

Early years inspection toolkit

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Please read the updated version of the toolkit found on the '[Early years inspection: toolkit, operating guide and information](#)' page.

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Please note that this document is intended for print use and may not be fully accessible when used on screen.

Leadership and governance

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Leadership is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders do not meet the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Breaches to statutory requirements have a significant impact on children's education and/or safety and well-being. Leaders do not act in children's best interests and/or with integrity. Leaders do not have the capacity to improve the quality of education and care. Actions taken to tackle areas of identified weakness have been insufficient or ineffective.	Strategic leadership, oversight and governance, including capacity to improve (track record of improvement or of sustaining high standards) Leaders have gaps in their skills and knowledge that prevent them from carrying out their roles in a consistently effective way. Leaders have an incomplete and/or only partial view of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders' actions to bring about improvement, while focused on the right areas, are imprecise. This makes it difficult for them to know how successful their work has been and what further action may be needed.	Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements in the EYFS are met. Leaders have the required knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively. They always act in the best interests of children. Leaders' professional behaviour provides a positive model for staff. Leaders support, motivate and engage with staff. They make sure that policies are implemented and embedded consistently well. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the setting's context, strengths and weaknesses. This informs the actions they take. Leaders review and refine their improvement plans. They identify weaknesses and act swiftly to remedy them. The positive impact of this approach has been sustained. Leaders manage resources sustainably, effectively and efficiently.	Leaders at all levels have an astute awareness of the context in which they work and the strengths and weaknesses of their provision. This informs and underpins their actions. They are alert and highly responsive, adjusting and adapting what they do to meet changing priorities. Leaders have been successful in instilling a culture of continuous improvement in which all staff seek, offer and accept feedback naturally as part of improving their practice. Improvements in any areas of weakness are rapid and sustained.	Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in leadership and governance, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children's learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas

Links with parents, and with other settings and professionals involved in supporting children’s education and care are weak. The nominated individual/ committee is unclear about their statutory duties, including in relation to leaders’ well-being. They do not support them appropriately.	Responsible bodies, including employers and/or nominated individuals/committees (where applicable)			of the setting’s work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting’s report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
	The responsible body is inconsistent in its support for leaders’ well-being. The nominated individual/committee, where applicable, carries out their duties effectively. However, their support for, and challenge to, leaders do not have enough impact. The nominated individual/committee is limited in their understanding of how the setting supports disadvantaged children and/or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).	The nominated individual/committee is strategic and carries out their statutory duties effectively. They support leaders when they face challenges and monitor their well-being. The nominated individual/committee plays an integral role in supporting and challenging leaders to establish an inclusive culture and practices that benefit all children, especially disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND.	The nominated individual/committee is highly effective in holding leaders to account and providing the right level of support. Their line of sight is clear between the strategic direction they have set and the information they receive about the setting’s successes and challenges. The nominated individual/committee is adaptive and responsive to the setting’s emerging and changing needs and circumstances. They support and challenge leaders to adapt, refine or change their approaches. This is based on an acute understanding of what is working well and where further improvement is needed.	
	Management of staff workload and well-being			
	Leaders do not appreciate or understand the main pressures on staff. Their actions to manage staff’s workload and maintain their well-being are inconsistent.	Leaders engage meaningfully with practitioners, understand their workload and make sure that the work that staff carry out is sustainable and proportionate. All practitioners are protected from harassment, bullying and	Leaders review the workload of staff regularly and refine it to sustain their well-being. Leaders have established an open and honest culture with staff so that any issues are raised and dealt with	

	Leaders are inconsistent in how they protect staff from harassment, bullying and/or discrimination.	discrimination. Any concerns about practitioners' well-being result in effective support. Systems for supervising and supporting all practitioners are effective. This includes identifying strong practice and tackling poor performance.	promptly, as needed. This creates a highly positive, supportive and collegiate environment. Systems for the supervision and support of practitioners are highly effective.	
Engagement with parents, and other professionals and settings				
	Leaders and/or staff do not engage consistently well with children, their parents/carers and/or other professionals. This reduces the opportunities for children to reach their full potential. The arrangements for children to settle into the setting and to move on to school, where relevant, are underdeveloped. This means that children have disjointed experiences.	Leaders engage effectively with children, their parents and others in their community, including schools, relevant professionals and local services. This effective engagement starts before children arrive at the setting and as they move on to other providers, including school, where relevant. Practitioners share information with parents about children's progress in relation to the EYFS, including the progress check at age 2. Parents are supported to extend their children's learning at home.	Leaders ensure that all adults involved in a child's life work effectively in partnership so that, together, they make a strong contribution to the child's learning, development and care. Transition arrangements enable children to settle quickly when they start at the setting and move on seamlessly to school, when appropriate.	

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Curriculum

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
The curriculum is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: The curriculum does not meet the full intention, ambition and breadth of the EYFS. The design and sequencing of curriculum content are weak and lack ambition. The curriculum does not prepare children to build knowledge and skills for future learning, including at school, where relevant. Children with SEND and those who are disadvantaged do not have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.	Leadership of the curriculum			Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in curriculum, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children’s learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the setting’s work
	The design of the curriculum emphasises some areas of learning at the expense or exclusion of others. The curriculum does not provide staff with sufficient guidance to support and develop children’s learning. The focus on developing children’s communication and language within and across all areas of learning is limited.	The curriculum meets the full intention, breadth and ambition of the EYFS. The learning and development requirements are used as the basis for building children’s knowledge and skills. The curriculum is designed to give all children the skills and knowledge they need for future learning, including at school, where relevant. The curriculum focuses sharply on making sure that children communicate effectively and acquire a wide vocabulary.	The curriculum significantly supports the knowledge, confidence and expertise of staff in teaching all the areas of learning. Leaders make sure that practitioners are relentless in developing children’s communication and language, including extending their vocabulary and supporting their language comprehension within and across all areas of learning.	
	Curriculum content, design and sequencing			
	The design and sequencing of the curriculum do not show clear progression in each area of learning. This does not help practitioners to make sensible choices about what children should learn next.	The curriculum is planned and sequenced coherently to make sure that all children, including those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for future learning. The curriculum builds up children’s vocabulary and language comprehension cumulatively. Adults regularly read aloud to children to develop their knowledge and vocabulary across the areas of learning. This develops children’s	The planning, design and sequencing of the curriculum, including its clearly defined progression points, mean that staff can quickly identify children who are falling behind and those who have a learning delay and/or SEND and can take immediate action. The curriculum builds up children’s vocabulary and	

		appreciation and love of stories, rhymes, songs and books. The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced so that concepts are introduced, developed, and practised frequently. It introduces and develops children’s mathematical vocabulary carefully so that they can talk about number, pattern, shape, measures, and demonstrate their spatial reasoning skills, with increasing confidence.	language comprehension cumulatively and systematically. Adults engage children expertly in high-quality dialogue through play and regular direct/explicit teaching.	being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting’s report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
	An inclusive curriculum			
	Leaders do not provide practitioners with sufficient guidance to support them in meeting the needs of children with SEND across the same ambitious curriculum as other children.	The curriculum is ambitious and developmentally appropriate for all children, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. The curriculum is sufficiently flexible to take account of children’s different starting points, individual needs, rates of learning and stages of development. The curriculum recognises and promotes equality and diversity. It supports children to reflect on their similarities and to understand what makes them unique.	The curriculum is highly inclusive, broad and ambitious for all children, including those with SEND and/or those who are disadvantaged.	

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Developing teaching

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Developing teaching is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders are not doing enough to tackle weaknesses in the quality of teaching. They have an inaccurate view of practitioners' knowledge, experience or confidence. There is no professional development programme for staff, and/or leaders are ineffective in supporting staff to develop their knowledge, experience and/or confidence to support children's learning and development more effectively. Children who need the most support do not	Leadership of teaching			Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in developing teaching, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children's learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas
	Leaders take action to improve the quality of teaching, but this is not always effective in remedying the underlying causes of practitioners' gaps in knowledge and/or experiences, or in improving their confidence. Their actions are overly generic and/or superficial.	Leaders have an accurate and informed understanding of the quality of teaching, including for children with SEND and/or those who are disadvantaged. Leaders identify gaps in practitioners' knowledge and/or experience, or areas where they lack confidence, and tackle these through effective mitigation, training and/or support. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and avoid burdening practitioners.	Leaders have created a culture of continuous improvement. It is based on open and honest feedback and on relentlessly pursuing what will make the most difference to children's learning and development. Regular reviews make sure that any changes improve children's learning.	
	Professional development			
	The professional development that leaders provide for staff is sporadic and/or not followed up in a timely manner. The impact on practitioners' knowledge, experience or confidence is therefore inconsistent. As a result, improvements in the quality of teaching are limited.	Leaders provide regular, relevant and effective professional development for all practitioners. This equips them to carry out their roles successfully and has a positive impact on teaching. All staff receive regular, constructive and effective feedback. They are clear about what they do well and what needs to improve.	The quality of the training, coaching and support provided helps practitioners to improve their practice rapidly and to a high standard. Practitioners reflect on their own practice and are keen to implement and embed new ways of working.	

have frequent, high-quality interactions with staff. Practitioners do not have a sufficient understanding of the EYFS educational programmes, the setting's intended curriculum and/or the ways in which young children learn. Practitioners have a poor understanding of their role in supporting children's play or in explicitly teaching new concepts and ideas, where relevant and appropriate.	<table> <tr> <th colspan="3" data-bbox="448 76 1787 137">Effective teaching</th></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 138 860 1374"> Practitioners have gaps in their understanding of the intended curriculum and the way in which young children learn. They lack confidence in choosing the most effective teaching approaches for what they want children to learn. The frequency and/or quality of interactions between practitioners and children do not support children's learning and development, especially of those who need the most support. Practitioners are unclear about how to focus children's attention on learning. Children's misconceptions sometimes go unnoticed. Practitioners' understanding of how to teach mathematics is underdeveloped and/or they lack confidence in teaching mathematics. This leads to a lack of precision in making sure that children gain a secure understanding of number, spatial reasoning, pattern and/or mathematical language. </td><td data-bbox="862 138 1370 1374"> Leaders make sure that there is enough time for teaching, practising, revisiting and consolidating the fundamental knowledge and skills that all children need. Practitioners choose the most effective ways to teach, combining explicit/direct teaching with opportunities for play, to help children learn the intended curriculum and achieve well. Practitioners' frequent, high-quality interactions with children support them to acquire vocabulary. They are clear about what they want children to know and think about, including the vocabulary associated with this, and deliver this in an age-appropriate way. Practitioners' own speaking, listening and reading of English enable children to listen and develop their own communication, language and vocabulary well. Practitioners teach mathematics explicitly. They focus precisely on the mathematical learning that will promote children's confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics. Practitioners present information and explanations clearly. They identify children's misconceptions and </td><td data-bbox="1373 138 1787 1374"> All children benefit from high-quality, well-structured teaching across all areas of learning. As a result, they work with increasing fluency, recall and use their learning with ease, cope with new challenges and develop resilience. Practitioners apply their expertise in all the areas of learning and development to engage and motivate children to secure new knowledge and skills. Practitioners' astute checks on what children know, remember and can do are highly effective. These help to make sure that children develop well across the breadth and depth of the curriculum. </td></tr> </table>	Effective teaching			Practitioners have gaps in their understanding of the intended curriculum and the way in which young children learn. They lack confidence in choosing the most effective teaching approaches for what they want children to learn. The frequency and/or quality of interactions between practitioners and children do not support children's learning and development, especially of those who need the most support. Practitioners are unclear about how to focus children's attention on learning. Children's misconceptions sometimes go unnoticed. Practitioners' understanding of how to teach mathematics is underdeveloped and/or they lack confidence in teaching mathematics. This leads to a lack of precision in making sure that children gain a secure understanding of number, spatial reasoning, pattern and/or mathematical language.	Leaders make sure that there is enough time for teaching, practising, revisiting and consolidating the fundamental knowledge and skills that all children need. Practitioners choose the most effective ways to teach, combining explicit/direct teaching with opportunities for play, to help children learn the intended curriculum and achieve well. Practitioners' frequent, high-quality interactions with children support them to acquire vocabulary. They are clear about what they want children to know and think about, including the vocabulary associated with this, and deliver this in an age-appropriate way. Practitioners' own speaking, listening and reading of English enable children to listen and develop their own communication, language and vocabulary well. Practitioners teach mathematics explicitly. They focus precisely on the mathematical learning that will promote children's confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics. Practitioners present information and explanations clearly. 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Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
Effective teaching								
Practitioners have gaps in their understanding of the intended curriculum and the way in which young children learn. They lack confidence in choosing the most effective teaching approaches for what they want children to learn. The frequency and/or quality of interactions between practitioners and children do not support children's learning and development, especially of those who need the most support. Practitioners are unclear about how to focus children's attention on learning. Children's misconceptions sometimes go unnoticed. Practitioners' understanding of how to teach mathematics is underdeveloped and/or they lack confidence in teaching mathematics. This leads to a lack of precision in making sure that children gain a secure understanding of number, spatial reasoning, pattern and/or mathematical language.	Leaders make sure that there is enough time for teaching, practising, revisiting and consolidating the fundamental knowledge and skills that all children need. Practitioners choose the most effective ways to teach, combining explicit/direct teaching with opportunities for play, to help children learn the intended curriculum and achieve well. Practitioners' frequent, high-quality interactions with children support them to acquire vocabulary. They are clear about what they want children to know and think about, including the vocabulary associated with this, and deliver this in an age-appropriate way. Practitioners' own speaking, listening and reading of English enable children to listen and develop their own communication, language and vocabulary well. Practitioners teach mathematics explicitly. They focus precisely on the mathematical learning that will promote children's confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics. Practitioners present information and explanations clearly. They identify children's misconceptions and	All children benefit from high-quality, well-structured teaching across all areas of learning. As a result, they work with increasing fluency, recall and use their learning with ease, cope with new challenges and develop resilience. Practitioners apply their expertise in all the areas of learning and development to engage and motivate children to secure new knowledge and skills. Practitioners' astute checks on what children know, remember and can do are highly effective. These help to make sure that children develop well across the breadth and depth of the curriculum.						

		respond effectively to improve their learning. Practitioners use their day-to-day interactions with children to check what they know and can do to inform their teaching.		
	Inclusive teaching			
	Teaching is not fully inclusive, including for children with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged. Any adaptations made and/or support provided for these children are not as successful as they need to be. Teaching does not prioritise the children who need the most support or the aspects of learning with which they need the most help.	Children with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged benefit from high-quality, inclusive teaching across the intended curriculum. Practitioners respond sensitively to children's learning needs and rates of learning, identifying any barriers. Teaching prioritises the aspects that children need most support with, making sure that they receive the right help at the right time.	Practitioners have a clear and unwavering focus on the children who need the most support, including children with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged.	

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Achievement

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
How well children achieve is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Children have not secured the age- and stage-appropriate knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for the next stage of learning, including school, where relevant. Children have not developed the communication and language skills they need to support their wider learning. Children with SEND and those who are disadvantaged do not achieve well. They are not prepared adequately for the next stage of their education, including school, where relevant.	Learning and development across the curriculum			
	Children have gaps in their knowledge and skills across some areas of learning that, if not remedied, will hinder their future learning. While practitioners are likely to know where these gaps are, they have not prioritised them and/or tackled them quickly.	Leaders make sure that babies and children develop age- and/or stage-appropriate knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning. Children of all ages connect new learning to what they already know and can do. They apply their knowledge and skills in developmentally appropriate ways in different contexts, including through play, through daily routines and as a result of direct/explicit teaching. Children are aware of their emotions. They are beginning to learn how to manage them to support the foundations of positive mental health and well-being. Children are physically active, develop positive attitudes to exertion and improve their physical skills. Children secure their knowledge of early mathematical concepts, as appropriate for their age and/or stage of development. Children develop a strong sense of pride in their achievements.	Children secure breadth and depth in their knowledge and skills within and across all seven areas of learning. They use their knowledge and skills confidently and with automaticity. Children make seamless transitions between different stages of their education, including to school, when relevant. This is because they have secured the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills on which the next stage of education depends.	

Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in achievement, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary.

All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is:

- embedded and sustained over time
- making a tangible difference to children's learning, development and well-being
- being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas

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		Children show a growing curiosity. They develop their capacity to persevere when facing new tasks and challenges and are increasingly resilient.		of the setting's work being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement.
Securing strong foundations for children's communication and language				Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
Gaps in children's listening, attention and communication skills have not been tackled with the urgency or priority needed. This prevents children from interacting with others confidently and expressing their needs, ideas and emotions clearly.	Children develop confidence and fluency in their communication and language to express themselves clearly. They learn to pay attention, listen and respond to others. They have a developing vocabulary and an increasing knowledge and appreciation of stories, rhymes, songs and books. Older children learn to talk to one another in ways that support their knowledge and develop their thinking. They can explain why things happen and can answer questions. Older children articulate their ideas in well-formed sentences and connect one idea to another.	Children know and use a wide vocabulary, which supports their language comprehension. They can connect what they already know and can do to new learning or to learning in different contexts. Children can articulate their thoughts, ideas, emotions and needs clearly and confidently to their peers and to an increasingly wide range of adults.		
Inclusive achievement				
Across the seven areas of learning, children with SEND and/or those who are disadvantaged do not learn as well as they should from their starting points. As a result, fundamental gaps in their knowledge and skills make it	Children with SEND and those who are disadvantaged achieve well. Gaps between the achievement of these groups of children and that of others are narrowing quickly. Children with SEND make good progress, particularly in developing	Regardless of background or circumstances, children with SEND and/or those who are disadvantaged achieve their full potential and are expertly prepared for a seamless transition to the next stage of their education.		

	more difficult for them to make a successful transition to the next stage of their education, including school, where relevant.	their communication and language skills.		
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Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Children’s behaviour, welfare and well-being are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Breaches of the statutory requirements have a significant impact on children’s safety, well-being and personal development. Practitioners have low expectations of children’s behaviour and/or attitudes. Children’s needs are not identified or managed effectively, resulting in children persistently showing poor self-control and a lack of respect for others. As a result, others in the setting do not feel safe and secure.	Leadership of behaviour			Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children’s learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas
	Practitioners are inconsistent in their expectations of children’s behaviour and attitudes. This limits children’s understanding of how to manage their feelings and behaviour, including the consequences of their actions for others. Practitioners offer children inconsistent and/or limited support to develop their emotional understanding and a sense of right and wrong.	Leaders have high expectations for children’s behaviour and attitudes to learning. These expectations are commonly understood by staff, children and parents. They are applied consistently and fairly. This is reflected in children’s positive behaviour.	The approach to helping children understand and manage their own feelings and behaviour is well considered. Practitioners adjust their approaches as children’s needs change. They prompt them to use strategies and techniques that they have been taught to manage their emotions.	
	Developing positive relationships and their impact on children’s behaviour and attitudes to learning, including their confidence, resilience and self-esteem			
	Relationships between practitioners and babies/children are not effective in promoting secure attachments, well-being and/or independence. Practitioners are not effective enough in teaching children to treat others with kindness, care and respect. They do not	Staff teach children to manage their own feelings and behaviour and to understand how these have an impact on others. When children struggle to regulate their behaviour, leaders and practitioners act well to support them.	Warm, positive relationships are highly effective in enabling all babies and children to thrive and develop the independence they need for their future learning. Practitioners use high-quality interactions to build and nurture sensitive and positive relationships.	

The curriculum, key person system and provision are not organised well to promote children's confidence, resilience and the independence they need for future learning.	provide effective models themselves. A positive and respectful culture is not established securely.	Staff teach children to develop a sense of right and wrong and to recognise unacceptable behaviour. Children build warm, trusting and respectful relationships with adults, who are responsive to their needs. As a result, they are confident to share concerns with practitioners in age-appropriate ways. Practitioners teach children the importance of treating others with kindness, care and respect and are role models themselves. Effective care practices and routines and warm, positive relationships promote children's emotional security and develop their characters. Staff support children to develop their confidence, resilience and independence.	The highly efficient organisation of the provision, the key person system and the implementation of the curriculum all successfully develop confident, resilient and independent children, who cope well with setbacks. Leaders and practitioners use a wide range of very effective approaches to help children to recognise and manage their emotions.	of the setting's work being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
Attendance				
Leaders' actions in promoting attendance and supporting parents and carers are limited because they are not always targeted at those who need the most support.	Leaders set high expectations with parents and carers for establishing children's routines, including attendance. They work closely with parents to tackle any problems, remove potential and/or actual barriers to children's regular attendance and promote positive habits in preparation for attending school.	Leaders secure the best possible attendance for all children because they work effectively to share information with parents and carers about the importance of attendance, both for early education and in readiness for school.		

Inclusive behaviour			
Not all children with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged benefit from warm, positive relationships that help them develop a sense of belonging.	Practitioners understand and consider each child's context, needs and challenges when managing behaviour and make reasonable adjustments. Any adaptations maintain the high expectations of behaviour that reflect children's age and/or stage of development.	All children, including those with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged, develop a highly positive sense of self. A range of extra help ensures that they learn to express their emotions and get along well with others.	

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Children's welfare and well-being

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Children’s behaviour, welfare and well-being are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Breaches of the statutory requirements have a significant impact on children’s safety, well-being and personal development. Practitioners do not support children’s social and emotional well-being or prepare them for transitions within the setting or to other settings and schools. The key person system does not work effectively to support children’s emotional well-being. Children fail to form secure attachments with relevant carers. Staff fail to notice when children need attention.	Leadership of children’s welfare and well-being			Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in children’s welfare and well-being, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children’s learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the setting’s work
	Leaders’ policies, procedures and practices are not developed well enough and/or given the leadership focus and oversight needed to allow for consistent implementation across the setting.	Leaders set suitable policies, procedures and practices that promote the welfare, mental health and well-being of all babies and children. These are implemented consistently well across the setting.	Leaders have well-honed policies, procedures and practices that consistently promote the welfare, mental health and well-being of all babies and children. These are reviewed, adapted and amended regularly to make sure that, as the setting’s context and/or the circumstances and needs of children and families change, leaders and staff remain highly responsive, keeping children’s welfare and well-being as top priorities.	
	Developing and supporting children’s welfare and well-being			
	Children are not supported effectively enough to manage their personal hygiene needs increasingly independently. Opportunities for children to develop their physical well-being or make healthy choices are limited. This hinders the way in which they play, take risks and develop	Hygiene practices ensure that the personal needs of babies and children of all ages are met appropriately. Practitioners teach children to become increasingly independent in managing their personal needs. Practitioners teach children about making healthy choices about food, rest, exercise and screen time.	Structured and successful approaches support children to manage their personal hygiene. Children are encouraged to develop independence quickly, and parents are engaged in the approach. Children are expertly supported to understand healthy eating habits and the	

Leaders’ policies, procedures and practice do not promote children’s health and welfare. As a result, children do not know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Staff do not promote children’s understanding of people and communities beyond their own or help them to recognise similarities between themselves and others and their own uniqueness.	their understanding of healthy choices. Practitioners do not promote children’s good manners and social skills effectively.	Leaders and practitioners provide a healthy diet. Practitioners make sure that mealtimes are opportunities to promote children’s good manners and social skills. Practitioners teach children to take appropriate risks and meet challenges as they play and learn, both inside and outdoors. Practitioners particularly support children to develop their physical and emotional health. Practitioners provide children with the developmentally appropriate knowledge that they need to stay safe and healthy and to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.	importance of rest, exercise and limiting screen time. Children routinely explore, prepare and eat healthy foods that widen their food preferences and promote healthy eating. Children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very well developed.	▪ being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting’s report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.	
	Inclusive approaches to children’s welfare and well-being				
	Not all children with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged benefit from warm, positive relationships that help them develop a sense of belonging. Experiences to broaden children’s knowledge of healthy lifestyles and mental well-being are limited.	Children, including those with SEND and/or who are disadvantaged, develop a strong sense of belonging through respectful, warm and positive relationships that promote their well-being effectively. Where barriers to positive well-being and welfare exist for some babies and children, practitioners work closely with families and other agencies to support their good development.	Practitioners are very effective at reducing barriers to children’s development.		

Inclusion

Breaches in EYFS requirements		Meeting EYFS requirements		
Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Leaders’ actions to foster inclusion and belonging are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Across the setting’s work, inclusive practices do not enable children who are disadvantaged and/or those with SEND to receive an acceptable quality of education and/or care. Leaders fail to identify children who are disadvantaged and/or those with SEND. They fail to support and meet children’s needs. Leaders do not make sufficient adaptations to the experiences and/or opportunities they offer to all children to ensure that they are accessible and	Inclusive practices (across all toolkits)			Where the setting is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in inclusion, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary.
	Aspects of the setting’s inclusive practices need attention.	Across the setting’s work, inclusive practices are secure so that all children feel safe, welcome and supported.	Across the setting’s work, inclusive practices are strong.	
	Identifying and meeting needs to remove barriers to learning			All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to children’s learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the setting’s work
	Leaders’ support for children is imprecise or not sustained. As a result, its impact on children’s learning and/or care is inconsistent. Providers and/or leaders have not paid sufficient attention to making sure that the setting’s practices are inclusive. Some children are not sufficiently included in the life of the setting and/or families do not feel valued within its community. Reasonable adjustments have not been fully considered to support children’s access to the same opportunities as those of their peers. As a result, barriers to their learning remain. These prevent children from	Leaders quickly and accurately identify children who have additional needs or face barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Leaders make sure that these children receive effective support, drawing on external agencies and specialists, where necessary. A suitable, graduated approach meets children’s needs effectively. The progress check at age two and practitioners’ knowledge of children’s progress across the curriculum support the accurate and timely identification of children’s special educational needs.	Leaders have established a culture in which all staff are highly vigilant in identifying pupils who may need additional support. Staff are relentless in their approach to breaking down the barriers that individual children face. They tackle these confidently and precisely, reviewing any adaptations systematically and adjusting them as needed to optimise children’s learning and care.	

can be enjoyed by everyone. Leaders' policies and/or practices have a significantly detrimental effect on some groups of children and/or are discriminatory. Children with SEND or who are disadvantaged are not welcomed sufficiently within the setting. They are not helped to learn, grow and develop.	achieving as well as they could.			being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the setting's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
	Supporting disadvantaged children and those with SEND (those receiving additional funding) Leaders' strategies for identifying children who are eligible for additional funding are not sufficiently understood by staff. Strategies for supporting disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND, including the use of additional funding, lack precision and/or are not implemented well enough. Leaders' monitoring lacks focus, and/or the impact of the strategies used is not sufficiently effective. Arrangements to support children with SEND or those who are disadvantaged have limited impact.			
		Leaders have a secure understanding of, and effective arrangements to identify, the needs of disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND. Leaders' support for disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND is effective. Leaders draw on specialist guidance, where necessary. For children with SEND, leaders' arrangements reflect the requirements of the 0 to 25 SEND code of practice. Leaders make sure that their approach to disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND is sustained, including through ongoing training and support for staff. The use of the early years pupil premium is monitored effectively so that it has a demonstrable, positive impact on children's learning, development and welfare. Collaborative working with parents ensures that leaders are able to identify and support all children to access any funding to which they are entitled.	Leaders have embedded a highly inclusive culture across the setting. They know about and actively signpost parents and carers to support in their area. The arrangements to support all children, particularly those with SEND or who are disadvantaged, are highly effective. As a result, all children feel welcomed, valued and loved. Leaders are forensic in analysing the learning, development and welfare of disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND. Helpful adaptations sustain high levels of learning, development and well-being in children with SEND.	

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Inclusive culture			
Leaders have not made sure that inclusive policies or practice are embedded well. Some children and/or parents do not feel included in everything the setting offers. Some policies or practices do not result in children achieving as well as they should, or some children are not as included as they should be.	Leaders have established a culture that welcomes all children, regardless of their background, circumstances and/or individual needs. Leaders understand and meet their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the fair and equal treatment of practitioners, parents and carers and children. Leaders are committed to working closely with external partners to meet the holistic needs of all children, including those with SEND. Children and parents feel that they are listened to and valued in their setting's community.	Leaders' policies and actions demonstrate, establish and embed inclusive behaviour and an inclusive culture. Practitioners understand very clearly their roles in cultivating and maintaining an inclusive culture for children. They work constantly and consistently in partnerships with parents/carers, other professionals and local services to make sure that every child can achieve, succeed and thrive.	

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Safeguarding

Breaches in EYFS requirements	Meeting EYFS requirements
Not met	Met
Culture	
Leaders have not created a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Children are not kept safe. There is a closed culture. Leaders are not open to challenge and/or do not learn from problems or incidents. Leaders do not actively seek and listen to the views and experiences of children, practitioners and parents and, where necessary, do not act promptly to deal with any concerns.	Leaders establish a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Babies and children are kept safe and feel safe. Practitioners recognise that babies may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and are dependent on adults to recognise and respond to concerns on their behalf. Leaders ensure that procedures are followed rigorously and that checks are robust so that all children are kept safe and feel safe. Particular regard is given to arrangements for babies sleeping, weaning and feeding routines. All practitioners are vigilant and carry out their responsibilities for keeping children safe effectively. Leaders and practitioners are receptive to challenge and reflect on their own practice so that the impact of safeguarding policies, systems and processes is kept under continuous review.
Safeguarding and child protection statutory requirements	
Leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities to promote the welfare of children in relation to the statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection. Breaches of the statutory requirements for safeguarding have a significant impact on children's safety and well-being.	Leaders meet their responsibilities to promote the welfare of children in relation to the statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection. Leaders have rectified minor safeguarding issues identified during the inspection and/or are taking steps to resolve them.
Policies and procedures	
Leaders do not know and do not carry out their role in safeguarding children.	Leaders and practitioners put in place all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. Practitioners follow the provider's systems confidently, ensuring that children are kept safe.

Leaders do not understand the impact of their policies, processes and systems. They are not receptive to challenge and/or do not reflect on their own practice to ensure that safeguarding policies, systems and processes are kept under continuous review. Serious failings in safeguarding practice result in children not being safe.	Practitioners make sure that parents and other professionals adhere to policies. Leaders have rectified minor safeguarding issues identified during the inspection and/or are taking steps to resolve them. Children are kept safe and feel safe.
Suitable people and fitness to practice	
Leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the safe recruitment of practitioners in section 3 of the EYFS. Statutory requirements are not met. For example, there are breaches of the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Safeguarding checks have not been carried out to make sure that off-site provision is safe for children to attend.	Leaders fulfil their responsibilities in relation to safer recruitment in accordance with EYFS section 3, 'Working together to safeguard children' and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This includes the requirement that practitioners have the relevant qualifications and training and have passed any checks required for their roles. Leaders have rectified minor safeguarding issues identified during the inspection and/or are taking steps to resolve them. Children are kept safe and feel safe.
Safeguarding concerns or allegations	
Leaders do not identify children who may need early help, and who are at risk of harm or who have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse, grooming, exploitation, sexual abuse and online harm. Leaders do not secure the help that children need and do not refer them, if required, in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help. Leaders do not monitor children's safety and well-being and do not liaise promptly with other professionals to share any concerns they may have. Leaders do not manage safeguarding allegations against adults appropriately. Leaders are not aware of their duty to refer concerns to the DBS.	Leaders fulfil their responsibilities in relation to reporting, referrals and record-keeping, in accordance with 'Working together to safeguard children' and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Leaders have rectified minor safeguarding issues identified during the inspection and/or are taking steps to resolve them. Children are kept safe and feel safe.

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