

NEAS/LF/RL  
11<sup>th</sup> April 2003

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To HTs of all schools with a Foundation Stage

Dear Colleague

**Subject: Foundation Stage Self-Review**

A number of colleagues working in Early Years have asked for support in carrying out self-review with a clear focus on the Foundation Stage. This is particularly important for any school developing Foundation Stage because of admission changes or where there is a significant changeover in staffing.

Whatever the circumstances, it is important to review regularly the provision for children in each key stage. In order to assist you in evaluating the effectiveness of the provision in the Foundation Stage, the Early Years team in the Advisory Service have produced a short, self-review checklist (attached). This checklist identifies some key questions, possible courses of action and links with your school development and improvement plan. It could also be used as part of the Norfolk Schools Self-Review process as sub-sections to some of the questions, for example, 3) how well are pupils taught and how well do they learn? 4a) How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? 7) How effective is the leadership of the school?

The suggestions for action have been compiled from a range of sources including the DfES publication, "Effective Reception Class Practice". We hope that you, as headteacher, together with staff and governors will find this checklist useful as a means for identifying both good practice and areas for further development.

If you would like to discuss this letter please contact Fiona Musters Adviser (Early Years) on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Ray Leeke (Principal Adviser)

## **FOUNDATION STAGE SELF-REVIEW**

**A checklist to help you to review the quality of provision for the Foundation Stage you currently offer.**

**Please make a judgement and identify actions that will inform your School Development and Improvement Plan.**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Possible courses of action</b>	<b>Priorities for SDIP</b>
1 How is the Foundation Stage represented in your School Management Plan?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Distinct Foundation Stage developments identified relating to Standards; Teaching and Learning; Curriculum; Resources; Training.</i></li></ul>	
2 How is the Foundation Stage represented on your Schools Governing Body?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Named Governor for Foundation Stage.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Specific regular agenda items.</i></li></ul>	
3 How does your school organisation reflect the needs of the Foundation Stage child?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Allow sufficient time for regular and frequent opportunities for physical development and outdoor play.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Phased entry on admissions.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Review access to Hall and playground.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Flexible timetabling i.e. playtimes; attendance at assemblies.</i></li></ul>	
4 Is the curriculum for the Foundation Stage planned in a manageable way to cover the <b>six</b> areas of learning? Is children's progress recorded against the Stepping-Stones/Foundation Stage Profile? Are children included in assessment process?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Ensure all staff are aware of the purpose of planning and recording.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Review the documentation currently required to ensure it meets statutory requirements, but is manageable and useful.</i></li></ul>	
5 How do you meet the needs of the Foundation Stage child in mixed stage classes?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <i>Make use of available mixed aged planning.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Foundation subject activities differentiated for Foundation Stage children.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Set up independent activities for both key stages.</i></li><li>❑ <i>See mixed aged classes as strength not a problem.</i></li><li>❑ <i>Adult directed and child initiated sufficient adult support.</i></li></ul>	

<p>6 Have all the staff been trained appropriately for the work they do with Foundation Stage Profile, whether initially or through in-service training? Can you identify the additional training undertaken by your early year's staff since the introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Ensure the needs of reception teachers and classroom assistants are fully reflected in the in-service training programmes.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Provide opportunities for reception teachers to share their expertise as well as learning from others and reflect and develop their practice.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Contact professional and early years organisations for further support and information.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>7 Do you make specific opportunities for close parental involvement? What systems are in place to nurture the partnership between parents/carers and the school?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Information for parents about Foundation Stage.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Induction programme for child and parent/carer.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Organise beginning of morning to give parents time in classroom to support choosing books and early activity.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Share child's records and encourage parents to add to records. (Foundation Stage Profile).</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Parents helping in school.</i></li> </ul>	
<p>8 Are you able to provide consistent full time support for the Foundation class teacher?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Allocation of staff resources need to reflect the implications of the Foundation Stage.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Support that enables simultaneous indoor and outdoor play; child initiated learning; time for practitioners to observe children.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Volunteer helpers, often parents and carers are well briefed in order to be effective and feel confident about their contribution.</i></li> </ul>	

9 How do you strive to achieve an inclusive environment where every child's individual needs are met as part of everyday provision?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Liaison with parents – both formal and informal.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Team involvement in planning, information shared with others (LSA's, Midday Staff, etc).</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Close links through SST including traveller and EAL support.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Circle Time discussions with the class.</i></li> </ul>	
10 Is your classroom organised to promote the development of independence skills and active learning?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Plan activities in blocks of time so they can be rotated.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Plan role-play areas to stimulate childrens independent learning.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Equipment easily accessible to children.</i></li> </ul>	
11 Do you have suitable play equipment for both indoors and outdoors – to include varieties of constructive materials, books and writing materials, facilities for domestic and role-play, natural materials (sand, water, clay, wood), appropriate climbing and other physical apparatus?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Create an inventory of equipment and programme for replacement and development.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Is equipment of suitable size and quality?</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Check planning for the frequency of use of sand/water, outdoor area etc.</i></li> </ul>	
12 Do your long-term plans ensure that reception children have opportunities to learn outdoors in accessible and well resourced outdoor areas?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <i>Ensure all staff, Governors and parents recognise what 'outdoor classroom' is as key to the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum as books and pencils.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Have long term strategy to provide access to outdoors.</i></li> <li>❑ <i>Consider spaces used for something else i.e. enclosed garden or car park; daily sessions in the hall; visits to nearby parks or leisure centres.</i></li> </ul>	