30</sup> In comparison, just 2% of providers who had an Early Years Foundation Stage judgement and remained active were inadequate. This suggests that a combination of the Early Years Foundation Stage and inspection against its requirements have contributed to an overall improvement in quality.

## Barriers to improvement

### Summary

- Self-evaluation and action planning was judged to be good or outstanding in just over a third of the childcare providers visited.<sup>31</sup> Self-evaluation was inadequate in four of the 20 childminders and three of the 23 childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited. In contrast, it was good or outstanding in 22 of the 25 schools visited.
- Self-evaluation and action-planning was too often seen by childcare providers as something that had to be done rather than a means of improving outcomes for children. However, outcomes for children were no better than satisfactory in any of the providers where self-evaluation was inadequate.
- A difficulty for all types of providers visited, including the good or outstanding ones, was involving parents in ongoing assessments of their child's learning.
- Inspectors found little evidence of ongoing communication about children's learning between the different Early Years Foundation Stage providers that a child might use during the course of a day or week.

### Self-evaluation

58. Where self-evaluation was judged inadequate, it was because providers were not reflecting on their practice. Outcomes for children were no better than

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<sup>29</sup> See: *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2009/10*, page 18, Figure 4; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2009-10](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2009-10).

<sup>30</sup> This analysis does not, however, include around 18,000 providers who left the sector before being inspected under the Early Years Foundation Stage who had already been inspected under the previous framework.

<sup>31</sup> Registered providers are encouraged to complete a self-evaluation form to help them evaluate their provision and to give them a structure to record the outcomes. The completed form is discussed with the inspector, usually during the inspection. In evaluating the effectiveness of leadership and management inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of systems for self-evaluation in identifying priorities for improvement that will improve outcomes for all children.

satisfactory in any of these providers where self-evaluation was inadequate. The childminders where self-evaluation was judged inadequate had either been childminding for many years and were continuing to do the job in the same way they always had, or simply did the same as they had with their own children when they were young. Where there was a written self-evaluation document, it was not insightful and did not link to any plans to take action. In the childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited, where self-evaluation was judged inadequate, it was because it was either at an early stage or was not seen as a high priority.

59. Where self-evaluation was only satisfactory in the childcare providers visited, the process of review and reflection was still underdeveloped. Providers relied on issues being identified through inspection or by the local authority, rather than their own monitoring. Self-evaluation focused more on provision than on outcomes for the children. It was seen as something that was completed for inspection, rather than to improve provision and hence outcomes for children. Providers often measured their success simply by how happy the children and their parents were.
60. Self-evaluation was much stronger in the school settings, where it was good or outstanding in 22 of the 25 primary schools visited. In 14 of the schools, it was very effective because it was driven by the headteacher and other senior staff as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. The Early Years Foundation Stage was given high profile within the school; senior leaders had an accurate view of strengths and the areas for development, and were focused on the progress that children were making and were taking action to address underperformance.

In one school, where self-evaluation was highly effective, the headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage leader had a well informed overview of the quality of the provision, the outcomes and where improvements were needed. They drew on their evidence from a range of monitoring to indicate where intervention had been effective, and to account for differences in outcomes. There was good evidence to show how the monitoring of phonics teaching alongside the monitoring of children's progress led to discussions on how to maximise the impact of sessions. The Early Years Foundation Stage unit's reflection and self-evaluation were established well through weekly meetings to discuss the impact of the previous week's provision.

## Partnerships with parents

61. The Early Years Foundation Stage expects providers to work in partnership with parents and to take account of information provided by parents about their child's learning. Inspectors found that all the schools and childcare providers visited were committed to establishing good relationships with parents. In the providers visited that were judged just satisfactory, the focus was often on support for welfare and care, rather than learning.

62. The good and outstanding schools and childcare providers visited had effective partnerships to support children’s learning to the extent that they usually involved parents in initial assessments of their children, regularly gave them information as to how well their child was doing and offered suggestions as to how they might help their child at home.

A childminder worked closely with parents and supported them with their children, for example in suggesting ways in which parents could manage their children’s behaviour. She shared the learning journeys with them and talked to them about their child’s achievements.

In a pre-school setting, frequent informal feedback on a daily basis ensured that parents were well informed of their child’s development. All staff in the pre-school informed parents of strategies used to improve their child’s behaviour, develop their language and give them support and resources to do this.

One nursery gave parents a copy of the planning for the next month. These plans detailed the topic and the activities for each area of learning, songs and rhymes to learn and stories to share. They also included useful and helpful suggestions for activities that parents might like to do at home which linked to the topic.

63. Inspectors found evidence that where parents were involved in their children’s learning, it had a positive impact on learning and development.

A nursery’s own analysis and the case studies that the inspector looked at showed that the children who were performing most highly were those who were known to have their learning reinforced at home. Similarly, the language acquisition of those children learning English as an additional language was considerably better where parents had asked for strategies and support in this area.

Since guidance on children’s developmental stages<sup>32</sup> had been shared with parents at one school, they reported that they felt more confident in supporting their children’s learning; they felt valued, their views were listened to, they were able to support their children better and see their progress. There had been a rise in attendance of about 20% in the nursery because parents were more engaged with the school.

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Development matters’ in the *Practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* gives guidance on the stages of children’s development in each strand of each area of learning.

64. Practitioners reported that they did not always find it easy to engage parents in dialogue about their child's learning. Inspectors found that after initial assessments, conversations about learning tended to take the form of the school or setting giving the parents information, rather than the parents contributing their views of their child's learning. The exception to this was children with additional needs, where parents' views were sought regularly, often coupled with input from other agencies.

In a nursery, partnerships with parents and other agencies had a good impact overall, particularly for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The contributions of parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities were consistently good, enabling staff to make accurate assessments about children. The views of health and social care agencies were central to the work that the setting did with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

65. Nevertheless, inspectors found that a few of the providers visited have had success in involving parents more widely in assessment, as the following examples illustrate.

A privately owned nursery valued the contribution that parents made to helping children develop their ideas and interests as they made progress in writing. The nursery provided blank notebooks in which staff and parents stuck samples of the children's work and encouraged children to present their ideas and interests. Parents were keen to write captions and comments on work that children had done in their books at home. From these, the staff got a rounded picture of what interested and motivated each child. A parent said 'It's such a simple idea. It makes us feel that learning doesn't just go on in the nursery. In our house, reading and writing are normal activities. This carries over for our child from home to nursery and back. The staff make us feel that our comments are important.'

One school visited had worked to strengthen partnerships with parents and to ensure that the school was kept fully aware of children's learning that took place outside of school hours. Parents were invited into the school for training sessions on how to observe their child's learning at home. They were given questions to consider when observing their child such as 'What does your child talk about while at the activity?'; 'Does your child observe or comment on anything different?'; 'Do they maintain concentration?' Parents were encouraged to share their observations of their child with the key worker. The sessions proved to be valuable to both the parents and the key workers as they enabled parents to gain an insight into how to observe their child's progress and development and to build a relationship with the key worker.

66. However, staff in the schools and childcare providers visited were not always clear about why they were inviting parents' contributions. For example, inspectors found that one childcare provider had started to invite parental contributions, but when parents had written in the children's journals there were few comments back from nursery staff to show that they valued the parents' time and effort.
67. Most parents who responded to the survey of Ofsted's Parents' Panel were satisfied with the early years and childcare provision they had used, and most agreed that providers took account of their knowledge of their child's previous learning and interests when they joined. Most parents said that providers made it easy for them to be involved in their child's learning and care, kept them well informed about the learning and care that their child received and gave them clear information about how their child was getting on. Around three quarters of parents said that the providers took their views into account when planning the next stages of their child's learning. Around two thirds of parents agreed that they were given ideas about how to support their child's learning at home; this rose to three quarters for parents with a child in a Reception class in a primary school.

### **Communication between Early Years Foundation Stage providers**

68. The Early Years Foundation Stage expects that where children receive education and care in more than one setting, practitioners will share relevant information with each other. It expects all professionals who interact with a child to work together to meet their needs.
69. Inspectors found that around half of the childminders visited belonged to local childminder groups, often hosted by children's centres. Four of the schools and three of the childcare providers on non-domestic premises visited were part of local networks of Early Years Foundation Stage providers. However, these groups provided a forum for discussion about provision, not individual children. Inspectors found very little evidence of ongoing dialogue about children's learning between practitioners in the schools and settings visited.

One childminder said that the nursery did not care what the children did while in her care. The nursery did not ask her about the provision or the children's experiences but did tell her what was planned in the nursery for them. She got no help from the nursery for a child who was slow to develop and whom she thought may well have special needs.

A childcare provider commented that they did not promote partnerships themselves because 'no-one is interested in the information, and the school was never interested in what the youngest have done or learnt'.

In one nursery, there were no systematic links with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers that a child may have attended part-time, and absolutely none with the schools. When asked if any liaison had ever been initiated by the main schools that the children moved on to, the manager was emphatic that it had never happened and expressed her disappointment at this.

70. Where there was communication between providers about children's learning and development, it was more likely to be at the point when a child moved from one setting to another. However, only seven of the childcare providers on non-domestic premises and three of the schools valued the transfer of information as part of the transition process, which often involved visits between settings by staff. Such formal links were less common for the childminders visited.
71. A handful of providers raised concerns about other providers and the accuracy of the information they received. For example, a nursery manager said that relationships were stronger where the feeder schools recognised the quality of their information and the accuracy of their assessments. A school said that it looked at the documents from other settings, although they felt that these were of varying quality and they were more certain of the accuracy of some than others.
72. Nevertheless, inspectors did find examples of good practice developing, although other providers were not necessarily the intended audience.

One childminder had a 'Working in Partnership' policy and during the interview stage with each family she explained the aims of the setting, its general ethos and that she would liaise with other settings if the child attended more than one place. Parents signed a permission slip allowing her to share information about their child's learning and development with schools/nursery on a professional level. The childminder was committed to communicating and working with other providers so that there could be continuity in children's learning. She understood that this was a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage and thought that it brought childminders the respect they deserved. But she noted that one school was much more willing to cooperate and keep her in the loop than the other.

One headteacher's vision was to create a seamless provision for children within the one building. Staff from the pre-school took children for visits to the school Nursery to enable them to become familiar with the setting and they discussed children's needs informally on a daily basis with school staff and carried messages between home and school if the children were receiving 'wraparound' care. The two sets of staff did not plan together specifically to meet the learning needs of children and they accepted that this may be a helpful 'next step' in their development.

In one setting visited by inspectors some children attended both the school nursery and a private nursery. The two providers were sharing information for the local authority's 'passport' document that tracked children's progress, but the manager reported that they found it quite complicated where children spent the majority of time in the school nursery.

One school's system of communicating with parents via a chalkboard about events and learning was very helpful to the childminder in knowing what was going on in the Reception class.

## Conclusion

73. Outcomes for children and the quality of provision have improved since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Inspectors found that in addition to good or outstanding providers implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage effectively, a combination of one or more other factors was at play. These included a commitment to professional development and improvement, and external support and challenge for providers.
74. National data indicate that the Early Years Foundation Stage has had a positive impact on children's attainment at age five. For all groups of children, the proportion reaching a good level of development has risen since 2008, but differing rates of improvement mean that some groups still lag behind the rest. There is more to be done to ensure that all providers are aware of the performance of, and take into account the needs of, different groups of children, as well as the needs of individuals.
75. Because of their starting points and previous experience in delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum, schools find it easier to deliver the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage well. This was particularly evident in some of the areas of focus in this survey, including developing children's communication, language and literacy skills, and in the activities of assessing children's progress and self-evaluation by providers. Nevertheless, Ofsted's inspection evidence and this survey show that childcare providers can and do deliver the requirements well.
76. Being intuitive about young children's learning and development is important, but is not enough. The quality of provision is likely to be better when practitioners understand how young children learn and develop and recognise the links between care and learning. Good and outstanding providers know why they do what they are doing and plan to ensure that they cover all aspects of children's personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills. They understand that assessment and self-evaluation are not bureaucratic processes, but are the keys to improving outcomes for the children in their care.

## Notes

The report is based on discussions with 12 local authorities and visits to 68 Early Years Foundation Stage providers between September and December 2010.

Between September and November 2010 inspectors held discussions with local authority staff from 12 local authorities in England to get their perspective on the impact that the Early Years Foundation Stage has had on the quality of provision and outcomes across the sector, for different groups of children. They also explored what the staff saw as the drivers of and barriers to improvement within their area. The local authorities were selected to give a range of different sizes across England, including rural and urban authorities: some where the proportion of children reaching a good level of development had been improving over time and the achievement gap had been narrowing; others where there had been no improvement in one or both of these measures; and some where there had been a decline in outcomes.

Between September and December 2010 inspectors also visited a small sample of 68 providers of early years childcare in nine of the local authorities. This included 25 primary schools providing the Early Years Foundation Stage, 23 providers of childcare on non-domestic premises and 20 childminders. Again, some of these providers were selected because they had shown improvement or had maintained at least good provision between their previous inspection and their most recent inspection against the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Others, in the main childcare providers, had remained satisfactory between their last two inspections.

The purpose of the visits was to:

- evaluate outcomes in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy
- evaluate the quality of provision for personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy
- evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management
- establish the impact of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- identify other drivers and barriers to improvement.

Inspectors looked at up to six case studies at each visit, as appropriate, to evaluate the provision and outcomes for different groups of children.

The survey also drew on the views of 140 parents of young children through Ofsted's Parents' Panel and inspection data and reports on early years providers since September 2008, and took account of national data on children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Annex C presents some key analyses of this data.

## Further information

### Publications by Ofsted

*The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2008–2009* (HC 11), TSO, 2009;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2008-09](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2008-09).

*The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2009–2010* (HC 559), TSO, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2009-10](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2009-10).

*Early Years registered providers inspection outcomes* (20090018), Ofsted

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20090018](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20090018).

*The evaluation schedule for schools* (090098), Ofsted, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090098](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090098).

*Inspecting the Early Years Foundation Stage in schools: Supplementary guidance for section 5 inspectors*; The link below is to the page with two sets of zip files. Click on A-E to access this guidance document.

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources-for-inspectors](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources-for-inspectors)

*Using the Early Years Evaluation schedule* (080124), Ofsted, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080124](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080124).

*The National Strategies: a review of impact* (080270), Ofsted, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080270](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080270).

*The special educational needs and disability review: a statement is not enough* (090221), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090221](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090221).

*Reading by six: how the best schools do it* (100197), Ofsted, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100197](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/100197).

*Childminding: a passion to be outstanding* (090107), Ofsted, 2009;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090107](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090107).

*Childcare groups: a passion to be outstanding* (090108), Ofsted, 2009;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090108](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090108).

*Children in need in childcare* (080248), Ofsted, 2010;

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080248).

## Other publications

*Raising standards – improving outcomes (statutory guidance – Early Years Outcomes Duty Childcare Act 2006)* HM Government (Ref: 0080-2008DOM-EN); [www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/Raising%20Standards%20-%20Improving%20Outcomes%20-%2003%20Dec.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/Raising%20Standards%20-%20Improving%20Outcomes%20-%2003%20Dec.pdf).

*Early Years Foundation Stage (statutory requirements and practice guidance)*, 2008; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00261-2008&>.

*Early Years Foundation Stage website*;  
<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/earlyyears>.

*Department for Education: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data*;  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml>.

*The first year of implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage* (QCDA/10/4783) QCDA, 2010; <http://www.qcda.gov.uk/resources/5912.aspx>

*Achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile* (DFE-RR034), DfE, 2010;  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DFE-RR034>.

*Practitioners' experiences of the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE-RR029), DfE, 2010;  
<http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFE-RR029&>.

*Early years learning and development literature review* (DCSF-RR176), DCSF, 2009  
<http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-RR176&>

*Effective pre-school and primary education 3–11 project (EPPE 3-11)*, Institute of Education, University of London; <http://eppe.ioe.ac.uk/eppe/eppeintro.htm>.

## Acts of Parliament

Childcare Act 2006; [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents).

Childcare providers (information, advice and training) regulations 2007;  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/part/1/crossheading/information-advice-and-assistance](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/part/1/crossheading/information-advice-and-assistance).

## Annex A. The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage came into force in September 2008. It ended the distinction between care and learning in previous legislation and set universal standards for learning, development and care for young children regardless of the setting they attend. All schools, and early years and childcare providers in settings on Ofsted Early Years register, attended by children from birth to the end of the academic year in which they reach their fifth birthday, have to meet the legal requirements relating to learning and development, and welfare.<sup>33</sup>

The learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage comprise the early learning goals, or knowledge, skills and understanding which children should have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they turn five, the educational programmes to be taught and the assessment arrangements. These cover six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; problem solving, reasoning and numeracy; creative development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical development.<sup>34</sup>

The learning and development requirements also include the arrangements for assessing young children's achievements. Practitioners should:

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles
- use these observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- match their observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

Children's achievements at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of the academic year in which they reach their fifth birthday.

There are 13 assessment scales in the profile: three in personal, social and emotional development; four in communication, language and literacy; three in problem

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<sup>33</sup> The Childcare Act 2006 enables regulations to be made which provide for the Secretary of State to grant exemptions to providers, in prescribed circumstances, from all or part of the learning and development requirements which are set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The regulations can also enable early years providers to grant exemptions in relation to individual children from all or part of the learning and development requirements in prescribed circumstances. The Act does not allow exemptions to be granted from the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage as these deal with fundamental issues of child safety.

<sup>34</sup> More information about the requirements for each area of learning can be found in *Early Years Foundation Stage (statutory requirements and practice guidance)*, 2008; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00261-2008&>.

solving, reasoning and numeracy; and one in each of knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Within each scale, a child can achieve up to nine points. Children who have achieved six or more points in all scales within an area of learning are working securely in that assessment area. Children who achieve a score of 78 points or more across the 13 assessment scales, including six or more in each of the personal, social and emotional and communication, language and literacy scales, are said to be reaching a good level of development.

The same Act that introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage placed statutory duties on English local authorities to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities for young children and to provide information, advice and training to their early years workforce. At the same time, Ofsted developed a new inspection framework and introduced new sections into existing frameworks to enable common judgements to be made across the sector.

The previous government introduced two targets for local authorities which related to outcomes in early years. They were: the proportion of children reaching a good level of development; and progress in narrowing the inequality gap in achievement by raising the results for the poorest performing 20% of children faster than the rest. It was also the previous government's aim that, by 2015, all early years settings would be graduate-led, with a requirement for all staff to have a minimum level 3 qualification. The goal was for the whole workforce to achieve, as a minimum, a level 3 qualification by 2015. This was supported by additional funding to local authorities.

## Annex B. Early Years Foundation Stage providers

There are nearly 18,500 maintained and independent schools in England that are required to deliver the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

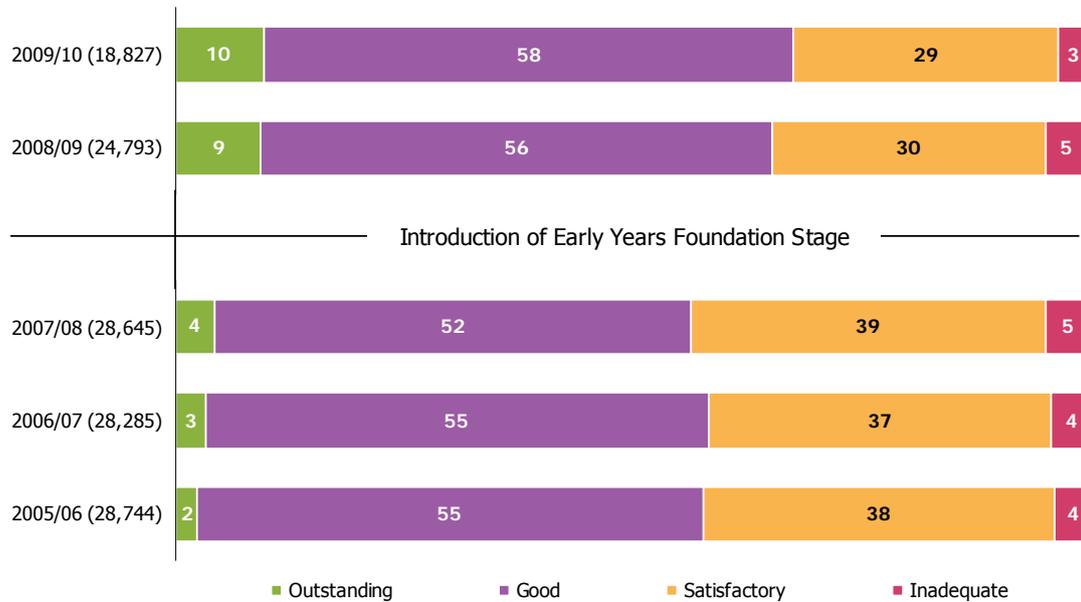
There were almost 83,000 early years and childcare providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register at 31 August 2010. Ofsted's Early Years Register records providers who look after children from birth to school age (that is, 31 August after the child's fifth birthday). Providers on this register must meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

There are three categories of provider on the Early Years Register: childminders; childcare providers on non-domestic premises; and childcare providers on domestic premises.

- Childminders work with no more than two other people, such as other childminders or childminder assistants. They care for children on domestic premises, most often in their own home. There are 56,065 childminders on the Early Years Register; childminders account for around 60% of early years and childcare providers overall and around 275,000 childcare places.
- Childcare providers on non-domestic premises include nurseries, playgroups, pre-school provision, crèches and holiday play schemes. There are 26,560 providers in this group on the Early Years Register: childcare providers on non-domestic premises account for around 30% of early years and childcare providers and around 1,030,000 childcare places.
- Childcare on domestic premises is provided where four or more people work together on domestic premises to care for children. Most often, these providers are groups of childminders and assistants, who choose to work together in the home of one of them. There are 96 such providers on the Early Years Register making up a very small proportion of the sector.

## Annex C. Contextual data

**Figure 1:** Overall effectiveness of early years registered providers inspected in every year from 2005/06 to 2009/10 (percentage of providers)

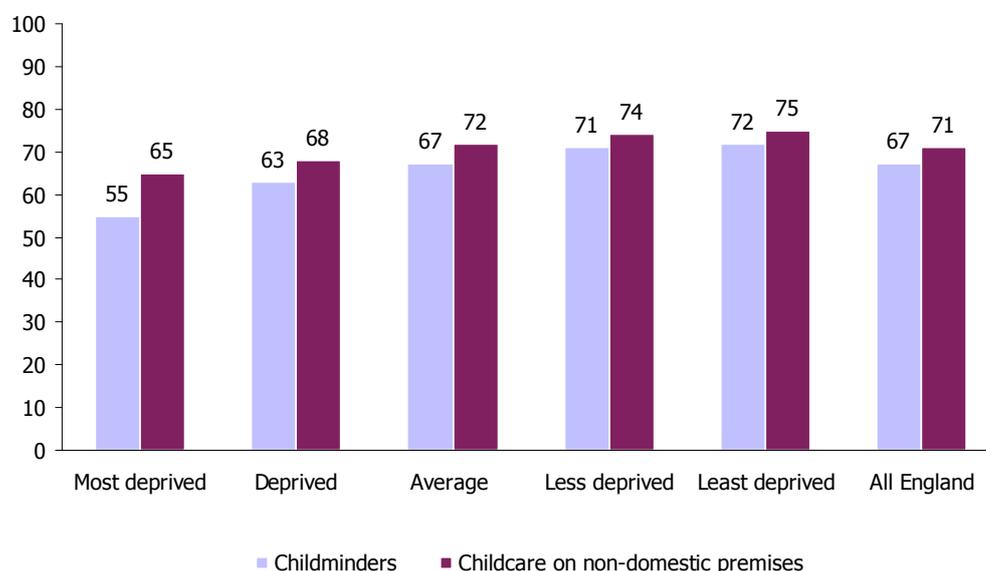


Figures are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Annual figures relate to inspections carried out between 1 September and 31 August each year, for providers active at the end of each year.

Inspection data from 2005/06 to 2007/08 are based on the Inspecting Outcomes for Children framework 'quality of care' judgement.

**Figure 2:** Percentage of childminders and childcare providers on non-domestic premises judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness, by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

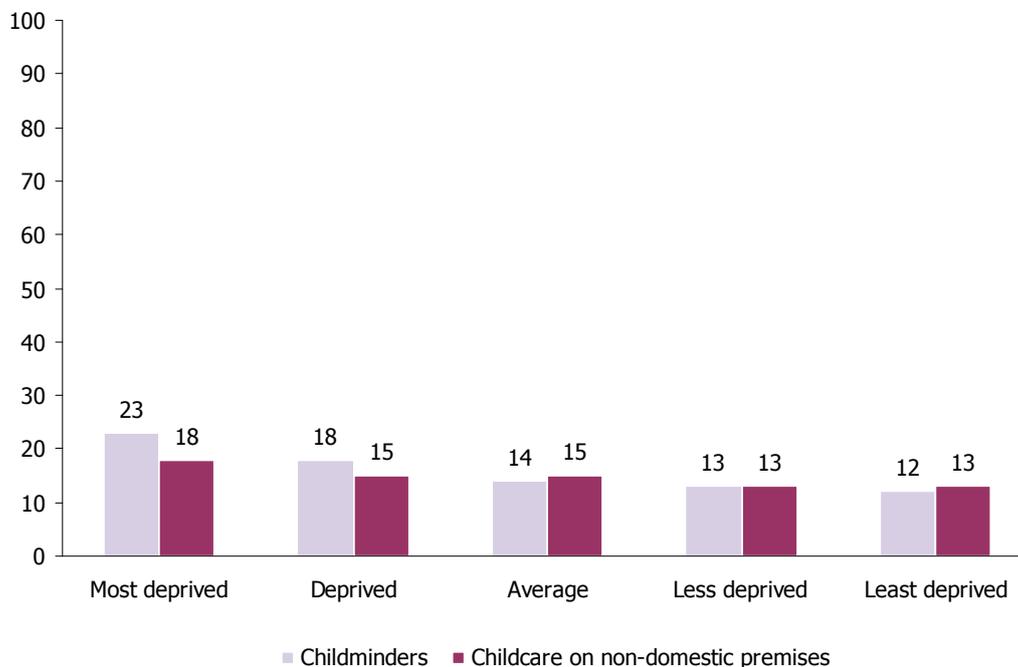


Inspection outcomes relate to the most recent inspection of early years registered providers conducted between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2010 for providers who were active on 31 August 2010.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) shows the percentage of children in each lower level super output area (LSOA) that live in families that are income deprived (that is in receipt of Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Families' Tax Credit or Disabled Person's Tax Credit below a given threshold). To reflect the level of income deprivation, the IDACI provides a deprivation rank for each LSOA.

Early years providers in deprived areas are identified by matching the postcodes of settings stored in the Ofsted database with the postcode associated with the LSOA in the IDACI. Sixty-six childminders and 48 childcare providers on non-domestic premises inspected under the EYFS could not be matched to a LSOA due to non-matching or missing postcode data in the Ofsted database.

**Figure 3:** Percentage of childminders and childcare on non-domestic premises judged satisfactory for overall effectiveness at their last two inspections, by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

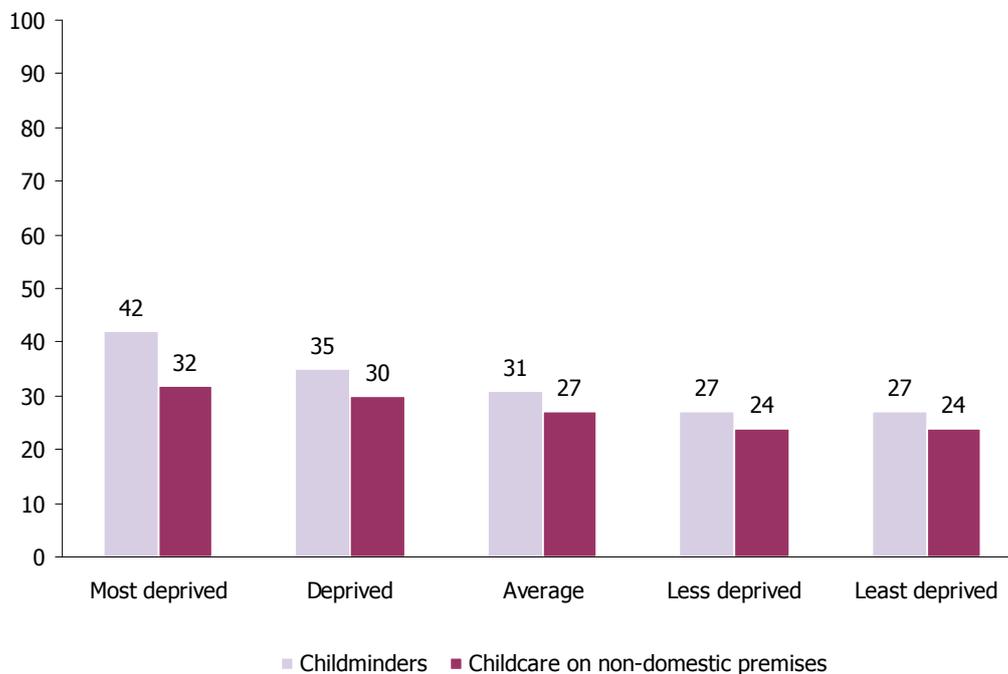


Data relate to active providers who were judged satisfactory for overall quality of care at the most recent inspection carried out between 1 April 2005 and 31 August 2008, and satisfactory for overall effectiveness at the most recent Early Years Foundation Stage inspection carried out between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2010.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) shows the percentage of children in each lower level super output area (LSOA) that live in families that are income deprived (that is in receipt of Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Families' Tax Credit or Disabled Person's Tax Credit below a given threshold). To reflect the level of income deprivation, the IDACI provides a deprivation rank for each LSOA.

Early years providers in deprived areas are identified by matching the postcodes of settings stored in the Ofsted database with the postcode associated with the LSOA in the IDACI. Sixty-six childminders and 48 childcare providers on non-domestic premises inspected between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2010 could not be matched to a LSOA due to non-matching or missing postcode data in the Ofsted database.

**Figure 4:** Percentage of childminders and childcare on non-domestic premises judged satisfactory for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index



Data relate to active providers who were judged satisfactory for overall effectiveness at the most recent Early Years Foundation Stage inspection carried out between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2010, regardless of whether inspected under the previous framework or the overall quality of care, if inspected.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) shows the percentage of children in each lower level super output area (LSOA) that live in families that are income deprived (that is in receipt of Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Families' Tax Credit or Disabled Person's Tax Credit below a given threshold). To reflect the level of income deprivation, the IDACI provides a deprivation rank for each LSOA.

Early years providers in deprived areas are identified by matching the postcodes of settings stored in the Ofsted database with the postcode associated with the LSOA in the IDACI. Sixty-six childminders and 48 childcare providers on non-domestic premises inspected between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2010 could not be matched to a LSOA due to non-matching or missing postcode data in the Ofsted database.

**Table 1:** Overall effectiveness of childminders inspected every year from 2005/06 to 2009/10 <sup>1 2 3 4</sup>

Annual period	Total inspected	Number and percentage achieving overall effectiveness grade							
		Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2009/10	12,342	1,088	9	7,029	57	3,860	31	365	3
2008/09	16,866	1,526	9	9,402	56	5,177	31	761	5
2007/08	18,949	891	5	8,914	47	8,089	43	1,055	6
2006/07	16,829	616	4	9,090	54	6,502	39	621	4
2005/06	18,712	505	3	10,769	58	6,956	37	482	3

**Table 2:** Overall effectiveness of childcare on non-domestic premises/day care inspected every year from 2005/06 to 2009/10 <sup>1 2 3 4 5</sup>

Annual period	Total inspected	Number and percentage achieving overall effectiveness grade							
		Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2009/10	6,448	745	12	3,877	60	1,621	25	205	3
2008/09	7,904	765	10	4,513	57	2,266	29	360	5
2007/08	9,696	345	4	5,988	62	3,010	31	353	4
2006/07	11,456	289	3	6,514	57	4,054	35	599	5
2005/06	10,032	134	1	5,172	52	4,095	41	631	6

1. Annual figures are consistent with figures published in the Annual Report 2009/10, which show inspections carried out between 1 September and 31 August of each year for providers who were active at the end of each year.

2. Inspection data from 2005/06 to 2007/08 are based on the Inspecting Outcomes for Children framework 'quality of care' judgement.

3. Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

4. For inspections carried out between 2005/06 and 2007/08, data relate to inspections of day-care providers: day-care providers encompassed full day care, sessional day care, out of school day care and crèches. For a full description of what these day-care types mean, refer to the notes which accompany childcare inspection reports published prior to 1 September 2008.

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Statistics/Childcare-and-early-years/Early-years-inspection-outcomes/Quality-of-childcare](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Statistics/Childcare-and-early-years/Early-years-inspection-outcomes/Quality-of-childcare)

5. For inspections carried out in 2008/09 and 2009/10, data relate to childcare on non-domestic premises.

**Table 3:** Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in maintained schools (Section 5 inspections)

		Number and percentage achieving overall effectiveness grade							
		Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
Annual period	Total inspected	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2009/10	4,572	595	13	2,752	60	1,141	25	84	2
2008/09	5,250	1018	19	3,283	63	921	18	28	1
2007/08	5,785	943	16	3,665	63	1,135	20	42	1

This is in the context of a more risk-based approach to inspection in which more satisfactory, inadequate and declining schools were selected for inspection.

In inspections carried out in 2007/08, the overall judgement was called 'Effectiveness of the foundation stage'.

Where a school has been inspected more than once in the period, the outcomes of all inspections are included in these figures.

**Table 4:** Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in independent schools (Section 162a inspections) 2008/09 and 2009/10

		Number and percentage achieving overall effectiveness grade							
		Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate	
Annual period	Total inspected	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2009/10	134 (of 319)	17	13	72	54	28	21	17	13
2008/09	168 (of 392)	24	14	115	68	20	12	9	5

Figures relating to inspections in 2008/09 have been updated since they were referenced in the *Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2008/09*.

**Table 5:** Percentage of children working securely<sup>1</sup> in each area of learning in maintained schools and private, voluntary and independent providers, in England<sup>2 3 4</sup>

	2008	2009	2010
Personal, social and emotional development [PSE] (in all 3 scales)	72	74	77
Communication, language and literacy [CLL] (in all 4 scales)	53	55	59
PSE and CLL combined (in all 7 scales)	49	52	56
Children in 30% most deprived areas <sup>2 3</sup>	39	42	47
Children in other areas <sup>2</sup>	55	57	61
Difference between deprived/other areas <sup>2</sup>	16	15	14

*Source: EYFS Profile full child collection*

Children achieving six or more points in all scale(s) within an area of learning are working securely in that assessment area.

The figures are based on children for whom it was possible to establish an area of residency.

The figures for 2009 and 2010 are based on the areas identified as being the 30% most deprived using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. The 2008 figures are based on the areas identified as being the 30% most deprived using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

The problem solving, reasoning and numeracy area of learning was known as Mathematical development prior to 2009.

Data table copied directly from DfE SFR: *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results in England, 2009/2010*.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml>

**Table 6:** Percentage of children working securely within the early learning goals (achieving six points or more) in each of the 13 assessment scales, in England <sup>1 2</sup>

	Percentage achieving six or more points		
	2008	2009	2010
<b>All children</b>			
PSE: DA	88	89	91
PSE: SD	82	83	86
PSE: ED	77	79	81
CLL: LCT	79	82	84
CLL: LSL	71	74	77
CLL: R	70	72	74
CLL: W	61	62	65

The problem solving, reasoning and numeracy area of learning was known as Mathematical development prior to 2009. Figures for 2009 and 2010 exclude children who scored N on any scale or had missing scale score data.

**KEY:**

- PSE: DA Personal, social and emotional development: Dispositions and attitudes
- PSE: SD Personal, social and emotional development: Social development
- PSE: ED Personal, social and emotional development: Emotional development
- CLL: LCT Communication, language and literacy: Language for communication and thinking
- CLL: LSL Communication, language and literacy: Linking sounds and letters
- CLL: R Communication, language and literacy: Reading
- CLL: W Communication, language and literacy: Writing

Data table adapted from DfE SFR: *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results in England, 2009/2010*.

For technical information please refer to technical notes in the Statistical First Release document relating to these statistics:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000961/index.shtml>.

**Table 7:** Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least six in each of the scales in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy in England, 2008–2010<sup>1 2</sup>

	2008	2009	2010
Region	percentage of children achieving a good level of development <sup>1</sup>	percentage of children achieving a good level of development <sup>1</sup>	percentage of children achieving a good level of development <sup>1</sup>
ENGLAND	49	52	56

*Source: EYFS Profile full child collection*

1. This measure defines children who achieved 78 points or more across the scales and at least six in each of the scales associated with the personal, social and emotional and communication<sup>1</sup> language and literacy areas of learning.
2. The figures reported in this table were used to inform the previous Government's National Indicator 72.

*Data sourced from DfE SFR: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results in England, 2009/2010.*

For technical information please refer to technical notes in the Statistical First Release document relating to these statistics: [www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/catego.shtml#m1\\_1](http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/catego.shtml#m1_1).

**Table 8:** Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest in England, 2008–2010<sup>1 2</sup>

Region	2008	2009	2010
ENGLAND	35.6	33.9	32.7

*Source: EYFS Profile full child collection*

1. The percentage gap in achievement between the lowest 20% of achieving children in a local authority (mean score), and the score of the median child in the same authority expressed as a percentage of the same median score.
2. The figures reported in this table were used to inform the previous government's National Indicator 92.

*Data sourced from DfE SFR: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Results in England, 2009/2010.*

For technical information please refer to technical notes in the Statistical First Release document relating to these statistics: [www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/catego.shtml#m1\\_1](http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/catego.shtml#m1_1).

## Annex D: Local authorities and providers surveyed

### Local authorities contacted

Cambridgeshire  
 Dudley  
 Hackney  
 Harrow  
 Hartlepool  
 Liverpool  
 North Tyneside  
 Southampton  
 Sunderland  
 Torbay  
 West Berkshire  
 Worcestershire

### Childminders

147742  
 147937  
 151333  
 205010  
 222161  
 222521  
 223171  
 255606  
 255640  
 322225  
 EY233805  
 EY236110  
 EY289371  
 EY295701  
 EY298403  
 EY303679  
 EY310422  
 EY313252

### Local authority

Harrow  
 Harrow  
 Torbay  
 Worcestershire  
 Cambridgeshire  
 Cambridgeshire  
 Cambridgeshire  
 Dudley  
 Dudley  
 Liverpool  
 Cambridgeshire  
 Torbay  
 Hackney  
 Harrow  
 Torbay  
 Torbay  
 Liverpool  
 Sunderland

EY315509	Harrow
EY320080	Sunderland
EY331814	Liverpool
EY334925	Dudley

**Childcare providers on non-domestic premises**

**Local authority**

Applepips Pre-School	Cambridgeshire
Bluebell Day Nursery	Cambridgeshire
Cambridge Day Nursery	Cambridgeshire
Friends Day Nursery	Liverpool
Galmpton Pre School Limited	Torbay
Granary Pre-Schools	Harrow
Hetton-le-Hole Nursery School	Sunderland
Howley Grange Kindergarten	Dudley
IMPS Day Nursery	Torbay
Kidsunlimited Nurseries – Long Road	Cambridgeshire
Marybone Day Nursery	Liverpool
Nesham Private Nursery	Sunderland
New World Nursery	Sunderland
Nippers Childcare Centre	Torbay
Raindrops Little Folk Pre-School Group	Worcestershire
Sandfield Park Private Day Nursery	Liverpool
Siblings Private Day Nursery	Sunderland
Spring Grove Day Nursery	Liverpool
Squirrels After School and Holiday Club	Dudley
Squirrels Pre-School	Torbay
St Marys Playgroup	Dudley
Stanmore Daycare Nursery	Harrow
Triangle Pre-School	Hackney
Waterview Park Nursery	Sunderland

**Primary schools**

**Local authority**

Brougham Primary School	Hartlepool
Fulwell Infant School	Sunderland
Glebe Primary School	Harrow

Hayes School	Torbay
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	Liverpool
Huntingdon Primary School	Cambridgeshire
Jesson's CofE Primary School (VA)	Dudley
Lambton Primary School	Sunderland
Longfield Infant School and Nursery	Harrow
Mount Pleasant Primary School	Dudley
Oldway Primary School	Torbay
Sherwell Valley Primary School	Torbay
Sledmere Primary School	Dudley
St Anne's Catholic Primary School	Liverpool
St Finbar's Catholic Primary School	Liverpool
St Mary's CofE VA Primary School	Cambridgeshire
Stag Lane Infant and Nursery School	Harrow
The Park Lane (Foundation) Primary School	Cambridgeshire
Throston Primary School	Hartlepool
Valley Road Community Primary School	Sunderland
Watcombe Primary School	Torbay
Wellesbourne Community Primary School	Liverpool
Whitefriars Community School	Harrow
Winhills Primary School	Cambridgeshire