The Parent's Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

🌟 What is the EYFS?

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** is the statutory framework that sets the standards for the learning, development, and care of your child from **birth to 5 years old**. All Ofsted-registered settings, including day nurseries, preschools, school reception classes, and childminders, must legally follow this framework.

🛡️ 1. Safety and Wellbeing (The 2025 Updates)

Recent changes to the EYFS framework heavily prioritize child safety. When choosing or reviewing a childcare setting, ensure they are meeting these updated standards:

- **Safer Mealtimes**: A staff member with a **Paediatric First Aid (PFA)** certificate must be physically present in the room at all times while children are eating to manage choking risks.
- **Allergy Management**: Providers must gather detailed dietary, allergy, and food texture requirements from you before your child's first day.
- **Emergency Contacts**: You must provide at least **two unique emergency contacts** for your child.
- **Absence Tracking**: Settings will follow up quickly on any unexplained absences to ensure child welfare.
- **Privacy & Dignity**: Clear policies must be in place to protect your child's privacy during nappy changing and toileting.

📈 2. The 7 Areas of Learning

Your child's development is tracked across seven key areas. The first three are "prime" areas, crucial for igniting curiosity and building relationships.

The 3 Prime Areas:

- **Communication and Language**: Developing spoken vocabulary, listening skills, and a love for storytelling.
- **Physical Development**: Improving gross motor skills (running, balancing) and fine motor skills (holding pencils, using cutlery).
- **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**: Learning to manage emotions, make friends, and develop independence.

The 4 Specific Areas:

- **Literacy**: Linking sounds to letters (phonics) and starting to read and write.
- **Mathematics**: Developing a deep understanding of numbers, counting, shapes, and spatial awareness.
- **Understanding the World**: Exploring environments, people, communities, and a basic introduction to safe digital technology.
- **Expressive Arts and Design**: Playing with textures, music, dance, and imaginative role-play.

📝 3. How Your Child is Assessed

EYFS focuses on "learning through play," meaning your child will not sit formal exams. Instead, educators observe your child naturally. You will receive four formal assessments:

1. **On entry:** Once your child has settled into nursery, we complete an assessment in the three Prime areas after the first few weeks.
2. **The Progress Check at Age 2**: A short written summary focusing on the three Prime areas. It highlights strengths and any areas where extra support is needed.
3. **Tots Assessment:** As your child leaves this room we will complete an assessment in all areas of the EYFS curriculum.
4. **Pre-School Assessment:** Just before your child leaves us for school we will complete a Final Assessment in all seven areas of the EYFS Curriculum.

All assessments are recorded on our Famly App for parents to read.

🤝 4. How Parents and Providers Partner Together

You are your child's first and most important educator. Under the EYFS, providers must work closely with you:

- **Key Person**: Your child will be assigned a specific staff member who ensures their care and learning are tailored to their needs.
- **Two-Way Sharing**: You should receive regular updates (via our Famly app) and are encouraged to share your child's milestones at home with the nursery.

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework** received major updates that legally took effect on **September 1, 2025**. These changes represent the

biggest shift in nearly a decade, heavily prioritizing **child safeguarding, health, and communication**.

As a parent or carer, understanding these changes helps you know what to expect from your child's nursery, preschool, or childminder.

🍽️ Safer Eating & Allergies

The 2025 framework introduces strict new rules to manage choking risks and severe food allergies.

- **Mandatory First Aid:** A staff member with a valid **Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate** must now be physically present in the room at all times while children are eating.
- **Detailed Onboarding:** Settings must gather extensive details on your child's dietary preferences, specific allergies, and required texture modifications (e.g., safe weaning) before they start.
- **Close Supervision:** Staff must actively face children during mealtimes to monitor for unexpected allergic reactions or swallowing issues.

📞 Attendance & Emergency Contacts

To prevent children from slipping through the cracks, communication protocols have been tightened.

- **More Emergency Contacts:** You are now required to provide at least **two emergency contacts** for your child.
- **Absence Tracking:** Providers must follow up quickly on any unexplained or prolonged child absences. If they cannot reach anyone, they have a formal escalation process which may include contacting local services.

🧼 Privacy, Dignity, & Care

While keeping children safe is paramount, the 2025 guidelines emphasize treating children with respect during personal routines.

- **Intimate Care Policies:** Settings must have clear rules to protect a child's **privacy and dignity** during nappy changing and toileting.
- **Balanced Supervision:** Corridors or changing areas must shield children from view while ensuring staff maintain proper safeguarding visibility.

🏫 Staffing & Training Upgrades

The government has mandated stricter rules behind the scenes to ensure the adults caring for your child are highly capable.

- **Safer Recruitment:** Open or personal references are no longer allowed. All staff references must be independently sourced from past employers to verify candidate suitability.
- **Frequent Training:** Mandatory safeguarding training for all staff must be thoroughly updated and renewed **every two years**.

🗣️ Core Learning & Development Goals

Beyond safety, the 2025 curriculum shifts its focus toward deeper developmental foundations.

- **Communication Focus:** Enhanced focus on speech, storytelling, and rich vocabulary development to close pandemic-era communication gaps.
- **School Readiness:** Stronger preparation for transitioning to Primary School by explicitly practicing concentration, independence, and fine motor skills (like holding pencils).
- **Digital Literacy:** Balanced, age-appropriate introductions to technology and early online safety rules.