



Guidance to the Standards  
for the award of  
Early Years Professional Status

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## **Foreword**

All good early years practitioners care for and nurture the children in their care, whatever their background or circumstances. They understand just how quickly children develop during the first five years of life and that young children's potential for learning is unlimited. They know that a loving and stimulating environment can give young children confidence and enable them to flourish. But effective early years provision involves more than care, a warm and stimulating environment and well-placed optimism.

Effective practice in the early years requires committed, enthusiastic and reflective practitioners with a breadth and depth of knowledge, skills and understanding. It involves establishing and maintaining good relationships with both children and adults, and working with parents, carers, the wider community, and other professionals within and beyond the setting. Practitioners need to understand the individual and diverse ways that children develop and learn. They need sufficient knowledge and understanding to enable them to support actively and extend children's learning, and meet all children's needs, learning styles and interests.

Just as early years workers have high expectations of the children they care for, so parents and carers are entitled to have high expectations of those they entrust to look after their children. There is a great deal of high quality early years practice led by highly skilled practitioners but CWDC and its partners recognise the importance of extending levels of training and development across the early years workforce. Early Years Professional Status will help highly skilled practitioners to gain recognition and to raise the standard of provision across early years settings to the level of the best. These Standards set the minimum standard required by the professionals we expect to lead the new Early Years Foundation Stage, raise the quality of provision and act as agents of change in the settings in which they work.

Early Years Professional Status is the first stage in a continuum of professional development that will underpin their career. It lays the foundation for subsequent professional and career development.

Jane Haywood  
Chief Executive  
Children's Workforce Development Council

## **Introduction to the Standards**

1.1 The Government's response to the national consultation on the future of the children's workforce identified the benefits of developing the role of the Early Years Professional (EYP) and confirmed the Government's aim to have EYPs in all children's centres offering early years provision by 2010 and in every full day care setting by 2015.

1.2 Improving workforce skills, knowledge and competences will be the key to delivering the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It will take cognisance of the Every Child Matters agenda and accommodate the Common Assessment Framework. The new role of Early Years Professional is being introduced to improve the quality of the early years experience, which research evidence suggests will lead to better outcomes for children. Early Years Professionals will work in a range of settings in the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors and will be expected to lead and improve practice across the new EYFS.

1.3 To undertake the role of Early Years Professional, it is necessary to achieve Early Years Professional Status (EYPS). To attain EYPS, candidates are required to demonstrate they meet all the Standards laid out in this document.

## **Standards for Early Years Professional Status**

2.1 The EYP Standards set out the national expectations for anyone wishing to gain EYP status and work as an Early Years Professional. They are outcome statements that set out what Early Years Professionals need to know, understand and be able to do. They cover working safely with children from birth to the end of the new EYFS. Achievement of the Standards will enable members of the workforce to move across the range of early years provision, which will encourage and support learning and development amongst practitioners, with benefits for babies, toddlers and young children.

2.2 The Standards are organised under six headings and describe what needs to be demonstrated to attain Early Years Professional Status:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Effective practice
- Relationships with children
- Communicating and working in partnership with families and carers
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Professional development.

2.3 No hierarchy is implied by the order in which the Standards are presented: candidates must demonstrate that they meet all the Standards before being awarded EYPS. Further, the Standards are, in several ways, inter-related: for example, candidates must demonstrate through their practice that their knowledge and understanding of the specified content underpins their own practice and informs their leadership of others.

2.4 Early Years Professionals will be key to raising the quality of early years provision. They will be expected to act as an agent of change to improve practice in the settings in which they work. They will lead practice across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), support and mentor other practitioners and model the skills and behaviours that safeguard and promote good outcomes for children; and, in addition, they will work in close collaboration with other agencies. Employers can be confident when recruiting staff at this level that those with EYPS will have met this minimum entry standard, regardless of their background, or the route through which they have trained.

2.5 The CWDC believes that, over time, only those with EYPS should lead the delivery of the new Early Years Foundation Stage. The CWDC also believes that the relationship between Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and EYPS should be clarified in time for the introduction of the new Early Years Foundation Stage in 2008. The Government agrees that further clarity is needed. The Government and CWDC wish to ensure that people with QTS are attracted to and are retained in the early years workforce.

2.6 It is not assumed or intended that an EYP should lead and manage multi-agency, multi-disciplinary, children's centre settings. However, in some smaller settings the EYP may in fact also be the setting leader. The National Professional Qualification in Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL) addresses the needs of those in a leadership role within multi-agency Children's Centres. Standards for leaders of integrated settings are being developed in parallel with the NPQICL award. Further information on the NPQICL can be found at [www.ncsl.org.uk/programmes/npqicl](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/programmes/npqicl).

2.7 The Standards for Early Years Professional Status remain provisional until they have been tested in Phase One of training and assessment.

### **Assessment against the Standards**

3.1 To attain EYPS all candidates will be assessed against the national Standards laid out in this document. The assessment process will be common to all candidates regardless of their background or location and irrespective of the nature and length of their pathway to EYPS or where they did their training. It will also be rigorous and consistent, thus affording confidence to employers and maximising candidates' opportunities to work across and between settings.

3.2 The Standards are as specific, explicit and assessable as possible. To achieve this purpose, each Standard has been set out discretely. However, as indicated in paragraph 2.3 above, there are clear, intentional links between the Standards. For example, the knowledge and understanding outlined in the first six Standards will inform all aspects of 'effective practice'. And prospective candidates will notice other links: for example, Standard S8, which specifies the kind of environment for children that we want EYPs to promote, is closely related to the characteristics of the relationships with children specified in Standards S25-S28; Standard S12, which concerns the suitability of resources, is clearly linked to S1 (knowledge of the Foundation Stage) and S7 (on the expectations we have of all children); and the reference to research in Standard S16 has a close tie with the Standards dealing with EYPs' professional development.

3.3 Being an EYP however, implies more than meeting a series of discrete Standards. It is necessary to consider the Standards as a whole to appreciate the skill, creativity, commitment, energy and enthusiasm required for leading practice in the early years and the intellectual and leadership skills required of the effective EYP. Because candidates may be working in different settings and have a wide range of prior experience, professional judgement will be required when designing training programmes that enable candidates to meet the Standards, and when assessing candidates for EYPS.

## Guidance to the Standards

4.1 The following guidance sets out the scope of each Standard and provides examples of how each Standard can be demonstrated in different settings and with babies, toddlers and young children. This should help:

- *candidates* to understand what is expected of them and how they might demonstrate that they meet the Standards;
- *trainers* to develop programmes which enable candidates to meet the Standards;
- *mentors* to support candidates in extending and reflecting on their experience with reference to the Standards;
- *assessors* to make consistent judgements against the Standards; and
- *employers* to know what they can expect of practitioners with EYP status, and which of their existing staff might be encouraged to work towards gaining EYPS.

4.2 In this guidance, the noun 'children' should be interpreted as *inclusive of babies, toddlers and young children*. These three categories, whilst in everyday usage, have no absolute chronological or developmental boundaries. For example, an older child might, for a variety of reasons, be at the same developmental stage as a much younger infant. However, for the purposes of this guidance, it is likely that the majority of 'babies' will fall within the 0-20 month range, that the majority of 'toddlers' will fall within the 16-36 month range, and that 'young children' will be between 30 and 60 months old.

4.3 Candidates should note the way in which some verbs are used in the guidance. Statements that include 'must', 'should' and 'will' are defining the essential characteristics of early years professional practice: these statements are requirements for meeting the Standards. However, statements that include 'might', 'may' or 'could' are intended to suggest alternative ways in which candidates can evidence the Standards. In the same way, the examples in both the main text and the boxes do not represent mandatory experiences but, rather, different ways in which candidates in different settings can provide evidence that they are meeting the Standards.

4.4 There is some variation in the number of examples provided for each Standard. The number does not reflect relative importance, but rather the nature and complexity of particular Standards.

4.5 Some of the examples presented in text boxes are, of course, potentially relevant to Standards additional to the one under which it is printed in this guidance. This reflects the point made in paragraph 3.2 above about links between the Standards.

4.6 This guidance will continue to be developed as training providers gain more experience of training and assessment and as the EYP role becomes established.

## **THE STANDARDS**

## **Standards for Early Years Professionals**

Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that a secure knowledge and understanding of the following underpins their own practice and informs their leadership of others.*

S1 The principles and content of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to put them in to practice

S2 The individual and diverse ways in which children develop and learn from birth to the end of the foundation stage and thereafter

S3 How children's well-being, development, learning and behaviour can be affected by a range of influences and transitions from inside and outside the setting

S4 The main provisions of the national and local statutory and non-statutory frameworks within which children's services work and their implications for early years settings

S5 The current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the well being of children and their implications for early years settings

S6 The contribution that other professionals within the setting and beyond can make to children's physical and emotional well-being, development and learning

### **Effective practice**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:*

S7 Have high expectations of all children and commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential

S8 Establish and sustain a safe, welcoming, purposeful, stimulating and encouraging environment where children feel confident and secure and are able to develop and learn

S9 Provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly routines that meet children's needs and enable them to develop and learn

S10 Use close, informed observation and other strategies to monitor children's activity, development and progress systematically and carefully, and use this information to inform, plan and improve practice and provision

S11 Plan and provide safe and appropriate child-led and adult initiated experiences, activities and play opportunities in indoor, outdoor and in out-of-setting contexts, which enable children to develop and learn

S12 Select, prepare and use a range of resources suitable for children's ages, interests and abilities, taking account of diversity and promoting equality and inclusion

- S13 Make effective personalised provision for the children they work with
- S14 Respond appropriately to children, informed by how children develop and learn and a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning.
- S15 Support the development of children's language and communication skills
- S16 Engage in sustained shared thinking with children
- S17 Promote positive behaviour, self-control and independence through using effective behaviour management strategies and developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills
- S18 Promote children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their practice
- S19 Establish a safe environment and employ practices that promote children's health, safety and physical, mental and emotional well-being
- S20 Recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of harm and know how to act to protect them
- S21 Assess, record and report on progress in children's development and learning and use this as a basis for differentiating provision
- S22 Give constructive and sensitive feedback to help children understand what they have achieved and think about what they need to do next and, when appropriate, encourage children to think about, evaluate and improve on their own performance
- S23 Identify and support children whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances and know when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support
- S24 Be accountable for the delivery of high quality provision

### **Relationships with children**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:*

- S25 Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children
- S26 Communicate sensitively and effectively with children from birth to the end of the foundation stage
- S27 Listen to children, pay attention to what they say and value and respect their views
- S28 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children

### **Communicating and working in partnership with families and carers**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:*

S29 Recognise and respect the influential and enduring contribution that families and parents/carers can make to children's development, well-being and learning

S30 Establish fair, respectful, trusting and constructive relationships with families and parents/carers, and communicate sensitively and effectively with them

S31 Work in partnership with families and parents/carers, at home and in the setting, to nurture children, to help them develop and to improve outcomes for them

S32 Provide formal and informal opportunities through which information about children's well-being, development and learning can be shared between the setting and families and parents/carers

### **Teamwork and collaboration**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate that they:*

S33 Establish and sustain a culture of collaborative and cooperative working between colleagues

S34 Ensure that colleagues working with them understand their role and are involved appropriately in helping children to meet planned objectives

S35 Influence and shape the policies and practices of the setting and share in collective responsibility for their implementation

S36 Contribute to the work of a multi-professional team and, where appropriate, coordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis

### **Professional development**

*Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:*

S37 Develop and use skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support their work with children and wider professional activities

S38 Reflect on and evaluate the impact of practice, modifying approaches where necessary, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their professional development needs

S39 Take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation, and adapt practice if benefits and improvements are identified

# GUIDANCE

## Knowledge and understanding

Candidates for Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that a secure knowledge and understanding underpins their own practice and informs their leadership of others. This knowledge and understanding is reflected in Standards S1-S6, each of which can be demonstrated through candidates' practice.

<p><b>S1 The principles and content of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to put them into practice</b></p>
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Candidates must demonstrate that they understand, promote through their practice and lead others to implement the broad principles that underpin the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The first principle emphasises the central importance of parents and families for each child's well-being and as their first educator. In each setting, a key person is important for each child in order to ensure their well-being and enable them to develop independence by having someone they can depend upon. Standard S6 below underlines the importance of effective partnerships with parents, carers, settings and key partners, such as health visitors and social workers, in ensuring that the experience of the child is coherent.

The second broad principle is that it is important to make plans for individual children using careful observations and assessments, with schedules, routines and adult intervention flowing with the child's needs. Planning is based on the premise that the starting point of children's development and learning is what they can already do, rather than what they cannot do. Coherent planning and delivery are important for continuity of experience for children who attend more than one setting.

Third, both indoor and outdoor play are central to children's development and learning. Very young children learn by doing, rather than through being told and, when they are given appropriate responsibility, they are able to make decisions and choices, sometimes errors, through which they develop and learn. Play and the development of imagination and creativity may be led by both the child and by practitioners.

The fourth broad principle underlines respect for diversity and the importance of welcoming and including all children. Effective practice for all children means effective practice for those with atypical development patterns.

<p><b>Example S1/1</b></p>
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<p>I have organised staff training on 'Every Child Matters'. As a result, staff have made displays which emphasise that it's the responsibility of all adults. To highlight this for staff, I mapped the nursery activities against the five outcomes. Last year I was involved with a radio station. The five one-hour broadcasts were all planned around the five outcomes for 'Every Child Matters'. For example, 'Staying Safe' focused on family gardens and safety equipment in the home, and 'Be Healthy' focused on developmental play and planning healthy eating for the family. I made copies of the broadcasts available for parents and carers, and I put them on the agenda for our team meetings.</p>
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**Example S1/2**

As a setting we aim to ensure our resources and displays are exciting, stimulating and appropriately promote the areas of learning and the appropriate level for all our children and that they reflect our diverse society. Hence, I have a check-list, which I use during my four-weekly walk around the centre. For example, I note that the resources such as dressing-up costumes, home and activity areas, books, puzzles and display within each base, and in our entrance and office areas, reflect our ongoing aims to provide suitably challenging experiences within our welcoming, inclusive setting.

**Example S1/3**

A few weeks ago, I planned a major activity outside for all the staff and children. They all had to sit or stand in a circle, surrounding and holding a large piece of fabric that they call 'the parachute'. I asked them to waft the 'parachute' up and down, whilst some children went underneath and called 'hello'. When sitting, the children lifted the parachute and staff looked under and called 'hello' to particular children on the opposite side to them. Later they had to place a teddy bear on top and bounce him by moving the parachute up and down either quickly or slowly. They made small movements, all whispering, to get him to go to sleep. Then they excitedly shouted and used big movements to 'wake teddy up'. I talked to the children throughout the activity, encouraging, praising, enticing and instructing them individually and as a group. Occasionally one of them broke away and I had to encourage him gently to come back to the circle and rejoin the activities. The children all joined in enthusiastically, singing, shouting, whispering, sitting, standing, turning, walking and running. The activity not only generated a sense of community, but illustrated how children can learn and develop in imaginative ways.

**Example S1/4**

When babies first arrive at the nursery I ensure that they meet a range of resources that will support them in their development through to the Foundation Stage and school. For example, we sit on the floor with the babies and read or sing from books and stories, while sharing brightly coloured illustrations. The babies quickly become familiar with both the activity and the individual books and you can see that they have favourites. Some children, who are six months old already, reach to turn the pages of their favourite books. In this way I ensure children engage in activities that will be extended in our setting, in other settings they attend or may later attend. I also stress the need to help children to progress at their own pace. I lead discussions with colleagues on the need for continuity in the children's experiences within and beyond our setting.

**S2 The individual and diverse ways in which children develop and learn from birth to the end of the foundation stage and thereafter**

As children develop and learn, they take with them what they have already achieved; they continue to practise, refine, use and consolidate their previous development and learning. Children are competent learners from birth and even young babies will usually have had a wide range of different experiences and, therefore, have their own skills and interests. By the time they reach the end of the foundation stage, however, the majority of children will have achieved the early learning goals in all six areas (although their journey towards them may be different) and some will have exceeded them. Other children will be working towards some or all of the goals, particularly younger children, children who have not had high-quality early years experience, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language.

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the broad developmental stages of children from birth to the end of the foundation stage. There are no absolute chronological boundaries for these developmental stages because babies, toddlers and young children self-evidently develop at different rates. However, for the purposes of this guidance the development of a baby will *normally* fall within the period from birth to 20 months, a ‘toddler’ will *normally* be aged between 16 and 36 months, and a ‘young child’ will *normally* be aged between 30 and 60+ months. These broad chronological ranges are intentionally overlapping.

Babies, toddlers and young children, from birth to five years old, are the focus of the work of an EYP, but the latter should also know, in general terms, the patterns of development that children typically exhibit during Key Stage 1 in school.

Candidates should understand that the course of development is influenced by cultural and environmental factors, and that differences in behaviour do not always reflect differences in development: for example, for some children maintaining eye contact may be an inappropriate way for children to interact with adults. Further, some children will behave in ways that fall outside the typical range of development. Candidates should understand the difference between developmental delay and developmental disorder and the implications of these for early years practice. They will work with parents/carers, and with colleagues from inside and outside the setting, to plan, deliver and support effective practice for children with atypical development patterns.

They should recognise too that children do not necessarily progress sequentially through these stages, and that the broad stages of development overlap because children develop at different speeds in different competences.

Candidates’ leadership and support will be evident in the way that they work with colleagues to look carefully at the young children in their care in order to take account of their stage of development, interests and needs, and to use this information to plan and deliver challenging and enjoyable experiences across all areas of learning and development. For example, they may take steps, via an induction programme or team briefings, to ensure that colleagues recognise that some children will need more support and/or more challenge than others and they may help colleagues to plan and deliver appropriately personalised experiences, interventions and support.

## Example S2/1

In our setting I have arranged to have an A4 booklet of coloured paper designated for recording the development of each toddler. These books are called 'My Learning Journey', starting with a photograph of the child. Any significant incidents noted during each day are recorded briefly and immediately on post-it stickers, which are then kept in the book. I make sure that these are not confined only to key workers but are available for contributions from anyone helping in the nursery. I know that, however open we try to be, we sometimes make judgements about particular children that may not be fair, whereas other colleagues may have a completely different view of the same child. That's why it's important to share our observations and ideas. I also make sure that we all look out for opportunities to enable the children to contribute, especially if they have drawn our attention to something new that they have observed or learned to do. I sometimes have to remind the team that children's perspectives are equally valid here!

Every day over lunch, I chair an informal meeting of my team to talk about children as well as running formal recall and planning sessions once a week. Following these discussions, and with reference to the post-it notes, records are then written in the book. Plans from these records are then devised for the following and subsequent weeks, so that the children's interests and development lead plans. We try to find time to talk about the children as often as possible, and it's not difficult because there's something happening in their development all the time.

## Example S2/2

I have found that the *Birth to Three* Materials have had a real influence on my practice. I use the cards, with staff help, to match our babies' current development and behaviour with the examples given. This provides ideas for planning activities and providing resources that will meet their needs. For example, we have been thinking about the 'being together' aspect component from *Birth to Three*. One of the outcomes from this is that we now use every opportunity to enable the babies to make close eye contact, looking at and sometimes touching each others' faces and ours. We sometimes lie on the floor with babies so that they can see and touch and talk with us easily. We constantly use their names to them and to the other babies.

## Example S2/3

A child with cerebral palsy has a specially designed chair for the nursery, with appropriate restrainers and cushioning. This chair also has a large tray that can be fitted to the front that helps the child, the other children in the nursery and staff, in a range of ways. I have arranged for the chair to be identical to the chair at home so the child is familiar and comfortable in it. When lifted into this chair the child smiles and seems happy and more alert. It really helps him to be in the same position as other children when they are in their high chairs to eat and drink. It also enables the child to have close eye contact as staff draw his chair close to other children's chairs. I have asked staff to monitor this provision and we regularly review it, while also seeking other strategies to improve his opportunities to communicate with his peers.

**S3 How children's well-being, development, learning and behaviour can be affected by a range of influences and transitions from inside and outside the setting**

As indicated in Standard S2, candidates must demonstrate that they understand the stages and changes that all young children naturally pass through as they grow and develop. But they must also understand the nature and consequences of the changes or 'transitions' that all young children will be expected to cope with in the early years.

Such transitions may include movement from home to an early years setting, movement between different early years settings or movement from an early years setting to school. They may include the departure of a key worker, or moving into a new group, or attending for longer or different hours. Some children may face very particular and personal transitions that may not necessarily be shared or understood by their peers: for example, family illness or the death of a close relative, divorce and family break-up, adoption, asylum, disability or the mental health problems or criminality of a parent or carer. Particular events in children's lives may, of course, affect their welfare, the way they behave and develop, and their ability to learn.

Candidates must show how their knowledge and understanding underpins their leadership and support of others. They may, for example, ensure that all colleagues working under their direction or supervision are aware of the transitions that children may be going through, and that they take account of these factors when planning provision to ensure that all children feel secure, are included and can benefit from the provision. They may provide advice to new colleagues about responding sensitively to children or to their families; or they may draft protocols to make it clear to everyone what information, either from the setting or from the wider community, can or must be shared, and what information should remain confidential.

**Example S3/1**

I realise that it can be difficult for some babies when they make the move from the baby room to the toddler room. Although the rooms are separate, they have low windows and a gated opening between the two so that the babies and toddlers can see and interact with each other as they choose. When staff advise me that a baby is ready to move to the toddler room I arrange for the toddler to spend short periods of time in there for the first few sessions with their new key worker. Staff move between the rooms and are together when outside so all the babies and children know all staff well. I believe that this familiarity and chance to build relationships with staff and the older children helps the babies when they move to the toddler room.

**Example S3/2**

We recently had a child who was happily settled on a part-time basis and spent the afternoons with his grandmother. Following a sudden, traumatic road accident resulting in the death of 'grandma', her single-parent father was left to cope. The child was immediately transferred to a full-time placement, and was totally de-stabilised. I discussed the situation with staff and suggested a range of strategies and routines to help the child feel more secure. I monitored the child's behaviour patterns, including her mood swings, which were adversely affecting her learning. We worked together to try in a caring way to provide a stable experience, especially as we too had experienced some staff changes. I am constantly monitoring and discussing the situation with staff and the parent.

**Example S3/3**

In the area served by our nursery, several parents have been prosecuted for possession of drugs. The taking of drugs affects their ability to wake up in the morning and to clothe and feed their children in time for our formal starting hour. We are open from eight o'clock, but do not have a specific time for parents to bring their children at the start of the day. We feel it is important to acknowledge that some families have different problems in the morning and that children have different sleep patterns and rhythms. Parents sign in when they arrive and we welcome children into whatever activity is going on when they come. We also provide breakfast for children who have not been fed in order to sustain their well-being and prepare them for the day's learning.

**S4 The main provisions of the national and local statutory and non-statutory frameworks within which children's services work and their implications for early years settings**

Early Years Professionals have an important role in the legal and non-statutory framework concerned with the welfare, care and education of babies and children.

Candidates are not expected to have a detailed knowledge of the whole statutory and non-statutory framework. However, to meet this Standard, they must be sufficiently familiar with their content to enable them to understand their own responsibilities and the implications of statute and official guidance for policy and practice within early years settings.

The key statutory and non-statutory documents obviously change over time. Currently they include<sup>1</sup>:

- Birth to Three Matters (SureStart)
- Children Act (2004)
- Code of Practice on the provision of free nursery education places (DfES Guidance)
- The Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Early Support Programme for supporting SEN/disabled children
- Foundation Stage
- Key Elements of Effective Practice (DfES)
- National Standards for Under 8s' Day Care, Crèches and Childminding (DfES)
- New Early Years Foundation Stage (consultation document) - with implications for practice after 2008
- Ten-Year Childcare Strategy, *Choice for parents, the best start for children*, HMT, DWP, DfES (2004)
- Every Child Matters (DfES)

Candidates must show how their knowledge and understanding of statutory and non-statutory documents underpins their leadership and support of others. They may, for example, prepare briefing documents for parents and/or colleagues on particular policy initiatives and legal requirements. Or they may advise colleagues, at planning meetings or case conferences, on the legal implications affecting their decisions.

**Example S4/1**

As part of a team preparing for a community open day I was responsible for preparing a booklet for parents, which identified and explained the ethos and culture of the centre. I took care to demonstrate how they were reflected in our published policies and mission statement, and also how these affect the children, parents and staff. The open day was designed to highlight and to reflect the main policy developments in early years, and aimed to promote a partnership with parents based on these policies. For example, this setting is in a culturally diverse area, so emphasis on how the equal opportunity policy is positively promoted was a key issue. We explained that all derogatory comments are consistently challenged. In promoting the open day, I promoted the key principle that parents want to be more involved in all projects, and that their children will be the primary beneficiaries.

<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, a Child Care Bill is currently before Parliament

**Example S4/2**

One of the staff told me that we needed an early support programme for a four-year-old who appeared to have a problem with her social and emotional development. After observing the child over a period of days, I agreed that the child had difficulty in interacting positively and co-operatively with other children. I discussed our concerns with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Following this a review meeting was set up with the child's parents and 'sharing' was put down as a target on her IEP, in order to develop her social, emotional and behavioural skills. I recommended that staff introduce sharing and turn-taking activities in order for this child to gain more chances to experience co-operation and sharing with her peers, with staff rewarding appropriate behaviour with positive reinforcement and praise.

**Example S4/3**

Our nursery is a pilot for the Common Assessment Framework for professionals from many agencies to work together in order to assess children's additional needs. I used this framework when trying to help a child who had screaming fits, and who was very egocentric and uncooperative. With the parents' permission, I contacted the health visitor, a specialist teacher and the child's paediatrician. These professionals observed the child in the nursery and he was diagnosed as autistic. Together the area pre-school team and the SENCO devised a very successful programme to help the child and the parents.

**S5 The current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the well being of children and their implications for early years settings**

Early Years Professionals have an important role in keeping children healthy and safe and promoting their well-being. To ensure that they can do this, candidates must demonstrate how their knowledge and understanding of the current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on health and safety underpin their own practice, thereby safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children in early years settings.

Relevant key policies, procedures and guidance cover (in no order of priority): accidents; first aid; bullying; child protection; safety (such as dealing with outings, lost or uncollected children); health (such as children with health conditions, medicine policy and infection control); personal care (such as hygiene and incontinence); staff ratios; staff qualifications and conduct.

Candidates must demonstrate how their knowledge and understanding of the legal requirements, policies and guidance inform their leadership and support of others. They may do this, for example, by preparing internal policy documents on health and safety in order to inform staff and safeguard children.

**Example S5/1**

I think that our staff induction programme is comprehensive and meets our needs. I ensure that staff are given the time and opportunity to become familiar with current legislation and its impact on the setting. For example, as our lead practitioner it is essential that I keep myself and all staff abreast of changes to key legislation and policies regarding the health and well-being of children. So I maintain an up-to-date file of legislation information, which staff are expected to refer to on a needs basis. All new information is circulated and acknowledged, by signature, as having been read by staff prior to its addition to the central file. I then ensure that the agenda for our team meetings includes opportunities for discussion of new legislation and guidance. In addition, by way of a reminder, I sometimes mention the statutory implications of particular situations that have arisen recently.

**Example S5/2**

I devised a structure and whole-team approach for monitoring and evaluating our health and safety policy. I organised a series of meetings to discuss and review each element to ensure each member had a comprehensive understanding of all requirements. I allocated individual responsibility for monitoring aspects of the application to each team member. I have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the outcomes of the monitoring, evaluating, reporting back to staff, and taking action where concerns have been highlighted.

**Example S5/3**

To address the requirements of the Children Act, I devised systems to monitor the knowledge, application and recording of procedures in cases of emergency, accidents, and policies on sick children. For example, I have myself qualified in first aid and arranged for several other members of staff to do so, and at least one of us is on duty when we are open. I also ensure, by a weekly monitoring and signed checklist, that our first-aid boxes are fully equipped. All new guidance is circulated and I ensure our qualifications are up to date.

**S6 The contribution that other professionals within the setting and beyond can make to children's physical and emotional well-being, development and learning**

Early Years Professionals may work in a wide range of settings, including full day-care, nursery and primary schools, playgroups, out-of-school settings and children's centres, as well as in home-based childcare, crèches and family support units. Wherever they work, EYPs will encounter other professionals who support children and families. Some, such as those working in children's centres, may work closely with other professionals in their own setting; others may work with professionals who visit their setting regularly or from time to time, or they may work with professionals outside the setting.

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they recognise the roles of those professionals who commonly support children from birth to five, and the contribution that each can make to children's physical and emotional well-being, development and learning. These professionals include: educational psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, health visitors, special educational needs co-ordinators, family support workers, social workers and portage workers.

Candidates' own practice and leadership of others will be informed by knowledge of the ways in which they and their staff can contribute to and support the work of other professionals. Their knowledge might be demonstrated through taking an active part in multi-professional planning and review, or by co-ordinating and implementing agreed programmes and interventions for the children in their care on a day-to-day basis. It might be demonstrated through making clear to colleagues the policies and procedures for involving other professionals, or by explaining to colleagues and/or concerned parents or carers where sources of help and support might be found.

**Example S6/1**

I watched the Speech and Language therapist work with parents and children on her weekly visits. I made a video of the children before her work and after. Using the therapist's programme and the videos, I trained the nursery nurse to integrate the programme into everyday routines and experiences in the nursery, and together we advised parents and carers on how to continue the work at home. After a year I re-evaluated the children's progress in their speech and language.

**Example S6/2**

A parent was concerned about how her toddler would cope with the physical demands of the programme in the nursery because he suffered from cystic fibrosis. The physiotherapist worked with the toddler when undertaking the prescribed daily exercises and I arranged for all staff who work with the child to observe a session so that they could support him when the physiotherapist was not present. I have explained these strategies to the parent and she has met the physiotherapist who has also recommended other sources of help and support.

**Example S6/3**

I have been working on improving links with other agencies, as I felt we did not have enough contact with health visitors or social services in the area in which our centre is located. It's really quite disadvantaged. We now hold baby clinics, sessions on baby massage, healthy eating and run parenting classes, particularly for teenage parents. Two health visitors and their assistants are now based in the centre. These improved links mean that we can now give a better service to the community.

There's one initiative I was particularly pleased with. It was when I arranged for a nurse from our neighbouring health centre to come in to demonstrate baby massage for our parents and their new babies. In the event, the 'parents' were all mothers or female carers. I had asked the parents to bring with them a changing mat and baby oil. They sat on the floor with their baby lying on the mat in front of them while gentle music played in the background. My colleague and myself then demonstrated simple stroking movements and the parents copied us. The session, which lasted for half an hour, offered an opportunity and permission for intimacy between the mothers and carers and their babies, as they made close eye contact.

After a few such sessions, which some of my team have now observed, the mothers and carers said it was one of the few times in a busy day when you could sit down and dedicate time to building a special relationship with your baby. Others described similar benefits. For example, one mother said that she uses these massage techniques now in the afternoons "when he gets fractious" - for her own and her baby's relaxation. Someone else commented that she used this massage more now because it helped to relieve her baby's colic.

## Effective practice

Those awarded Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:

**S7 Have high expectations of all children and commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential**

Candidates must demonstrate their commitment to raising the achievement of all children in the setting in which they work, irrespective of their age, gender, social background, or current stage of development or attainment.

Candidates should demonstrate that they meet this Standard in every aspect of their planning, their direct work with children and their evaluation of their own and others' practice. This means that they will find out relevant information about children and their families in order to enable all children in the setting to develop, learn and achieve their full potential. They will then use this information about a child's level of development and past achievements to plan next steps that are challenging and achievable, taking account of and building on their interests and the way they prefer to learn.

Candidates' leadership and support of others might be evidenced in several ways. For example, in planning the next steps for children, they may challenge any stereotypical views of what children can achieve and work directly with colleagues in order to change attitudes, raise expectations and remedy unacceptable practice. Or they may advise colleagues on how to take account, and minimise the effects, of the barriers to participation and achievement that a particular child or children might experience. In some cases, they may challenge low expectations on the part of parents and carers.

**Example S7/1**

Prior to entry, I try where possible, to ascertain from parents, what their child knows and can do via a meeting and/or proforma. Together with staff, I also complete an initial assessment by making specific observations of the child's interaction with the staff and their peers, their contribution during group and circle time activities, and their use of the resources during free play. For example, I noted one child was very confident in counting the number of children within the group, differentiated 'more' or 'less', and was frequently using numeracy skills during play at a level well above others within the group. I discussed this with staff and provided additional resources and tasks relating to number, whilst also encouraging staff to work with and question the child at a more challenging but achievable level. I have also found some excellent, stimulating ICT programs, which have inspired the child and he is constantly seeking even more challenge. We are being careful to feed his enthusiasm, whilst ensuring a balanced learning programme. I am monitoring the child's progress to ensure he really benefits from our provision.

**Example S7/2**

I recently admitted a child of a single-parent mum who had clearly loved, protected and nurtured the child but had apparently excluded other adults and peers: hence, the child's social skills were under-developed, and she fretted for her mum. This was clearly reflected in the child's attitudes within the setting; she was a 'lone' child who rarely interacted with others, would move areas when other children became involved, and rarely contributed during group or circle times. I discussed this sensitively with the child's mum and with the staff, and then devised a series of strategies, starting with very basic one-to-one staff interaction and widening to involve other children, commencing in our model kitchen. It was real progress when she made a cup of tea for me and asked if I would like a biscuit. I have been monitoring each step the child takes towards becoming secure, integrated, confident and making progress in her learning.

**Example S7/3**

One member of my team is an enthusiastic, dynamic artist. The outputs from children in her groups are all of a high quality, constantly valued by parents and acknowledged by visitors. My problem is that they do not reflect the children's skills but rather those of the member of staff, who, in aiming for excellence, cannot step back and let the children produce their own masterpieces using the skills she has shared with them. I have told her that I really appreciate her high expectations but suggested that she needs to allow the children to build upon their own skills. I also modelled an activity for her to observe and, at her request, I have monitored her recent work on wax paintings. She is now making considerable efforts to share her skills and to allow children to work more freely and creatively.

**S8 Establish and sustain a safe, welcoming, purposeful, stimulating and encouraging environment where children feel confident and secure and are able to develop and learn**

To meet this Standard, candidates must show that they can create and sustain a safe, secure, nurturing environment that stimulates interest, values learning, and supports collaboration and independence.

Such an environment will be one in which children feel welcome, respected and valued and where they are confident that they will be supported by those educating and caring for them and by their peers. It will be a productive and safe environment that is well organised, and where space and resources are used flexibly. Candidates will contribute to this in several ways: providing experiences and activities that interest and motivate children; encouraging children to co-operate and respect others; promoting independence; explicitly valuing the contributions of all children; and challenging racial, religious and gender stereotypes and expressions of discrimination or prejudice.

The effectiveness of candidates' personal practice will also be demonstrated through the advice and guidance they give to others. For example, they might brief colleagues and other adults on matters of health and safety or they might help colleagues to use praise appropriately to encourage children's efforts. They might show how best to afford comfort and emotional support to children who are distressed or upset, or show colleagues ways to enable children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to be as independent as possible, rather than speaking for them or doing things for them.

**Example S8/1**

Part of the nursery is just a very large room. I have broken it up into smaller, more flexible areas so that the children can feel secure and understand quickly which activities each area offers. The children feel confident and secure in the nursery because it is clear to them where everything is. I encourage all staff to follow my example. For instance, I put pictures to label toys and resources to help them find what they need and to be independent in choosing toys and putting them away afterwards. I use laminated and Velcro photos of the children to identify their work trays and, with parents and carers' permission, put photos of their families on their lunchtime place mats. They all love talking about their photos and about their parents, carers and siblings. I find this activity helps with their language development, and is fun. I also make sure that there are lots of displays of the children's drawings and paintings on the walls, and check that the nursery looks bright and attractive and well-organised so that the children feel invited to explore and play.

**Example S8/2**

I arrange the Nursery into areas for play that change frequently, perhaps every two weeks. This week I have organised our play and learning around the café I designed with the help of the children. My team helped me to plan our theme to link with the books, stories, rhymes, toys, plasticene and food to this café theme, the focus of which changed according to the children's wishes from a 'chippy' or burger bar to a range of other food outlets. The children chose the roles they wanted to play, such as waiter, chef or customer, and we encouraged them to rotate roles in an environment of their creation yet in partnership with their peers. My current focus is to check that staff are encouraging children's efforts, and use praise positively to challenge children to work at a higher level.

**Example S8/3**

I ensure that the nursery is always attractive, well organised and stimulating. That is my priority for the children. Each month I change the display in the entrance area to focus on a different area of provision: this sets the tone for not only the children and their parents/carers, but also for the staff. Until recently I mainly used photos, quotes and leaflets. Now I have developed a series of home loan bags based on areas such as investigative learning. Each bag has examples of how it can be used at home and what learning will come from it. Elsewhere, everything is clearly set out so they know where particular activities take place. For example, I provide quiet areas where picture books can be shared and enjoyed and where children can listen to tapes of songs and stories, and areas where children can be more active and interactive and noise levels can be higher.

**Example S8/4**

I encourage my team to make the outside area as stimulating as the inside spaces. I suggested, for example, that we introduce a 'healthy' garden where the children have planted some vegetables. Each child had a small plot to tend and there was great excitement when some competed to grow the largest marrow, while others were frequently measuring their beans to see which would be the tallest. I also felt the area was not well demarcated and a number of children were experiencing minor bumps and bruises. In order to encourage safe outdoor play, I discussed this with my team and I have demarcated a space for playing with wheeled toys, and one for ball games, and a more reflective area where children can be quieter. I encourage staff to teach children to respect the use of each designated area and to place any further ideas in our suggestion box.

**S9 Provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly routines that meet children's needs and enable them to develop and learn**

To meet this Standard, candidates should lead practice in such ways as to ensure that schedules and routines are responsive to individual children's needs. However, a predictable environment does not imply rigid routines and schedules that prevent children from becoming engrossed in activities and thinking deeply about what they are doing. Periods of rest and relaxation are equally as important as other more stimulating activities.

Candidates must show how they provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly schedules and routines, tailored to children's different needs. This means taking into account particular circumstances: for example, children who attend more than one setting, and some children will have different patterns of attendance, such as those attending part-time, and those using full-time or extended services. Some babies and very young children might find their time in a setting particularly tiring and may need opportunities to rest and be quiet, and some young children will be at different stages in developing bowel and bladder control. Some children will have particular medical conditions, special educational needs and/or disabilities and may need more frequent pauses and rests than other children, or different or more flexible eating and other care routines.

Candidates will lead practice and support others in several ways. For example, they may advise colleagues on the rationale for balanced and flexible routines, and demonstrate particular ways of applying such routines; or they may nominate a key person to plan the routine for each child.

**Example S9/1**

I ensure that the babies have a routine for feeding and sleeping that varies according to individual needs. I have ensured that each member of my team understands that routines are determined by the babies and that we need to know how to 'read' their development needs. There are no fixed times for sleeping, feeding or changing: some will need milk every four hours and others feed on demand, or at differing times. I ask the parents to explain the routine they have set up at home and encourage staff to follow this for the small babies. One six-month old baby that I was caring for was showing clear signs of enjoying the sounds of the chimes, so I moved her closer so she could kick them with her feet. I shared this work with her key worker, who has built the activity into her provision.

**Example S9/2**

I plan the overall week with the team and then the daily routines. These follow a pattern for the children to feel secure. Each small group works with a key worker. I use a picture wheel with suggested activities on it and discuss with each child what they will do first and then we meet again to talk about the activity and what the child will go on to explore. I plan the structure to the day, while bearing in mind the importance of building on the children's interests, so that they quickly learn and enjoy what they are doing. This week they got very excited by some new ducks I introduced into the water play. This led to sharing songs and rhymes about ducks and to making a big collage of paint and feathers. We finally took them to the park to feed the ducks.

**Example S9/3**

I set up meetings to enable key workers to discuss children's routines, interests and preferences with parents and carers. I note, when toddlers attend part-time, the experiences they may have before or after they come to me. This means that everyone is well informed about children's needs and that, as far as possible, these needs are met in our daily and weekly routines. This represents my overall intention to maximise continuity and consistency between our centre, home and other provision.

**S10 Use close, informed observation and other strategies to monitor children's activity, development and progress systematically and carefully, and use this information to inform, plan and improve practice and provision**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that, routinely and systematically, they observe closely what children can do and use these observations for informing planning for the next developmental steps. In short, they should be able to demonstrate how they use observations to make a positive impact on practice, provision and outcomes for children.

The above implies that candidates know and are able to use appropriate forms of observation. They know when it is useful to observe children individually and when to observe them in groups. They know when and why to record their observations and use appropriate methods; for example, in writing, photographs, digital images, video or audio tape. They also know how to build up a record of observations over time and how to summarise them for different purposes: for example, for meetings with colleagues or parents/carers or in the EYFS profile.

Candidates' leadership and support of others can be demonstrated through their management of arrangements for monitoring children's activity and for using the information as the basis for future planning. Or it might be demonstrated through working with colleagues on joint observations in order to check interpretation and implications.

**Example S10/1**

I have introduced a variety of observation-based records in our baby room. These include sleep records, changing records, feeding records, parents' written routines and weekly wall planners for activities. I monitor and discuss with staff the effectiveness of these records and then use them in our planning. Most of what we do is based on the 'Birth to Three Matters' Framework for each baby. I think that this way of developing an understanding of individual babies' needs and interests, and writing records of what they are doing and learning, fits well with the sorts of things that the Early Years Foundation Stage requires. As a result, I think that we know our babies very well from these observations and can analyse and apply the information gained to design activities to support the babies' next stage of development.

**Example S10/2**

I encourage colleagues to contribute to planning and evaluation meetings by using evidence from their observation of children to back up their views on next steps or on how to modify or improve practice. At a recent team meeting, it seemed to me that, on the basis of the team's observations of children, we needed to improve personal independence and the quality of their play activities. So I re-organised the use of adults in the nursery so that there were fewer adults in some activities and greater intervention from adults within play. As a result, the reception teacher reported that children came to her with greater independence and children's social and language skills in play had improved.

**Example S10/3**

I ask the staff to make detailed observations of the children in their care. Initially, I brief them about the key things they should observe and when they might do so. I also explain how to record detailed observations in a form that can be used for planning and evaluation. These help them to recognise patterns in the children's behaviour and in their interactions with adults and other children. These patterns refer to what they like and dislike and what interests them. Each child has a portfolio in which are kept these dated notes and photographs, and in the case of older children, examples of their work. I have also shown them how to use digital cameras to make a more permanent record of their observations of children's activities and how to annotate and organise them so that they contribute to assessment and to the planning of further activities. Alongside this, I encourage parents to keep a home diary to share on a regular basis with staff. I monitor each child's progress by accessing the portfolios on a monthly basis, and feed back to staff orally and in writing to help them to plan their next topic.

**S11 Plan and provide appropriate child-led and adult-initiated experiences, activities and play opportunities in indoor, outdoor and in out-of-setting contexts, which enable children to develop and learn**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they plan and provide experiences that have the following main characteristics. First, they should be *planned and purposeful*, and give children opportunities to develop and learn. Second, they should be *relevant*, with content that matches children's ages, needs, interests and learning styles. Third, they should be *developmentally appropriate* for the different starting points from which children develop their learning and that build on what they can already do. Fourth, they should be *sustained* in that they give children time to become engrossed, to work in depth and to complete activities; and, fifth, they should be *comprehensive* in that they cover all areas/aspects of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (i.e. *Birth to Three Matters* and the *existing Foundation Stage*) and help children to achieve the outcomes within *Every Child Matters*. Overall, the experiences should be *child-oriented* in that they enable children to become competent learners.

Candidates should lead and support others in providing activities that are planned and initiated by both adults and children. Their leadership may be evident in the way they promote, with colleagues, the importance of safe, indoor and outdoor play settings for promoting children's well-being, development and learning. It may be evident in the encouragement they provide for their staff to stimulate and inspire children, to foster their independence, motivate them and promote their personal and social development. It may be evident in the way that the staff undertake risk assessments and take all reasonable precautions without restricting opportunities for children.

**Example S11/1**

I ensure we have a stimulating programme of visitors with art, music or dance backgrounds, or interesting jobs, to ensure children have access to a wide range of stimuli and ideas. My aim is to encourage the children to be stimulated by the visitor and, possibly then, incorporate ideas into their own play. For example, I recently initiated a visit from the local optician who, with the children, modelled and role-played testing eyes and fitting new glasses. Several children then set up their own eye-testing clinic, which enhanced well their letter and number recognition. Another example was a large-group visit to the beach with a local artist. I carried out a risk assessment and shared this with all staff prior to our expedition. At the beach we collected flotsam and jetsam. The staff and children then built a pirate boat, in which we all sat and talked about how they felt as pirates stranded in the boat on the beach. We then sang our pirate song as we made our way home. Later the same week, the artist worked with the children to create a really exciting collage of our boat for our entrance hall. We all discussed the benefits of, and the input of, the visitors and the value of outings, and what the children had learnt. Enthusiasm was so high that several members of staff volunteered to arrange other 'expert' visitors or outings.

## Example S11/2

It is always my practice to involve colleagues in planning provision. For example, I was keen to get over the benefits of carefully-planned adult-initiated play. So, it's been my job to explain the rationale and objectives for this, to rehearse the importance of the balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated play, to underline when and how staff should intervene, and the need to specify the expected outcomes for the children. All this is my way of helping staff to be imaginative and so help children to be involved in exploration and experimentation. Recently I purchased a range of puppets, and then trained and encouraged the staff to use them imaginatively, such as depicting many of the stories we share during book time. For example, I introduced *My Hungry Caterpillar*, which loves fruit and vegetables. Children talk to it, give it advice and feed it, literally stuffing it full of food, naming and identifying each item. They count and add on segments as the caterpillar fills with food. Many take it on walks to the garden or into the kitchen, chatting away, sharing their likes and dislikes: 'I hate lemons, they are sour' and then, without apology, giving them to the caterpillar. This has inspired staff to initiate more creative activities, which children love to talk about. For example, they have now installed a beanstalk that has stimulated the children to talk about growing and about what it must be like to be big and tall so they could see over the secret garden wall. Many are wondering what they would see!

## Example S11/3

As part of her induction process I worked alongside a new practitioner for half a day in the baby room. I put together a treasure basket and asked her to observe whilst I played with a seven-month old child. He took little interest in most of the items in the basket but soon became engrossed in dropping a spoon into a tin and listening to the sound it made. I asked my colleague to put on a music tape and I gently tapped a wooden spoon on the table in time with the music. He listened attentively, then reached for the spoon and tried it on his tin. We then spent a few minutes with him singing to the music tape and tapping out the rhythm. Afterwards, we reviewed what went well and why, and considered ways in which this approach might be adapted for other children.

**S12 Select, prepare and use a range of resources suitable for children's ages, interests and abilities, taking account of diversity and promoting equality and inclusion**

Candidates must demonstrate that they select, prepare, organise and manage resources in ways that best support all children's development and learning.

Resources that are of interest to children are more likely to motivate them to develop and learn. Candidates should demonstrate that the resources they use are: suitable for the age and interests of the children using them; suitable, as far as is reasonable, for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language; and reflect the ethnic, cultural, and social diversity in society. Candidates also need to show that they ensure that resources are safe, that children know how to use them safely and that they are supervised adequately while using them.

Candidates must be able to select from available resources such as toys, books and other published materials, museum and gallery resources, visual aids, tools, specialist equipment, artefacts and hardware and software, and also show that they are able to prepare their own resources where necessary.

Candidates may demonstrate their leadership and support in several ways. It is likely that their main focus will be on advising and supporting colleagues in their selection, preparation and use of resources, but others may work with parents and carers to support the effective selection and use of resources.

**Example S12/1**

We have a number of children who are in the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. I ensure we provide these children with opportunities to listen and encourage staff to use gestures, signs, facial expressions and visual support such as pictures and puppets. Children are also provided with examples of writing and audio materials in their home language, and books and puzzles depicting a range of cultures. In addition, we have a broad selection of multicultural dolls placed around the room, paints to depict all colours of skin, and a multitude of ethnic clothes in our activities area. I constantly seek to improve our provision.

**Example S12/2**

I ensure staff are supported, and have appropriate resources to meet each child's learning needs. We have, for example, a child with a visual impairment. I have liaised with other professionals and adapted materials to provide visual and written materials in different formats, including large print and symbol-text using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials. We also provide more tactile experiences such as feeling and stroking the rabbit to imagine what it looks like.

**Example S12/3**

We find that there is considerable variation in children's ability to use technology. I therefore ensure that babies have access to a range of simple electronic toys such as pushing a button to play music, or make lights flash. As children develop, I incorporate technology in the role-play area by including such play items as a digital microwave or electronic egg timer. The older, more able children use software; for example, having recorded digital photos of their favourite animals they use 'toolkit' and data-handling programs to complete a pictorial bar chart of the popularity of these animals.

**Example S12/4**

One of my key workers admitted a new child from India. The child spoke no English at all. I advised her to ask the child's mother to teach her some key words that she could use in the first few weeks and also asked the local authority's EAL teacher for support. I wanted the children to know more about India and the child's background. Her mother let her wear her sari and a bindi one day and I talked to the children about these. I had found out about different coloured bindis and had some for all the children to stick on. All of this led to our dancing to Indian music, looking at picture books of India and dressing-up activities. We had a curry lunch (not too spicy!). For most of our children this was their first contact with an Indian child and they learnt a great deal.

**S13 Make effective personalised provision for the children they work with**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they take account of the range of physical, cognitive and social development to be found, during the foundation stage, amongst children of the same chronological age. Candidates should take account of the different ways and rates in which children learn, and build on this. They will draw on their knowledge and understanding of children's developmental stages and the way they learn, in order to plan experiences and activities tailored as far as possible to suit the needs and interests of the child. They may identify the latter by, for example, interpreting children's facial expressions or body language, and/or noticing things that captivate children's interest.

Candidates' own practice will ensure that flexibility is built into children's experiences and activities in order to allow provision to reflect their needs; some children, for example, will need more time to explore some aspects of learning.

Candidates will lead and support others in several ways. For example, they might do this by coaching colleagues in how to personalise provision, or in how to promote and encourage a flexible approach that routinely takes account of children's differing needs. Or they might provide guidance on how to modify activities and experiences to accommodate the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities and those learning English as an additional language.

**Example S13/1**

A member of the team had difficulty in settling a child into the toddlers' group. The child behaved aggressively at times and his communication skills were weaker than we would have expected for his age. So I first asked the area special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to assess the child's communication skills and, with her support, I was able to develop a programme to meet the child's needs. I linked with the staff in a local assessment and support centre for nursery children so as to give him opportunities to attend the centre for specialist help. I then shared this with my colleague, together with some ideas that she could try, to improve the child's behaviour. Over a period of time we observed and assessed the child's behaviour through observations and noted that he was making perceptible improvements.

**Example S13/2**

I constantly emphasise to staff that children learn in different ways and at different rates, and that they need to take account of this and plan accordingly. For example, I noticed one child who was totally captivated when I played the electronic keyboard and sat enraptured, listening avidly and tapping the beat. I discussed this with the staff and planned further experiences and activities to give the child more access to the keyboard and other musical instruments. The child was less keen on number work, so I also advised staff on strategies such as counting the drum beats, then distinguishing five loud and five soft sounds, moving on to playing a simple tune on the xylophone using numbered keys matched to numbered instruction cards. The staff report that the child's number recognition is improving in leaps and bounds.

Example S13/3

I monitor colleagues' records of each child's development. I want to check that staff know their children and can assess, on the basis of observed 'eye-hand' co-ordination and confidence, when they are ready to be taught to be able to use scissors and staplers safely. I advise staff of my assessments and encourage them to build them into their planning.

**S14 Respond appropriately to children, informed by how children develop and learn and a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning**

Standard S2 specifies candidates' knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn, thus providing the basis for identifying possible next steps in children's development and learning; and Standard S3 deals with how children's development and learning can be affected by several influences, including transitions. This Standard outlines how candidates' own practice, and their leadership of others, reflects this knowledge and understanding, and ensures that provision for children fully takes account of their different needs and different predispositions, notwithstanding the fact that these may change over time.

Candidates must show that they are able to identify next steps in children's development and learning, and that they know and can use strategies to help children to make those next steps. In so doing, they will ensure that the provision they make respects and responds to children's individual needs. They will take an inclusive approach that is flexible enough to respond to children's different needs at different times, such as by differentiating provision or resources, managing pupil groups or adult support, or setting appropriate targets.

Candidates are not expected to be able to plan provision to accommodate every need and transition that might affect children's development and learning; however, they should be familiar with those that are most common and know where to seek information and advice, when necessary, on those with which they are less familiar.

Candidates' leadership and support of others might be evidenced in several ways: for example, they may work alongside colleagues to help them break down the task of independent feeding into very small targets to use with a child who has severe co-ordination difficulties; they might coach colleagues in ways in which a reticent child might gradually be brought into a group and encouraged to participate; or they might seek advice from parents/carers or from colleagues inside or outside the setting on the best way to promote the development of English for a toddler whose home language is not English.

**Example S14/1**

I ensure the information about what children have done and said is gathered and recorded in writing, photographs or on video, so that staff know how children learn and can identify the next steps in their learning. For example, when children made a model aeroplane I required staff to talk to and encourage children to evaluate simply what they had done, so that staff could gain insights into children's knowledge, understanding and skills. Did the aeroplane fly? How far? Why did another child's plane fly further? What was easy to make? What was difficult? How could the plane be modified to make it fly further and faster? From the records of these conversations, I encourage the staff to plan the next steps for the children's learning.

**Example S14/2**

In our village nursery, we have admitted a toddler who has recently arrived from Poland and speaks no English. I have sought help from the parents on some Polish words that we could use with pictures to communicate with the child. I have also contacted the local authority's teacher for pupils for whom English is a second language for advice for my team on the best way to help the child's development of English. As the child develops an English vocabulary, records will be kept of the child's progress and the next steps will be identified.

**Example S14/3**

We have children with a very wide range of abilities within our setting: hence, we have to provide a selection of resources that will challenge each of our children. For example, our book area contains a wide range of differentiated books from pictures only to simple script and pop-up to other interactive page folds and hidden messages. Although the books are available for all, I have monitored the children's ability to use and hence enjoy their early reading activities, and shared this with staff, so when they are sitting with children in the book corner they encourage children to choose books that will further help their learning. For example, several children in the group are book 'shy', so I have advised the use of some large colourful pictures based on pop-up books for them as a first step. Others in the group like 'pretend' reading and story-telling, so staff encourage them to 'read' to themselves and share with an equally interested friend or with an adult. I ask staff to record the children's progress, so we can plan the children's next learning steps.

**Example S14/4**

A high proportion of our children are keen, buoyant and enthusiastic, but we do have a few who are shy, reticent and very reluctant to participate in group activities. We have a regular circle time during which children are allowed to bring a favourite or new toy to show and talk about to the group. I noticed that our shy children tend to avoid participating by never bringing an item to share. I suggested to the key workers of these children that they might talk to the children's parents or carers and suggest encouraging their child to bring an item with which the child was really enthralled and which they had talked about, so priming their child for circle time. At circle time I then set the scene for listening, sharing and encouraging by sitting near the shy child, encouraging him whilst keeping the focus on him short and positive. I asked the key workers to report the outcome to the parents and to explore further short steps to build on this, so as to increase the child's confidence and participation.

<p><b>S15 Support the development of children’s language and communication skills</b></p>
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To meet this Standard, candidates must show that their own practice and leadership of others support children’s learning in language and communication.

In supporting children’s development in these skills, they should show that they plan and provide age-appropriate opportunities for children to learn and gain competence in communicating: speaking and listening and beginning to read and write. They should also give children the confidence and opportunity, through encouragement and support, to use and practise these skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes.

Candidates may demonstrate in several ways how they lead and support colleagues’ planning; for example, by showing colleagues appropriate ways to develop babies’ communication, language and literacy, such as through eye-contact and talk during nappy changing and feeding, or through sharing songs and rhymes and telling and reading stories. They may demonstrate to colleagues how simple signs that accompany speech can help everyone in the setting communicate with children with learning and communication difficulties; and they may encourage them to expand their sign vocabulary, teach new signs to each other and to children, and use signs to accompany speech as a routine part of their work.

<p><b>Example S15/1</b></p>
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<p>When we are planning our activities programme, I continually emphasise the need to cross-reference experiences and activities to the relevant Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) areas of learning so that all staff become aware of the purpose of particular experiences and activities, and the importance of ensuring that provision is balanced. For example, in a recent activity on growing beans for our healthy garden, we agreed on the key words we would introduce to help children to develop their language skills. We related it to our numeracy work: bigger, taller, thick, thin, long and short; and then to the scientific element of knowledge and understanding of the world, such as roots, leaves and stems. We all agreed to talk about healthy eating, and then move on to cooking and tasting our beans. The children were really excited, especially when we linked it to ‘Jack and the Bean Stalk’ and started to play at climbing the stalk to find the giant. The children were very keen to communicate their views. We evaluated these activities and their impact on the children’s language and communication skills. I fed back my overall evaluation prior to planning our next topic.</p>
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<p><b>Example S15/2</b></p>
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<p>I show colleagues appropriate ways to develop children’s communication skills. I encourage them all to note and reinforce the themes within our planning, which is on display for staff and parents. I myself note, in my ‘good practice’ notebook, incidents of exemplary practice or missed opportunities, which I share with the staff concerned. I have also initiated a weekly ‘star’ board for staff and students on which I congratulate and share the best practice. This is done in a light-hearted way but is clearly an effective stimulus for encouraging good practice in developing children’s communication skills and in ensuring that we all have a shared agenda for our work.</p>
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**Example S15/3**

I arranged a visit to the local fire station. The primary purpose of this was really to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. However, I explained to the staff and volunteers how important it was to listen to the children's observations and to respond appropriately. I also explained that we should follow up the visit with stories and improvised play about the fire service, certainly underlining some safety issues, but also developing the children's communication skills as this visit was as much about listening and speaking as about nice red fire engines! This proved to be the case; excitement was high and all clamoured to talk to the fire-fighters, and literally grew in importance when they sat in the cab. They greeted their parents and carers later in the day with smiling faces, alongside much chatter, as they showed their pictures of their experiences. Their role play the next day was incredibly animated.

**Example S15/4**

I firmly believe, and hence stress to all staff, that the development and use of communication and language is at the heart of children's learning. At team meetings I have reminded everyone of the range of ways in which we can support very young children, initially by non-verbal communications through body language such as facial expression, eye contact, bending the head to listen, and hand gestures. Parents usually well understand their very young child's communications and I expect staff to become equally proficient by developing close relationships within an effective atmosphere. I have recently introduced a key worker team system so staff can develop their knowledge, understanding and relationships with their children.

**S16 Engage in sustained shared thinking with children**

To meet this Standard, candidates must show that they are aware of the importance to effective early years practice of adult-led and child-initiated sustained shared thinking. They must also plan and provide opportunities (and, indeed, seize un-planned opportunities) to improve children's thinking skills by engaging them in high quality verbal interactions involving sustained, shared thinking.

In practice, this means that candidates must demonstrate that they encourage and support colleagues in engaging in this kind of interaction with children: that is, planning and providing opportunities for children to interact with an adult or peer one-to-one, or in small groups – for example, to solve a puzzle or problem, develop an idea or skill, evaluate an activity or extend a narrative.

Candidates' leadership and support can be demonstrated in several ways. For example, they may take steps to ensure that staff encourage all those involved to contribute to the development of thinking skills, and to build on and extend children's interests and understanding. They may explain to parents or carers the importance of sustained interaction with their children, encouraging them to do this at home.

**Example S16/1**

I have put up a sheet on display where the children can, with adult help, pose questions that puzzle them. We have had: 'how does the moon stay in the sky?' and 'why don't fish drown?' During circle time we discuss their own ideas about these questions and then try to find out the answers and explain them at their own level. For the fish question we watched our goldfish, looking at the bubbles that arose through the water; we also looked at books about fish, and I drew a large fish and talked about fins and gills. I brought in a mackerel for a session and we prodded and probed the fish, naming the parts we could remember. This question sheet has really helped extend thinking and learning, all from the children's own interests.

**Example S16/2**

I regularly model how to work alongside children, talking to them whilst allowing and encouraging them to comment on choices and evaluate their work. I also encourage the children to talk to each other about their work, saying what they like and how it might be made even better. Recently, for example, I worked with a new member of staff and six children to make badges for our 'rainbow' day. All made suggestions, listened to each other, and finally agreed on the size, colours and materials before embarking on the activity. Finally, on completing this task they were elated and pleased, but at the same time quite sharply critical as they evaluated the outcomes, appreciating that next time it would be easier to complete the decoration before attaching the fasteners: all badges might then be secured the right way up! Even when the children's evaluations are sharp and pertinent, I think it important that I provide some feedback to them individually. I constantly encourage staff to adopt this approach.

**Example S16/3**

I encourage staff to plan and provide opportunities for children to interact collaboratively with an adult to solve problems. For example, during our 'Going Camping' topic I provided a simple frame tent and asked the children how we might erect it. It was great fun as we sorted out the poles to make the frame and then fit the canvas. We then spent time thinking about how to stop the tent blowing away, and several children soon suggested moving from the patio to the grassed area so we could 'hammer' it down. One child thought we should hide from the wind behind the fence; another that we should shelter under the tree. One remained very concerned that if it rained we might get wet, so we had a long talk about what tents could be made from to keep the rain out, and the child suggested we tested materials with drops of water, including our canvas. Others suggested using the hose pipe or the watering can. All this led to some excellent, high-quality shared interaction to which the children contributed their own individual thinking. I discussed this activity with staff to encourage the good practice to be transferred to future topics.

**S17 Promote positive behaviour, self-control and independence through using effective behaviour management strategies and developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they can apply the behaviour policy for their setting, that they can manage children's behaviour positively, and that they can promote self-control and independence in a manner appropriate to the stage of children's development.

Candidates should show that they plan opportunities to develop children's social and emotional skills, giving children opportunities to be responsible, make decisions, errors and choices, whilst feeling secure and safe and whilst understanding what is expected of them.

Candidates will set reasonable expectations for children's behaviour, establishing clear boundaries, and applying clear and concise rules consistently with all children. They will be able to manage behaviour effectively on a day-to-day basis, helping children to negotiate solutions to problems with other children and model these skills appropriately. They will set the tone and expectations by being assertive in challenging unacceptable behaviour, following up on children's misbehaviour and supporting children in talking through their conflicts.

Their leadership and support others may be evidenced in several ways. They may actively promote and model positive strategies to encourage appropriate behaviour; they may help colleagues to pre-empt potential behaviour problems through the effective management of the physical environment, experiences/activities, resources and scheduling. They may take steps to remind colleagues and/or parents and carers of the boundaries and rules and the reasons for them, and of the need to apply them consistently. They may work in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, professionals from other agencies, to help children who have particular behavioural difficulties to take a full part.

**Example S17/1**

I encourage staff to pre-empt potential behaviour problems through the way they use resources. For example, I try to provide materials that encourage two or more children to play co-operatively by putting several small cars and trucks in the block play area or by ensuring a good range of containers in the water or sand trays. Alongside this, I have initiated a child-friendly 'smiley faces' rota, which limits the number of children engaged on an activity. This has been adopted by all staff and the potential of overcrowding, arguing and bullying has been reduced substantially.

**Example S17/2**

As soon as our new tricycles arrived excitement was very high and the children started pushing and clamouring to use them. I had anticipated this and agreed with the staff a strategy to help the children to devise a way in which they could all be involved. So, at circle time we talked about being fair, taking turns and helping each other. I then invited the children to suggest the 'rules' about using the new tricycles. They all felt we should have a time limit and only one turn each morning and afternoon. After much 'thinking' we agreed to use our big 'egg timer' and a tick list. The staff implemented this strategy and have adopted it for other popular activities.

**Example S17/3**

I try to ensure that there is a calm atmosphere in the nursery and advise the team on techniques for promoting positive behaviour. For example, I stress the importance of talking quietly to the children, and of constantly praising good behaviour, especially when the children take turns or share toys. I ask them to make explicit our praise that such-and-such is the way to behave. We therefore give rewards such as smiley faces, special badges and stickers and make much of putting them on the children. We try to ensure that everyone has some reward, even for quite small things. I have also introduced group puppets that can be used to model good behaviour. The adult congratulates the puppet and children on their good behaviour, but often corrects only the puppet for poor behaviour rather than the child concerned, who usually notes this and modifies his or her behaviour without feeling embarrassed. I also make a point of observing colleagues' practice in promoting positive behaviour, then suggesting ways in which they might improve and helping them to do so.

**Example S17/4**

As the lead practitioner, I always try to model positive behaviour by actively listening to staff, parents and children and by respecting their input. For example, I used this approach when a child displayed his frustration by unsociable behaviour. He commandeered all the red and blue markers and refused to share. The member of staff working with the boy initially used humour, advocated compromise and then tried to make a change of direction. Having not resolved this situation, she moved her group on to their next task and, at her request, I quietly but firmly challenged his behaviour not directly but by talking about two boys who could never agree and would not share. I encouraged a discussion on how each boy felt frustrated and how they might resolve the situation. Gradually we moved on to talk about his own frustration and how the other children might feel, at which point he relinquished the pens and moved to another activity. I then discussed the situation with the member of staff and we agreed further strategies to employ in the future.

**S18 Promote children’s rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their practice**

Candidates must demonstrate that they plan to meet the needs of all children, promote and uphold children’s rights and that they actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. They will ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. Whether or not there is a diverse population in the candidate’s setting, candidates should show that they promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference with children and adults: for example, by helping children to learn about and value different aspects of people’s lives. They should encourage children to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony with other cultures and traditions.

Some children from minority ethnic groups or with special educational needs and/or disabilities may experience discrimination and barriers to participation and learning. Candidates should show how they target support to remove barriers, where these exist, and to include such children fully in all aspects of provision. For example, for children learning English as an additional language, this may involve building on children’s experiences of language at home and in the wider community by providing a range of opportunities to use their home language(s), so that their developing use of English and other languages support one another. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, this may involve planning for their inclusion in all activities through providing additional support from adults, adapting activities or environments, providing alternative activities, or using specialist aids and equipment.

Candidates will protect children’s rights, in the context of *Every Child Matters* and anti-discriminatory legislation. Given social inequalities, they will provide a safe and supportive learning environment, free from harassment, in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes and expressions of discrimination or prejudice are consistently challenged. They will be able to monitor and evaluate provision and practice in order to identify and remove any discrimination.

Candidates should show how they lead and support colleagues to promote children’s rights, equality and inclusion. For example, some candidates may be able to show that, when children’s rights have been infringed, such as in matters of safeguarding, they have advised colleagues about when and how they should act themselves, and when and to whom matters should be referred. Some may have evidence of working with colleagues and professionals from other agencies to remove barriers to learning and development; whilst others may have led team discussions on the nature and avoidance of stereotypes and discrimination.

**Example S18/1**

I challenge any racist comments heard in the setting. For example, when I heard one child calling another child a racist name, I brought a “Persona Doll” into a circle time session and discussed how the doll might be feeling if someone had called him names he did not like. I then talked about how we need to have respect for everyone’s individuality and differences. I shared this experience with colleagues when I ran a workshop on anti-discriminatory practice, focusing broadly on activities, resources and interactions between adults and children and amongst peers.

**Example S18/2**

One of my responsibilities is to take the lead, and where possible use colleagues' skills, to develop ways to include new children whose families have recently arrived from another country and who do not yet speak much English. Recently, I was making a home visit, accompanied by a member of staff who was able to speak the home language of this particular family, in order to see a toddler who was due to start attending the children's centre shortly. Initially the parents appeared anxious and very concerned about leaving their child for the first time within an environment that they thought may not be able to support their cultural and religious requirements. I was informed by the father that the child was also very wary of strangers as she had never left her parents before. I spoke to the parents with the help of the staff member acting as an interpreter and gave them a copy of our 'Nursery Handbook for Parents', which was written in their home language of Urdu. I was able to put their minds at ease when we outlined the nursery's health and safety policy with regard to the provision of food, and policy of hygiene and cleanliness. I also promoted the ethos of the nursery, which advocates racial and cultural harmony. I reported back to the staff who would be working with the child.

**Example S18/3**

We have recently enrolled a number of babies and young children with learning and communication difficulties. I have sought specialist professional guidance on how to support the staff, and hence the children, to expand their sign vocabulary, teach new signs to each other and to children, and to use more signs to accompany speech as a routine part of their work. I have been demonstrating this to colleagues and we have all been monitoring our practices. I have also video-recorded some of our work. I have now arranged a staff meeting to share and discuss our experiences with a visiting expert.

**Example S18/4**

Whenever possible I put myself in the place of the child and think 'If that was me, how would I want the adult to treat me?' For example, before I wipe a child's nose I explain what's going to happen. I respect the child's right to privacy and emphasise this with my team. So when the changing room is in use no one else goes in. The children are included and informed about when they will be changed, e.g. "When you've finished playing with the cars shall we change your nappy?" We do have a policy on children's rights, which we've discussed formally, but it seems to me that the best way to disseminate the policy to colleagues is to model good practice.

**S19 Establish a safe environment and employ practices that promote children's health, safety and physical, mental and emotional well-being**

Candidates must demonstrate that they establish and maintain a safe, comfortable, supportive and inclusive environment. This environment will be one in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes and expressions of discrimination or prejudice are challenged; children will be free from harassment. Candidates should also demonstrate that they promote the good health and welfare of the children in their care.

Standards elsewhere deal with the knowledge that candidates will need: for example, on health and safety, and safeguarding policies and procedures. However, candidates will need to be able to act on that knowledge appropriately. They will need to ensure that staff for whom they have responsibility have the required qualifications and knowledge to help them to care for children effectively, and that the environment indoors and outdoors, including furniture, equipment and toys, are safe, secure and appropriate for the children involved, and well-planned to support children's development and learning.

Candidates will provide a secure environment where children can take risks and make mistakes; they will ensure that children understand the dangers in their immediate environment and know how to act to keep themselves safe. They will ensure that each child in their care has a key practitioner who is special to them and their family. They will promote healthy eating and regular exercise through the provision they make, and be able to take appropriate action when children are ill, including any necessary steps to prevent infection. They will also provide support and comfort for children who are upset or distressed.

Candidates may lead and support others in several ways. For example, they might produce a brief guide to health and safety and use it to induct and brief new colleagues or other adults. They might introduce some specific practices and procedures to promote welfare and health, such as providing fruit for refreshments, making sure fresh drinking water is always available, or setting up a quiet area where children can rest or sleep if they are tired. They might institute checks to ensure that colleagues working directly for them or under their supervision are following health and safety procedures, and promoting children's health and welfare in all aspects of their work. Where practice needs to be improved, they will provide advice, support, coaching or training.

**Example S19/1**

After an accident to a baby, I found that a practitioner in my team did not have any knowledge of risk assessments. I found, on the Internet, a health and safety policy with a suitable risk assessment for the age group. This proved to be a very useful source of advice on the establishment and maintenance of a safe environment, and I monitored with colleagues the effect on our practice and subsequently integrated the procedure into our assessment processes.

**Example S19/2**

To ensure health and safety, I insist on a very rigorous set of protocols regarding the disposal of nappies. I noticed that one of the younger practitioners in the babies' room was not following these fully. I took her to one side and reminded her of the importance of following the protocols, and asked her if she could go through them with me. It became clear that she was unsure of the requirements. I revised them with her but also used an opportunity a little later to reinforce the protocols with all the practitioners in that room.

**Example S19/3**

Many of our pre-school children have been attending this nursery since they were babies and are very happy with the routines. It is sometimes more difficult to settle children who have only started coming at the pre-school stage. I held a meeting of the practitioner team to get their ideas for how we could make new children feel comfortable at the beginning of the day, and I encouraged staff to use circle time to gather ideas from the children. As a result we have a buddy system for new arrivals.

**Example S19/4**

To ensure the setting is a safe environment, I hold a number of informal meetings with staff and a selection of volunteer parents/carers. We discuss a wide range of issues relevant to children's health and safety, including child protection. Equally, we discuss matters of physical safety, and the balance between safety and affording children the opportunity to be creative and exercise choice. I allow the children to make choices and assess risk for themselves, whilst ensuring that the area and equipment are safe. At a recent meeting, I discussed with staff safety in the outdoor area. I always ensure that this area and the equipment are safe but I allow the children to make choices and assess risk for themselves. For example, I remember one child who had climbed to the top of the grass bank but was unsure about how to get back down. Rather than taking over and lifting him from the bank I suggested to him that he might like to try coming down on his tummy. This increased his confidence so much that he repeated the action safely several times. This seemed to get the balance right between safety and risk taking.

**S20 Recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of harm and know how to act to protect them**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they take the necessary steps to safeguard and promote children's welfare. They will be able to apply child protection policies and protocols, health and safety policy and the related procedures. They will be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of actual or potential harm and abuse in children, and they will know how and when to act to safeguard them, including liaising with and referring matters to health and social services.

They should be able to apply the setting's anti-bullying policy, combat bullying behaviour and support children who are being bullied. They should be able to act to ensure that ICT is used with suitable safeguards for children. The latter is not simply a matter of avoiding trailing wires, but also of Internet content.

Candidates will ensure that colleagues are sufficiently knowledgeable about relevant policies and procedures. They will also ensure that colleagues are able to apply health and safety policy and minimise risk in all aspects of their work. Such leadership and support may, for example, be demonstrated through fully briefing their colleagues on child protection policies and procedures, so that know when to act and to whom they should report, or by supporting colleagues in dealing with specific cases. Or it may be demonstrated through conducting health and safety audits of the premises.

**Example S20/1**

A parent, who is on the designated collection list, arrived at the setting to collect her child. On her arrival she appeared to be incapacitated, which could have been due to a variety of reasons, including alcohol, drugs or illness. Due to the condition of the parent I was unable to release the child into her care. In a non-confrontational, non-judgmental manner, and in line with our health and safety policy, I encouraged the parent to leave the immediate area in a quiet manner, whilst accompanied by a suitable member of staff. In agreement with the parent, another relative was contacted by a member of staff and arrangements were made for collection of the child and transportation of the parent. On arrival of the relative, I explained the situation and referred to and explained our policies and procedures on health and safety and child protection. The incident was recorded using the appropriate method and following our guidelines. I will continue to monitor the situation, including talking to the parent to build up a relationship with her, and observing any effect upon the child. If there is a similar occurrence in the future or other behaviour that gives cause for concern about the parent's ability to provide appropriate care for the child, I will take further action. This could include alerting other agencies to the situation through liaison and use of the Common Assessment Framework, or initiating a planning meeting with other relevant agencies.

**Example S20/2**

We have one child in the setting who constantly seeks possession of the most popular resources. He frequently identifies the most vulnerable children and demands or snatches things, and will even hit or kick them to gain ownership. For example, he loves footballs and as soon as they are made available, will threaten in order to gain the balls. Often, not being content with one, he will continue to bully for more. I advised staff to stick to our bullying policy of talking to the child concerned and to support the children being bullied. This did not resolve the situation, so I invited in the child's parents to agree strategies with them, such as a short removal from the group and the use of the 'thinking chair'. I am now monitoring the situation.

**Example S20/3**

As the key worker for a child was on leave, I attended a case conference that had been called by social services, and which included myself and other professionals. I was asked to attend as I had already alerted my manager to my concerns about this child because of some bruising on his arm. At the conference it was agreed that we should observe and monitor this little boy, keeping careful note of our observations and reporting back to the designated key worker in Social Services on a weekly basis. If there was further cause for concern, the setting was to report immediately. Until his key worker returned, I acted in this capacity and fortunately no further problems occurred.

**S21 Assess, record and report on progress in children's development and learning and use this as a basis for differentiating provision**

Candidates must be able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the Early Learning Goals to determine children's progress towards them. They should be able to use information from systematic and routine observations to promote, record, and track children's progress towards these goals. This is the basis for differentiated and personalised provision.

Candidates must be able to comply with the assessment and reporting requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that they can: complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile; summarise the information it contains and use it as the basis of clear oral and/or written reports to parents/carers on children's general progress and achievements; and, at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide information for teachers in Key Stage 1 to ensure a smooth transition from the setting to school.

Candidates should be able to manage the assessment process so that the progress of all children in respect of all the Early Learning Goals is kept current by arrangements for the observation of children, procedures for the recording and dissemination of information, and arrangements to ensure that the information derived from assessment will be used to inform future practice and provision.

Candidates should be aware that some children may have additional needs and might, therefore, benefit from additional assessment so that practitioners can better support their development and learning. Candidates should demonstrate that they understand the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), know how to complete it and understand how CAF core data can help professionals from all agencies work together to identify and address any factors from outside the setting that may be affecting a child's learning and development.

Candidates' leadership of practice might be demonstrated in several ways: for example, briefing colleagues about key assessment objectives, and how evidence to support the assessment should be gathered, recorded and reported. They might encourage colleagues to contribute assessment evidence in planning and evaluation meetings to back up views on next steps or for modifying or improving practice. Or they might train colleagues in how to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, the Common Assessment Framework and any other assessment schedules used in the setting.

**Example S21/1**

I lead regular, minuted staff meetings for the 0-3 years team. These meetings have a clear agenda, focusing on whether our differentiated provision has resulted in sufficient progress for all children. It also always includes opportunities for staff to report what went well and what did not go well in the activities provided. Minutes are circulated. Staff are encouraged to take action adjusting their practice following the meeting. They are aware I will be monitoring these adjustments. I observe and follow up their actions with what I hope will be sensitive but positive feedback.

**Example S21/2**

I was concerned that we were not challenging sufficiently in all elements of the area of learning, knowledge and understanding of the world. I led the team in an analysis of our observations of children's responses to activities related to the early learning goals for the element on exploration and investigation. We discussed how we could record these observations to help us to report on individual children's progress in their Early Years Profile. These judgements have helped us differentiate our activities so we can provide more challenge for individual children.

**Example S21/3**

We are using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), so we can work alongside professionals from the outside agencies with whom we have contact, to identify any factor from outside our setting that may be affecting a child's learning and development. I have provided training for the staff on its usage and we refer to it when planning our provision. For example, we identified via the physiotherapist and the CAF, a child who had been identified with poor fine motor control. I had noted the child seemed to be clumsy but the parent had only mentioned a problem with walking. I liaised with the physiotherapist and agreed possible areas to focus on. Over the last few weeks I have, for example, been encouraging staff in their planning to provide the child with opportunities to use building blocks to create towers, multi-link, and wooden puzzles. I have asked staff to monitor, record and at times video his progress, and to plan, based on the child's success rate, more challenging tasks to ensure ongoing progress. I have also kept his parent informed of progress and have arranged for her to join one of our sessions so that she can directly observe what we are doing. We want to encourage her to use these same techniques at home, and share any concerns about her child's development with us in future.

**Example S21/4**

We maintain an Early Years Profile for each child. I have provided a wall chart, demarcated into each area of learning. Within our planning we agree a focus for the area and children we will particularly observe during each session. Our observations are recorded on 'post-its' and added to the chart. At the end of each week I ensure the key workers update their children's ongoing profile. We then take cognisance of our assessments in planning the next step in each child's learning. The profile is updated each half term from our notes using a colour-coding system. This profile moves with the child when they move to their next setting.

**S22 Give constructive and sensitive feedback to help children understand what they have achieved and think about what they need to do next and, when appropriate, encourage children to think about, evaluate and improve on their own performance**

Children are likely to make more progress if they are given immediate, constructive and sensitive feedback that identifies what they have or have not understood or achieved, and helps them to overcome difficulties or to think about what they need to do next. Some young children, especially those in the upper age range of the Early Years Foundation Stage, will be able to begin to think about how they can evaluate and improve their own progress and decide what and how they might improve.

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they are able to integrate their monitoring and assessment of children's progress into their everyday practice. They should demonstrate that they recognise when children are doing well or are encountering difficulties and can respond appropriately in their interactions with children: for example, by giving specific targeted praise, providing constructive feedback, by addressing difficulties, or by asking targeted open questions that provide opportunities for children to share their views on their progress and performance.

Candidates will lead and support others in several ways. They might do so by giving colleagues working for them or under their direct supervision specific instructions about what they should monitor when working with groups of children, how they should intervene and what they should record and/or feed back. Alternatively, they might teach colleagues how to use meaningful praise and constructive feedback when working with children, so children get clear information on what they are doing well and how they might improve or make more progress. Or they might do so by encouraging colleagues to seek and listen to the views of older children in the setting about the experiences and activities they are involved in, how well they are doing, what they might have done better and what they might do next.

**Example S22/1**

I encourage practitioners to give feedback to children. At the end of the sessions, they guide children in talking about their work and in evaluating simply what they have learned. In this way, children are beginning to understand how they can improve. A newly-admitted child, in his third week with us, said, 'I have learnt to hammer nails' when I asked what he had learned in the woodwork area outside. The following day he returned to the area and continued to hammer more nails. I encouraged my colleague-practitioner to work with him and discuss how he might use his new skill. While continuing to hammer he clearly reflected and suddenly exclaimed, 'I could make a fence for the rabbit by hammering the wood together. Look, like this!' I discussed this with the member of staff and advised further more challenging tasks for her to introduce in order to involve and extend further the child's eye-hand co-ordination.

**Example S22/2**

I noted one girl was finding it hard to clap to a rhythm, so I helped her to tap out the syllables of her name on different parts of her body. I suggested to other staff that they use a shaker and a drum to tap out her name and move on to more clapping games. As a result, she was able to clap in time after some more activities. In this case, we think that our assessment promoted action that in turn led to an improvement.

**Example S22/3**

I encourage staff to ensure that in a typical day, children will have some formal opportunities to count and to carry out a practical activity with a mathematical focus: for example, when sorting fruits into matching sets according to colour or shape. Staff try to make the learning fun with action songs, rhymes and by the use of a teddy bear who makes mistakes so that the children can help him out with the correct answers. The bear 'asks' them what they could now do and what they need to practise to get even better. In this way they are receiving feedback and evaluating their number work before moving on to the next stages of calculation.

**S23 Identify and support children whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances and know when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they are aware that some children will experience changes or difficulties that affect their ability to develop and learn. They will know about the likely impact of key transitions such as divorce, bereavement, family break-up, birth of siblings and changes in childcare. Candidates will be able to identify children who may be experiencing transitions that affect the children's ability to develop and learn, so enabling candidates to provide support in several ways.

Candidates should provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment to help children experiencing transitions feel secure while they are in the setting. They will routinely model the kinds of support, experiences and activities that can be provided to support successfully children experiencing transitions. They will watch children closely, 'tuning in' to individuals, listening to their concerns and taking account of any changes in their attitude or behaviour. They will manage provision to help children and families experiencing transition to reach a positive outcome: for example, encouraging children to talk about their feelings and frustrations, or using puppets and stories to help children explore and understand transitions, or providing a quiet, caring environment when needed. They will empathise with and reassure children and families experiencing transitions and, when appropriate, support the families by exploring and examining possible actions or suggesting sources of support or advice outside the setting. Their actions will reflect the importance and limits of their role in providing care and support, such that they know when and how to intervene, and when, where and how to refer matters on.

Candidates' leadership and support might be evidenced in several ways. For example, they may have taken steps to ensure that colleagues responsible for, or working with, children experiencing transitions are well-informed about the difficulties that the children are facing and how they should be supported. Or they may provide evidence that they have made arrangements to ensure that colleagues are clear about the boundaries of their role in providing support and that they understand and respect confidentiality.

**Example S23/1**

A member of my team had a boy who was finding it very difficult to socialise. His parents had recently separated and his mother had set up a new household with a partner with two older, apparently ebullient, youngsters. 'Our' boy was very shy and didn't talk to the other children. I observed him carefully and found that he did talk to himself when playing with toy animals in a small sand tray. I shared my observations with my team member and advised her to slowly join in his play and gradually involve another child to play with him. The next day he was keen that the same child be with him for the same activity. He continued to need quite a lot of adult support and some intervention in his play to encourage him to play and talk to other children, but my colleague has continued to build on my advised strategies and the child is gradually increasing his interactions with his peers.

**Example S23/2**

We have a very aggressive girl who started the nursery as a baby and comes from a family where domestic violence is the norm. Her behaviour has become more challenging now that she is two years old; we assess that she is becoming more aware of her father's aggression and is distressed by the experience, including the effect on her mother and older sister. However, this clearly isn't a short-term problem: evidence of a consistent pattern in her behaviour was gathered through observations by nursery practitioners, the area SENCO and an educational psychologist. From the advice received, I advised my staff of various strategies to manage her behaviour. The use of 'distraction' and a 'one-to-one relationship' were the most successful. I advised staff on the use of these strategies and on step-by-step approaches to integrate her into group activities. My job all the time was to monitor the situation and advise staff how to proceed at each stage of the way.

**Example S23/3**

At this nursery we make home visits before the children start. The parents are always asked if they are happy for us to do so and mostly they agree. We started to notice though that some of the families in short-term bed and breakfast accommodation were amongst those not happy for us to visit. We make special efforts now, as a team, to make individual contact with the parents when they come in the morning and work hard to quickly build the strong relationship with these children and their families that we feel we have already established with the others we had visited at home. This has helped us to ensure that children in this group were benefiting from the nursery provision to the same degree as other children. Close contact has also helped us to direct the families towards other sources of support that may be available. Access to multi-professional teams has helped me to understand the range of support that is available.

**S24 Be accountable for the delivery of high quality provision**

Candidates must demonstrate that they are accountable for the delivery of high quality provision. This accountability is first and foremost to children and their parents and carers: for example, in relation to the quality of education and care they provide, the outcomes of *Every Child Matters* and children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. In addition, they are accountable to senior staff and managers through the process of performance review.

Candidates' leadership and support of others may be demonstrated, for example, by leading on action planning to improve practice, or by providing or arranging professional development that helps colleagues to meet performance targets or provide better outcomes for children.

**Example S24/1**

I am responsible to the nursery manager for my practice and that of my team. I am expected to promote our mission statement of 'Excellence in child care; we make a difference'. My manager responds by her frequent comments on displays, activities and the practice she sees. I also gather feedback from parents on the children's responses to the provision when they drop off or collect their children. In addition, we also have a suggestion box for both parents and staff. Based on feedback from all these sources I draw up an action plan list. I share, implement, monitor and evaluate the actions taken and report via our notice board on our successes.

**Example S24/2**

I need to uphold the vision for the children's centre, which is: 'To nurture, to care, to make a difference'. I am accountable to the nursery manager and parents for implementing this vision and ensuring that my practice, and that of my team, reaches the standards expected by external bodies. In consultation with all stakeholders, I draw up an annual development plan, which we display on our noticeboard. It indicates the things we intend to improve, how we intend to do it and when we hope to have achieved it. I update it regularly so everyone knows about the progress we are making and can feed back their impressions. I provide a short written report for the nursery manager and parents each term.

**Example S24/3**

I am accountable to the head of centre for the work in the babies and toddlers groups. When she visits the areas, she makes comments and gives helpful suggestions to assist us in achieving a high quality of provision. This term she focused on our outdoor play. She observed that children tended to play alone or alongside their peers. Few were learning and improving their social and communication skills by using physical play, which involved their interaction with others such as throwing or catching balls, or rolling and capturing hoops. I use these suggestions now to set targets for myself and for the staff. We all agree our targets, focus on them, keeping a brief log of our actions. I ensure we all make a short verbal report at our monthly meeting. We also report back to the head of centre when our actions have made a sustained positive impact on the quality of our provision.

## Relationships with children

Those awarded Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:

**S25 Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children**

Candidates must demonstrate that they build positive relationships with children as a basis for working effectively with them. This will be manifest in several ways.

First, candidates should demonstrate that: they focus on the needs of individuals within the group during planning, working with children and evaluating the impact of provision; they recognise that children are part of a family or caring network as well as a wider social context, and appreciate the diversity of these networks; they take account of children's skills, interests and preferences; and they notice changes in individuals' attitudes or behaviour and follow up any concerns, such as recognising when a child needs to sleep or to be cuddled.

Second, they should treating all children fairly, and with respect and consideration: for example, by applying rules and consequences of breaking them consistently and fairly across the setting, by making children feel safe and secure, by avoiding embarrassing them or making them afraid to make mistakes, and by respecting and taking account of children's language, religious or cultural backgrounds.

Third, they will ensure that children feel valued and secure. This they might do by: taking an interest in them as individuals; listening carefully to them and taking account of their responses; asking open-ended questions to find out what children are thinking and feeling; involving them and their families in decisions concerning them; taking account of their preferences and interests, and by making sure that each child has a key individual on whom they can depend.

Fourth, they will act and respond consistently: explaining the reasons for their actions, consequences and next steps; establishing routines and implementing them consistently.

Fifth, they will communicate effectively with children: establishing rapport, adapting their style of communication to meet children's needs, responding respectfully and constructively to children's questions, listening carefully and taking account of children's responses.

And, finally, they will provide support and encourage a positive attitude and disposition to learning, such as by giving specific, targeted praise, or by breaking tasks down into smaller, more manageable steps where children are struggling in order to prevent early failure.

Candidates will lead and support others through modelling good practice in their own relationships with children. More specifically, they may demonstrate their leadership through advising colleagues on ways in which to establish or re-establish positive relationships with children.

## Example S25/1

We meet as a team each week to go through and share our observations of children's play and achievements, so each child's key worker can keep records up to date. We often talk about any difficulties members of staff may have with particular children and their behaviour. We do this so we are all careful to treat each child respectfully and fairly. For example, I had noticed that one little boy was often disruptive but some staff just allowed him to carry on like this - excusing him because his mum had died when he was a baby, and his dad's life was complicated. The child was even being left unchecked after hurting other children. When we discussed his progress, I raised my concerns and this gave other colleagues a chance to talk about how sad this situation was for him but that he could not be allowed to hurt others and disrupt their play. So we decided we'd adopt a gentle but firm way to show we love him but not his behaviour. The member of staff – when possible his key worker – would take him aside after comforting the offended child/children and quietly explain. Gradually the child's behaviour improved and the other children became more positive towards him.

## Example S25/2

One of our children is in foster care and on the child protection register. She travels to and from the centre by taxi every day and there have been, and still are, constant changes of driver. The child has been insecure and subdued right from the start, and things were not getting much better. However, I did notice that she was developing a close attachment to Owen, one of our empathy dolls, so I gradually started talking to Owen: first, asking him what he was doing and how he was feeling, then later using him as a kind of intermediary between the child and myself. It took some time but, eventually, the two of us were able to talk *about* Owen. I suggested that some of the other staff also used Owen as and when necessary.

Owen was important for establishing a trusting relationship, so I used to let her take Owen home with her each day. Some months later, when she was placed in long-term foster care in another part of the country, she took Owen with her.

## Example S25/3

Fairly early during my time in my present job, I overheard a couple of my team talking about one child's parents in a disparaging manner within hearing distance of some of the children. I was very concerned by this as I think it is not only disrespectful but unprofessional. I was worried that this might have become commonplace in this nursery, so rather than just speak to these two staff members, I decided to raise the issue, I hope subtly, at one of our meetings. Parents' influences on their children are often mentioned when we discuss individual children's development and learning each week, so it was easy for me to bring into the discussion the notion of principles we could work by, including respecting the children's families and what this would mean in practice.

**S26 Communicate sensitively and effectively with children from birth to the end of the foundation stage**

To meet this Standard, candidates must show that they use a warm and respectful approach when initiating relationships with children, and they must show how their personal skills in communicating with children enable them to lead and support others' practice.

They should demonstrate that they allow children to initiate and engage in communication at their own pace, and that they engage the interest and attention of children using methods appropriate to children's ages and developmental levels. They should recognise when children do not wish to communicate, or wish to disengage from communication, and respect their wishes.

Candidates should get to know children well, using their knowledge of children's home circumstances, interests and preferences and shared experiences, as topics of communication. They should show that they can use a range of methods to communicate with children, including talking, stories, sounds, rhymes, games, gestures, symbols and signs, and language-based activities and experiences. Candidates should encourage children to communicate in different ways, such as through touch, mark-making, pretend play and painting, and understand that they may need to use alternative or augmented methods of communication for some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Candidates' communication with children should be clear and effective, at a level and pace suited to their development and understanding, using appropriate praise and positive language, whilst respecting the children's chosen method of communication. Candidates should encourage children to communicate respectfully with adults and with each other. They should recognise where a child may have a communication problem and know where to seek help and advice so that they can help support and develop the child's communication through day-to-day activities.

Candidates must show how they lead and support others. They might do this in several ways: for example, by giving advice to colleagues on ways to improve their communication with children that have no or little speech, or by showing colleagues how to incorporate strategies into their practice for supporting children, using methods such as Makaton signs for children with hearing impairments. Some candidates might suggest strategies to colleagues to help children newly arrived from another country to communicate their needs and preferences and so develop fluency in English.

**Example S26/1**

I observed staff communicating with babies at the pre-verbal stage, and noticed that one member of staff found this difficult. I discussed this with the member of staff, highlighting the need to communicate with the baby. I modelled the use of infant-directed speech, echoing the sounds the baby makes, leaving pauses for the baby to respond and giving praise and encouragement to the baby. I would also compliment the other team members when I observed them interacting with babies, allowing the baby to lead the 'proto-conversations'. This started a discussion within that team about the importance of non-verbal communication through the use of appropriate facial expression and body language.

**Example S26/2**

When new staff are appointed, I schedule time for them to observe my practice. Whilst undertaking an outdoor activity with a small group of children and parents, I encouraged the parents and the children to interact and explore the environment using their senses. One child wanted to examine a caterpillar so together he and I gently edged it into a pot. He studied it through the lens and called me to share what he could see. I asked questions such as 'I wonder how it moves/ eats?', and this allowed me to introduce descriptive and naming vocabulary. This then enabled the child to talk and share what he had discovered. During this discussion, I had sat beside the child and listened attentively: looking at his face and eyes as he talked and giving him time to have his say; sometimes nodding or raising my eyebrows as one does when listening carefully and with interest. I had wanted to demonstrate appropriate listening skills. Later we sang the 'Caterpillar Rhyme', which everyone seemed to enjoy, and we all (children, parents and I) talked about what we'd learnt. The whole session was fun and yet it showed how young children learn, how we reinforce concepts, how we engage children in the communication process and encourage them to reflect on their learning. At the end of the session, I discussed with the member of staff the reasons why I had done things in this particular way.

**Example S26/3**

A baby whose family came from Sudan was very fractious at first, even though her mother had spent several days settling her in, helping us become familiar with her likes and dislikes, routines and rhythms. I suggested to the key worker that through an interpreter she ask the mother if she did anything at home when trying to settle her baby to sleep. The mother told her about a special song she sings; she taught the song to the key worker (amid much laughter at her initial efforts) and this seems to have helped calm the baby. Certainly, it has also made a difference to that mother's confidence with us; she has a really strong relationship with the baby's key worker now.

**S27 Listen to children, pay attention to what they say and value and respect their views**

Listening is a vital part of establishing respectful relationships with children and is central to the learning process. Children have a right to be listened to and for their views to be taken seriously about matters that affect them.

Candidates must demonstrate that they understand the benefits of listening to children: that is, how it can make a difference to practitioners' understanding of children's priorities, interests, concerns, capabilities and feelings, how it can help them to gain confidence, self-esteem, communication and social skills, and how it can help practitioners match early years provision more closely to children's needs.

Candidates should demonstrate that they respect children and believe that children of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are important, unique and worth listening to. They will work collaboratively with parents/carers, as appropriate. They will apply their recognition that babies are capable communicators. Whilst being alert to their non-verbal language, they will patiently and sensitively listen and respond to children, and provide opportunities for children to express their views. As well as providing specific opportunities for adults to listen to children and find out about their thoughts and feelings, they will observe skilfully, noting for example body language or the way children interact, to supplement information gained through listening. They will use a range of ways and opportunities to observe and listen to children: for example, while playing with them, using toys or puppets as intermediaries, or through the visual arts. They will take children's views and experiences seriously and use them to inform practice. At the same time, they will be honest about how far they may be able to act upon children's views or keep them confidential. However, they will feed back to children so they can see that their views have been taken seriously, including why it hasn't been possible to act on their suggestions.

Candidates' leadership and support of others might be evidenced by planning opportunities for staff to listen to particular children and, during evaluation of the experiences/activities, seek feedback on what children have said. Alternatively, they might teach colleagues ways to communicate with children with communication difficulties, such as by using alternative or augmentative communication, or arrange for a parent/carer or other specialist to train staff in its use.

**Example S27/1**

Following a visit and performance by some local Indian dancers, the children started talking about music they like listening to and making at home. I realised we had not known about some of this. One three-year-old girl's family originated from Ireland, so I asked her grandmother, who usually collected her from nursery, about this. She told us that the girl already went to Irish dancing class and her older brother could play the tin whistle. After that, I related this story to the rest of the team, asking them to find out about other children's musical experiences at home and some of the families ended up performing a concert one Saturday. It delighted everyone. I felt we had shown how we value and respect the children's families. Equally importantly, it helped me to develop my practice and I was able to encourage the staff to recognise just how much we don't know about our children and families and what 'rich' lives we can draw on in our community.

**Example S27/2**

I wanted to find out what the children like and dislike about our nursery, the routines, and so on, and I asked the staff for ideas about how we might do this. We agreed that while we like to think we're good at tuning in to the children, including the babies, and that parents do sometimes tell us when their children are worried about an aspect of nursery life, we really wanted to listen to the children themselves. So we introduced a Teddy and said she was a 'new girl' called Sue, who would be coming to the nursery, and that we wanted to show her what we do like and don't like. As the children spend some periods of time in a family group with their key workers, we also asked the older children if they had noticed any special likes and dislikes of the babies and toddlers about which they could tell Sue Ted. Some of those children used our small digital video camera so they could show Sue Ted what they had discovered and what they thought. As a result of the children's efforts I have been able to lead some valuable changes in our routines and organisation.

**Example S27/3**

I observed one member of staff at different times with various groups of children, talking with them as they played in the water trough. She was thoughtfully changing the kinds and complexity of her questions about water and the objects they were playing with according to what she knew about each child. She was not only 'listening actively', she was then making suggestions for further explorations, other items children could bring to the trough, or subsequent activities like painting to extend their learning. I asked her if I could describe what I had seen at a future staff training session, as her work had been of such high quality. The session was very successful – not least because she told me afterwards that she had not herself been aware of some of what she had done. (I realised she is an intuitive practitioner!) She recognised that the more conscious we are of how we listen and respond to children, the more effectively we can provide for their learning and the more capable we are of explaining our work to parents and others.

**S28 Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children**

To meet this Standard, candidates should demonstrate that they understand the values and attitudes that they should encourage children to develop, and that they put these into practice with children and adults in all aspects of their work in the setting. They should also demonstrate their professional behaviour in areas such as punctuality, time-management and reliability.

Candidates might show how they lead and support others in several ways. For example, they might establish practices and routines that are followed by all colleagues working with them, such as greeting and making welcome all children, parents and visitors, and always saying 'please' and 'thank-you' and expecting children to do the same. They might do so by modelling personal skills in listening, empathy and respecting differing views, or through a 'can do' attitude that is picked up by the children. They might do so through a demonstrable regard for their own and others' property.

**Example S28/1**

Children learn a lot from watching the ways that we behave towards them and towards each other. For example, one boy was becoming isolated in the class group, and the more isolated he became the more aggressively he behaved towards the other children. Following a discussion with staff, we decided to demonstrate how much we valued him by: first, 'catching' him being good and praising him for his efforts; second, choosing him as a friend or partner ourselves in games; and, third, showing him and the other children that he was equally loved and valued. I monitored his attitudes and noted that very quickly his self-esteem grew, he became less aggressive, and the other children followed our lead and started to include him in their games.

**Example S28/2**

Two brothers (one is three and the other four) were arguing over a toy car. They began to fight. A member of staff knelt between the boys and talked to them quietly. She listened to them both and one relinquished the car to the other. He was praised for giving up the car. Later the fight resumed. The older boy told the other children that he 'hated' his brother. The same member of staff intervened by kneeling in front of the older boy. She made eye contact and talked quietly. She said that she understood that he was feeling cross with his brother but that he shouldn't say that he 'hates' him. The two were encouraged to make up. The younger extended his arms to hug the older (who declined) but the two played together with toy cars and a garage. I advised the key worker to sit near to them on the floor, let them play together, respond to their questions when they turned to speak to her but not to interrupt them. We later discussed the effectiveness of this strategy.

**Example S28/3**

I noticed that when the children were bathing dolls in the water trough they were ignoring the black dolls and selecting only the white ones. I went and began playing with one of the black dolls, pretending she was my baby, talking to her and telling her she was beautiful and clever. The children watched me and one said she did not like my doll. I asked why and the girl made a racist remark. This made me realise we needed to do more to engender anti-racist attitudes and behaviour. I gently explained to the group how upset my 'baby' was by what had been said and how it is unacceptable to hurt people in this way. At the next staff meeting, I told the team of my concerns and we planned to invite an anti-racism trainer with whom we can explore ways in which we could develop our practices and resources.

**Example S28/4**

Sometimes the noise level gets rather high in the nursery and the children raise their voices even more in order to be heard. They don't realise how loud they have become. So if, for example, I'm visiting the toddlers' room to see how things are going and I find it very noisy, I worry some children may be intimidated and those with a hearing problem may find it all rather painful. At a team meeting, I discussed this problem with the staff. We decided to go round speaking quite softly, praising the children for being able to use quieter voices. I usually find the children respond by reducing the volume of their own voices too, and the overall noise level has quietened.

**Example S28/5**

We had a problem with one little girl who was biting the other children a lot. I don't focus on undesirable children's behaviour directly but, to reinforce the behaviours I do expect, I advocate the use of the empathy doll. I put the doll on my knee and said she was upset because someone had bitten her. The child who was biting came and comforted the doll. I discussed this with her key worker who reinforced my methodology and reported that she had noticed an improvement in the child's behaviour.

## Communicating and working in partnership with families and carers

Those awarded Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:

**S29 Recognise and respect the influential and enduring contribution that families and parents/carers can make to children's development, well-being and learning**

Candidates must demonstrate that they recognise the important role that families and parents/carers can make to children's development, well-being and learning. They will work in close partnership with parents/carers as a routine part of their practice in several ways: regularly involving parents/carers in identifying their children's strengths and areas for development; listening to parents/carers and valuing what they say; involving parents/carers in the experiences provided by the setting; and by supporting parents/carers in furthering their understanding of their children's educational development and social care needs, as appropriate.

Candidates' leadership and support for others might be evidenced by involving colleagues, when appropriate, in case conferences and meetings with families/carers or by making arrangements for colleagues to work alongside parents/carers, modelling the skills required.

**Example S29/1**

Each half term I ensure that all the staff display the topic and show how the activity links to the children's areas of learning. For example, this half term, we are looking at candles and light and how we use them to celebrate these festivals. I ensure parents/carers are involved so that they can talk to their children about the activities. Hence, I oversee the production of a booklet linked to the topic, which outlines the letters and words being learnt, the number activities we will focus on, the songs and rhymes we will share. Alongside this is always a plea for resources, including the possibility of parents/carers being involved and sharing their knowledge and skills.

**Example S29/2**

We have set up a parents' forum so that parents and carers can have more input into the nursery. We have already been inundated with some really good ideas, and offers of help and resources. Some parents with computer skills have come forward, whilst others have volunteered to help arrange and support outings and visits. We have also begun a monthly newsletter from the group to let everyone know what activities are going on and what kind of help is currently needed. We have a parents' news-board and I am responsible for encouraging all staff and parents to contribute to it and for ensuring that it is regularly updated.

**Example S29/3**

I thought I would really try to capture children's interest with a unit of activities relating to sweets. We had a collection of chocolate wrappers to represent our favourites. One morning one of the parents lingered to talk and started remembering her favourites when she was a child. She offered to start a display of parents' favourite sweets and this really developed when one family brought in some old toffee tins they had saved. The display grew and grew with most families wanting to add their own favourites. Children came into the nursery to find parents and grandparents sharing memories and telling stories of liquorice and sherbet dabs, pocket money and penny sweets. We all seemed to learn something new and the children especially enjoyed having their family represented in the display. At a staff meeting, I shared the development of the theme with staff and emphasised the positive contribution that parents/carers had made to the children's learning.

**Example S29/4**

I have created a brochure for parents which talks about children's development from birth to three. I used the Birth to Three Matters Framework as a model, including some of their examples, that shows how exploration and play are the ways that children learn. Following a discussion with staff, I listed some examples of how parents and children can play together at home without expensive toys using, for example, boxes, blankets, hats and scarves. In this way, we hope to celebrate some activities that families may already do, and perhaps give extra ideas for ways that play can help development.

**S30 Establish fair, respectful, trusting and constructive relationships with families and parents/carers, and communicate sensitively and effectively with them**

To meet this Standard, candidates must show that they establish and maintain positive relationships with families/carers. They do this by being approachable, and communicating in a professional, respectful, open and welcoming manner that is likely to promote trust. They should demonstrate a non-judgmental attitude that values diversity and recognises cultural, religious and ethnic differences.

Candidates should demonstrate empathy and sensitivity when encouraging families to discuss issues that are important to them. They should show they are aware of how to manage confidentiality: they know how to discuss confidential matters with families in a way that ensures discretion, whilst making clear the boundaries and their responsibilities. Where family members have communication difficulties, perhaps because of a disability or a lack of fluency in English, they should arrange facilities to facilitate effective communication.

Candidates may show, in several ways, how they lead and support others. As with Standard S29, they might do this by involving colleagues, as appropriate, in conferences and meetings with families/carers and modelling the skills required for effective communication.

**Example S30/1**

When we drafted our child protection policy, I was particularly concerned to ensure that we included a protocol for liaising with parents about the policy and, in particular, the purpose of the incident sheets. We use them to record any injuries or accidents to the child whilst at the centre, but also note any bruises or marks that have occurred elsewhere. We then talk to parents or carers about the recorded incident, and add any comments from them. We obviously take other action if it emerges that an injury is not accidental. Now, when I visit homes, I always talk with the parents about our policy and the purpose of the incident sheets. I also draw it to the attention of new members of staff. Our arrangements worked well when, six months later, a toddler came into the centre with a nasty bump on her head and I had to ask her mum to help complete and sign an incident sheet explaining what had happened.

**Example S30/2**

After being in the nursery for a few weeks, it was apparent that a particular child's development was delayed. Her mother was usually in a hurry when she dropped her off and picked her up, as she had other children in the primary school some distance away. I asked her when it might be convenient for us to have a chat and arranged to visit her at home. During the visit she opened up and explained that she had not told us about her daughter's developmental delay because she thought we would not accept her in the nursery. I reassured her and indicated how the whole staff could work together to meet the child's needs. We arranged to meet regularly to discuss progress.

## Example S30/3

We have been thinking about how we can use some of our resources to benefit parents. In a staff meeting, a colleague suggested starting an informal exercise class in the nursery in the evenings. I suggested it to a few parents and there was so much enthusiasm that I started it straight away. We found that this was a really useful and enjoyable way to build relationships between parents and staff, and to break down barriers. We also found that parents were much more ready to talk about their children in an open way to us after the exercise class had started. This idea developed further when one of the parents offered to teach computer skills and then the computer club started too. Some parents, who had previously seemed to be intimidated by the whole idea of 'school', now seem to be quite happy to join in with us.

## Example S30/4

Following consultation with the staff, I decided not to have a whole group registration time at the very beginning of the session. Instead, we now have a system where each key worker has her group's name cards and as children arrive with their parents, they find their key worker and are welcomed by them. This provides an opportunity for children and their parents to talk to staff, to locate their own name and place it on the name board, swap news and give back books. Some children rush in with a picture they have done at home, some rush to hug their key worker. Some parents have time to spare and help their children at the toilet or to put on aprons; some sit and read stories with their child or walk around looking at our displays. Although parents are free to stay as long as they want to, most parents leave as soon as their child becomes absorbed in an activity. When we reviewed our new mode of working, everybody seemed to feel it was working well and engendered a much more relaxed and gentle start to the session, without the harshness of a quick separation from parents.

## Example S30/5

Our centre has a multilingual practitioner who works with families representing a range of ethnic and cultural traditions. She ensures that families know about the services available, and is a link between the families, key staff and other agencies. She has enabled us, over time, to establish very good trusting relationships with the local religious leaders, community representatives and parents, and they sometimes use our centre for evening meetings. As a result of her briefings, I have been able to ensure that our displays and resources reflect children's home and community experience. More unexpectedly, I have also arranged day-time classes for groups of Bangladeshi and Pakistani mothers to improve their English. But the real bonus has been that, as the mothers gained confidence, and with induction and some training, I have been able to deploy some of them to work alongside us in the centre.

**S31 Work in partnership with families and parents/carers, at home and in the setting, to nurture children, help them develop and to improve outcomes for them**

Young children do well when they experience a coherent approach at home and across all the settings in which they are cared for and educated. The best outcomes for children are likely to be established when staff share their aims with parents/carers and encourage them to become involved in their children's learning, so that they can support those aims at home.

Candidates must therefore demonstrate that they take proper cognisance of children's home circumstances, so that they can identify issues that might have an impact on the child's development and learning and, as far as is possible, provide continuity and coherence between home and school. They should also show that they are aware that some parents/carers look to the early years setting as a source of advice and information on child-care issues. Candidates should be skilled in listening to parents'/carers' concerns, and sensitive to the ways in which parents/carers motivate, encourage, nurture and support their children at home to develop their children's learning. By receiving information from parents/carers, they will be able to use the information to develop and sustain the children's well-being and to support their planning and practice with children. This information might include children's particular likes and dislikes, and their competence in their language and communication at home, whether or not it is English. This discussion should provide the basis for the best ways that home and the setting can work together to support children's learning and development.

Candidates must show how they lead and support others. They might do this by ensuring that all colleagues working under their direction or supervision can explain the aims and approaches of the setting to others, by raising and discussing issues of coherence and continuity between home and school. As a routine part of planning and evaluation meetings with colleagues, they might arrange for less experienced colleagues to 'shadow' them on home visits and, afterwards, discuss the approach used, what went well and what might be improved. They might also prepare colleagues to work with parents/carers on activities with children in the setting, observe them doing so, give them feedback on their strengths and areas to be improved, and arrange further coaching or training as necessary.

**Example S31/1**

We encourage parents to come and help in the school but some, especially the mothers who live at the Women's Refuge, are shy and lack confidence. I realised that they might be able to cope if they came in pairs, with a friend whom they had chosen from among the other Mums. I was delighted by the response and gradually more and more pairs of friends wanted to come to spend time in the classroom. I see them the week before and ask what they'd like to do, making some suggestions and telling them that I'll buy any provisions we might need for their chosen activity. I also explain briefly to them about how and why we do things in a particular way. I brief the staff on the activity the parent has chosen to be involved in. Many of the parents – admittedly mostly mothers – have said they don't know how we manage so many children so happily. They say they can see how play, talk and being allowed to experiment really captures the children's interest, and that they are impressed by what such young children are capable of learning.

**Example S31/2**

I have set up a system whereby, prior to the children's admission, the key worker visits the family and child as part of our transition process. We use the visit to find out about the child's ethnic faith, cultural heritage, home experiences and interests, as a starting point for learning and teaching. We then nurture the child's background and particular interests during the first few days in the setting, often by encouraging them to bring a favourite toy. For example, several children bring their 'comfort' doll to sit and watch them at work.

**Example S31/3**

We asked parents to tell us if they liked the sheets I had started to produce to tell them what the children had been doing all day, noting what they'd eaten for lunch, what they'd played with and learnt, if babies had done a poo, or if a child seemed off colour, etc. The parents all said they loved getting the information sheets and asked us if we'd have time sometimes to add a few little suggestions for activities they could do at home to help, if they felt their child was struggling to achieve something.

**S32 Provide formal and informal opportunities through which information about children's well-being, development and learning can be shared between the setting and families and parents/carers**

Candidates must demonstrate that they welcome parents/carers into the setting by having systems in place so that parents/carers know how to approach staff informally to exchange information about their children's well-being, development and learning. They might, for example, establish procedures whereby children's key workers can be available for brief informal discussions when children are dropped off or picked up, or have a system whereby parents/carers can book appointments to discuss matters at greater length.

Candidates should provide regular, more formal opportunities for staff to: review children's progress with parents/carers; plan together how to promote and support the next steps of learning and development; and enable parents to contribute to their child's development and learning record. They should draw on the information they have gathered about children's learning and development over time to give summary reports on children's progress and next steps to parents/carers. They should make arrangements to facilitate the effective exchange of information when family or carers find communication difficulty or are not yet fluent in English. Candidates should ensure they are approachable to parents/carers, that they know the procedures and legislation related to confidentiality, and that they know when and to whom information should be passed on.

Candidates may show how they lead and support others by, for example, coaching colleagues in how to summarise monitoring and assessment information collected for the EYFS profile and how to use this as the basis for discussions with parents/carers. They might also observe colleagues who work directly for them or under their supervision, exchanging information with parents, and then give constructive feedback to these colleagues in order to consolidate or improve their skills.

**Example S32/1**

During the first weeks after admission, we timetable a meeting with each of the parents, at a time when it is most convenient for them. This forms the beginning of the children's Early Years Profile. We emphasise that this is a shared responsibility, as we feel strongly that parents are the experts in relation to their own children. I write down at this meeting any information parents can give us about their child's interests, friendships, what they like to play with at home, their early development and learning. It is a good opportunity to build a trusting relationship with parents, gather useful information to support the children and to demonstrate how we hope to build on their child's early experiences. And, of course, I encourage parents right at the start to continue talking informally to us about their children whenever they feel it necessary. I have shared my records with staff to help them focus their conversations with parents.

**Example S32/2**

I have developed a very effective form of contact diary in the nursery. I ensure key workers complete it on a daily basis and frequently check to ensure the staffs' comments are appropriate. The diary begins in the baby room when parents record any incidents or experience that they feel will affect how their child spends the day with us and we do the same. So, for example, if a child has not slept particularly well either at home or in the nursery, or if they have health problems, it will be recorded in the diary. Equally, if something significant or joyful has happened, like the first time a baby has smiled or made a verbal response, then we will write that down. We would always try to talk to each parent as well, at the beginning and/or at the end of sessions but in case this doesn't happen, or people forget, it helps to have a written version. Parents, too, say it's nice to look back on this.

**Example S32/3**

A mother came in after the nursery had opened and asked me to help her to take her child out of the car as he was refusing to come in that morning. Other staff members were able to take responsibility in the nursery while I walked to her car with her. During these few minutes, we were able to discuss why her child was particularly anxious that morning and I was able to reassure her that we would be particularly watchful during the session. We all three chatted cheerfully while I unbuckled his seat belt, took his hand and walked with him into nursery and his mother was able to leave him calmly in our care. Later, I shared the information with the child's key worker and discussed ways of overcoming the child's anxieties about coming to the nursery.

**Example S32/4**

One two-year-old boy, who recently started in the setting, would cry each morning when his mother left him but soon after she had gone he would play and have a happy day. Of course, his mother worried because she had witnessed the tears and imagined he stayed like this all day. I suggested that staff hold him up so he could wave to his mum at the window and as they talked to him about doing this he would brighten, though for a few days he still pulled a miserable face as she made eye contact. We kept reassuring his mum that he was fine once she had gone and gradually he smiled as he waved at the window, cuddled by a member of staff.

## Teamwork and collaboration

Those awarded Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate that they:

**S33 Establish and sustain a culture of collaborative and cooperative working between colleagues**

To meet this Standard, candidates should demonstrate that they work collaboratively and cooperatively with colleagues and other adults to enhance children's welfare, development and learning, and that they deploy colleagues who work directly to them or under their supervision in ways that support children's development and learning.

They will lead practice and plan, manage and direct the work of colleagues who work directly to them or under their supervision. At the same time, candidates will work in partnership with colleagues to plan, deliver, evaluate and improve practice and provision. They will involve colleagues in monitoring, assessment and record keeping. Candidates will draw upon the knowledge and skills of colleagues and encourage them to share expertise through, for example, mentoring, shadowing and coaching.

**Example S33/1**

We have a shared sense of purpose and shared values in our nursery team. This has developed because I have led the team in talking about the children, their learning and development and ways that we can enhance their experiences with us. It helps enormously that we all have a great sense of fun, that we are passionate about our work with the children and that we have learned to respect each other's talents and skills. Our planning sessions are noisy: we all contribute with our stories of observations and ways to link those experiences to new plans. Notes are taken and, together with our observations, are used to plan future sessions and for entries into each child's individual record.

**Example S33/2**

I realised that our teams were not working as well as they could, as there seemed to be too many of us with apparently similar skills. We discussed this problem and, with the help of the business link advisor, we held a training day when we worked together to understand and analyse the teams' talents, interests and skills. We found that working together in this way led to significant improvements in the atmosphere, in relationships in the nursery between us and with the children, and in the improved range and variety of displays around the setting. I introduced some professional journals to the nursery and we buy these regularly now because they provide us with ideas for practice and prompts for future training.

**Example S33/3**

As a team we work very hard to help children to understand and articulate their own aspirations and to develop their interests through their play. This means that our plans have to follow hard on the heels of our observations of play, taking the lead from the children and helping them to resource their activities and to achieve their objectives. It also requires us to work closely together to ensure that we have correctly interpreted the children's intentions and to create displays that focus on and celebrate their endeavours. I ensure that we share our expertise by working in pairs to mount displays and later we all provide feedback to each other on their effectiveness.

**S34 Ensure that colleagues working with them understand their role and are involved appropriately in helping children to meet planned objectives**

To meet this Standard, candidates should demonstrate that they lead, motivate and support colleagues, or other adults such as volunteers, who work under their direction and supervision. They should, for example, involve them in planning where possible, or as a minimum, ensure that they are well briefed for the task they are to undertake.

Candidates should make sure that every practitioner under their supervision is aware of: the objectives for activities in which they are involved and is clear about the role they are to play; what interventions and observations they should make; and what needs to be reported back after the activity. Through their work with children, they should promote and model the kind of practice they wish others to employ.

Whenever possible, they should involve colleagues in the review and evaluation of practice, discussing, for example, how far children achieved the objectives and possible next steps for them. They should involve colleagues in helping to identify children who need additional interventions and decide how these will be made. They should give constructive feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the practice of colleagues working with them and, where necessary, help them to improve. Where detailed joint feedback is not possible, candidates should, as a minimum, seek colleagues' views on the effectiveness of provision.

More solitary workers, such as child-minders, might demonstrate that they meet this Standard through supporting and working together with less experienced colleagues through, for example, child-minder networks.

**Example S34/1**

I spend time in each area of the nursery to enable practitioners to undertake observations of children, or to work on a one-to-one basis with particular children. This enables me to pick up on any difficulties or good practice and to share this with other practitioners in the setting. I sometimes use these sessions to demonstrate different observational techniques or to work alongside practitioners with particular children who may require additional support. Sometimes my presence enables a practitioner to take time out for planning and review.

**Example S34/2**

We share our strengths and expertise across the nursery. I belong to a drama group and lead play-acting sessions. Another worker leads some dance and movement times. We led a joint session recently on mini-beasts and the children moved as slugs and bees and other beasties to percussion music. Another practitioner, who is particularly artistic, then led a session where the children made a mini-beast mosaic. They had been looking at pictures of mosaics after we had taken them to visit the Roman baths. She often offers ideas for creative work to the team and I welcome her suggestions for other areas of learning.

**Example S34/3**

The children were fascinated by the reflections of their faces in a series of mirrors we put up in the nursery. The babies who could crawl could look into them too as we fixed them along the walls in accessible places. We also have a big Perspex screen on which children paint, so we left that with a chair on one side and paints on the other. The older children soon began to paint each other's portraits by looking carefully at a friend who sat on the other side of the screen. Meanwhile some of the toddlers were painting their own faces and then looking in a mirror to see the effects. I suggested to one member of staff that the children could use the digital camera to photograph each other too. The children were meeting their own objectives and staff were able to enjoy, observe and note the children's learning: being informal with the children but 'formal in their heads', in the rigour of their use of observations as evidence of learning.

**S35 Influence and shape the policies and practices of the setting and share in collective responsibility for their implementation**

Because Early Years Professionals have considerable knowledge, understanding and experience about what constitutes effective practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they have an important part to play in influencing the quality and direction of practice.

Candidates should demonstrate that they are familiar with the current policies and practices of the setting. They should provide evidence that they implement these policies and practices through their own practice, and through the way they advise and lead colleagues who work directly for them, or under their supervision, or are accountable to them for the quality of their practice. Further, they should show that they influence and shape the policies and practices of the setting by leading colleagues in reviewing existing policies and in formulating and implementing new policies, and by contributing ideas and evidence to inform collective policy making and review.

**Example S35/1**

On a training day for staff I introduced the Birth to Three Matters Framework. I selected some examples from the video material for us to watch together and identify similarities and differences between the video and our own practice. I then put the staff in pairs to discuss and report back on different sections, after which I was able to draw out some key issues. As a whole team, we then devised completely new flexible routines to meet the babies' needs more thoroughly and to enrich their experiences. For parts of the day we now play relaxing music inside the nursery and, to help develop a sense of 'belonging', we have lots of opportunities for the babies to snuggle, with blankets and cushions on the floor along with soft cuddly toys. We also decided to evaluate regularly the changes. I allocated time at our final team meeting at the end of term for sharing our observations so that we could assess the babies' progress with the new routines and activities, and critically evaluate our own practice.

**Example S35/2**

I believe it is important for the whole team to have regular opportunities to be inspired and to have their ideas and practices refreshed and renewed. To achieve this, I draw colleagues' attention to conferences and training events and plan a programme for their attendance. As a result, when we meet to create medium- and long-term plans, colleagues are able to draw upon ideas and understandings from other settings, other parts of the country and sometimes other countries. We can then adapt these to meet the needs of the children in our nursery. For example, an excited colleague returned from visiting an exhibition with plans to introduce a range of mirrors and reflective surfaces for the babies and the toddlers. When she had finished, with the help of her colleagues, the nursery had been transformed into a magical setting through the careful reorganisation of our existing mirrors, shiny paper, old compact disks and all sorts of silvery paper and objects collected together or dangling enticingly just within reach. The children were entranced!

**Example S35/3**

I have responsibility for creating the transition policy for the nursery. We find now that transfers to school are smooth because we have carefully resourced our nursery to include the kinds of equipment, including picture books, which we know the children will meet in their reception year. Our circle times sometimes mirror the kinds of activities that most of our local schools now adopt at registration times in the early years, with rhymes, songs and games. This doesn't mean that we have changed what we do or how we play with children, but that we try to be sensitive to some children's concerns about change, answer their questions and make it as easy for them as possible.

**S36 Contribute to the work of a multi-professional team and, where appropriate, co-ordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they are pro-active in working with other early years providers and professionals within and outside their own settings, in order to provide the best development and learning opportunities for children. Other key professionals might include speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, social workers, health visitors, midwives, portage workers, dieticians, and specialist teachers working with children with visual or hearing impairments.

Candidates should demonstrate that they work effectively as part of a multi-professional team. They might do this by, for example, judging when they should provide support for children and families themselves, and when they should support children while working as part of a wider multi-professional team. They should know the possible sources of support available from professionals for children and staff, within and beyond their setting; they need to understand the way that partner services operate - their procedures, criteria, objectives, roles and relationships – in order to be able to work effectively alongside them. Where appropriate, candidates should initiate the involvement of professionals from other agencies using the correct protocols and procedures. Through formal and informal exchanges, candidates should communicate effectively with other practitioners and professionals to provide timely, appropriate, succinct and evidence-based information by knowing how to use the Common Assessment Framework, and working to forge and sustain relationships across agencies. Overall, they should demonstrate how they record, summarise and feed back relevant information, as appropriate, to colleagues and other professionals.

**Example S36/1**

One area of our work that demands close co-operation is that of child protection and although it is usually myself who has responsibility for attending Case Conferences, I realised that there are times when the key worker knows a particular child much better than I do. We have talked about possible solutions to this. My team is generally very young and I suppose I am trying to protect them to some extent by going to the meetings myself. One day we invited all the members of the local multi-professional network, of which we're a part, to come to tea after the children had gone. Although it was difficult for some to spare the time, it meant the staff had a chance to get to know the social workers to whom their information might be passed, as well as becoming better acquainted with a whole range of people from probation officers to speech and language therapists. I learnt a lot from this, not least that I would try to arrange such a gathering each term. We also try to have someone from our team represent the nursery at multi-professional conferences, such as the one held recently about domestic violence. By attending, we not only learn about others' contributions but we can remind people that we too are involved with the lives of families and we can contribute a viewpoint from our own and sometimes the children's perspective.

## Example S36/2

I liaise with the speech and language therapist, social services, professionals who work with children who have English as an additional language, and the educational psychologist. I meet with them in order to receive, on behalf of my team, feedback on their work with children and suggestions for how to continue the programmes between their visits. For example, the educational psychologist was invited to come and observe a child with quite severe learning difficulties because some of his behaviour was proving quite disruptive for the team in his room. He would take a cup of water from the water play trough and throw it at electricity sockets, among other things. Staff would respond to these incidents with alarm. The psychologist suggested this was just what the child wanted, to get attention! She advised us to work together to ensure someone was always monitoring the child, and close enough to praise him on his achievements and to curtail any potential crises before they arose. The psychologist would pop in occasionally to talk through how we were progressing and the staff really developed in their ability to plan for and support children with different learning difficulties.

## Example S36/3

I have been working on improving links with other agencies, as I felt we did not have enough contact with health visitors or social services in the area in which our centre is located. It's really quite disadvantaged. We now hold baby clinics, sessions on baby massage, healthy eating and run parenting classes, particularly for teenage parents. Two health visitors and their assistants are now based in the centre. These improved links mean that we can now give a better service to the community.

There's one initiative I was particularly pleased with. It was when I arranged for a nurse from our neighbouring health centre to come in to demonstrate baby massage for our parents and their new babies. In the event, the 'parents' were all mothers or female carers. I had asked the parents to bring with them a changing mat and baby oil. They sat on the floor with their baby lying on the mat in front of them while gentle music played in the background. My colleague and myself then demonstrated simple stroking movements and the parents copied us. The session, which lasted for half an hour, offered an opportunity and permission for intimacy between the mothers and carers and their babies, as they made close eye contact.

After a few such sessions, which some of my team have now observed, the mothers and carers said it was one of the few times in a busy day when you could sit down and dedicate time to building a special relationship with your baby. Others described similar benefits. For example, one mother said that she uses these massage techniques now in the afternoons "when he gets fractious" - for her own and her baby's relaxation. Someone else commented that she used this massage more now because it helped to relieve her baby's colic.

## Example S36/4

When a child with multiple disabilities came to our nursery, we quickly realised that he wasn't getting as much from us as he could because of his complex needs. I felt that we were ill-equipped, both in terms of knowledge and resources, to support his development. I looked on the Internet for as much information as we could find about his condition, and discussed the child's needs with our area SENCO. I also contacted a portage worker who came and showed us very specific examples of how to promote the child's learning and development. As a result, our provision was more closely matched to the child's needs and staff felt more confident. We also visited the child at home, and his parents have now relayed more information to us so that we can be of even more help. I have since organised a planning meeting to ensure that those involved with the child, including his parents, are all working to the same objectives, and we have agreed specific targets for the child.

## Personal professional development

Those awarded Early Years Professional Status must demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:

**S37 Develop and use skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support their work with children and wider professional activities**

Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) have an important role to play in most aspects of the Early Years Professional's role in both working with children in the setting, and in supporting their professional role. In this context, ICT includes internet-enabled computers and the relevant peripherals, CD-ROM and DVD-based software, digital projectors, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, scanners, video-recorders, and control and sensing equipment.

Candidates must demonstrate competence in these areas by, for example, using their own knowledge, understanding and skills in literacy and numeracy to plan and deliver experiences and activities designed specifically to develop children's communication, language and literacy, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and, whenever appropriate, as part of other experiences and activities in the setting. They should also use their competence in ICT and their knowledge of the way that ICT can support young children's learning and skills to plan and deliver appropriate experiences and activities for children. They should be able to prepare, plan, evaluate, administer and manage provision, and use ICT, via e-mail, video-conferencing, and web forums, as appropriate, to keep in touch with colleagues inside and outside the setting, with others who work with young children and/or with parents/carers. Candidates should develop their skills in these areas and keep them up-to-date.

Candidates' leadership and support of others may be demonstrated in several ways. For example, they may use their knowledge of software to advise colleagues on ways to personalise digital content to include children with particular needs, such as EAL, SEN and/or disabilities. They may use their skills to locate and digest research and other evidence of effective practice that can then be disseminated to colleagues with a view to introducing new ideas and improving practice. Or they may have used ICT for administrative and/or professional purposes, such as producing an electronic record sheet for noting observations of children's learning and development.

### Example S37/1

As part of our programme for involving parents in our nursery, we held an ICT workshop and put out everything that the children use - disposable cameras, digital cameras, the overhead projector, tape recorders and the computers - with some examples of how they had used them. Some parents were surprised, but others had some good ideas about how we could develop this further and volunteered some time in the nursery to play with ICT with the children. We were really pleased to find some expertise amongst our parents and this has also helped to strengthen our skills as well as our relationships with parents and families.

**Example S37/2**

We have been concerned that our children's skills in numeracy are weak. I decided to carry out an analysis of what the children could do and, using a simple spreadsheet, I analysed my findings. I shared these with staff and we were able to pinpoint where our practices could be improved. Some staff, at this point, shared their concerns about their confidence in their own numeracy skills. I discussed this with the advanced skills teacher in mathematics from the local primary school, who agreed to visit and advise us. This proved to be a stimulating session that raised the staff's confidence and awareness. Several staff also visited and observed the teacher in action in her school. We then listed within our routines and planning all the times when we could focus on numeracy with the children. I have monitored this and noted some excellent practice emerging and intend to carry out a further analysis at the end of the term to monitor our impact.

**Example S37/3**

We had a training session when we looked at the ways that literacy, numeracy and ICT were part-and-parcel of our everyday lives as adults. Some people were worried about ICT but I was able to help them to see how mobile phones, digital cameras, tape recorders and televisions were already part of our personal lives. Following this, we thought of ways that we could try to recreate authentic, or reasonably authentic, opportunities for children to develop skills in these areas in their play rather than separating them out. We all scanned copies of professional journals for ideas. When we started closely observing the children's play, we could all list many ways where they were already doing this: for example, using telephones and telephone directories, signs, notices and clip boards in their 'Bob the Builder' role play area, using pretend scanners next to the till in the shop. We have increased the time during which staff encourage dialogue and early writing skills. We have also put the computer table next to the role play area now and we are all looking at ways of using computer technology in relation to play, rather than as an isolated activity.

**Example S37/4**

We had a student working with us in the nursery and she had a brilliant idea to give a video camera to the children so that they could tell the story of the nursery with their own pictures and commentary. However, she needed help to complete the project successfully, so she enlisted my support in organising and working with the children who quickly understood how the camera worked. She helped the children to assign roles: for example, for the camera team and the narrators. They talked about the sorts of things that might be interesting to film and, after practising, the production team walked around the nursery with the camera talking about what they were seeing and who was playing and with whom. The resulting film was very much the children's efforts, with unplanned cuts and unexpected close-ups. The children took part in an activity that was serious, fun and have enjoyed showing it to their parents and families.

**S38 Reflect on and evaluate the impact of practice, modifying approaches where necessary, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their professional development needs**

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they reflect upon and evaluate the effectiveness of their practice, drawing on research outcomes and other sources of setting-based evidence of effective practice as a way to inform and improve their own and other's practice.

They should demonstrate that they know how to gain access to sources of continuing professional development and support for themselves and, where appropriate, their colleagues.

Candidates might lead and support others through, for example, joint planning and review, helping colleagues to gain the skills to become reflective practitioners. They might disseminate research findings and other evidence of good practice with colleagues. They might encourage colleagues to identify areas where they need training or development and help them to address these needs: for example, through coaching, work shadowing, visits to other teams or settings, or more formal training opportunities.

**Example S38/1**

To improve children's language development, I initiated a programme whereby we integrated the baby and toddlers sometimes, encouraging them to play together or enabling the babies to observe the slightly older children when it was clear that's what they wanted. We put this plan into practice but it did not seem to have the desired effect. On reflection, I realised I had imposed the initiative and that the staff had not had sufficient involvement in the planning or, indeed, even the practice! There were too many children in the group, and some health and safety concerns with the babies using toys designed for toddlers. I did manage to get the team involved in evaluating the initiative and now we have adapted our practice to integrate the two groups when numbers will allow. This gives good social integration and has had a positive impact on children's language skills. It also meant that the staff have become more able to express their views when I try to implement something new and we share the planning. I show that I value their ideas and they contribute a lot more to all our developments.

**Example S38/2**

After three months, a new practitioner in the 'babies' team had not settled: she looked miserable, and this was having a detrimental effect on the team. I talked to her and found she was uncertain of her role and about what she should be doing with the babies. I realised that we did not have robust induction practices in place, and that, although we claim to be a caring setting for the children, we were not being that for our staff! I put in support for her by giving responsibility for her induction to an experienced colleague and we worked on developing action plans for clearer guidance. Our new colleague has blossomed and both she and the team are more effective in their practice. I have used this experience as the basis for drawing up an induction process for new members of staff.

**Example S38/3**

The nursery has three teams: for babies, toddlers and young children. When I started work there, many staff did not have a good knowledge of 'Birth to Three Matters'. I led the team in revising our activity planning sheets for our six-week project to match this curriculum, and we held team meetings to discuss its impact and how things were developing. I have also introduced a 'swap system' whereby practitioners spend time in a team other than their own to observe practice. I, for example, observed the toddlers with a focus on relationships. I wrote a report on my observations and it was discussed at the next staff meeting. Any good ideas are shared and developed across the setting. We subscribe to professional journals, go to conferences whenever possible, read articles and books, and share what we have learnt from these. Sometimes we put eye-catching articles up on the contact board so parents can read them if they have time, and each term we create a special display about what the children have been learning and why. Parents ask us lots of questions, so I need to have thought carefully about what we've provided for the children, in order to explain.

**S39 Take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation, and adapt practice if benefits and improvements are identified**

Early Years Professionals should work continually to evaluate and improve practice and provision to achieve the best possible outcomes for children. As part of their role, they may be required to consider using new or existing products or services, improving practices, procedures, systems and ways of working, either within or outside the setting.

To meet this Standard, candidates must demonstrate that they can think creatively and are open to innovative suggestions from others, and that they encourage colleagues to put forward their ideas. Further, they should provide opportunities for new ideas to be considered by colleagues and, where appropriate, selected for further development, and encourage colleagues to take acceptable risks in pursuing innovation and to make and learn from their mistakes. They will discuss and agree ways in which selected innovations can be implemented and evaluated, and ensure that colleagues who originated or developed any ideas that are successfully implemented, receive recognition for their achievement.

Candidates' leadership and support may be demonstrated by suggesting, piloting and evaluating innovations. They may directly support colleagues' implementation of new ideas, monitor and review progress with them, and subsequently help them to integrate successful innovations into everyday practice.

**Example S39/1**

As our new building is an open-plan design, I made two visits to a similarly-designed children's centre in a neighbouring local authority where I looked at planning and the use of space. I also read about the Reggio Emilia approach where pre-schools operate as a real community with central piazzas built into the centre of the setting with seats and space to meet and talk. As a result, we integrate the babies and toddler groups more frequently, both inside and in the outside space so that children can meet and play together, developing their language and social skills at the same time. Our practitioners have benefited from this too, as they now have experience of working with a wider age range and have more confidence to move between groups.

**Example S39/2**

As a result of a weakness in the curriculum identified by an inspection of the setting, I organised activities for staff to develop their effective use of ICT within the areas of learning. I conducted a number of practical training sessions focusing on one software tool-kit and developed instruction manuals for our software. Since then, children on a visit to the farm were encouraged to use the digital camera to take photographs of their favourite animals and themselves. When they returned, these were downloaded so the children could incorporate them into their work. One member of staff produced a display for parents, which incorporated another member of staff's superb production of an illustrated diary of our visit. This focus on ICT is now being reflected in many areas of our work.

## Example S39/3

We talked about what was happening in the outside area and how it needed enriching. We were fortunate in being part of a funded research and development group relating to creative practices and so I invited an artist in residence to work with us. She came to observe what was happening, talked to the children and to staff and some parents. She then used some of the oldest children as a focus group and talked to these three- and four-year olds about their memories of the nursery from when they first started. She used a weaving idea, so when the children talked, for example, about memories of dressing up at nursery, some dressing-up clothes were woven into her structure. Others found materials from the nursery and contributions from families were also woven in, as well as laminated photographs of all of the children and the staff. This long woven structure is now fixed to what was a rather ugly perimeter wall and, although it won't last for ever in the weather, it has given us a focus for talk and stories. The children have enjoyed talking about it to each other, to their families and to visitors, showing their contributions and their place in it. The children now like to make their own small versions and we feel confident that next time we could make another version, perhaps including the help of parents and families. Overall, this activity has really helped children to feel that it's *their* nursery, not just a place they come to play, and it has helped strengthen our sense of community.

## Example S39/4

I have led the team in developing self-evaluation systems. Although we talk constantly about the children, we wanted to focus more specifically on our own practice: what we were doing with the children. Two experienced colleagues volunteered to have a video taken of them during a normal morning session. At the end of the day, we viewed it with the two members of staff talking us through what they were doing and why. We all discussed what was happening, with successful interactions being particularly noted. Although we laughed about how often we spend our time on instructions and directions, from the evidence on film we also were able to celebrate a number of sustained interactions with the children during their play, and some examples of adults taking playful roles under the children's direction. This proved to be a positive experience and helped us to focus directly on our own practice in the nursery. We have decided to do this on a termly basis, choosing a different aspect to consider each time, when we watch the film. Now that staff realise that this can be a positive and constructive experience, more people are volunteering to be filmed. Also, as part of this self-evaluation process, at half-termly meetings each member of staff is encouraged to talk about one example from their practice of which they feel particularly proud or pleased. From this, we talked about common features of good practice and drew out key principles to which we all feel that we have contributed.

**THE STANDARDS:**  
SINGLE-SHEET VERSION



## GUIDANCE (V6) FOR PHASE TWO

<b>Candidates for EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONAL STATUS should demonstrate through their practice....</b>	
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<i>... that a secure knowledge and understanding of the following underpins their own practice and informs their leadership of others</i>	
S1	The principles and content of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to put them in to practice
S2	The individual and diverse ways in which children develop and learn from birth to the end of the foundation stage and thereafter
S3	How children's well-being, development, learning and behaviour can be affected by a range of influences and transitions from inside and outside the setting
S4	The main provisions of the national and local statutory and non-statutory frameworks within which children's services work and their implications for early years settings
S5	The current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on health and safety, safeguarding and promoting the well being of children and their implications for early years settings
S6	The contribution that other professionals within the setting and beyond can make to children's physical and emotional well-being, development and learning
<b>Effective practice</b>	
<i>... that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:</i>	
S7	Have high expectations of all children and commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential
S8	Establish and sustain a safe, welcoming, purposeful, stimulating and encouraging environment where children feel confident and secure and are able to develop and learn
S9	Provide balanced and flexible daily and weekly routines that meet children's needs and enable them to develop and learn
S10	Use close, informed observation and other strategies to monitor children's activity, development and progress systematically and carefully, and use this information to inform, plan and improve practice and provision
S11	Plan and provide safe and appropriate child-led and adult initiated experiences, activities and play opportunities in indoor, outdoor and in out-of-setting contexts, which enable children to develop and learn
S12	Select, prepare and use a range of resources suitable for children's ages, interests and abilities, taking account of diversity and promoting equality and inclusion
S13	Make effective personalised provision for the children they work with
S14	Respond appropriately to children, informed by how children develop and learn and a clear understanding of possible next steps in their development and learning
S15	Support the development of children's language and communication skills
S16	Engage in sustained shared thinking with children
S17	Promote positive behaviour, self-control and independence through using effective behaviour management strategies and developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills
S18	Promote children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their practice
S19	Establish a safe environment and employ practices that promote children's health, safety and physical, mental and emotional well-being
S20	Recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of harm and know how to act to protect them
S21	Assess, record and report on progress in children's development and learning and use this as a basis for differentiating provision
S22	Give constructive and sensitive feedback to help children understand what they have achieved and think about what they need to do next and, when appropriate, encourage children to think about, evaluate and improve on their own performance
S23	Identify and support children whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances and know when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support
S24	Be accountable for the delivery of high quality provision
<b>Relationships with children</b>	
<i>... that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:</i>	
S25	Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children
S26	Communicate sensitively and effectively with children from birth to the end of the foundation stage
S27	Listen to children, pay attention to what they say and value and respect their views
S28	Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children
<b>Communicating and working in partnership with families and carers</b>	
<i>... that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:</i>	
S29	Recognise and respect the influential and enduring contribution that families and parents/carers can make to children's development, well-being and learning
S30	Establish fair, respectful, trusting and constructive relationships with families and parents/carers, and communicate sensitively and effectively with them
S31	Work in partnership with families and parents/carers, at home and in the setting, to nurture children, to help them develop and to improve outcomes for them
S32	Provide formal and informal opportunities through which information about children's well-being, development and learning can be shared between the setting and families and parents/carers
<b>Teamwork and collaboration</b>	
<i>... that they meet the following Standards::</i>	
S33	Establish and sustain a culture of collaborative and cooperative working between colleagues
S34	Ensure that colleagues working with them understand their role and are involved appropriately in helping children to meet planned objectives
S35	Influence and shape the policies and practices of the setting and share in collective responsibility for their implementation
S36	Contribute to the work of a multi-professional team and, where appropriate, coordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis
<b>Professional development</b>	
<i>Demonstrate through their practice that they meet all the following Standards and that they can lead and support others to:</i>	
S37	Develop and use skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support their work with children and wider professional activities
S38	Reflect on and evaluate the impact of practice, modifying approaches where necessary, and take responsibility for identifying and meeting their professional development needs
S39	Take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation, and adapt practice if benefits and improvements are identified

WORK IN PROGRESS