

Compared to the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS, why does Birth to 5 Matters use some different names for aspects of the Areas of Learning and Development and in some cases organise them in different places?

In a number of cases, the organisation within ELGs in the EYFS (2021) does not make sense in terms of child development and learning and following that structure would be very confusing for practitioners who are responding to children's development from birth onwards.

For reference, there is a table at the beginning of *Birth to 5 Matters* to show where support toward all the ELGs is covered, and the linked ELGs appear at the end of each section of the Bto5M grids for Areas of Learning and Development.

Here are the specific changes, and our reasons for them:

ELGs for Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Given that PSED is of such fundamental importance to children's overall wellbeing and development, it is particularly unfortunate that these ELGs mix together strands that are better understood in other areas of development. Shaping curriculum guidance around the ELG structure would not support practitioners to understand child development and how they can support it across the age range of the EYFS. PSED is best understood in terms of its parts, and so *Birth to 5 Matters* has used these aspects: Personal – Sense of self; Social – Making Relationships; Emotional – Understanding Emotions.

PSED ELG for Self-regulation: In *Birth to 5 Matters*, different elements of this are covered within the Characteristics of Effective Learning, in PSED (Understanding emotions), and in CL (Listening and attention).

Our view is that this ELG is badly constructed and does not represent an understanding of what self-regulation is. Self-regulation should not sit within PSED, because it is an overarching aspect of development with emotional, cognitive, physical, and neurological elements.

ELG: Self-Regulation	Bto5M placement	Why?
Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly	PSED: Understanding emotions	Eventually developing emotional self-regulation depends on first being supported to understand feelings from birth, within warm, responsive relationships.

Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate	Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)	Goal-oriented behaviour is supported through attention to intrinsic motivation and critical thinking including plan-do-review, which are part of Active Learning and Thinking Creatively and Critically (and apply across all Areas of Learning and Development, not just PSED). Waiting and controlling impulses can be indications of self-regulation, which depend on cognitive and emotional development -- a gradual process since infancy of neural pathways growing in response to experiences of encouragement and support to set goals, make choices, and take responsibility. Again, this sits in Characteristics of Effective Learning.
Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions	CL: Listening and attention	This is a developmental area, dependent on neurological maturation but also on support given to children to focus and listen. It is an essential part of supporting children's early communication and language, since if babies and children don't share attention with adults, then communication doesn't happen and the next stages – understanding language, and then using it – will suffer.

PSED ELG for Managing Self: In *Birth to 5 Matters*, different elements of this are covered within the Characteristics of Effective Learning, in PSED (Understanding Emotions and Sense of Self), and in PD (Health and Self-care).

Again, this ELG contains a mixture of elements that result from very different strands in children's development, and practitioners need to see how they result within the continuum of development from birth in these different areas.

ELG: Managing self	Bto5M placement	Why?
Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge	PSED: Sense of Self; Characteristics of Effective Learning	Developing a sense of self from birth onwards is essential for developing confidence and awareness of one's own capacities. Independent thought and action, resilience, persistence and a positive approach to challenge and setbacks are all part of Characteristics of Effective Learning.
Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly	PSED: Understanding emotions; Making relationships	Children will understand the reasons for rules when they have empathy and respect for the feelings of others, and try to follow them when they understand and care about the impact of their actions on others. These

		elements grow from understanding emotions, and the quality of relationships they experience.
Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices	PD: Health and self-care	Development toward this ELG sits firmly within Physical Development. Through sensory development, babies and children gradually develop an internal awareness of their own body and its needs -- including needs for food and toileting. Food choices and nutrition affects physical health, and ability to manage hygiene depends on physical development.

ELGs for Physical Development

PD ELGs for Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills: In *Birth to 5 Matters* these have been combined as **Moving and Handling**. Movement skills do not develop in separate channels but are part of a developmental pattern from birth of coordination and control moving outward from the centre and from top down. The integration of senses, muscle control and coordination, and sense of space are involved in both gross and fine motor development, and they are not separate -- e.g. fine motor skill in writing depends on core body stability and balance.

In addition, *Birth to 5 Matters* places Health and Self-care within Physical Development instead of PSED Managing Self, as explained above.

ELGS for Communication and Language

CL ELG for Listening, Attention and Understanding: In *Birth to 5 Matters* this has been divided into two strands of **Listening and Attention, and Understanding**. This is to support practitioners to understand that listening and attention are fundamentals which must receive primary attention, since children cannot go on to understand language and other ways people communicate, and then to use language and other communications themselves, if they are not first paying attention and listening in exchanges with others.

In addition, *Birth to 5 Matters* identifies the strand of Understanding within CL, as it is a crucial bridge between Listening and Attention and Speaking, and needs attention from birth onwards.

ELGS for Literacy

L ELG for Comprehension: In *Birth to 5 Matters* this appears as **Understanding, in Communication and Literacy**. There are three ELGs in Literacy, representing an unfortunate increase of emphasis on this Specific Area of Learning and Development at the expense of the Prime area of Communication and Language. Oral language is the necessary underpinning out of which literacy can grow. In fact, the ELG content is entirely concerned with oral comprehension rather than reading comprehension, and so clearly belongs in the strand of developing children's understanding within Communication and Language from birth onwards.

L ELG for Word Reading: In *Birth to 5 Matters* this is covered in **Reading**. Reading does involve both comprehension and word reading, but these are better combined in a unified understanding that reading involves using text to gain meaning. Word reading without understanding misses the point of literacy, and it is important that children are supported to experience reading as a form of communication, not as isolated skills.

ELGs for Mathematics

ELGs for Number and Numerical Patterns: In *Birth to 5 Matters* these have been combined into one trajectory for **Mathematics**. Knowledge and understanding in mathematics develops holistically, with all elements supporting and influencing others; spatial awareness and pattern, for example, support understanding of numerical patterns. To support practitioners to understand development of the various strands of mathematical knowledge as they interweave in children's growing understanding, the strands have been identified within the guidance. There is attention to space, shape and measure, which have been left out of the ELGs, but appear in the statutory Educational Programme for Mathematics.

ELGs for Understanding the World

UW ELGs for Past and Present, and People, Culture and Communities: In *Birth to 5 Matters* these have been combined in **People and Communities**. While it seems that the ELGs have been framed to mirror a curriculum for later key stages, as covering history and geography, this is an inappropriate and artificial division for babies and young children. Early learning in these areas is rooted in close personal experience of family and home, and so illustrating the progression across the EYFS from birth must start from this common root.

UW ELG for Natural World: In *Birth to 5 Matters* this is named **The World**. There is no apparent benefit in renaming this aspect the 'Natural' world. While perhaps intended to link to the later curricular area of science, the broader scope of "The World" includes the natural and man-made world, and the important area of becoming aware of the impact of people on their world.

In addition, *Birth to 5 Matters* outlines Technology as an aspect although there is no linked ELG, because this is an important area for children's futures in a technological society. Although also described as using digital media within other areas of the curriculum, not all children have equal access to technology at home and familiarity should not be taken for granted. Also, not all technology is digital. Given the importance of "STEM" (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects, we include Technology here to emphasise that children should be comfortable with using and exploring technology and engineering in the form of everyday devices.