



Early years foundation stage profile

Local authority moderation requirements booklet 2010—11

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Introduction

This guidance explains the requirements and sets out the procedures for local authority moderation of the early years foundation stage profile (EYFS) and identifies key elements of effective practice. It is based on section 6 of the *Early years foundation stage profile handbook* (QCA/08/3657), section 3 of the *EYFS and KS1 Assessment and Reporting Arrangements 2011* (QCDA/10/4851) and additional guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), which can be found on the QCDA website at www.qcda.gov.uk/eyfsp.

QCDA is remitted by the Department for Education (DfE) to ensure that 2011 EYFS profile outcomes are robust and reliable as a result of improved moderation practice. All English local authorities must have regard to any guidance given by the QCDA in exercising its function under the EYFS (Learning and Development Requirements) Order 2007, Section 4.2.

Local authority requirements for 2010—11

Under the *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage* (May 2008), local authorities have a statutory duty to 'monitor and moderate the EYFS profile judgements to ensure that providers are making assessments that are consistent across settings' (section 2.25, page 17.)

Details of the 2010-11 EYFS profile moderation plan for each local authority have been submitted to QCDA as part of the QCDA evaluation and planning form in the summer of 2010. QCDA has a statutory function of keeping under review all aspects of the EYFS assessment arrangements. As part of this function, QCDA monitors the effectiveness of local authorities' moderation processes. Moderation activities within the context of the EYFS profile involve professional dialogue to ensure practitioner judgements are based on assessments of children consistent with nationally agreed exemplification and that attainment of individual scale points is a reliable, accurate and secure process.

Local authorities have a responsibility to moderate all 13 scales over a three-year cycle.

Local authority moderation validates practitioners' judgements by:

- visits carried out by a suitably experienced and trained external moderator
- meetings of groups of settings organised by a local authority.

All practitioners implementing the EYFS profile are entitled to access moderation events.

Specific guidance in relation to moderation can be found in the *2011 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements*, section 3.11, page 15.

Local authorities should inform those schools and settings that are to receive an EYFS profile moderation visit by 31 March 2010. Individual settings can be added to the local authority sample after this date, if particular issues arise.

QCDA external moderation

To fulfil its remit, QCDA organises visits to a number of local authorities during the summer term to undertake external moderation of their approaches and procedures. A representative sample of local authorities will be visited in 2011. EYFS profile moderation managers will be informed by December 2010 if their local authority is to be part of the sample.

The role of the QCDA external moderator is to visit the local authorities that make up the annual national sample, and to examine approaches to implementation and moderation of the EYFS profile by:

- meeting with the EYFS profile moderation manager and appropriate personnel to discuss the approaches to moderation, training and support
- attending a moderation visit undertaken by the local authority
- reporting to QCDA on the quality of the local authority's approaches to moderation and the robustness of the model employed.

QCDA categorisation and support

QCDA makes a judgement about the effectiveness of a local authority's moderation model, and the potential reliability and accuracy of its EYFS profile data. This judgement is based on information from:

- the evaluation and planning form
- scrutiny of published data
- reports from external moderation

- support and development officer visit reports

and relates to the potential reliability and accuracy of a local authority's EYFS profile data and the effectiveness of its moderation model.

All local authorities have received a letter informing them of QCDA's decision about the potential reliability and accuracy of the local authority EYFS profile data and consequent category. This was designed to inform future moderation planning. The categories used are set out in the table below.

		Additional causes for concern		
		No additional causes for concern	Succession	Data anomalies
Category	Robust moderation model			
	Moderation model is not robust			
	Non-compliance with moderation requirements			

Copies of the categorisation letter have been sent to the local authority's EYFS profile moderation manager and the Director of Children's Services. The category assigned to each local authority has been shared with the DfE.

Local authorities have access to EYFS profile support provided by QCDA. Where local authority systems were judged not to be robust, a support and development officer has been assigned in order to help improve the standard of moderation. Support is also offered to authorities where a new moderation manager is in post (succession).

Support and development officers work alongside appropriate personnel in the local authority, focusing on identifying and removing obstacles to the accuracy of, and confidence in, EYFS profile data. They then report to the QCDA on the local authority's progress in relation to the issues identified.

Key elements of an effective moderation process

The following table sets out the requirements for robust moderation and identifies key elements and examples of most effective practice. The requirements, set out in italics across the top of each section, draw on the *Statutory Framework for the EYFS* (May 2008). The key elements link directly to the guidance within the *EYFS profile handbook* and the *2011 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and Reporting Arrangements*. The examples of most effective practice are drawn from current practice in a range of local authorities.

The sections in the table below can be cross referenced with the evaluation and planning form sent annually by QCDA to all local authorities. Section A of the form requests general contact information and so the table below starts from section B.

Section B - Moderation plan	
<i>The local authority should plan an annual programme to ensure that its statutory duty in relation to the moderation of EYFS profile judgements is met</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to implementation, details of the moderation plan are shared and agreed with all schools and settings which will complete EYFS profiles. • The moderation plan includes a specific appeals procedure in relation to the moderation of EYFS profile judgements. • The moderation process is evaluated each year in consultation with all stakeholders. The plan is revised accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the moderation process are communicated to all relevant stakeholders early in the autumn term. • The stakeholder group includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ local authority colleagues ○ headteachers/managers ○ practitioners ○ moderation team ○ inclusion team ○ independent school leaders ○ private and voluntary setting leaders ○ local authority data teams.

Section C - Moderation team	
<i>In order to carry out the statutory role of moderator, the moderation team should have a thorough understanding and experience of the principles and practice of the EYFS profile</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation team includes both local authority personnel and serving practitioners with appropriate EYFS experience. • Moderators are trained and participate regularly in local authority moderation activities, using QCDA exemplification of national standards to ensure national consistency. • The local authority has an effective process for the recruitment of new moderators as appropriate. • Moderators new to the role undertake a suitable induction process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All moderators undertake the full range of moderation activity. • The local authority has a plan in place to ensure all moderators hold QCDA registered moderator status. • Moderators are recruited who have the appropriate skills and capabilities to carry out their role. • As part of the induction process, the local authority provides a mentor moderator and/or opportunities to shadow a more experienced colleague.

Section D – Inter-authority moderation	
<i>Local authority moderators will need to work with other moderators so that comparability is consistent across all areas of the country.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation manager participates regularly in inter-LA moderation activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderators participate regularly in inter-local authority moderation activities, using QCDA exemplification of national standards to ensure national consistency. • Pairing arrangements between moderators from different local authorities provide opportunities for the promotion of consistency.

Section E - Specific EYFS profile training	
<i>Specific training is carried out as part of the annual plan to ensure that EYFS profile assessments are in line with the requirements set out in the EYFS statutory framework</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific EYFS profile training and support is established for the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ practitioners new to the final year of the EYFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the local authority there is an expectation that all stakeholders will attend training in order to ensure their knowledge and understanding of EYFS profile is up to date. • Where appropriate, particular groups of colleagues might attend

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ newly qualified teachers○ teaching assistants and support staff working in the final year of the EYFS○ EYFS leaders○ year 1 practitioners○ headteachers/managers of EYFS settings○ governors○ school improvement partners and local authority personnel.● QCDA exemplification of national standards is used to support training and ensure national consistency with regard to the principles and processes of EYFS profile assessment and the accuracy of judgements.● Systems are in place to monitor the attendance for all training events and non-attendance is followed up where appropriate.	<p>training together, for example school improvement partners and headteachers/managers may attend data feedback courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Additional training is provided, specific to the context and needs of the local authority is provided. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ practitioners in mixed age classes○ assessment coordinators○ subject leaders○ specialist teams○ deputy headteachers/senior leaders.
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Section F - Moderation cycle	
<i>Local authorities should ensure all settings are moderated at least once every four years and that all 13 scales are moderated over a three-year cycle in order to meet the statutory requirement that EYFS profile judgements are moderated to ensure consistency.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All settings are visited on a four-year cycle • All 13 scales are moderated over a three-year cycle: moderation does not focus on a specific scale at the expense of others. • All practitioners responsible for the completion of the EYFS profile take part in moderation activities at least once annually. • All practitioners not receiving a moderation visit have sufficient opportunities to participate in moderation activities. • In addition to planned visits to all settings on a four-year cycle, moderation visits can be triggered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ presence of NQTs and practitioners new to the EYFS ○ requests from the headteacher/manager ○ concerns identified by the school improvement partner or local authority personnel ○ data anomalies ○ non-attendance at moderation or training events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and settings are visited more than once every four years. • The moderation cycle includes opportunities for supportive visits throughout the year as preparation for the final moderation visit, during which the accuracy of judgements is established. • Most moderation visits take place in the summer term in order to provide evidence towards a greater range of scale points, including scale point 9.

Section G - School moderation visits	
<i>As part of their statutory duty for moderation, local authorities are required to visit schools and settings implementing the EYFS profile on a regular basis. This should be on a four year cycle and at least 25 per cent of schools and settings are visited each year.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation visit focuses on a professional dialogue between the moderator and each practitioner responsible for completing EYFS profiles. • The moderator establishes whether EYFS profile assessment has been undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and is in line with exemplified national standards. • Visits take place at an agreed time within the school day, with practitioners released for the duration of the visit. • The moderator establishes the accuracy and consistency of practitioner judgements by scrutinising a range of evidence, the majority of which will come from the practitioner's knowledge of the child and observations of the child's self-initiated activities (no more than 20 per cent of the total evidence for each scale point should be gained from adult-directed activity). 	<p>Information meetings are held for settings that are to receive a moderation visit prior to visits taking place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities ensure that practitioners are familiar with additional QCDA guidance materials and moderators reference these where relevant during the moderation visit. • The headteacher/manager, senior leadership team, subject leaders and year 1 teachers have opportunities to participate in elements of the moderation visit. • Contributions from parents or carers and the child are actively sought by practitioners and are used to inform the judgements made for the EYFS profile. • The local authority has an effective system to follow up any advised actions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the time of the visit, the practitioner provides the moderator with a list of the children for whom EYFS profiles have been completed. This is divided into three attainment bands: those children attaining scale points 1-3, those attaining within scale points 4-8 and those attaining 9 scale points within the focus scales. A child's profile from each band is selected by the moderator and forms the basis of the moderation dialogue.• Outcomes of internal moderation are considered within the moderation dialogue. Moderators establish how settings develop and use internal moderation processes.• At the end of the visit, the moderator informs the headteacher/manager whether the EYFS profile assessment is being carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and whether practitioner judgements are accurate.• Where the moderator judges that the assessment is not in line with QCDA exemplification of national standards, the local authority can require the headteacher/manager to both reconsider the practitioner's judgements as advised by the moderator and arrange further CPD opportunities for the practitioner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where appropriate, a joint observation may take place. The sole purpose of this is for the moderator to gain a clearer understanding of the accuracy of practitioner judgements.
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Section H – use of additional assessments	
<i>The statutory requirement is that judgements are made in relation to the EYFS profile assessment scales and should be made from observations of consistent and independent behaviour, predominantly children's self initiated activities. Additional assessments are not required in order to complete the EYFS profile.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional assessments are not required in order to complete the EYFS profile. 	

Section I - Model for moderation meetings	
<i>As part of their statutory requirement to ensure that EYFS profile judgements are moderated to ensure consistency, local authority moderators should facilitate moderation meetings so that practitioner judgements can be verified in accordance with QCDA exemplified national standards and relevant outcomes recorded.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings focus on the moderation of practitioners' own EYFS profile judgements. Practitioners are required to bring to the meeting evidence which has informed their judgements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional meetings and other opportunities take place during the year to provide practitioners with the chance to meet the moderators and further their understanding of any aspect of the EYFS profile.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The validation of practitioner judgements is undertaken by local authority moderators to ensure they are accurate and in line with QCDA exemplified national standards. • Where the moderator judges that the assessment is not in line with QCDA exemplification of national standards, the local authority can require the headteacher/manager to both reconsider the practitioner's judgements as advised by the moderator and arrange further CPD opportunities for the practitioner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations to moderation meetings are extended to other practitioners e.g. year 1 teachers, assessment leaders, headteachers/managers and subject coordinators. • The local authority has a system in place to follow up any concerns raised by those attending moderation meetings.
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<p align="center">Section J - Data collection and analysis</p>	
<p align="center"><i>Local authorities are required to collect EYFS profile data by 30 June 2011. This collection (and subsequent return to DfE where required) should be carried out in line with section 3.4 of the 2011 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and Reporting Arrangements.</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EYFS providers have an appropriate system to record and submit EYFS profile data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities provide a helpdesk or other means of support for the data collection system, and training is provided for any personnel new to the process. • The local authority moderation manager has an effective working relationship with both the local authority's IT and data analysis teams. Systems for the collection, submission and analysis of EYFS profile data are evaluated and developed each year.

Section K - The quality assurance of EYFS profile data	
<i>To ensure that the data submitted for each child is an accurate reflection of their attainment, the school and local authority should have quality assurance processes in place.</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteachers/managers take responsibility for the reliability of the EYFS profile outcomes and ensure that the data accurately reflects the attainment of their cohort of children. • The local authority has an effective process for the quality assurance of EYFS profile data prior to submission to the DfE. EYFS profile data from schools and settings is scrutinised by the moderation manager and the local authority data team. • The local authority scrutinises data at a level of detail that enables anomalies to be identified and highlighted to schools and settings for review and amendment (where necessary). • Amendments to EYFS profile outcomes are made prior to submission to DfE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exploration of anomalies reflects an understanding of local circumstances and priorities. Any sampling of data for scrutiny takes place with regard to local intelligence. • Systems for the quality assurance of EYFS profile data are evaluated and developed each year. • Training of all stakeholders (including school improvement partners and local authority personnel) on understanding the EYFS profile and the resulting data ensures that the need for accuracy is embedded at all levels.

Section L - Use of data to support planning in year 1	
<i>The primary purpose of the EYFS profile is to inform the Year 1 teacher of the attainment of each child. This will enable the teacher to 'plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet children's needs'. (EYFS profile handbook pg 5.)</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities are provided to help year 1 teachers understand and use EYFS profile data effectively so that they can plan a curriculum that meets the needs of all children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition processes are developed and evaluated each year in response to EYFS profile outcomes, in order to reflect the needs of the current cohort. • Training is provided for year 1 teachers focussed on the understanding and interpretation of EYFS profile outcomes and how these may be use to support transition, provision and planning in year 1. • Year 1 teachers participate in internal EYFS profile moderation within the school. • Year 1 teachers participate in local authority moderation events.

Three-year moderation cycle

Local authorities have a responsibility to moderate all 13 scales over a three-year cycle. Local authorities may refine and modify both the focus and scales moderated in order to respond to the specific needs of their settings and practitioners. However, moderation should not focus on a specific scale or a sub-set of scale points, to the exclusion of others. A suggested cycle is provided here:

School year	Moderation focus	Moderation visits	Moderation meetings
2008–09	Problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy (3 scales) Physical development (1 scale)	25% of schools/settings (minimum)	75% of schools/settings
2009–10	Personal, social and emotional development (3 scales) Knowledge and understanding of the world (1 scale)	25% of schools/settings (minimum)	75% of schools/settings
2010–11	Communication, language and literacy (4 scales) Creative development (1 scale)	25% of schools/settings (<i>minimum</i>)	75% of schools/settings

