

Step 1:

Spread The Word

It is quite possible that members of your team will not be fully aware of the changes that are taking place in the Early Years. There's also a chance that some people have heard snippets of information which may be causing them a level of nervousness. It is important to provide clarity as to what has changed.

Share the Guidance Document(s)

The new Development Matters document is available to download for free. You can find it on the gov.uk website.

Your initial reaction will likely be that it looks very different to the existing 2012 version. This is quite purposeful. One of the key reasons for the removal of the 'age-bands' and related statements is that they were too often being used as a tick-list to track children's progress and produce data.

The new Birth to 5 Matters guidance can be found on their website: <https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/>

Allay Fears

Contrary to some opinions you may have heard, the introduction of the new guidance does not mean you are required to change the way that you teach. A child-centred, play-based approach should still be at the heart of your provision. The most significant news is that you have more flexibility with your assessment procedures. Ofsted have confirmed that they will not ask to look at any progress data when they visit. If you choose to use the new Development Matters (just like the previous version, this is non-statutory guidance), the emphasis of assessment will focus more on the professional judgement of staff. This is a very positive thing, and the time saved in the changes to assessment procedures should be celebrated. Your staff will need to have a good understanding of early child development – CPD is going to be very important moving forward.