



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# Foundation Phase Action Plan

November 2016



# Foundation Phase Action Plan

## **Audience**

Primary school teaching and practitioners workforce, practitioners in settings funded to deliver the Foundation Phase; government and national partners, including regional consortia, local authorities, governing bodies, workforce unions and diocesan authorities.

## **Overview**

This document sets out actions to support and share learning on effective practice and ongoing staff development, while maintaining momentum in the delivery of the Foundation Phase.

## **Action required**

Specific actions have been identified for individual stakeholders involved.

## **Further information**

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## **Additional copies**

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at

[www.gov.wales/educationandskills](http://www.gov.wales/educationandskills)

## **Related documents**

*Evaluating the Foundation Phase: Final Report (2015); An independent stocktake of the Foundation Phase in Wales: Final report, September 2013 – March 2014 (2014); Foundation Phase Framework (Revised 2015) (2015)*

Further information on the Foundation Phase can be found online at

[www.gov.wales/foundationphase](http://www.gov.wales/foundationphase)

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## Ministerial foreword

*Taking Wales Forward 2016–2021* (Welsh Government, 2016) sets out how Welsh Government will deliver more and better jobs through a stronger, fairer economy, improve and reform our public services, and build a united, connected and sustainable Wales. Our future prosperity and stability depends on the skills and values of the people of Wales. Our education reforms focus on raising standards, closing the attainment gap between the poorest learners and their peers, and promoting strong leadership and cooperation. As part of ensuring our commitment to providing the best start for children in Wales, Welsh Government will maintain its commitment to the Foundation Phase.

This is an exciting time for education in Wales. There is a new momentum in Welsh education driven by our reforms, and focused on raising standards across the board. Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that all children have the opportunities, through a developmentally appropriate curriculum, to gain the skills and knowledge they will require to become lifelong learners. We are extremely proud of the Foundation Phase and its approach to teaching and learning which has been identified by practitioners as a significant strength of our current educational practice in Wales. There is good evidence to show that where the Foundation Phase curriculum is being delivered well it is raising the attainment of all children, with improvements in overall school attendance, literacy, numeracy and learner well-being. Many of the fundamental approaches used in the delivery of the Foundation Phase, particularly learning through experience, will extend across the breadth of the new curriculum. It is important therefore that we continue to improve the way we deliver the Foundation Phase so that we can build the implementation of the new curriculum on a solid basis of good practice.

This Foundation Phase Action Plan sets out a national approach to continuously improve the way in which the Foundation Phase is implemented and delivered in our schools and funded non-maintained nurseries, while we build towards the new curriculum developments. This plan aligns with the timeline for the curriculum framework to be available to settings and schools by September 2018, and full implementation from 2021. It also sets out the broad, high-level actions to support and share learning on effective practice and ongoing staff development, while maintaining momentum in the delivery of the Foundation Phase in the interim.

Many parties have to support the implementation of this plan to drive the changes needed in order for us to provide the best possible early years education for our children. We hope those of you who will play a part in delivering this plan will fully embrace the opportunity to help deliver it in the most effective way possible. We are sure you will agree that we need to do all we can to ensure the future success and well-being of every child and young person in Wales who deserve nothing less than world-class learning and teaching.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alun Davies".

**Alun Davies**  
**Minister for Lifelong Learning**  
**and Welsh Language**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirsty Williams".

**Kirsty Williams**  
**Cabinet Secretary for Education**

# Introduction

This Foundation Phase Action Plan sets out Welsh Government's national approach to continuously improve the way in which the Foundation Phase is delivered in schools and funded settings in Wales. It aims to ensure that high-quality Foundation Phase education is delivered consistently across Wales.

The plan contains:

- › the background to why Welsh Government is publishing the plan
- › how the plan will be taken forward as part of the development of the new curriculum arrangements for Wales
- › high-level actions which will be required in four strategic areas in order to achieve the desired outcomes of the plan.

## The context

The Foundation Phase is supported by international research evidence on the most effective approaches to early childhood education and care<sup>1</sup>. This evidence suggests that:

- › high-quality early childhood education and care is a key characteristic of the type of outstanding education system Welsh Government is committed to creating in Wales
- › such provision can reduce inequalities linked to parental background and socio-economic status and have a positive impact upon economic growth and prosperity.

The Foundation Phase, which was piloted in 2004 and rolled out in stages with full implementation from 2011, is Welsh Government's education curriculum for three to seven-year-old children. It adopts an approach to learning and teaching that is designed to encourage children to become independent thinkers with a positive disposition to learning.

Marking a departure from more formal, competency-based approaches to learning and teaching, the Foundation Phase meets the needs of all children through developmental, experiential and active learning. Through carefully planned, engaging activities, children can practise and consolidate their skills, experiment with ideas, use their creativity and imagination, take risks, solve problems, and make decisions individually, as well as in small and in large groups.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the *Early Years Literature Review* published in 2014 by The Centre for Research in Early Childhood ([www.crec.co.uk](http://www.crec.co.uk)).

## The evidence base

As part of our commitment to the Foundation Phase Welsh Government commissioned a three-year independent evaluation<sup>2</sup> and an independent stocktake<sup>3</sup>. The findings of these two reviews have been overwhelmingly positive and the reports suggested that overall:

- › where the Foundation Phase **is being implemented well**, it is raising the attainment of **all** children
- › there is positive evidence to show that the Foundation Phase is associated with **improvements in overall school attendance, literacy, numeracy and learner well-being**.

Support for the effectiveness of the Foundation Phase was emphasised further by Professor Graham Donaldson in his review of the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales – *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (2015). However there is variability in implementation within and between settings and schools.

Particular emphasis is placed in the stocktake and the evaluation on the need to improve the consistency of Foundation Phase curriculum delivery across settings and schools in Wales and, while there is an overall improvement in the attainment of all children, the independent evaluation noted that there had been no observable impact on reducing inequalities in the settings<sup>4</sup> and schools which formed part of the study<sup>5</sup>.

The evaluation, also highlights that this may not be surprising given it is generally well accepted that focussed and targeted interventions are more appropriate for tackling educational inequalities than universal interventions such as the Foundation Phase. This plan therefore also includes specific targeted actions to address the effect of inequality on children's achievement.

In order to build upon what settings and schools have already achieved, the reports make a number of recommendations to further develop Foundation Phase practice and provision.

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<sup>2</sup> The suite of evaluation reports can be found at [gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-foundation-phase/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-foundation-phase/?lang=en)

<sup>3</sup> *An independent stocktake of the Foundation Phase in Wales: Final report, September 2013 – March 2014* (2014) ([gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/earlyyearshome/foundation-phase/stocktake-of-the-foundation-phase-final-report/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/earlyyearshome/foundation-phase/stocktake-of-the-foundation-phase-final-report/?lang=en))

<sup>4</sup> 'Settings' refers to private nurseries, playgroups, childminders and other settings that are approved and funded by local authorities to deliver Foundation Phase early education entitlement for three- and four-year-olds.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics published after the final evaluation report appeared did, however, show a decrease in the gap between the achievements of learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and their peers. These statistics can be found under *Achievement and entitlement to free school meals* (2015) at [gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-free-school-meals/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-free-school-meals/?lang=en)

These can be summarised as requiring improvements in the following areas.

- › Professional learning and development.
- › Leadership.
- › Delivery of curriculum and assessment.
- › Inspection and regulation.
- › Overcoming the impact of poverty and other vulnerable characteristics.
- › Engaging parents/carers and families in the delivery of the Foundation Phase and providing more information for them.
- › Welsh language provision.

## The plan and the new curriculum

One of the key recommendations from the stocktake was that a Foundation Phase action plan should be developed in order to support the continuing implementation and consolidation of good and effective practice across the curriculum. Welsh Government accepted this recommendation and remains committed to the Foundation Phase and the vital role it has to play in creating the outstanding education system that is currently being built. Welsh Government will ensure that in designing and developing the new curriculum and assessment arrangements, the Pioneer Network, consisting of a group of schools from across Wales, fully considers the principles that underpin the Foundation Phase curriculum and pedagogy – developmentally appropriate, experiential and active learning.

A key consideration in delivering the plan effectively will be to ensure that it ties in with the specific delivery model of the Foundation Phase. This will include recognising the vital role of the non-maintained sector in providing early education for three- to four-year-olds and the more extensive role of teaching assistants in comparison with delivering the curriculum for older children.

A strategic Foundation Phase Expert Group was appointed and is made up of leading early years experts from across Wales and the UK, reporting to Welsh Government Ministers. Their work was supported by task and finish groups made up of a wide group of practitioners, academics, the Inspectorates<sup>6</sup> and early years education and childcare policy officials.

While this work was underway, Professor Graham Donaldson<sup>7</sup> was also undertaking a much wider independent review of the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, commissioned by Welsh Government. The Foundation Phase was identified by Professor Donaldson as a particular strength of the curriculum in Wales and he stated that much is to be learned from it as the new curriculum is developed.

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<sup>6</sup> Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)

<sup>7</sup> *Successful Futures: Independent Review of the Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (2015) ([gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculum-for-wales-curriculum-for-life/why-we-are-changing/successful-futures/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculum-for-wales-curriculum-for-life/why-we-are-changing/successful-futures/?lang=en))

The adoption of his recommendations together with Welsh Government's commitment to reform initial teacher education<sup>8</sup> and improve the professional learning opportunities available to the education profession make up a major reform programme within Welsh education.

The Digital Competence Framework (DCF), introduced in September 2016, will cover all ages of the curriculum, with the Foundation Phase being taken into account in its design. The DCF will be reviewed by Welsh Government and its partners during its early implementation and this process will include considering how settings and schools have been able to implement it alongside delivery of the Foundation Phase pedagogy and whether any refinements are needed.

The new curriculum will take time to be developed – with the aim of the curriculum framework to be available to settings and schools by September 2018 and to be used to support learning and teaching from 2021<sup>9</sup>.

**In the interim, maintaining momentum in the delivery of the Foundation Phase is vital through the sharing of effective practice and provision and ongoing professional development.**

As it is implemented the plan will:

- › be further developed and adapted to ensure that it aligns with the emergence of the new curriculum<sup>10</sup>, the reforms of initial teacher education and professional learning
- › continue to reflect existing and new research evidence
- › continue to draw upon identified effective practice.

### The four purposes<sup>11</sup>

The four purposes of the new curriculum proposed in *Successful Futures* will be at the heart of all Welsh Government does and are already reflected in current effective Foundation Phase practice. Learners should become:

- › ambitious, capable learners
- › enterprising, creative contributors
- › ethical, informed citizens
- › healthy, confident individuals.

The plan outlines that all settings and schools should strengthen their Foundation Phase practice and pedagogy in relation to these four purposes.

<sup>8</sup> *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (Welsh Government, 2015) ([gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150309-teaching-tomorrows-teachers-final.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150309-teaching-tomorrows-teachers-final.pdf))

<sup>9 10 11</sup> *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (Welsh Government, 2015) ([gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf))

## Pedagogical principles

The four purposes should be supported by underpinning pedagogical principles. The Foundation Phase Expert Group has developed a set of principles through refining those used in the evaluation of the Foundation Phase, and has also taken into account those put forward by Professor Donaldson in *Successful Futures* and other research evidence. For the Foundation Phase, these pedagogical principles should focus on:

### **the child:**

- › exercising choice, participating, being involved, initiating and directing their own learning over a period of time
- › learning from first-hand, exploratory and practical, hands-on activities
- › being appropriately challenged and supported by the adults and learning environment, so that good progress is made

### **a learning environment:**

- › which provides flow between continuous, enhanced and focused activities, located indoors and outdoors, that reflect and engage children's interests
- › that allows children access to resources that enable them to use choice and develop independence in their learning
- › which enables children to apply, use, consolidate and extend their skills across Areas of Learning and Experience
- › that includes opportunities for children to be physically and cognitively active as well as having 'quiet time' for contemplation and thought

### **practitioners:**

- › who prompt the child to think about and reflect upon their learning experiences in order to extend their learning when appropriate
- › who plan developmentally appropriate, engaging learning opportunities informed by regular observation and assessment of children's abilities
- › who actively engage parents/carers in the setting/school community, seeing them as partners in their children's learning
- › who look to continuously develop themselves professionally, sharing and learning from excellent and effective practice and working with other practitioners across Wales and further afield.

## The four enablers<sup>12</sup>

The plan will be supported by the following four enablers.

### › Working in partnership

As part of the change and governance process set out in *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life*, the Foundation Phase Expert Group will work with the Pioneer Schools Network<sup>13</sup>, local authorities and their regional consortia, higher education institutions (HEIs), Welsh Government, Estyn, the Care and Social Services Inspectorate (CSSIW), and the non-maintained and voluntary sector to support, monitor and review the plan as part of the process of developing the new curriculum.

### › Strong school (and setting) to school (and setting) working

This form of working will be fundamental to ensuring that the plan is embedded at setting and school level. It should draw upon existing high standards and expectations and collaborative practice that has fostered the high-quality professional skills needed to deliver the curriculum. This practice and provision will be shared with the Pioneer Schools developing the new curriculum.

### › Inspiring leadership

Effective and inspiring leadership in settings and schools which is based on high expectations and a willingness to lead learning with others.

### › Inclusivity

A Foundation Phase for **all** children in Wales which makes a significant contribution to closing the achievement gap for children who experience various forms of disadvantage, inequality or vulnerability.

## Taking forward the plan: governance arrangements

The Foundation Phase Expert Group will influence the work of Pioneer Schools, local authorities and their regional consortia, Welsh Government and others, to support, monitor and review the plan as part of the development of the new curriculum.

Regular updates will be given to stakeholders on the progress of the plan as the new curriculum development takes place. Welsh Government will be responsive to feedback and changes or amendments will be made as required. This will form part of the engagement and communications strategy for the plan with updates being communicated via Dysg, through local authorities and their regional consortia, social media, etc., and other publications and information about key developments, documents and progress will be published on the Welsh Government's website<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (Welsh Government, 2015) ([gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf))

<sup>13</sup> *Pioneer Schools* (Welsh Government, 2015) ([gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150630-pioneer-schools-en.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150630-pioneer-schools-en.pdf))

<sup>14</sup> [www.gov.wales/curriculumforwales](http://www.gov.wales/curriculumforwales)

## Taking forward the plan: communications

In order to support the consistent delivery of the Foundation Phase as Welsh Government moves towards the development of a new curriculum, an effective communication strategy will be developed to:

- › engage with parents/carers and practitioners
- › support training and information sharing
- › highlight effective practice
- › share activity and resource suggestions
- › support planning and observation and assessment
- › support communications on the new curriculum
- › promote initiatives.

This will include:

- › better use of lines of communication such as infographics, social media and online tools
- › each resource, as listed above, being adapted for use by practitioners, parents/carers and others within the sector.

## Taking forward the plan: monitoring arrangements

Progress against the actions laid out in this Foundation Phase Action Plan will be monitored by the Foundation Phase Expert Group. Regional consortia and representative organisations for non-maintained settings will be required to provide six-monthly reports on the progress made against the actions that they will be delivering.

# Foundation Phase Action Plan

**The Foundation Phase Expert Group identified the following four strategic areas that need to be addressed.**

- › Curriculum and assessment.
- › Professional learning.
- › Narrowing gaps in achievement.
- › Regulation and inspection.

There are a number of actions required in each area which are set out below.

## 1. Curriculum and assessment

Further developing the delivery of the Foundation Phase curriculum against its pedagogical principles is key to improving outcomes for children. Improvements on this aspect in the short-term will help build the basis on which the new curriculum will be developed. Assessment for learning approaches remain vital to supporting progression and the learning and development needs of children.

This area of the plan contains actions to develop and embed effective practice and approaches to:

- › consistently deliver the curriculum and assessment arrangements across the Foundation Phase as Welsh Government aligns with the requirements of the new curriculum
- › digital competency
- › literacy and numeracy
- › Welsh language and culture
- › assessment for learning.

### Action points

#### Short-term action points (by September 2017)

1. Settings and schools to embed effective Foundation Phase practice, as noted in the principles set out in the pedagogical principles (page 8 of this document) in their planning and provision, and to plan for how they will embed the four purposes at the heart of the new curriculum.
2. Welsh Government, regional consortia and local authorities to continue to develop approaches to school (and setting) to school (and setting) support to ensure the embedding of these effective pedagogical approaches throughout Wales.

3. Welsh Government, in consultation with key stakeholders, to consider how the Foundation Phase can best be delivered as part of the new childcare offer for working parents/carers.
4. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to improve collaborative working between Flying Start teams and settings and schools, including transition planning and progression through sharing of excellent practice and professional development.
5. Regional consortia to identify and share effective assessment for learning practice to further embed assessment for learning within the Foundation Phase.
6. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to identify and share effective Foundation Phase practice with all practitioners via school (and setting) to school (and setting) support, social media, Learning Wales, Hwb, other digital tools and through Foundation Phase conferences. Effective practice on the following important areas to be identified and shared with all practitioners using the approaches set out above:
  - › Welsh language and Welsh-medium provision in the Foundation Phase
  - › digital competency
  - › literacy
  - › numeracy
  - › the Foundation Phase Profile (FPP) and its continuing role in ensuring that observational assessment remains prominent within Foundation Phase assessment
  - › assessment for learning approaches
  - › engagement with family and communities.

### **Medium-term action points (by September 2018)**

7. Settings and schools with effective Foundation Phase practice to help and inform the development of the new curriculum.
8. All settings and schools, when delivering the Welsh Language Development Area of Learning, to make effective and appropriate use of Welsh language resources across all other Areas of Learning.
9. Welsh Government to undertake a survey of the Welsh language skills of practitioners to inform future developments.
10. Welsh Government to replace paper-based reading and numeracy tests with computerised adaptive tests for first use in summer 2019.

## 2. Professional learning

Developing the workforce is particularly key in improving the delivery of the Foundation Phase as it is still a relatively new form of curriculum in Wales and the evidence shows that there are significant inconsistencies in practice. A wide body of evidence also shows that improving the quality of the workforce in the early years is particularly important for improving the outcomes for children and especially those from deprived backgrounds.

This area of the plan contains actions to:

- › provide high-quality professional learning and leadership development
- › ensure that this is based upon setting/school and setting/school working, facilitated by the regional consortia.

We take 'high quality professional learning' to be that which is systematic, sustainable and transformative, that is professional learning that supports individuals and groups to:

- › understand when and why there is a need for change in their own practice
- › implement change in their practice
- › reflect upon the success of the change, in light of children's experiences and outcomes.

### Action points

#### Short-term action points (by September 2017)

11. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to make all professional Foundation Phase learning opportunities available to all Foundation Phase practitioners, as appropriate to their needs.
12. Welsh Government to work with regional consortia challenge advisers and local authorities (where appropriate) to ensure that settings and schools are adequately assessing the skill levels and requirements of those delivering the Foundation Phase and including the appropriate access to professional learning within their development plans.
13. Regional consortia to strengthen the role of advisers in relation to professional learning in settings/schools.
14. Regional consortia to include training on Welsh language in all professional learning opportunities.
15. Welsh Government, regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to ensure that information on Foundation Phase professional learning opportunities is widely publicised, locally and nationally.

16. Local authorities and their regional consortia to ensure that they have appropriate staffing expertise in place to lead on professional learning within the Foundation Phase.
17. Welsh Government to make quality-assured, effective practice case studies available on Hwb.
18. Regional consortia and local authorities to review the training resources and other professional learning opportunities available to practitioners, including those in leadership roles, and share current good practice and materials, developing revised materials and approaches where needed. This will include professional learning in child development, leadership, environment experiences and pedagogy of Foundation Phase.
19. Welsh Government to ensure that the needs of Foundation Phase practitioners are adequately represented in any future early years childcare and play workforce plan for Wales<sup>15</sup>.

#### **Medium-term action points (by September 2018)**

20. Welsh Government to ensure that the professional learning approaches for those working within the Foundation Phase in non-maintained settings are developed and implemented systematically.

#### **Long-term action points (by September 2019)**

21. Higher education institutions to ensure that all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes awarding qualified teacher status must include delivery of child development following revalidation of courses. Where courses have recently been through this process, opportunities for incorporating child development into existing courses should be considered.

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<sup>15</sup> The plan will cover practitioners, including teaching assistants and learning support workers, but not teachers.

### 3. Narrowing gaps in achievement

Narrowing the gap in attainment of different groups of children remains a key objective for Welsh Government.

This area of the plan will require actions to:

- › ensure the Foundation Phase continues to contribute to closing gaps in achievement as well as raising the attainment of all
- › focus particularly on raising the achievement of children experiencing poverty.

#### Action points

##### Short-term action points (by September 2017)

22. Welsh Government, regional consortia and local authorities to promote the use of the approaches set out in the Family and Community Engagement (FaCE) Toolkit<sup>16</sup> to settings and schools to support them to work with families as partners in children's learning and use family engagement as a means of raising attainment and well-being.
23. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to promote adopting a nurturing ethos within settings and schools such as nurture groups for children and their families.
24. Welsh Government, regional consortia, local authorities (where appropriate), and settings and schools to encourage parents and carers to support their children's learning including using the 'readiness to learn' strand of the Welsh Government 'Education begins at home' campaign.
25. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to promote the use of approaches with Foundation Phase practitioners, that are known to be particularly effective for children from disadvantaged backgrounds including<sup>17</sup>:
  - › a focus on developing early speech, language and communication skills
  - › listening to and acting upon 'learner voice'
  - › small group work that puts the best practitioners with groups that are underachieving
  - › effective deployment of practitioners – teachers and teaching assistants

<sup>16</sup> The FaCE Toolkit is available on the Learning Wales website. ([learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/family-and-community-engagement-toolkit/?lang=en](http://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/family-and-community-engagement-toolkit/?lang=en))

<sup>17</sup> *What really works for the early years? Guidance for the Early Years Deprivation Grant* (Welsh Government, 2015) ([learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/150506-pdg-what-really-works-en.pdf](http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/150506-pdg-what-really-works-en.pdf))

- › early literacy and numeracy interventions
- › developing children's self-regulation
- › a focus on social and emotional learning.

26. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to share effective practice in the use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) and Early Years Pupil Deprivation Grant (EYPDG) across all settings and schools through professional learning opportunities, taking into account any recommendations from the evaluation of the EYPDG being undertaken by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

### **Medium-term action points (by September 2018)**

27. Settings/schools to build upon existing good practice in providing learning opportunities for families especially related to literacy and numeracy and on-site, multi-agency provision.
28. Welsh Government to support settings and schools to have closer involvement in multi-agency working with Flying Start, Families First, Communities First and other programmes so as to support disadvantaged children and families more effectively.
29. Regional consortia and local authorities (where appropriate) to support settings and schools to make effective use of information from observation and assessment, including the Foundation Phase Profile assessments, for early identification of children with additional learning needs, and to plan appropriate interventions, working, when needed, with specialised services.
30. Welsh Government and higher education institutions to include effective practice on raising the attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds in initial teacher education, professional learning and leadership programmes.
31. Welsh Government to assist settings, schools, local authorities and their regional consortia in monitoring and self-evaluating their progress on narrowing gaps in achievement.

## 4. Regulation and inspection

Inspection is important in maintaining the standards of delivery of the Foundation Phase across settings and schools but is also key as a means of identifying those settings and schools which have good practice that could be shared widely across Wales.

This area of the plan contains actions to ensure that any revised inspection arrangements continue to be aligned with the Foundation Phase.

### Action point

#### Medium-term action points (by September 2018)

##### **Estyn to consider the following when making changes to its inspection framework.**

32. Maintaining an appropriate inspection focus on the implementation of the Foundation Phase, the standards achieved by children and how leadership supports this.
33. Maintaining an appropriate inspection focus on the support provided by local authorities and regional consortia to settings and schools to implement the Foundation Phase.

##### **Estyn and CSSIW should consider the following when making changes to joint-inspection frameworks for settings delivering the Foundation Phase for three- to four-year-olds.**

34. Reflecting the outcomes of the current pilot of joint-inspection and providing inspection guidance for non-maintained settings.