

The UK ADDENDUM to the ITERS-R: December 2014
(Please check www.aplus-education.co.uk for updates)

This addendum was developed by A+ Education, with the help of a local authority panel and reference to the English Health Protection Agency Guidelines and the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. It is intended for use by users of the ITERS-R in the UK, and aims to align the ITERS-R with UK guidance and standards in the small number of instances where there are differences. It identifies recommended changes to the scoring of the ITERS-R scale, the 'All About the ITERS-R' and the latest US 'Additional Notes for Clarification' available at the time of publication (September 2014, see www.ersi.info), resulting from a cross-referencing exercise with the HPA Guidance and the EYFS, and consultation with UK stakeholders.*

This revised addendum replaces the original 2009 edition.

The numbers in brackets below link to the full Addendum notes for all the scales.

KEY
CFOC = Caring for Our Children (US guidance on which ECERS/ITERS decisions are based)
US Additional Notes = US Additional Notes for Clarification (www.ersi.info)
HPA = Health Protection Agency Review June 2013*
There is also reference to a Comparison Table, see Appendix i, which is a table showing a comparison of US and UK Guidance

* The Health Protection Agency was renamed Public Health England in 2014 (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england)

GENERAL NOTES AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THE SCALE

CLEANING, SANITISING AND DISINFECTING (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

(1) ITERS-R requires a weak bleach solution for sanitisation after cleaning. **HPA** states that detergent and hot water are adequate for cleaning most surfaces and furniture, including toilet areas. So do not score down if bleach is not used. However, if bleach is used, it should be a weak solution. Do not routinely check the make-up of solutions, but observers should ask about products used within toilet/nappy-changing areas, food areas and with toys, especially mouthed toys, and check that these are appropriate.

HAND WASHING

(2) Use of sanitisers/gels (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

ITERS-R allows sanitisers to be used in place of hand washing for adults, and children over 2 years unless hands are visibly soiled. However, observers should follow HPA guidelines and score down if adults' or children's hands are not washed before eating/handling food and after toileting procedures including changing nappies/pull-ups.

Sanitising gels should only be used in exceptional circumstances, i.e. where soap and water are not available/practical, e.g. at the park. Gels are acceptable for hand washing on entry to the setting.

(3) Correct use of gels

If, in exceptional circumstances, hand gels are used, check the procedures, and score down in safety and supervision if these are not followed. The use of gels must be as thorough as when performing hand washing, i.e. the hand-rub solution must come into contact with all surfaces of the hands and the hands be rubbed together vigorously until the solution has evaporated and the hands are dry. Do not use towels to dry hands.

(4) Rubbing soapy hands (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

Although ITERS-R US Additional Notes changes the time required to 20 seconds, give credit if soapy hands are rubbed together for at least 10 seconds (**ITERS-R scale notes p25**).

(5) Use of paper towels to turn off taps (All About the ITERS-R p117)

This is not required, but we would recommend it as best practice. Do not score down if it does not take place.

(6) Use of hands-free bins (All About the ITERS-R p130, see illustration 10.3.1b)

ITERS-R requires hands-free bins with lids for all waste. Give credit if open bins are used for paper towels, but **not nappies**, as long as the bins are well supervised and emptied frequently, i.e. there is an emphasis on not re-contaminating hands. Hands-free bins with lids are needed for nappies unless it is observed that the procedure is completely hygienic, e.g. the bagged nappy is put into a chute and hands are washed immediately.

(7) Hand driers (All About the ITERS-R p116 Hand washing procedure and HPA)

Do not give credit for these. The only satisfactory method of drying hands is with good quality disposable paper.

(8) Antibacterial soap (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

HPA states that antibacterial soap is safe. Do not score down if it is used, but let the setting know that antibacterial soap is not necessary.

(9) Observers cleaning hands on arrival (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

Hand washing or the use of a sanitiser is good practice, and it is the responsibility of the observer to clean his/her hands on arrival.

ACCESSIBILITY

(10) Calculating Accessibility (ITERS-R scale p7)

The ITERS-R bases calculations of accessibility on the whole time that a setting is open (see chart at the top of p7 in ITERS-R) and encourages observers to ask questions about access outside the three-hour period observed. However, in England, due to the way in which early education places are funded, many children attend for three hour sessions only, and full-day provision is not necessarily the norm. For sessional provision – or full day provision where *some* children attend on a sessional basis – we suggest basing accessibility calculations on the time observed *only*. Only base calculations on the full time the setting is open where all children attend for a full day (e.g. in some reception classes or private settings).

See page xiv of the All About the ITERS-R book, which advises when to carry out observations (i.e. ‘when children are most active and when most children are present, and it must include both play/learning times and routines, such as feeding, toileting and nap’.)

GUIDANCE ON INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

ITEM 2 FURNITURE FOR ROUTINE CARE, PLAY AND LEARNING

Cubbies (ITERS-R US Additional Notes)

ITERS-R requires an individual cubby for each child, large enough for all possessions to be stored, and requires observers to score down at **3.1** if this is not provided. We relax this slightly as follows:

At **3.1** children must have individual pegs for coats and bags. Cubbies are not required.

If coats are stored on pegs, do not score down if they touch each other, e.g. sleeves touching, as long as they are not overly crowded. No shared pegs. Hygiene issues should be picked up in Item 10, the Health Practices item.

At **5.1** individual storage space is required. Any storage which fulfils this need can be credited. For example, a school might provide individual drawers, whilst a playgroup in a church hall might use spare chairs to provide each child with space to store their things during the session.

ITEM 4 ROOM ARRANGEMENT

This ITERS-R item refers to indoor space only. Observers in the UK should also consider any covered porches or verandas which operate as extensions of the indoor space, i.e. can be accessed directly from the indoors, and are attached to the building.

ITEM 7 MEALS/SNACKS (All About the ITERS-R p77 and p85)

Appropriate schedule 1.1; 3.1

ITERS-R marks down at 3.1 if drinking water is not accessible.

Many ITERS-R age children may not know they need a drink, and should not be expected to help themselves. We are therefore tightening this requirement for England as follows: score down at **1.1** if water is not offered to ITERS age children between meals. Observers should see evidence that children do not go for long periods without a drink, e.g. staff remind children regularly.

As stated in All About the ITERS-R p77, infants and toddlers who eat solid foods should be offered water between feedings rather than juice or milk. Snack bars are only appropriate for ITERS age children if staff carefully supervise, and check that all children have had the opportunity to access the snack and have been encouraged to have a drink. Observers should check that staff have a list of whether or not children have eaten. This is in accordance with EYFS 2014, p6.

Hygiene 1.3; 3.3

Hand washing after eating food (All About the ITERS-R p82 and HPA) Hands should be washed after eating if children have fed themselves and have sticky fingers (see **All About the ITERS-R p82**). Wipes are acceptable but flannels often remain wet for a period of time and provide ideal conditions for growth of germs (see HPA, June 2010, Review 2013). Only allow the use of individual damp flannels if these are used under very strict hygienic conditions, i.e. cloth is used immediately after dampening and is then discarded for laundering. Disposable wipes may be used and faces dried with soft towels.

Table cloths (All About the ITERS-R p83) If table cloths are used, a clean cloth should be used for each snack/meal. For cafe-style snacks or snack bars, we would not expect the table to be sanitised, i.e. sprayed, between children. ITERS-R would expect this. However, children should not be expected to eat at a messy table and the table should be wiped if needed. Plates should be used as an additional barrier against contact with the table, and to promote understanding of social expectations.

ITEM 8 NAP/REST SCORING N/A FOR NAP (All About the ITERS-R p95)

Drop-sided cots 1.1 (ITERS-R US Additional Notes) There has been no move to ban drop-sided cots in the UK, so, if seen, do **not** score down for these. ITERS-R US Additional Notes suggests marking down in both the Nap and Safety items if drop-sided cots are used.

Soft toys 1.1; 3.2 (ITERS-R US Additional Notes) The NHS SIDS website highlights the importance of children sleeping safely. Mark down if there are soft toys in a cot of an infant under 6 months old. One soft toy/comforter per child over 6 months is acceptable. Blankets are fine as long as they are placed safely and the number of blankets should be varied depending on the ambient temperature. Please see <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/Pages/reducing-risk-cot-death.aspx> for details.

Distance between cots/mats/beds 1.1; 3.2 (ITERS-R US Additional Notes) Do not score down for the distance between cots/mats/beds at 1.1 and 3.2, as required in ITERS-R, see p22, 3.2, if the only sanitary issue is the proximity of children to one another. However, if the spacing causes other problems with hygiene, such as walking on other children's mats to access their own, then score down.

At **3.2** we require 45cm minimum, as long as adults and children have enough room to access beds easily and hygienically. Only allow less if there is a solid barrier.

Supervision

Children within sight at all times (All About the ITERS-R p102, 3.3) ITERS-R requires that children under 24 months must always be supervised, within sight, with careful checks. Mark down at **1.2** if staff are not in the room. The following note clarifies our expectations: If older children are in a separate sleeping space, regular visual checks must be made every 10 minutes, and recorded. There needs to be a system in place, e.g. beeper, to remind them when to check, and not just rely on remembering to do so, as it is easy to forget when busy! Children must be checked regularly by touch – not just viewed through a window. These checks must be recorded.

ITEM 9 DIAPERING/TOILETING

Changing facilities The EYFS 2014 p28 requires suitable hygienic changing facilities for any child who is in nappies. Do not score down at 1.2 if there is no diapering table, as long as there is a changing mat, which is sufficiently long to accommodate the full length of the child's body. Staff undertaking nappy change should **not** be involved in the preparation of food unless **strict** hand washing procedures are adhered to.

Aprons In ITERS-R, the wearing of aprons is optional, but observers should follow HPA guidelines, June 2010, Review 2013, which require staff to wear a disposable plastic apron to protect their clothing or uniform from contamination when involved in nappy changing. Score down at 3.1 if staff do not wear aprons for nappy changing. We do not require aprons to be changed between children, unless the aprons are visibly soiled.

Posting of nappy change procedure (US Additional Notes and CFOC p106-108) ITERS-R requires nappy change procedure to be posted. We do not require this, but if a care plan is in operation relating to personal care/additional needs for a particular child, this should be posted.

Disposal of nappies (ITERS-R Scale Notes p25) Hands-free bins with lids are needed for nappies. However, we would give credit if it is observed that the procedure is completely hygienic, e.g. the bagged nappy is put into a chute and hands are washed immediately.

Nappy creams, lotions, etc. should be labelled with the child's name and **must not be shared** between children. It is important to use clean, disposable gloves when removing creams from containers. This will help to avoid cross infection and contamination of the container.

Basic Provisions 1.2 (EYFS p25)

Lack of toilet doors ITERS-R allows toilets without doors, but we would mark down at **3.2** if lack of doors compromises dignity, e.g. staff or children from other rooms see children on toilets when they walk past, i.e. they should not be in view of people passing by. Where children's nappies are changed on a mat on the toilet floor in full view of passers-by, where no effort has been made to provide privacy, mark down at 3.2, as the child's dignity is compromised.

ITEM 10 HEALTH PRACTICES 1.1; 3.1; 3.2; 5.2; 5.3

Hand washing (All About the ITERS-R p125 and Keeping spaces, materials and equipment clean p131, 3.2)

ITERS-R is very rigorous about hand washing. We suggest relaxing the requirement as follows:

Upon arrival Do not require adults or children to wash hands upon arrival or when re-entering the room after outdoor play, unless hands are visibly soiled.

After sand/messy play Children should wash hands after sand/messy play, where hands are obviously soiled. We recommend hand washing after play dough and before cooking. However, it would be hard to enforce at other times, and it risks cutting across play. Convenience is more important.

Hands that are visibly soiled, potentially grossly contaminated with dirt or organic material, i.e. following the removal of gloves, after touching animals, or where potentially infectious symptoms are suspected, must be washed with liquid soap and water. Score down at 3.1 and 3.2.

Before and after water play Hands should be washed **after** water play but do not require hands to be washed before water play.

Dealing with bodily fluids ITERS-R requires hands to be washed after sneezing/coughing (ITERS-R Scale Notes p27). Most general guidance on hand washing also suggests that hands should be washed after coughing or sneezing. For example, HPA states that 'if bare hands are coughed or sneezed into, they must be washed immediately'. While this procedure should be in place, it would be very difficult for staff to ensure that children wash their hands after every sneeze or cough. We are therefore relaxing the ITERS-R guidance as follows:

Observers should not be overzealous when assessing this. Encouraging use of tissues is good practice. Observe whether adults encourage children to wash hands/throw tissues in the bin after coughs/sneezes. If adults are being explicit and encouraging good hygiene practices, then observers should not score down, even if hands are not washed every time. If no attention is paid, then score down. Where adults wipe children's noses, they should wash their own hands.

Other issues

Use of Face flannels (HPA) ITERS-R allows the use of individual flannels (All About the ITERS-R p126). HPA says that children's skin should be cleaned with a disposable wipe. Flannels should **not** be used.

Sun cream 3.1; 3.2 (All About the ITERS-R p127)

When adults are applying sun cream to children, hands should be cleaned between the application of different types of sun creams. If children apply their own cream, they should wash their hands. Wipes are acceptable.

ITEM 11 SAFETY PRACTICES 1.1; 1.2; 3.1; 3.3; 5.1 (ITERS-R Scale Notes p29)

Plug sockets Do not score down for lack of safety caps on plug sockets. Please see www.fatallyflawed.org.uk for further information.

Raised lip on changing tables 1.1 ITERS R requires a raised lip of 6 inches to prevent children from falling off the changing table. However, do not score down if the raised lip is less than 6 inches, as long as there is some arrangement/barrier/lip to stop children falling when having their nappy changed.

Drop-sided cots (ITERS-R US Additional Notes) There has been no move to ban drop-sided cots in the UK, so, if seen, do not score down for these.

Glitter Count as a safety hazard at 1.1. if children under 3 years freely access loose glitter and/or other materials with warnings 'not for use with under 3s' unless under the most stringent supervision, i.e. the member of staff is within an arm's reach of the child and watches closely. However, if the glitter is suspended in other materials, such as glue or play dough, but not in water, then this could be considered safe. The observer should use professional judgement. Do not score down if glitter is observed in display, as this might have been added by the child under very close supervision, i.e. the member of staff was within an arm's reach of the child and watched closely. Ask for clarification.

Safety of toys/materials Consider it a hazard if children are allowed to play with toys or craft materials which carry warnings 'not suitable for children under 3 years', unless they are very closely supervised, i.e. the member of staff is within an arm's reach of the child and watches closely. Observers should check labels. N.B: Some ready mixed paints carry this warning, but this is because the caps on the containers could present a choking hazard. In this case, the staff should pour the paint out for the children to use, but be careful to keep the containers out of the reach of the children. The paint itself does not pose a problem. Refer also to **Item 16** for potential hazards posed in relation to active play materials and space. These could be in or outside. See ITERS-R Scale Notes p37 for 1.1, 1.2, 3.3, 5.5.

Essentials needed to handle emergencies 3.3 Check and list visible evidence including the following: fire procedure posted; fire equipment available and exits clearly identifiable; first aid kit; emergency services numbers, including child protection service, posted. Score down if these are not met. Questions can be asked during the interview, to establish that the setting has planned for emergencies. Scoring yes to this indicator will not necessarily mean that all EYFS requirements are met. Settings should use the EYFS as specific guidance in this regard.

Car parks ITERS-R suggests that settings should be scored down on safety where a car park is adjacent to a play area, unless extra protection, (eg cement barriers or bollards), has been put in place, in addition to a fence - see All About the ITERS-R p143. We do not require this.

ITEM 17 ART (1.2 and ITERS-R Scale Notes p29)

Use of glitter Children under 3 years should not freely access loose glitter and other materials with warnings 'not for use with under 3s' unless under the most stringent supervision, i.e. the member of staff is within an arm's reach of the child and watches closely. If toxic or unsafe materials are used, ITERS-R would score down. However, if the glitter is suspended in other materials such as glue or play dough, then this could be considered safe. The observer should use professional judgement. Do not score down if glitter is observed in display, as this might have been added by the child, under very close supervision, i.e. the member of staff was within an arm's reach of the child and watched closely. Ask for clarification.

ITEM 21 SAND AND WATER PLAY

ITERS-R suggests scoring N/A if all children are under 18 months of age. We are changing this to meet expectations in England. Only score N/A if all children are under 12 months.

ITEM 34 PROVISION FOR PERSONAL NEEDS OF STAFF 1.2; 3.4; 5.3; 7.3

ITERS-R stipulates that a 15 minute break is required if staff work 8 hours.

European Legal requirements: if a person works more than 6 hours, s/he must have a 20 minute rest break. Additional requirements are:

- The 20 minutes is in one block
- Not to be taken at the end of a shift, somewhere in the middle
- Can leave place of work if wish
- The employee can decide when the break is taken, so long as it meets these conditions
- Young workers under 18 years, working more than 4.5 hours, get a rest break of 30 minutes

At **1.2** and **3.4** apply the above EU requirements for those working 6 hours or more, i.e. increasing the minimum requirement from 15 minutes to 20 minutes. Part-time workers require the opportunity for toilet breaks and to have a drink alongside children. So, for example, staff working for 2.5 or 3 hours should be able to have a drink of water and access the toilet, but do not require a break as such. This follows EC guidance.

5.3 ITERS-R requires a total of 1.5 hours break for staff working an 8 hour day, split into 3 breaks. There is flexibility on whether staff take 3 breaks or leave early, or take fewer longer breaks, as long as the time totals 1.5 hours and this has been agreed with staff. See above for guidance on staff working fewer hours. In a 3 hour session, staff should be allowed time for access to the toilet and to have a drink, but not necessarily a 15 minute break. This might impact negatively on the children, as they will miss time with their key person.

7.3 Some flexibility is required concerning when staff may take breaks, even for staff working in sessional provision, e.g. 3 hours. Observers should consider elsewhere in the scale whether breaks and flexibility in breaks affect the needs of the children and parents, e.g. for access to the child's key person. Any issues with children's needs not being met should not be reflected in the scoring of this item, which is about staff needs. The impact on children and parents should be reflected elsewhere in the scale, as appropriate.

ITEM 39 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH 7.3

Use A levels/Level 3 as an equivalent to AA degree, rather than scoring the indicator as N/A.