

# **Department of Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**

## **Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five**

### **Guiding principles**

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learnt to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

### **The areas of learning and development**

There are 7 areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

**The prime areas are :**

#### **Communication and language**

Giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

#### **Physical development**

Providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

Helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

## **The specific areas are :**

### **Literacy**

Encouraging children to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

### **Mathematics**

Providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

### **Understanding the world**

Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

### **Expressive arts and design**

Enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.