

department for

education and skills

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TO: Chief Education Officers
Local Authorities in England

01 March 2005

Foundation Stage Profile

I am writing to you regarding the concerns raised by schools about workload in the Foundation Stage. As you know there is a statutory requirement to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals and to report to the LEA a score for each of the thirteen scales at the end of the Foundation Stage.

I am concerned that some LEAs may be placing unnecessary burdens on reception teachers by asking for other assessments to be made in addition to these requirements. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, in some areas, reception teachers are being asked to complete, for example, baseline assessments or assessments against the Key Stage 1 curriculum, as well as the Foundation Stage Profile. I would be grateful for your co-operation in ensuring that reception teachers are not asked to undertake additional non-statutory requirements.

LEAs can choose whether to develop their own system for recording progress against the 13 scales or to recommend the use of the QCA Profile scales booklet. Whichever LEAs choose, it should be made clear that it is not necessary for teachers to complete both the LEA alternative and the Profile scales booklet.

We have developed an electronic version of the QCA scales booklet for recording Foundation Stage progress. The e Profile is compatible with schools Management Information Systems and is available to schools free of charge, provided that LEAs are able to provide technical support. A link to the software can be found on Teachernet at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/tools/schoolsdataportal/eprofile/

The Primary National Strategy is working with LEAs to identify how the Profile can be used more effectively to support children's transition to Key Stage 1. One of the main aims is to reduce teacher workload by ensuring the Profile is the sole form of assessment. We will ensure that the findings from these projects will inform local training and effective practice for the Foundation Stage Profile.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

As you may know, in our 10 year strategy for childcare, 'Choice for parents, the best start for children', we have set out plans to create a new 0-5 quality framework for children aged from birth to the end of the reception year in schools. This will build on both Birth to Three Matters and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Alongside that development, we will continue to evaluate and review as necessary the Foundation Stage Profile.

I attach a letter to Foundation Stage practitioners which clarifies their statutory requirements. A copy will be made available on the DfES online publications site, but I would be very grateful if you would also circulate it to the private and voluntary Foundation Stage settings in your Authority. I also enclose a brief description of the purpose of the Foundation Stage Profile for Headteachers and other interested parties.



MARGARET HODGE