

Using the themes of the EYFS - EYFS 2012

There are 4 themes of the EYFS -

1. Unique child
2. Positive relationships
3. Enabling environments
4. Learning and development

They are changed slightly from the themes we have used with the 2008 EYFS because some of the contents have moved around and many of the statements are slightly different... they are also used in the Development Matters Guidance a totally different way!

- **Unique child** - is the section we all probably use most in the Development Matters guidance document, covering the ages and stages of a child's learning and development. It helps us to focus on child development, keeping children safe and healthy, ensuring our practice is inclusive and supporting children to be strong and independent individuals with a sense of who they are and where they fit in the world.
- **Positive relationships** - is used to look at how a child's relationships can be enhanced to support their ongoing learning and development. This includes the ways we embrace their home and family lives, support their behaviour and learning, manage relationships with other settings and ensure the key person requirement of the EYFS is securely in place for each family - as their childminder we are key person for each child.
- **Enabling environments** - focuses on how the learning environment - inside, outside, outings, home, family, community etc - affects the child's learning experiences and how it can be enhanced to meet each child's individual needs. Included in 'enabling environments' is the requirement to offer each child learning opportunities which interest and excite them and to set up the environment so they are supported during their learning and development.
- **Learning and development** now talks about the 'Characteristics of effective learning' which are prompts to help us think about how a child learns. When we know how a child learns we can better ensure the learning opportunities we offer them are right for them. This section also includes the 7 areas of learning and development.

As you can see the 4 themes are now very important in the Development Matters guidance and will be used to guide your practice as you refer to them when you are planning for a child's learning and development, dependent on your observations of their play.

The themes and the principles of the EYFS 2012

Themes	Unique child +	Positive relationships +	Enabling environments =	Learning & development
Principles	Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning & can be resilient, capable, confident & self-assured.	Children learn to be strong & independent through positive relationships.	Children learn & develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs & there is a strong partnership between practitioners & parents.	Children develop & learn in different ways. The framework covers the education & care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs & disabilities.
Practice	<p>Practitioners...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand & observe each child's development & learning, assess progress, plan for next steps • support babies & children to develop a positive sense of their own identity & culture • identify any need for additional support • keep children safe • value & respect all children & families equally 	<p>Positive relationships are...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • warm & loving & foster a sense of belonging • sensitive & responsive to the child's needs, feelings & interests • supportive of the child's own efforts & independence • consistent in setting clear boundaries • stimulating • built on key person relationships 	<p>Enabling Environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • value all people • value learning <p>They offer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stimulating resources, relevant to all the children's cultures & communities • rich learning opportunities through play & playful teaching • support for children to take risks & explore 	<p>Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime & specific areas of learning & development.</p> <p>They foster the characteristics of effective early learning...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing & exploring • Active learning • Creating & thinking critically

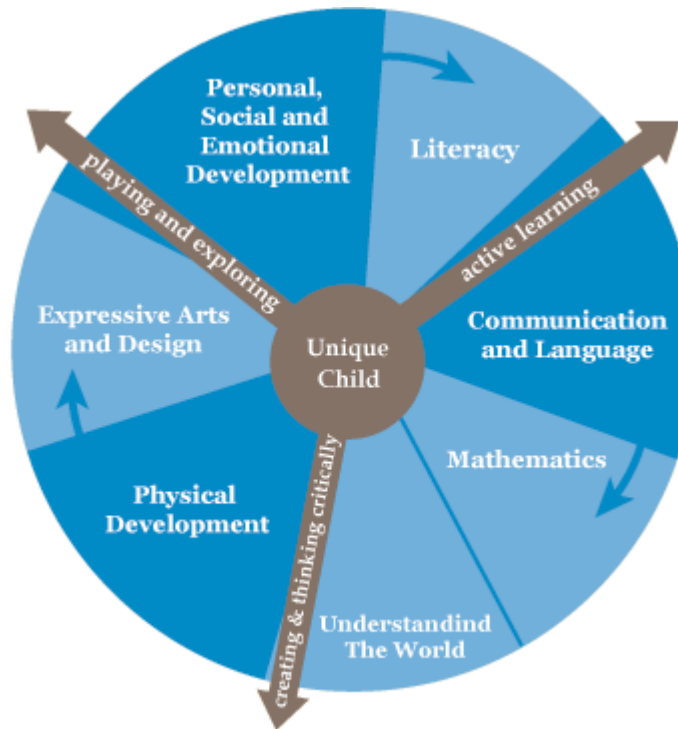
How the themes of the EYFS 2012 fit together...

The **unique child** approach supports children to learn and develop and make good progress by ensuring practitioners focus on each child's characteristics of effective early learning...

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Positive relationships are developed when practitioners work closely together with children, their parents and other settings children attend.

Enabling environments ensure children's individual care and learning needs are met. They reflect different cultures, religions, home languages etc and are linked closely with the local community.



The 3 prime areas of learning and development support children as they prepare for life long learning. They cover children's learning and experiences in...

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and language

The 4 specific areas of learning and development are based on children gaining the skills and knowledge they need to make good progress in the prime areas.

Children's experiences and learning is linked to...

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design