

All in one

Foundation Stage Units are in the spotlight amid Government plans to greater align EYFS and Key Stage 1 goals. *Anne O'Connor* outlines how they work and examines their benefits and challenges



It has long been established that the Early Years Foundation Stage is a phase in its own right. However, Government plans to bring greater alignment between the EYFS goals and learning expectations in Key Stage 1 (KS1) once again call into question whether governments truly understand the special and particular nature of the learning and development that takes place from birth to five.

Many early years specialists would rather see the alignment reflect the need for continuity between EYFS and KS1 and for this continuity to greater reflect the developmental needs of young children, rather than a pressurised rush to achieve standards that are not in line with children's natural growth and development – and are in danger of damaging their well-being.

When I was first involved, almost 25 years ago, in setting up an 'all-through Foundation Stage Unit' (FSU), where nursery and Reception children were totally integrated, we had to be very clear that it was not a means to introduce more formal schooling at an earlier age. Indeed, the aim was to extend the benefits of good nursery and pre-school experience and to reduce the trauma of change and upheaval for young children at an age when their resilience for change and separation was not yet fully developed.

This fell quite naturally into place when the Foundation Stage as a distinct phase was first introduced in 2000, reinforcing the fact that rather like the two years of the sixth-form phase, the nursery and Reception years are part of the educational

Dr South's hosts pre-nursery-, nursery- and Reception-aged children (see case study, right)

Change is about situations; transition, on the other hand, is psychological

framework but a separate entity in themselves.

The creation of the EYFS, to include the birth-to-three phase, has not changed the fundamental fact that there are developmental shifts before and after the age of three, and that children in the three-to-five phase generally have much to benefit from each other.

CHANGE AND TRANSITION: IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Young children now experience more shifts in care and education outside the home than ever before. It is rare to find a child who goes straight from home to school (or even nursery) without any other form of early child-care and education (ECE).

Many children are exposed to a 'pick and mix' approach (Selleck 2006) ►

CASE STUDY: DR SOUTH'S COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL, OXFORDSHIRE

Dr South's CofE Primary School in Islip, Oxfordshire, a half-form-entry village school, admits some 36 children to its FSU across the year.

Pre-nursery (F3) and nursery-age (F2) children access 15 hours, with some parents paying for additional hours. There is a maximum of 15 Reception (F1) children, some of whom have not attended the FSU before. Some nursery children leave to enter Reception at other primary schools. There is flexibility and space to allow a small number of Year 1 children to remain in the FSU when appropriate.

Key person groups include children across all age bands. There are three full-time-equivalent staff (two NNEBs job-sharing, one teaching assistant and one full-time teacher).

Home visits are an important feature of the settling process, as are settling visits. Parents are allocated at least two settling visits of 60–90 minutes but can take as many as needed until the child is able to be relaxed in the setting. Parents are encouraged to bring a book and sit where the child can see them while also allowing the child to be free to interact with the other children and staff.

Children arrive between 8.50am and 9am and after self-registering they access free-flow continuous provision until 11.30am and again in the afternoon. One member of staff leads a 'rolling' phonics group of no more than four children at a time, with other staff supporting, observing and interacting with children indoors and out. Snack is served café-style to allow an adult to sit with the children and create a 'homely' time for talking and sharing news.

Planning is responsive and 'in the moment' and focuses on building on what the children are already deeply involved in. Children initiate their own learning and the adults support and guide them to extend the learning opportunities. Adults will stand back to observe the children carefully, joining in with them, or leading, when appropriate.

There are weekly FSU meetings to discuss the children's engagement in the setting, to share observations and talk about any concerns. Regular 'looking back to look forward' sessions are held to raise questions about what the children are doing and why, and think about how the setting might need to change in order to grow with them.

To support the children's transition into Y1, the FSU teacher spends one day a week in the KS1 class.

IN OUR VIEW

Head teacher Huw Morgan

'There are many advantages of having a Foundation Stage Unit, with a mixed pre-nursery, nursery and Reception class. One is that the children have a secure sense of belonging from an early age and that moving to another class is nothing to be anxious about as they see their older friends move on confidently.

'Another is that there is no artificial ceiling to what the nursery children can achieve; they can access, for example, phonics when they are ready, which suits our more able children. Also, Reception children needing consolidation in certain areas can access that with no sense of being held back.'

Teacher Helen Prud'homme

'One of the main benefits is the scaffolding of skills which the older children can give to the younger ones. The older children become the "more knowledgeable other" and the sense of empowerment this gives them is immense. The Reception-age children want, and are actively encouraged, to help the younger children with coats, reading, writing, rules, routines, sharing. The nursery children feel the same sense of empowerment with the arrival of the pre-nursery children.

'Nurturing, love, compassion, empathy, co-operation, patience and teamwork are all promoted throughout the FSU by a team, which includes the children and parents, with a common goal, and who know that when well-being is high everything else follows.'

Nursery nurses Jessica Brock and Nikki Grossi

'We get to know the children really well, and the parents, grandparents, aunts,

uncles and siblings. It's like an extended family. This gives us such a way in to maximising the children's well-being and involvement and then their learning.

'We know the children as well as they know us. They learn a little about our lives, interests and experiences and this helps build an honest relationship. Parents see this and trust us to nurture their children. The children pick up on this trust and this is a secure base from which they fly.

'Being with children in such a wide age-band has also developed our skills as early years practitioners.'

Governor assigned to early years Mandy O'Sullivan

'Assessing the children's progress and abilities is an easy process for the staff, as there are no transitory stages where new relationships have to be formed. In-depth knowledge of the children in Reception means the staff are able to intervene if they become aware of an additional need or problem. This translates into excellent progress at the end of the Reception year.'

Parents

'My [nursery-aged] child is often greeted at the door by several of the older children, which immediately makes him feel he belongs and makes him want to join in.'

'The bond that children gain between year groups continues throughout the school, as I see from my older daughter who has friends in both the years above and below. All the children are very kind and protective of each other and I think that starts in the Foundation Stage.'

'As an older child within her year group my nursery-age daughter was ready to start phonics in nursery and was able to begin to read and write.'

'The team are there to support us and

because they know the children so well, have been flexible in their approach, which has really bought out the best in our daughter.'

'They really know my daughter and myself which means we can be very open and honest with feedback, help and encouragement in both directions.'



to ECE with the potential for multiple transitions between home and anything from a range of childminders, nurseries, pre-schools and playgroups, all on a weekly and sometimes daily basis. There may be valid reasons for this in terms of parents' lifestyle and working needs, but this notion of 'parental choice', much beloved by governments, doesn't begin with the needs of the child.

From what we know of child development, attachment theory and a growing appreciation of the impact of early stress and trauma, there would seem to be ample evidence that young children need to form secure attachments to a few familiar adults in their earliest years in order to support the strong foundations in neurological development, self-regulation and emotional resilience so important for later learning and life in general.

It is impossible to protect children from all change, but as William Bridges (2011) writes, 'It's not the change that does you in, it's the transitions.' As a 'transition management expert' in the business world, Bridges was very clear that they are not the same thing. Change is about situations: a new job, moving home, etc. Transition, on the other hand, he

describes as psychological – 'a three-phase process that people go through as they internalise and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings about'.

We are asking many of our youngest children to experience and survive so many more transitions in their early lives than many of us have experienced even as adults – and we need to recognise the impact that this may have on them.

NURSERY TO RECEPTION: REMOVING THE HURDLE

One clear way of reducing the number of transitions that children experience before the age of five is to remove the hurdle between nursery and Reception. Who, as a nursery practitioner, hasn't felt that we were only just really getting to know the children when it was time for them to move to Reception – often having just turned four? And who hasn't felt that they could have achieved so much more for the children had they had them for another year?

This is not an indictment of Reception teachers but of the disruption to relationships and learning that occurs when children are made to go through the upheaval of change so

soon after arriving in nursery or pre-school. However, as a practitioner in an all-through FSU, where children stayed with us for two years, I knew that their development in the Prime areas was more secure and that they had increased levels of well-being, self-regulation and resilience for whatever challenges school (and life) might have in store for them.

These stronger relationships, which we know are important in establishing the best conditions for young children to thrive and learn, were often acknowledged by practitioners with experience of working with 'vertical groupings' or in Steiner schools, where children stay with the same teacher year on year.

Although vertical grouping has fallen out of fashion, it is still often a necessity in small rural schools and seems to function very well there. The notion that children are easier to teach in chronological age groups denies the known value that children get from being with children who are both older and younger than them. There is no doubt it can be more difficult to teach across rigid curriculum boundaries, but that is perhaps a fault of curriculum design and an over-insistence on artificial targets, rather than any inherent fault in the practice itself.

As a result of increasing top-down pressures, many of the original Early Years Units or FSUs have reverted to separate provision for nursery and Reception children, but there are still some authorities and schools that continue to see the value of supporting integrated provision. Various models for this integration exist, ranging from joint planning and shared use of an outdoor area through to total integration of nursery- and Reception-age children within shared indoor and outdoor areas.

Although not a common occurrence, there have also been examples of nursery schools working closely with local primary schools and extending their provision to retain Reception-age children and transferring them only at KS1.

Setting up an FSU is not a cheap or easy option. It requires schools to rethink their staffing, organisation, use of environment, routines and procedures.

Most importantly, it demands careful reflection on what is important for children at this stage of their learning and the early years principles that support this. ■

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Teachers at Dr South's report that having an FSU enables them to get to know the children better

FOUNDATION STAGE UNITS: BENEFITS

Reception-age children clearly benefit from the continued provision of a play-based, nursery-style environment and the opportunity to progress through the EYFS at their own pace. But a two-year 'all-through' approach for nursery and Reception can bring significant gains for all children, their families and practitioners:

- For many children, the transitions from home to nursery to Reception class can be traumatic, even when managed well. Allowing children to remain in the same environment, with familiar adults and routines until the start of Year 1, reduces stress and helps build confidence and emotional security.
- Children can work at their experiential level, rather than chronological age, for longer. This means that there is no ceiling of development for nursery-age children, who may benefit from playing alongside older and more experienced children. Less-experienced children particularly benefit when they reach Reception age as they can continue to engage in developmentally appropriate play alongside younger children, can access appropriate resources easily and have the time and space to develop at their own pace, ensuring that they don't miss out on crucial early developmental experiences in the Prime areas.
- Working at their experiential level is particularly important for children who may have missed out on key physical or language development stages, which will have a detrimental impact on later learning and well-being. The opportunity for greater involvement in developmental movement activity is essential for 'narrowing the gap' in later achievement. Poor motor development in particular has been shown to impact negatively on 'school readiness' (Goddard Blythe 2012) and may well have a part to play in language delay (Ayres 2005).
- Children can transfer to Year 1, and all the routines and procedures of the KS1 curriculum and school life in general, at a later stage when they are more likely to have the emotional security and confidence to cope with the changes. Even children who have not reached all the early learning goals will be better able to deal with the new experiences in primary school life as a result of their increased maturity and self-reliance.



- Being in an FSU strengthens the relationships between practitioners and children and enhances their awareness of children's needs, which better supports their formative assessment. It also helps settings to establish stronger relationships with parents and carers and to involve them to a greater extent in promoting their children's learning.
- Siblings can be accommodated in the same setting. When handled sensitively this can be very beneficial for children in reducing anxiety and building empathy and responsibility.
- Reception staff have the opportunity to work in a multidisciplinary team and to benefit from the expertise of trained early years staff.
- Children also benefit from the broader range of skills of a team of practitioners, while an effective key person approach provides greater individual support for children and families.
- Separate EYFS guidance continues to give practitioners some curriculum independence from KS1 and the top-down approach influenced by the demands put on the learning needs of older primary school children. This enables practitioners to develop 'responsive' planning in which children are allowed time and space to follow their own interests, uninterrupted by unhelpful timetabling demands such as playtimes and assemblies that may not best support the particular learning needs of three-, four- and five-year-olds. (See case study for an example of how to provide phonics teaching in an integrated unit.)
- An EYFS or early years team is likely to have more say in the development of whole school policy than a lone nursery or Reception teacher and is better able to advocate for the needs of the youngest children in the school.
- Linking nursery and Reception areas in an open-plan style frees up space, avoiding unnecessary duplication of resources.
- More space makes it easier to provide a 'workshop'-style environment, where larger areas can be devoted to, for example, role play, creative and messy activities or large-scale block play, enabling practitioners to provide a wider range of resources.
- Children have greater freedom of movement and more space in which to develop activities – and freedom of choice for children is likely to promote the development of positive dispositions and motivation for learning. It also encourages valuable movement play experiences that are vital for good physical development and is linked with later learning success.
- Integrated provision can improve staffing ratios, enabling greater focus on directed activities as well as supporting children's free play both indoors and out.
- Incorporating Reception children into a smaller 'enclosed' environment within the primary school – for example, one that they need not leave to go to the toilet or dining hall – is beneficial to both their physical as well as their emotional security.

FOUNDATION STAGE UNITS: CHALLENGES

As with any initiative that aims to make the learning experience more meaningful for children, there are practical difficulties that will need to be addressed.

When judging what level of integration may be appropriate for their setting, schools must take account of the specific nature of their accommodation, how a unit may affect their funding and the needs of their children and families.

Challenges will present themselves, particularly where historical routines and traditional perceptions of the Reception class and its place in the primary sector prevail. What is vital is that provision in the unit remains rooted in good early years practice.

To achieve this, schools will need to consider the following factors:

Size

Settings should not be too large in number. Where several classes are to be integrated, it is worth considering creating parallel units, although this can create other challenges. There are also added complexities with one-and-a-half form entry settings.

Admissions

It is vital that admissions and settling procedures are flexible and that practitioners can devote ample time, planning and energies to ensuring that children and their families are supported through the transition into the setting.

Children's needs

Meeting the needs of three-, four- and five-year-olds creates special demands on the

adults working with them. Practitioners used to working with four- and five-year-olds may need support and training to work effectively with three-year-olds. Those with experience of three-year-olds may need reassurance that their understanding of this crucial stage of child development provides them with a good foundation for working with slightly older children.

Part-time and full-time children

Balancing the needs of all children accessing the setting at different times can present particular difficulties, although settings usually find that they quickly develop their own natural flow to the day that responds to the children and their needs.

Integrating with private childcare providers

Although this can add to the initial complexities of creating integrated provision, many schools and providers have inevitably found this to be a useful way forward in reducing or removing transitions into school.

Staff qualifications and training

The quality and experience of unit staff is vitally important, and practitioners continue to need training and opportunities for team-building once the unit is up and running.

Management

Leading a multidisciplinary team of teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants is demanding and requires skill, experience and a degree of non-contact time. Where this is acknowledged and FSU co-ordinators are represented in senior management teams then the needs of the EYFS are less likely to go unnoticed within a primary school. It is unlikely that the FSU can be successfully managed on a day-to-day basis from outside the unit or age phase.

Routines and procedures

Historical school routines and procedures may need to be challenged and amended. For example, it is not always appropriate for Reception-age children to have their concentrated play interrupted by the need, for example, to attend assembly or have a formal PE session. Supporting uninterrupted periods of sustained free-flow play provides plentiful opportunities for physical activity and implicit teaching of specific skills and development.

Planning

The need to provide an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and experiences appropriate for nursery- and Reception-age children demands rigorous and creative thought on the part of practitioners, but need not be difficult. Differentiation by outcome is often more relevant than providing differentiated tasks. Planning must be responsive and collaborative, emanating from observations of children's needs, interests and motivations matched to a sound understanding of child development. This means that planning in the EYFS may need to be distinctive from the rest of the school as 'moment by moment' planning (Ephgrave 2012) may be more appropriate than routine short- and long-term planning formats.

Observation

Efficient and responsive methods of observation, tracking and monitoring need to be in place as practitioners may be interacting with more than their 'own' group of children. 'Focus child' observations ensure that all children benefit from close interactions and practitioner reflection on their progress and needs. An effective key person approach supports the development of strong relationships and meaningful interactions, enabling practitioners to 'tune into' children and focus on their developmental stage and individual needs.

Communication and support

The current top-down and results-led approach that prevails in education today can make very unreasonable demands on EYFS practitioners and children. Senior managers, head teachers and governors must, therefore, be made aware of the particular nature of the EYFS so that they can support early years practitioners in their commitment to the principles of good practice. KS1 and KS2 colleagues, too, need to be informed about the early years curriculum to ensure that EYFS practitioners do not become isolated.

Year 1 staff

This group of staff in particular need training and support to acquire an understanding of the principles of the EYFS, to better understand the needs of the children transferring into their class, and to make them aware of how best to capitalise on the children's learning and to maintain continuity.



In practice: creating an FS Unit

Advice and points to consider for school leaders interested in establishing a Foundation Stage Unit at their setting

While the challenges in setting up an FSU may appear great, the benefits can far outweigh the difficulties. To achieve a level of integration that is right for a school and to create a unit that is faithful to the principles of the EYFS, there are a number of key areas that practitioners need to consider.

The following is an outline of some of the main areas, with accompanying questions and points to help practitioners assess how they can best create an FSU in their setting.

PARENTS AND FAMILIES

It is vital that a school involves children's families to raise their awareness of the EYFS and the ways that young children learn. Supporting parents is particularly important where a unit changes long-standing practice and procedures and where parents may expect a formal approach to Reception-class teaching.

Parents are anxious and often unsure about their children's early learning experiences and are keen to be kept informed. Winning parents' support is more successful in schools where their involvement is already a priority. A two-year Foundation Stage period allows practitioners to establish better contact with families and enables parents to become involved at a level that suits them.

For reflection

- Can you offer home visits before children start at the setting?
- Can you arrange flexible settling-in routines with parents based on children's individual needs and review them regularly, on a daily basis if necessary?
- What strategies will there be for dialogue with parents? Will you be able to communicate daily?
- The key person approach is an essential part of establishing relationships, providing one or two special people that the child and their parent can connect with in a busy and lively setting.
- Encourage parents to become involved in the daily life of the unit, but be flexible about your expectations of parental involvement.

SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Setting up a unit may involve schools having to refurbish, extend or redevelop their existing spaces. In times of economic restraint, there are likely to be fewer funds available so make the most of the opportunity to assess how best to use available space.

For reflection

- How many children will be in the unit? Because of the age ranges involved, small FSUs work best. Consider setting up parallel units if large numbers of children are involved. Most importantly, ensure that you have an effective key person approach that provides children and parents with ideally two special practitioners with whom they can develop a close and affectionate relationship, within the larger group.
- Consider the best way to adapt the space available to create a mix of free-access workshop areas and quiet spaces that can be used for relaxing, nurturing experiences or for one-to-one or small-group work. Such an area can reassure parents that their more experienced child has the space and means to work at an extended

The ultimate aim of the FSU is to meet children's needs

or challenging level without distraction from younger or less-experienced children.

- Can you provide toilets and dining areas within the unit so children do not need to leave it? Is the unit secure, so children cannot run out or find themselves in unfamiliar places without adult supervision? Is this respected by other staff, visitors and parents? Regardless of the limitations of your physical space, will the environment promote emotional security?
- Can you create an area where parents settling their children can spend periods away from their children but still be close at hand?
- Will there be a telephone link to the rest of the school and access to an outside line so that families can be contacted when needed?
- Is the outdoor area manageable? Has it adequate storage and a variety of surfaces? The area should be ample enough to provide empty spaces and a mix of static and adaptable resources, but not so big that it is difficult to supervise. Create smaller areas within any large area so that children do not feel threatened. Can you create shade and shelter so that children can make optimum use of the outdoors in most weather conditions? Fit a safe external electricity point so that sound systems can be used outside for music or stories. An external water tap is also essential.



STRUCTURE OF THE DAY

In primary schools, the day is usually planned around traditional timetables and doesn't always take account of the needs of Reception children, despite exceptions being made for nursery classes. Establishing routines and procedures that are appropriate but different from those for the rest of the school may, at first, be difficult. However, the changes are valid and it is important that practitioners clearly understand why.

For reflection

- Concentration skills and positive dispositions for learning develop best when children are allowed to follow their motivations and interests over extended periods. Are you able to provide long sessions of uninterrupted free-flow play? View the organisation of the day from a child's perspective to help you decide what can be improved upon.
- Can you provide access to supervised outdoor play all day? Ensure that your planning for outdoors is given high status, and that stimulating activities and play experiences are available to engage the enthusiasm of children and practitioners alike. Encourage team members to be supportive of each other and flexible, particularly when the weather is poor. Remember, the outdoors provides many learning experiences that cannot be replicated indoors. Physical and sensory development in particular is supported by outdoor play. Once children arrive in KS1, their outdoor experiences often become time-limited and restricted so it makes sense to maximise this time to support their development of the Prime areas in particular.
- Can you provide space within the setting for children to eat lunch (if provided) in informal, family-style groups? Can the children set the tables, serve and clear away? Consider setting up a rolling or café-style snack area, where such things as water, fruit and leftovers (from breakfast or lunch) can be made available for children to help themselves during the day. Practitioners will need to attend regularly to such an area, but it is an excellent way to forge relationships, promote vocabulary development and to help children make healthy decisions about what and when to eat.

TEAMWORK

- An FSU will incorporate practitioners with varying qualifications and experience so it is essential that a team leader or co-ordinator is appointed, ideally with some managerial experience and strong, intuitive people skills.
- Plan for and spend time on team-building. Provide opportunities for staff to meet and share their concerns and enthusiasms as well as just for planning and operational information.
- A flexibility of roles will develop where there is a positive approach to teamwork, and children benefit most when all practitioners are enthusiastic about all aspects of children's development – physical, emotional, social and academic. Children benefit from seeing all staff (and genders) engaging in housekeeping and nurturing responsibilities as well as teaching. Teachers must remember, however, that they probably earn more than other team members and that ultimate accountability rests with them. What strategies and procedures will you have in place to maintain good communication and healthy team relationships?
- While teachers may ultimately leave the FSU to work elsewhere in school, the nursery nurses and teaching assistants are likely to remain more constant team members and have a vital role to play in supporting new teachers, particularly those with little early years training or experience. How will senior management and governors acknowledge this vital role? And how will they promote and support staff's personal and professional development?

LINKS WITH KS1 AND KS2

Raising awareness of good early years practice among primary practitioners can sometimes be a struggle. An FSU requires a degree of independence from KS1 and KS2, but equally, unit practitioners should not become isolated from the rest of the school.

- Consider what links will remain useful, and ways in which older children can benefit from the EYFS facilities and resources.
- Think creatively about ways to inform other staff about early years practice. Perhaps a 'bottom-up' approach needs to be developed, whereby the principles of early years education



FURTHER READING

- O'Connor A (2017, 2nd edition) *Understanding Transitions: Supporting Change through Attachment and Resilience*. Routledge
- Selleck DY (2006) 'Key persons in the Early Years Foundation Stage', *Early Education*, no50
- Bridges W and Bridges S (2011) *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*. Nicholas Brealey
- Goddard Blythe S (2012) 'The Right to Move: Assessing Neuromotor Readiness for Learning. Why physical development in the early years supports educational success', www.allianceforchildhood.eu/files/book2012/QoC%20Book%202012%20Chapter-1.pdf
- Ayres AJ (2005) *Sensory Integration and the Child*. Western Psychological Services
- Ephgrave A (2012) *The Reception Year in Action: A month-by-month guide to success in the classroom*. Routledge

can be applied to the rest of the primary stage. This is vital at a time of Government pressure for 'alignment' of the early learning goals with expectations for KS1 – any alignment must be built on continuity and what is essential for EYFS children, rather than making Reception more like KS1.

MOVING ON

Children who have experienced little disruption during the EYFS are more likely to be emotionally ready for the transition to Year 1. How will you prepare the children (and their parents) for the transition?

Encourage Y1 staff to spend time in the FSU to get to know the children and become familiar with their learning styles and dispositions. You could mark the end of a child's time in the FSU with a party or special ceremony. Ask the children how they might like to do this and don't assume that 'graduation-style' events will mean much to young children, even if the parents like the idea of them!

MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Look at your setting from the perspective of:

- a three-year-old leaving their parent for the first time
- a four-year-old who has had experience of daycare since shortly after birth
- a child with learning difficulties
- siblings with a 13-month age gap
- a child with reduced mobility
- a five-year-old with no experience of nursery or pre-school
- an experienced five-year-old with high-level literacy and numeracy skills
- a hyperactive five-year-old with emotional difficulties.

What do you need to do to help each child feel secure, active, stimulated and supported by the learning environment you have provided?

IN CONCLUSION

It is essential that any innovations are not at the expense of children's needs and entitlements. There are many unique aspects to quality nursery education and Reception-class teaching that we must not lose sight of in the current climate of narrow, target-driven expectations. Only by building on sound EYFS practice can we hope to develop FSUs – in whatever form – that are true to the principles of good-quality early years provision. ■