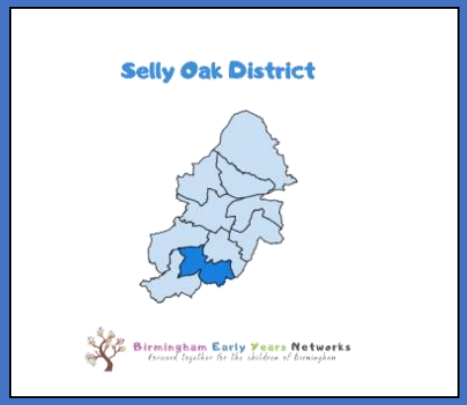
Pedagogy and Curriculum Document 2026-27

Birmingham Federation
Maintained Nursery Schools



Allens Croft Nursery School

Executive Head Teacher – David Aldworth

Article 28 (The Right to Education)

Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29 (The Goals of Education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Vision

Values

Intent

Implementation

Impact

Key documentation

A

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At Allens Croft, we pride ourselves on our creative and holistic approach to pre-nursery and nursery education. Our approach empowers children to make their own choices and helps them to become self-motivated, confident and self-disciplined individuals. Our principles of creating opportunities for participation, negotiation and collaboration enhance the children's knowledge and skills as well as their ability to respect and to work with others. We ensure that all our work is child-centred and wraps around the children and their families as an all-encompassing service for our community.

What do we mean by? (definitions)

Curriculum:

The curriculum: what we want children to learn

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Young children's learning is often driven by their interests. Plans need to be flexible.
- Babies and young children do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

Development Matters (2023)

Skills: When we talk about skills throughout this document, we are referring to the things children can do.

Knowledge: When we talk about knowledge throughout this document, we are referring to the things children need to know and remember.

Experiences: Any opportunity readily available where children get involved and engage with. Children learn through their daily experiences at Allens Croft. These are usually open-ended experiences.

Activities: Specific adult-initiated activity planned for and set up, with an intended outcome. These are usually adult led activities.

Pedagogy: The strategies employed to teach knowledge and skills.

School Values

Our values underpin our practice and run through every aspect of our curriculum. The best interests and welfare of children are at the forefront of all that we offer.

We want our children to be:

happy, independent, confident, resilient, curious, sociable, respectful, play-full and creative.

These attributes drive the content of curriculum and the delivery of our curriculum.

We value happiness: We want children to feel joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfilment.

We value independence: To have the belief that they are competent and capable. To act for oneself.

We value confidence: Confidence to speak, confidence in their own abilities, and confidence to try new things.

We value resilience: To withstand or recover quickly from difficulties and persevere in the face of challenge.

We value curiosity: To be eager to know or learn something.

We value sociability: To learn to talk and to engage with other children and adults. To learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceable.

We value respect: To be regarded for own feelings, wishes and rights. To be admired for own abilities, qualities or achievements.

We value play: Play is the vehicle for all children's learning. Play is an active process without an end product.

We value creativity: To use imagination. To generate ideas and possibilities.

Key Principles

Our provision is non-discriminatory, accessible and sensitive to race, gender, religion, culture, language, disability, sexuality and differing patterns of family life. We firmly believe that high quality early years education and care is about supporting and developing strong, curious and confident children.

Creativity is at the heart of our school and is used in everyday contexts to provide purposeful opportunities taking into consideration the rhythm, space and time needed for every type of learner.

Overarching Principles of the EYFS

- There are four guiding principles that shape our practice in early years.
- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

EYFS Framework (2026)

Our Key Principles

At Allens Croft Nursery School, the curriculum is designed to recognise the children's prior learning and to provide first hand learning experiences. Stated within the EYFS framework (2026), *'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.'* Children learning through play is the key pedagogical thread throughout our curriculum. Our play-based curriculum encourages:

- Practicing and building up ideas, concepts and skills through tangible opportunities
- Positive physical and mental health
- Hands-on exploration both indoors and outdoors to help children make sense of the world around them.
- Understanding of the need for rules and what that looks like in our Nursery.
- Socialisation and communication through sharing experiences, working together, making friends and learning about the wider world.
- Resilience through resolving conflict, overcoming frustration, dealing with uncertainty.
- Development of cognitive skills, concentration and long-term memory through problem solving, investigation, flexible thinking, and revisiting skills and ideas
- Verbal and non-verbal communication through sharing experiences, sharing own ideas, storying and role play.
- Risk taking, understanding of 'safe risks' and making mistakes.
- Creativity through self-expression and imaginative play, making connection between what is remembered and new abstract ideas.
- Using the whole body to move in different ways and strengthen core muscles, developing fine and gross motor skills.

Rights Respecting Principles

- We are a school committed to the principles of Rights Respecting Schools. Children's rights run through all that we do.
- Children are right's holders and learn about their rights
- Children can exercise their rights
- Adults are active-duty bearers
- We hold a culture of respect in school
- Children's voices are heard and valued
- We have a shared sense of community and belonging

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

unicef UNITED KINGDOM

SILVER – RIGHTS AWARE

Rights Respecting Pledge

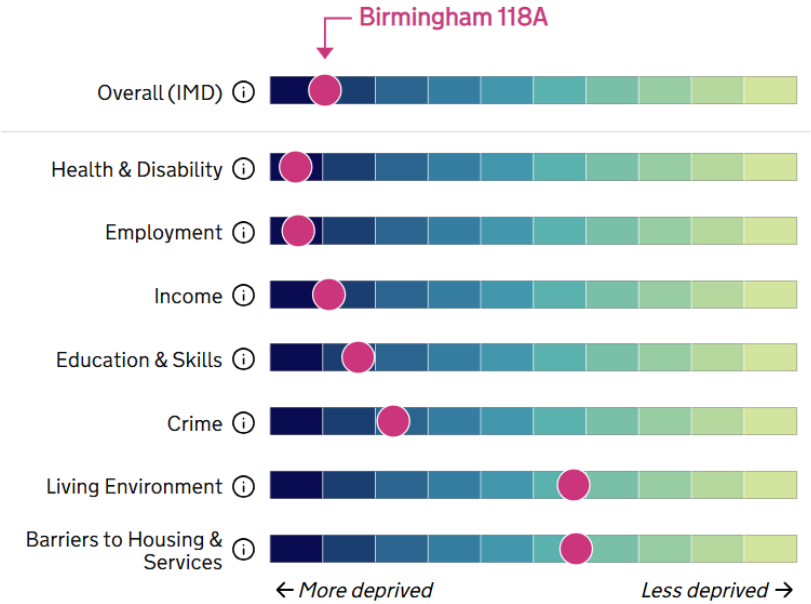
We have the right to learn our way,
We have the right to food and drink,
We have the right to talk and think,
We teach each other about our rights,
To help all children have a choice.

ABCDE of Rights

Rights are for **ALL** (UNIVERSAL)
Rights are there at **birth** (INHERENT)
Rights **cannot** be taken away (INALIENABLE)
Rights **do not** have to be earnt (UNCONDITIONAL)
All rights are **equally** important (INDIVISIBLE)

Rationale for our Curriculum Design

Our children come in to nursery with a strong sense of family and attachment to home. On entry to nursery, the majority of our children have achieved earlier developmental milestones (than expected for their chronological age) in the three Prime areas of learning. For many children coming to nursery is their first experience outside the home and family. The children living close to our school live within the Selly Oak District of South Birmingham. Selly Oak is more deprived than most neighbourhoods in England. It has a higher rate of income deprivation affecting children than most neighbourhoods in England.



Selly Oak is ranked 45th out of the 69 most deprived wards in Birmingham in terms of child poverty levels with 29% of children living in low-income households. Nationally children in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to be living with obesity compared to those living in the least deprived (National Child Measurement Programme, 2026). This is true in Birmingham as 12% of the Reception aged children are living with obesity (Startwell Data 2025).

We have seen a huge increase in the number and complexity of children with attending our school with SEND, (Census May 2026, 18% SEND). Communication and interaction are the highest areas of need. Many families travel of children with SEND are travelling significant distances across the City to access our provision due to our reputation for inclusion. In addition to our highly inclusive ethos, we have 6 places available as part of our commissioned resource base. 18% of our children have high level or complex special educational needs (October 2025).

Our inclusive and ambitious curriculum is for all children and especially the most disadvantaged children in our community, so all children thrive. All children have the right to a broad, balanced and carefully sequenced curriculum that builds on the unique needs, interests and strengths of each child. Our curriculum:

- promotes active learning through core experiences that prioritise learning in the prime areas – PSED, CL & PD.
- Values working in partnerships with parents and outside agencies. Support is offered to enhance the home learning environment.
- Prioritises building children's vocabulary within a language rich environment.
- Enhances the opportunities and experiences available to children, especially those who are disadvantaged. We provide a strong early help offer around the family.

What is Cultural Capital?

Cultural capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success. It is about giving our children the best possible start to their early education. It is important to recognise that everyone has cultural capital - that is - knowledge, skills and behaviours, and that these accumulate over time through many different experiences and opportunities. It links to one of the core principles of the EYFS, the Unique Child: 'every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured' (EYFS, 2026). The experiences we offer such as our outdoor learning environment, creative play experiences and opportunities to see, feel, hear, touch and do things they have not had experience of before, all build on children's cultural capital. We also take children and their families on external trips and visits for the purpose of deepening curriculum linked learning, but also for our school community to experience 'togetherness' outside of our setting.

Our Curriculum and Intent

We want our children to be:

Impact → Confident learners, engaged citizens, happy, independent, resilient, excited, curious, sociable, respectful and creative. ← Mission

High Quality Interactions:

- Peer on peer
- Between children and practitioners
- Within our team of practitioners and professionals
- With the environment, materials and resources
- Total communication approach (to include Makaton, widget symbols and objects of reference)

Enabling Environments:

- A daily routine
- Continuous provision indoors and outdoors
- Combination of child-led learning and adult guided teaching
- Visual aids to support communication, autonomy and understanding.
- Transforming spaces unlocks every child's potential. By removing physical and sensory barriers, we create inclusive environments

Characteristics of Effective Learning

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Assessment:

- Observation
- Curricular goals
- Cultural capital
- Developmental milestones
- Individual starting points and next steps
- Specific and meaningful assessment methods for children with SEND.

Implement → ← How

An inclusive and ambitious curriculum for all children, especially the most disadvantaged in our community including children with SEND so that all children thrive.

All children have the right to a broad, balanced and carefully sequenced curriculum that builds on the unique needs, interests and strengths of each child.

Practitioners know the which pedagogical strategy best suits each unique situation for each child or group of children as they play and learn.

Child Centred Practice

Children learn through play. They make choices about what, how and with whom they want to play, skilfully supported and guided by practitioners. We plan experiences to support children to gain knowledge, skills and behaviours to be engaged citizens and lifelong learners. As agents of their own learning, children interact with the learning environment, exploring new ideas and further developing their knowledge and skills.

Intent → ← What

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2026) SEND Code of Practice (2015), KCSIE (2026) WTSC (2026) Equality Act (2010) Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance: Development Matters (2023) Birth to Five Matters (2026)

Intent: Why do we teach what we teach?

We aim to ensure that children are:

- *Happy, secure and feel safe*
- *Independent, self-assured risk takers*
- *Confident and resilient*
- *Excited and curious*
- *Socially strong and able to form positive relationships*

At Allens Croft Nursery School, we put children and their families at the heart of everything we do so that their individual interests and talents will be valued and developed. Our aim in the EYFS is to build strong foundations and resilience, so that they can grow to become successful, life-long learners and members of society.

Our curriculum is the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. We intend that our ambitious and inclusive curriculum provides children with the knowledge, skills and understanding, to be effective, inquisitive, curious, independent learners and influence their wider thinking across all areas of the curriculum. British fundamental values are incorporated into our curriculum design.

Our children will have belief in themselves, their rights, and their abilities. They will know that they are loved, that they are strong, capable and unique. They will have resilience and the perseverance to keep on trying when things are challenging. We want children to have the confidence to try new things, to take risks and be physically active. We are fully inclusive, and all children are expected to think about the needs of others. We respect and value all families as their children's 'first teachers' and aim to develop a positive two-way relationship with each one.

We want children to be able to communicate their ideas, beliefs and feelings, choosing different ways to do this. We will celebrate this creativity and the many languages that children use to demonstrate their thoughts, their ideas and their learning. They will have experienced and remembered a wide range of words through stories, core books, rhymes and poems. They will have the skills to make friends and will show kindness to others. They will know how to look after themselves, their friends, their school and the environment. They will know about important mathematical and scientific concepts. They will have an understanding and respect of the world around them and the world beyond. They will have a desire to learn and be ready for their next stage in education.

Play underpins our ethos, both adult led activities and child-initiated play. Their learning through play is enhanced by skilful adult intervention. Practitioners know which pedagogical strategy best suits each unique situation for each child or group of children as they play and learn.

Our youngest children will firstly develop a strong foundation in the prime areas of learning. Once this solid foundation has been constructed, the children are then able to develop and extend their existing knowledge, learning new and more complex skills and knowledge within the specific areas of learning.

Prime Areas

Communication and Language (CL)
Physical Development (PD)
Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Specific Areas

Literacy (L)
Mathematics (M)
Understanding the World (UtW)
Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Our nurturing of children promotes a high level of wellbeing. This in turn leads to positive physical and mental health and the ability to create and think critically.

We aim to provide our children with knowledge, skills and experiences in a hands-on, holistic way so that all learning is embedded in a meaningful context. We do this through a personalised, flexible curriculum that engages and motivates our children. It covers all the 7 areas of learning and supports the children's learning characteristics.

Curricular Programmes/ Threads

Specific programmes	What children learn – Summary
Rights Respecting Schools (UNICEF) Whole school approach	There are four key areas of impact for children at a Rights Respecting school: wellbeing, participation, relationships and self-esteem. Children feel valued, safe, and respected. Improves self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of belonging. Encourages children to understand their own rights and respect the rights of others. Promotes a caring, inclusive ethos that supports mental health and emotional literacy. Builds a shared language of respect across the school. Improves relationships between educators and children, and between children and children. Focuses on equality, fairness, empathy, cooperation and responsibility. Promotes child voice and active participation in learning. Encourages critical thinking about fairness, diversity, and global citizenship. Fosters awareness of global issues. Children understand the reasons behind rules – to protect everyone's rights.
Physical activity for early years (Birth- 5 year olds) UK Chief Medical Officer's Physical activity guidelines 2026	Daily routine – promotes active learning through play indoors and outdoors Active children are healthy, happy, school ready and sleep better. Every movement counts Aim for at least 180 minutes per day for children aged 1-5 Get strong, move more, break up inactivity
Forest School Scandinavian educational programme Outdoor play	**What is Forest School?** Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It is a long-term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting.

Nature play Wooded areas 1 x Forest school leader level 3 in training	Forest School is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than one-off or infrequent visits; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session. Activities take place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a lifelong relationship between the learner and the natural world. This approach uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning. Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners, who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice. Self-esteem and independence through nature play developing: • Confidence and social skills • Language and communication • Motivation and concentration • Physical skills • Knowledge and understanding of the world
Letters and Sounds Department for Education (2007) Guidance	Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. Phase 1 concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. It is used as part of a broad and rich language curriculum that has speaking and listening at its centre, links language with physical and practical experiences, and provides an environment rich in print and abundant in opportunities to engage with books. Phase 1 paves the way for children to make a good start in reading and writing.
Startwell Whole school approach	The Startwell programme is based around 8 key characters and their messages to help early years settings, parents and health professionals create a healthier environment for our children and families. The early years of life is a vital time to set healthy foundations to prevent obesity later on in life. Our lifestyles are significantly influenced by early life experiences. Healthy lifestyle intervention at a young age can influence food choices, physical activity levels and leisure activity choices and these are likely to continue into adulthood**.**

Health for Life	Healthy lifestyles programme that focuses on growing food, healthy eating, cooking and physical activity and includes pupils, parents and staff. There is a focus on sustainability and reducing food waste. Children learn about the life cycle of plants. They grow, harvest and cook fruit and vegetables. They also grow fruit and vegetables for our healthy snacks.
Wellcomm	Delayed language skills lead to under-performance later in life. The WellComm toolkits were developed by Speech and Language Therapists at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust with the aim of providing easy to use support for everyone involved with children. Requiring no specialist expertise, they quickly identify areas of concern in language, communication, and interaction development in order to ensure early targeted intervention. Once a profile has been drawn up for each child, The Big Book of Ideas provides focused teaching and intervention activities to meet individual needs within continuous provision and talk time sessions.
Early TalkBoost	Early Talk Boost is a 9-week structured program to accelerate your children's language development. Identified children will take part in three small-group sessions per week (about 15 minutes). The sessions include stories, songs, games, and talking activities that build attention, listening, vocabulary, and sentence structure. There are also home activities (Inc. books) for parents/carers to reinforce learning. Research and evaluations show that children who take part in Early Talk Boost can make significant progress, often equivalent to **4–6 months' language development** over the 9-week period.
Attention Birmingham	Small group intervention for children with communication and social interaction needs. Attention Birmingham is a four-stage intervention designed by Gina Davies, which aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually stimulating and highly motivating activities. Attention Birmingham is particularly effective in supporting children who have communication and interaction difficulties, who are particularly self-directed and find sharing attention a challenge. The Aims of Attention Birmingham are for children: -To engage attention -To improve joint attention -To develop shared enjoyment in group activities -To increase attention during adult-led activities -To engage in spontaneous interactions in a natural group setting -To increase non-verbal and verbal communication through gesturing and commenting

	-To build a wealth and depth of vocabulary -To have fun as part of a shared experience
Counting Collections	Counting Collections is an early mathematics approach to teaching young children about number. It aims to support children's counting, subitising, comparison of numbers and composition of number as well as their abilities to estimate and represent number (including understanding numerals). Children work together to select a container of objects and then decide how they will find how many are in the collection. Having counted carefully, the children record their counting on paper. **The Counting Collections Routine:** • Choose: children decide which collection they would like to count • Strategise: children plan how they will count the objects in the collection • Count: children count the objects • Record: children represent their laid-out collection of objects
My Happy Mind myHappymind is a programme that teaches children how to build their resilience, self-esteem and happiness through science-backed lessons, resources and activities. There are 5 modules which are delivered to children over the course of the academic year. Each module starts with a story	**Autumn 1: Meet Your Brain:** Staff read the module overview and watch the training video **Week 1:** Children listen to the story of Berty and Betty's Play Date and watch the video of the story. They learn a happy breathing technique called flower breathing. The story, video and happy breathing will be used throughout the half term **Week 2**: Brain sort activity **Week 3:** Let's make a brain **Week 4:** Glitter jar **Week 5:** Brain hat **Week 6:** Brain growing moments **Week 7**: Prep for the following module and staff to complete evaluations for the Meet Your Brain module **Autumn 2: Celebrate:** **Week 1:** Children listen to the story of Charlie's Rainbow Adventure and watch the video of the story. They learn a happy breathing technique called rainbow breathing. The story, video and happy breathing will be used throughout the half term **Week 2**: Understanding character strength **Week 3:** Recognise character strength **Week 4:** Strength in pictures **Week 5:** Being kind **Week 6:** Bravery medal **Week 7**: Prep for the following module and staff to complete evaluations for the Celebrate module **Spring 1: Appreciate:**

designed to introduce the children to the characters and the key concepts. • **Meet Your Brain**: Understanding how your brain works and how to ensure we look after it so that we can manage our emotions and be at our best. Growth mindset is a key part of this too. • **Celebrate**: Understanding your unique character strengths and learning to celebrate them. This is a fantastic module for building self-esteem. • **Appreciate**: Understanding why gratitude matters and how you can develop gratitude as a habit. Gratitude is key to wellbeing and resilience and we're all about making it a habit! • **Relate**: Understanding why positive relationships matter and how to build them. We're focussed on the building blocks of good relationships and friendships. • **Engage**: Understanding how to set meaningful goals that matter and how to keep resilient in times of challenge. This module is all about building self-esteem and resilience too.	**Week 1:** Children listen to the story of Arabella and her Friends at the Seaside and watch the video of the story. They learn a happy breathing technique called wave breathing. The story, video and happy breathing will be used throughout the half term **Week 2**: Understanding thankfulness **Week 3:** Identifying ways to be thankful **Week 4:** Appreciation sort **Week 5:** Gratitude mirror **Week 6:** Thankfulness lucky dip **Week 7**: Thankful tree, prep for the following module and staff to complete evaluations for the Appreciate module **Spring 2: Relate:** **Week 1:** Children listen to the story of Rose's Story Day and watch the video of the story. They learn a happy breathing technique called book breathing. The story, video and happy breathing will be used throughout the half term **Week 2**: Develop good listening skills **Week 3:** Using listening skills **Week 4:** Taking time to listen **Week 5:** Name that noise! **Week 6:** Rose says **Week 7**: Prep for the following module and staff to complete evaluations for the Relate module **Summer 1: Engage:** **Week 1:** Children listen to the story of Ernie's Birthday Tree and watch the video of the story. They learn a happy breathing technique called cake breathing. The story, video and happy breathing will be used throughout the half term **Week 2**: Setting class goals **Week 3:** Growth goal for me **Week 4:** Perseverance challenges **Week 5:** Review goals **Week 6**: Our goals **Week 7**: Staff to complete evaluations for the Engage module **Summer 2:** Recap learning from the 5 modules Continue with happy breathing techniques

There is also a parent app for families to access the information and resources and a focus on staff well-being. Backed by the NHS	
Early Years Picture News	We use Picture News with Big Nursery. Each week we have a current news story, which is used as a stimulus for speaking and listening. The news items in shared with children with a focus on what is happening, where it is happening and how we feel about it. Each item of news always links with British Values, Unicef children's rights and the protected characteristics. Children make sense of the world around them, broaden their knowledge and understanding of current events in the world and make connections to what they already know. Children learn new vocabulary linked to the news and often ask questions to find out more. Each pack includes a vibrant poster with a big, open question based on the news story. The question encourages children to discuss, debate and form opinions. This gives us opportunities to teach children respect, tolerance and to celebrate differences. Also included are some activities linked to the news items and shared with parents/carers to reinforce the learning.
Helicopter stories	We use an approach to storytelling and story acting called 'Helicopter Stories' created by Trisha Lee and inspired by the work of Vivian Gussin Paley. It combines children's imaginative storytelling with drama and play, supporting language, creativity, and confidence. The approach has two parts: story dictation then story acting. In story acting the educator reads the child's story aloud and the child and their peers act it out in a stage area on the floor. It provides inclusive opportunities for all children to express their ideas.

Conversational styles

We recognise that children have different conversational styles – sociable child, reluctant child, child with own agenda and passive child. Our practitioners reflect on children's styles to decide what support they need. Our practitioners are regularly reflecting on who they interact with using an interaction audit so that they encourage all children to communicate.

Four conversational styles for children

The Hanen Centre provides evidence-based information and training about language learning to parents and professionals, and identifies four conversational styles for children. Understanding these styles, helps our practitioners adapt their communication strategies to support each child's unique needs and development.

- The Sociable Child

The sociable child initiates interactions constantly and is very responsive to others' initiations. Even in early infancy, sociable children initiate interactions to draw attention to themselves. Some sociable children interact freely in any situation, but others are more sociable with their peers than they are with the practitioners, or vice versa. If language delayed, the sociable child may be slow to talk or difficult to understand, but this doesn't deter them from interacting with others. However, they may be less socially mature than their peers.

1. The Sociable Child

- The Reluctant Child

The reluctant child seldom initiates and is often on the outside of group activities and interactions. They may take a long time to "warm up" and respond to you when you approach them. Given time and opportunities, they will interact with you and other practitioners, but peer interactions may be more difficult for them. If language delayed, this child's reluctance to initiate may be related to their language difficulty. They may be reluctant to interact with others because they can't make themselves understood or they may not yet have learned to communicate appropriately in social situations. However, a reluctant child usually responds when others make an effort to interact with them.

2. The Reluctant Child

- The Child with their Own Agenda

The child with their own agenda spends a lot of time playing alone, appearing uninterested in interaction with adults and peers. They may initiate when he needs something, but they frequently reject or ignores your efforts to engage them. Typically developing children may go through this independent phase when they want to "do their own thing." However, they still enjoy interacting with others in some social situations.

3. The Child with His Own Agenda

- The Passive Child

The passive child seldom responds or initiates, demonstrating little interest in the objects or people around them. It can be very hard to elicit a smile from them or to engage them in any sort of playful interaction. If this is the child's consistent style of interaction, it reflects a developmental delay.

4. The Passive Child

How can adults support children's language and thought?

Practitioners support children's language and thought by:

- Being a magnet for communication
- Being a language radiator
- Being a conversationalist

*Taken from **URLEY (Using Research Tools to Improve Language in the Early Years)**: overview and language learning principles.*

Be a magnet for communication	Be a language radiator	Be a conversationalist
Children learn language best when they *use* language: so the first step is to get them communicating with you and with others. Strong and positive relationships with children are at the heart of effective practice. • **make children feel noticed and valued:** just like adults, children talk most when they feel comfortable,confident and competent, and that the person listening wants to hear what they have to say. Encourage children to initiate conversation by showing that you are relaxed and 'open for business'. When children do communicate, show interest by using body language, using their name and getting down to their level. Know and enjoy your children as individuals and let this show; give each child individual attention. Use specific praise and encouragement; • **be an active listener and a responsive language partner:** remember that young children are still developing their processing abilities, so need time and space to respond when communicating. Observe, wait and listen before speaking, to allow the child space and time to think and respond (1 ½ -2 times your usual waiting time). Let children know that you have understood them by confirming, repeating and extending their communication. Encourage them to talk more by responding with interest, asking genuine, open questions and praising both verbal and non-verbal communication. **CONT....**	Adults play a vital role in modelling language and thought for children. • **model rich language and thinking:** hearing rich language is associated with faster language learning and later literacy. Children need to experience language that they cannot yet produce. Talk with children often in different contexts. Use a rich and varied vocabulary, including unusual words as well as everyday ones, and using complex sentences. Use opportunities provided by resources and activities to introduce new words and **plan** for introducing words in play, topics and books. During play, activities and routines, use techniques such as commenting and narration to model the language for what children and adults are doing, experiencing and thinking. • **use language in context:** children learn language best when it is meaningful. Words are not simply labels, but represent concepts, ideas and knowledge. The best way to develop language is to provide rich and interesting experiences (i.e. *something to talk about*) and then give children the *language* they need to talk about and share those experiences. • **help children to understand word meanings:** adults play an important role in defining and explaining new words to help children learn them. Offering explicit, child-friendly definitions of new words during conversation, book-reading and activities increases word learning. Adults can also give clues to meaning by labelling objects, actions and abstract concepts, and by using concrete clues such as gestures, props, pictures and signing. This is particularly important for children with limited vocabularies or language delays. Discussing the meaning of any new words before starting a topic or book (e.g. using props) helps prevent them forming a barrier to understanding. • **model language for *every* child:** through interactions and conversations with *all* your children, make sure to model language and thinking for your reluctant communicators, children with delayed language and those learning to speak English, as well your confident communicators. Adapt your language to the child, modelling just above their current level. • **provide repeated opportunities for children to bump into and use new words:** research suggests that at least 20 exposures to a new word are needed for a child to 'own' it and start using it as part of their own ...	Engaging in dialogue with a more experienced conversation partner is one of the most powerful ways in which children develop their language and thinking skills. It supports all aspects of language development and is particularly important for promoting narrative skills (e.g. retelling events or stories), which children need to communicate socially and to mentally organise their lives into meaningful episodes. • **make your class/room a place for conversation:** discuss a wide range of subjects with children and deepen topics over multiple turns. Talk about the here-and-now but also about events in the past or future: talking about things that are not right in front of them helps children to develop abstract thought. Have genuine conversations with children, about things that both they and you are interested in. • **scaffold conversation, narrative and thinking:** support turn-taking and use a range of techniques for keeping discussions and conversations going, including commenting, explaining, questioning, speculating, and adding information and ideas to what children say. • **read, enjoy and discuss books with children daily:** books provide a powerful context for conversation. Techniques such as interactive shared book reading and dialogic reading have a particularly strong evidence-base. Re-read books to develop discussion in later readings, as children become familiar with the words and ideas. • **support *all* children to engage in conversation,** remembering that some will need more help if they do not have experience of conversations at home. Think about group times and whether all children are actively involved (remember, children learn language best when they *use* language). Small groups tend to support interaction and communication more effectively than large groups. Support children with limited language by using concrete gestures, props and pictures. **CONT....**
• **put children in charge:** children are most confident and motivated to talk about things they have experience of, are interested in and which are meaningful to them. Build on children's interests and existing knowledge to harness their enthusiasm to communicate. • **engage with all children:** as well as talking with sociable children, make sure to interact and communicate with your reluctant communicators, children with language delay and children in the early stages of learning English. These children may not 'ask' for your attention directly but it is they who most need your language-supporting interactions.	...spoken vocabulary. Reinforce new words by providing opportunities for children to 'bump into' and use them repeatedly. Model them in a range of different contexts, re-read books and provide play resources which relate to the new words, including props/puppets so that children can act out a new story themselves. Plan follow-up activities and link learning across a range of meaningful and connected experiences. • **read, enjoy and discuss books with children daily:** books help us to be great language radiators. The language in books is much richer than in everyday conversation, and when adults share and talk about books with children, *their* language is also richer. Shared book reading has a significant positive impact on children's oral language skills. • **give children timely and positive feedback on their use of language** to help them improve their skills. Imitating what a child says lets them know that they have been heard and understood. When a child uses incorrect words or grammar, research shows that repeating back a correct and extended version supports language development. It allows children to directly compare their own language with a similar, but correct and more complex, version.	• **actively scaffold peer communication and conversation:** shared play provides a rich context for children to practice language, social and self-regulation skills with peers in a meaningful context. Techniques such as descriptive commenting help children to notice each other, and draw them into peer conversation. Encourage children to talk with and listen to each other. Support social skills and self-regulation, so that children can successfully engage in peer interactions and learn from them. Praise peer communication, interaction and listening. Plan for small-group discussions supported by an adult; and during whole-group times, use talk-partner techniques to make sure that children have a chance to practice their conversation skills and share ideas.

ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALE ITEMS WHICH WILL HELP YOU PUT THESE THREE PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

Environment Rating Scale	Item	Language Principle		
ECERS-3	**12** Helping children expand vocabulary			
	13 Encouraging children to use language			
	30 Staff-child interactions			
ECERS-E	**3** Adults reading with children*			
	6 Talking and listening			
SSTEW	**5** Encouraging children to talk with others			
	6 Staff actively listening to children and encourage children to listen			
	7 Staff support children's language use			
	8 Sensitive responsiveness			
	10 Encouraging sustained shared thinking through storytelling, books, singing, rhymes			

*** There is a similar item in the ECERS-3 (Item 14 Staff use of books with children). We chose the ECERS-E Item for this list because it is stronger on the adult role but you may find both useful.**

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Provision Plan Safeguarding in the Curriculum
Policies and procedures – All policies and procedures are reviewed yearly, and staff sign to say they follow and understand. **DSL's –** pictures and names in reception, on the safeguarding board and parents informed on induction. **Weekly DSL panel meetings –** all concerns are discussed and followed up by DSL. All Health and safety, medical needs and accidents discussed, reviewed and monitored. **Staff training:** A rolling cycle of development is in place so all staff are up to date with relevant safeguarding training. **Inductions:** Rigorous inductions take place to gather child protection, medical, SEND and personal needs. Personal care plans signed by parents. **Contextual safeguarding:** DSL's review concerns regularly and share contextual safeguarding concerns with staff to be aware of and highlight where needed – e.g. mental health, domestic abuse, safe sleeping, home safety, food poverty. **Role of the key person:** Every child is assigned a key person; someone who supports attachments and builds positive relationships with parents and family to support each child to feel safe and secure.

Focus areas	Focused teaching – adult led, small group
Learning the concept of safety	**Feeling safe and being safe** – Discussions with children about what safety means. **Feeling safe** – emotional literacy, key person, attachments, friendships, to have a sense of belonging (key group, coat pegs). **Being safe** – Ensuring children are physically safe in the environment and are encouraged to recognise risks.
Online safety	Group time discussions with children to highlight how to stay safe online. Safe use of ICT resources. Staff to know what site are being accessed online. Inform parents online safety through leaflets and a workshop.
Safe touch and consent and relationships	Discussions with children around consent, practitioner's role model through puppet play and stories. Children have a right to say no and be safe. Teach children about healthy relationships / friendships, how to practice being kind to others, taking turns and feeling safe in their relationships at nursery and at home. Staff to talk to children about how to get help to support their relationships if they feel sad, scared or unsafe.
Conflict resolution	Supported through role play, puppet play and turn taking activities. Staff to model my turn, your turn and talk to children about how to ask for help when needed. Children are supported to make choices, given a voice and given safe spaces to reflect and retreat to when needed.
Weather and safe clothing	Children learning about different seasons and weathers. Ensuring they are dressed appropriately and what they need to stay safe in the weather – e.g. group time discussions on keeping safe in the sun, staff role modelling sun safety activities. All children to have access to hats and sun cream. Ensuring children are hydrated and have regular access to water or a warm/cool space weather dependent.
Health and self-care	Children are taught about being healthy and making healthy choices. Oral Health activities in group times and advice shared with parents. Mindfulness and feelings group time activities, inc. My Happy Mind programme. Healthy eating activities promoted daily – snack time, cooking, Health for life, Startwell.

UNCRC – Children's Rights	Children are taught about their Rights and staff role model through correct language and group time discussions.
Risk taking and managing risks	Children are encouraged to take risks and they have access to risk taking in the daily activities, adults teach children how to access their environment and resources safely and with support where needed. Children are taught how to use and handle resources in a safe way and how to identify risks.
Emotional literacy – language and understanding of emotions and feelings	Children have access to mindfulness activities and learn about their emotional literacy. Naming and recognising feelings and emotions through activities such as mirror play, role play, relaxation, singing, books. Children to have opportunities to discuss their feelings and adults to recognise and tune in to feelings of children so they feel validated e.g. I can see you feel sad….Again, reinforced through My Happy Mind programme.
How to keep ourselves safe and others	Children are taught how to ask for help, to share their thoughts and feelings. Visuals are used to support children who are non-verbal or EAL. All activities are discussed and children are taught how to safely access the environment, staff role mode the appropriate use of resources. Staff to listen to children's voice and children to feel they are listened to and they have a voice by having regular discussions with their key person and staff. Children are taught consistent rules and boundaries and positive praised for their contributions.
EYFS welfare requirements	

- **2 year old progress checks**
- **Key Person** for all children
- **Access to healthy snack and Lunch -** All children encouraged to access a healthy snack. They have access to water throughout the day.
- **Self-care** – supporting children to become independent in their self-care for example toilet training.
- **Oral Health** – Children to learn about oral health and the importance of keeping our teeth healthy.
- **Risk assessments** – Staff complete daily risk assessments and support children involved in identifying risks in their environment. Staff to complete daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments.
- **Handwashing** – Children supported to and encouraged to wash hands throughout the day.

Skills and Knowledge Progression for 'Little nursery' (2 - 3 year olds) - Typical development pathway – Children meeting age related milestones.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations. Pays attention to own choice of activity. Understands simple sentences, e.g. throw the ball Understands different situations – able to follow routine events and activities using non-verbal cues. Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating	Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds, e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. *fast/slow, good/bad*) Single channelled attention; can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus Uses longer sentences (e.g. *Mummy 'gonna' work*) Shows interest in play with sounds, songs and rhymes Begins to use language to share feelings, experiences and thoughts	Beginning to understand more complex sentences, e.g. *Put your toys away and then sit on the carpet* Uses a variety of questions (e.g. *what, where, who*) Understands who, what, where in simple questions (e.g. *Who's that? Who can? What's that? Where is?*) Beginning to use word endings (e.g. *going, cats*) Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic Identifies action words by following simple instructions, e.g. *Show me jumping*

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

Key vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of little nursery year:

Names of everyday objects and objects in Nursery

Names of actions linked to what children do in Nursery, such as: sit, play, sing, dance, run, walk, feel, touch, jump, draw, build, pretend, share, scoop, fill, empty, read Feeling words: sad, happy, angry, hurt, loved	
2 year progress check Look out for children whose speech is not easily understood by unfamiliar adults. Monitor their progress and consider whether a hearing test might be needed.	Understand single words in context – 'cup', 'milk', 'daddy' Puts two (or more) words together Repeats words and finds objects when asked Understand frequently used words such as 'all gone', 'no' and 'bye-bye' Understand and respond to simple instructions like 'give to nanny' or 'stop' Responds to own name Generally focus on an activity of their own choice and find it difficult to be directed by an adult Responds to familiar music, songs and rhymes
By the End of Little Nursery, children will: • Respond to questions and instructions • Ask for help if they need it • Speak in simple sentences • Be interested in books and stories • Be able to stop what they are doing and can listen to you. Can shift attention from one task to another • Use lots of new words • Use pronouns such as me, I, you. • Respond to songs and rhymes; begins to join in with familiar songs and rhymes.	

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Uses gesture and body language to convey needs and interests and to support emerging verbal language use	Runs safely on whole foot Begins to understand and choose different ways of moving	Moves in response to music, or rhythms played on instruments such as drums or shakers Jumps up into the air with both feet leaving the floor and can jump forward a small distance

Sits comfortably on a chair with both feet on the ground Climbs up and down stairs by placing both feet on each step while holding a handrail for support Develops security in walking upright, using feet alternately and can also run short distances. Children begin to make marks using a range of media.	Begins to walk, run and climb on different levels and surfaces Sits up from lying down, stands up from sitting and squats with steadiness to rest or play with object on the ground, and rises to feet without using hands Turns pages in a book, sometimes several at once When holding crayons, chalk etc, makes connections between their movement and the marks they make. Very energetic in short bursts and needs time for rest and calm with at least three hours of a day of exercise including moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity, spread throughout the day	Kicks a stationary ball with either foot, throws a ball with increasing force and accuracy and starts to catch a large ball by using two hands and their chest to trap it Uses wheeled toys with increasing skill such as pedalling, balancing, holding handlebars and sitting astride May be beginning to show preference for dominant hand and/or leg/foot Holds mark making tools with thumb and all fingers. Shows increasing control in holding, using and manipulating a range of tools and objects such as tambourines, jugs, hammers, and mark making tools

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

Key vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of little nursery year:

Safe, turn, positional vocabulary, bend, straight, stretch, roll, crawl, run, walk, skip, jump, climb, throw, catch, aim, stop, start, go, grip, cut, hold, up, down, round, circles, fast, slow

2 year progress check	Climbs over obstacles Uses a spoon or fork to feed themselves

Look out for children who find it difficult to sit comfortably on chairs. They may need help to develop their core muscles.	Climbs stairs independently Walks independently Can squat and balance to pick up objects.

By the End of Little Nursery, children will:

- Manage a range of equipment purposefully (e.g. uses a spade to fill a bucket)
- Run around, change direction and slow down so they do not bump into things
- Make lines and marks
- Build a tower
- Jump with both feet off the ground
- Kick a ball
- Have general control of their whole body
- Clap and stamp to music

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Complete all about me with parents/carers.

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Explores the environment, interacts with others and plays confidently while their parent/carer or key person is close by using them as a secure base to return to for reassurance if anxious or in unfamiliar situations. Enjoys playing alone and alongside others and is also interested in being together and playing with other children. Shows their growing sense of self through their growing likes and dislikes, choices, decisions and ideas. These may be different to those of the adult or their peers, often saying “no, me do it” or “mine” Seeks comfort from familiar adults when needed and distracts themselves with a comfort object when upset Begins to recognise danger and seeks the support and comfort of significant adults Is becoming more-able to separate from their close carers and explore new situations with support and encouragement from another familiar adult	Builds relationships with special people. Participates more in collective cooperation as their experience of routines and understanding of some boundaries grows Is becoming able to think about their feelings as their brain starts to develop the connections that help them manage their emotions Is beginning to be able to cooperate in favourable situations, such as with familiar people and environments and when free from anxiety. Shows a sense of autonomy through asserting their ideas and preferences and making choices and decisions Responds to the feelings of others, showing concern and offering comfort Feeds self competently Develops some independence in self-care and shows an awareness of routines such as handwashing but still often needs adult support	Shows some understanding that other people have perspectives, ideas and needs that are different to theirs, e.g. may turn a book to face you so you can see it Is developing an understanding of and interest in the diversity of the school community. Is gradually learning that actions have consequences Develops increasing understanding of and control of the bowel and bladder urges and starts to communicate their need for the preferred choice of potty or toilet Shows empathy and concern for people who are special to them e.g. may offer a child a toy they know they like Experiments with their own and other people’s views of who they are through their play, through trying out different behaviours, and the way they talk about themselves May recognise that some actions can hurt or harm others and begins to stop themselves from doing

Knows their own name, their preferences and interests and is becoming aware of their unique abilities Can hold a cup with two hands and drink well without spilling Feeds self with increasing control		something they should not do, in favourable conditions Able to help with and increasingly independently put on and take off simple clothing items such as hats, unzipped jackets, wellington boots

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

***Key* vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of little nursery year:**

Rights, different, same, rules, community/ ies, feeling words, respect, listen, friend, safe, germs

2 year progress check Look out for children who get extremely upset by certain sounds, smells or tastes, and cannot be calmed. Or children who seem worried, sad or angry for much of the time. Work closely with parents and other agencies to find out more about these developmental difficulties.	Separate from carer with the support of key person approach Makes some decisions for self. For example, decide what to play with, what to eat, what to wear Show an interest in what other children are playing or doing Sometimes joins in with other children's play Find ways to calm themselves, through being calmed and comforted by their key person Seeks physical contact from others Uses pointing to let an adult know what they want Enjoys simple make believe play e.g. having a cup of tea, making dinner Likes to do things for themselves Displays a range of emotions

By the End of Little Nursery, children will:

- Watch what friends are doing and joins in with play.
- Show an interest in others and begins to make relationships.
- Explore new environments and experiences.
- Like to help you when you are busy.
- Begin to assert independence or challenge boundaries.
- Sometimes manage to share or take turns with others with adult guidance.
- Settle to some activities for a short while.

Skills and Knowledge Progression for 'Big nursery' (3 - 4 year olds) - Typical development pathway – Children meeting age related milestones.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: To use communication and language to express wants, needs and entitlements. To begin to understand and use Makaton as a vehicle to support communication. To show enjoyment of stories, songs and rhymes through developing listening and attention skills. Begins to know and use name of key worker and friends.	**Second Milestone:** Children demonstrate a love of stories, songs and rhymes and begin to use vocabulary linked to core books and favourite stories. Listening skills are developing so children can participate in group times and with support, children are able to respond to questions and instructions. Children are able to ask for help if they need it and speak in simple sentences.	**Third Milestone:** Children can follow instructions with 2 parts and are developing a repertoire of favourite songs and rhymes.
Listens to others in one to one or small groups and when conversation interest them Can listen and do for short periods of time. Selects familiar objects by name and knows the name of some resources e.g. a paint brush for painting Learns and uses the names of friends and key worker Understands simple sentences e.g. group time now Uses language to share feelings, experiences and thoughts	Listens to familiar stories with increasing attention and recall Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories Focusing attention – can still listen or do but can change their own focus of attention Beginning to understand why and how questions Shows understanding of prepositions such as under, on top, behind by carrying out an action or selecting the correct picture	Beginning to understand humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. *who, what, when, how* • Beginning to use a range of tenses (e.g. *play, playing, will play, played*) May indicate two-channelled attention, e.g. paying attention to something of interest for short or long periods; can both listen and do for short span Understands questions such as *who; why; when; where* and *how*

Uses different types of everyday words (nouns, verbs and adjectives) e.g. banana, jump, sleep, hot Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating Begins to follow simple directions (if not intently focused)	Understand a question or instruction that has two parts such as wash your hands and put an apron on Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts using 'and' and 'because' Builds up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences Will absorb and use language they hear around them in their community and culture Use talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play e.g. this box is my castle Use longer sentences of four to six words and uses this to organise themselves and their play e.g. let's go on a bus… you sit there…I'll be the driver	Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words Uses intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others Uses multi-syllabic words such as caterpillar, ladybird, centipede, chrysalis Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion and can continue this for many turns Uses talk to imagine, organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play
Assessment Opportunities: Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments		
Key vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of big nursery year: Names of everyday objects and objects in Nursery and the home Names of actions linked to what children do in Nursery, such as: sit, play, sing, dance, run, walk, feel, touch, jump, draw, build, pretend, share, scoop, fill, empty, read, listen, talk, learn, write, balance, work together. Feeling words: sad, happy, angry, hurt, loved, jealous, upset, tired, sick, scared, nervous, excited		

By the End of Big Nursery, children will:

- Know a range of rhymes and songs from memory
- Know repeated phrases within familiar stories
- Know instructions require an action- they follow a sequence and know the purpose of instructions
- Know what response is required from key questions
- Be able to talk with other children
- Talk about what they are doing and what they remember
- Start conversations with familiar people
- Talk in sentences about what they know, what they see and how they are feeling
- Talk about things that have happened, are happening and will happen, mostly using the correct tense
- Ask and answer questions to find out more
- Ask and answer questions about stories and events

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: Children are happy, and developing control of their bodies so that they can access all activities and opportunities in Nursery. Children use large muscle movements in dance, and mark-making activities.	**Second Milestone:** Children are gaining skills in manipulation of objects, with improving control and show independence in their use of equipment and tools. They can talk about and identify different parts of their bodies and have a developing understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies.	**Third Milestone:** Children are confident and independent. Children have developed their core strength, which will enable them to join in with games and sport. They have developed fine motor control and hand-eye coordination- meaning they can access self-chosen activities safely.
Holds mark-making tools with thumb and all fingers	Runs with spatial awareness and negotiates space successfully, adjusting speed or direction to avoid obstacle	Chooses to move in a range of ways, moving freely and with confidence making changes to body shape, position and pace of movement such as slithering,

Climbs stairs, steps and moves across climbing equipment using alternate feet. Maintains balance using hands and body to stabilise Walks down steps or slopes whilst carrying a small object, maintaining balance and stability Uses large muscle movements to wave flags and streamers and make marks. Creates lines and circles pivoting from the shoulder and elbow Use large and small motor skills to do things independently e.g. manage buttons, zips and pour drinks Participates in finger and action rhymes, songs and games, imitating the movements and anticipating actions.	Manipulates a range of tools and equipment in one hand, tools include paintbrushes, scissors, hairbrushes , scarves or ribbons. Can balance on one foot or in a squat momentarily, shifting body weight to improve stability Uses a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils (model and encourage the tripod grip) Shows a preference for a dominant hand Can grasp and release with two hands to throw and catch a large ball, beanbag or an object	shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping Start to take part in some group activities which they make up themselves or in teams. Increasingly be able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm. Choose the right resources to carry out their own plan. For example, choosing a spade to enlarge a small hole they dug with a trowel. Collaborate with others to manage large items such as moving a long plank safely or carting large hollow blocks. Negotiates space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles. Travels with confidence and skill around, over and through balancing and climbing equipment. Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control and intention.

Assessment Opportunities: Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments
Key vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of big nursery year: Safe, turn, positional vocabulary, bend, straight, stretch, roll, crawl, run, walk, skip, jump, climb, throw, catch, aim, stop, start, go, grip, cut, hold, up, down, round, circles, fast, slow
By the End of Big Nursery, children will: • Catch a large ball. • Pedal a tricycle. • Climb, run and jump with confidence. • Use resources and tools safely and with some control and accuracy. • Move around spaces with control and coordination. • Have an effective grip and good control when holding pens and pencils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: Children make a strong relationship with their key person. Increasingly they separate from their parent with growing confidence and become involved in their play. They use their key person as a 'secure base' throughout the session 'touching base' when needed.	**Second Milestone:** Children are happy, settled, playful, and are able to follow routines with growing confidence. Children are beginning to recognise their feelings and feelings of other and join in with conflict resolution with supportive adults. They can communicate their wants and needs.	**Third Milestone:** Children have social skills, show pleasure in play and reflect on their learning. They are becoming independent; persevering when they face difficulties can work collaboratively. They understand rules and boundaries and show pride in who they are and what they can do.

Seeks out others to share experiences with and may choose to play with a familiar friend, child or adult, sharing experiences and play ideas Enjoys playing alone, alongside and with others, inviting others to play and attempting to join others' play Enjoys a sense of belonging through being involved in daily tasks Begins to recognise danger and seeks the support and comfort of significant adults Can tell adults when hungry, full up or tired or when they want to rest, sleep or play Willing to try a range of different textures and tastes and expresses a preference Can wash and can dry hands effectively and understands why this is important Dresses with help, e.g. puts arms into open-fronted coat or shirt when held up	Uses their experiences of adult behaviours to guide their social relationships and interactions Is sensitive to others' messages of appreciation or criticism Is more able to recognise the impact of their choices and behaviours/actions on others and knows that some actions and words can hurt others' feelings Observes and can describe in words or actions the effects of physical activity on their bodies Gains more bowel and bladder control and can attend to toileting needs most of the time themselves Shows increasing consideration of other people's needs and gradually more impulse control in favourable conditions, e.g. giving up a toy to another who wants it Expresses a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others and through their behaviour and play Shows their confidence and self-esteem through being outgoing towards people, taking risks and trying new things or new social situations and being able to express their needs and ask adults for help	Practices skills of assertion, negotiation and compromise and looks to a supportive adult for help in resolving conflict with peers Understands that expectations vary depending on different events, social situations and changes in routine, and becomes more able to adapt their behaviour in favourable conditions Develops particular friendships with other children, which help them to understand different points of view and to challenge their own and others' thinking Shows confidence in speaking to others about their own needs, wants, interests and opinions in familiar group Talks about their own and others' feelings and behaviour and its consequences Shows some understanding that good practices with regard to exercise, eating, drinking water, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health Is becoming more aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others in more detailed ways and identifies themselves in relation to social groups and to their peers

	Talks about how others might be feeling and responds according to their understanding of the other person's needs and wants Attempts to put on own coat and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom	

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

Key vocabulary categories (concept, noun, verb, adjective) to be taught by the end of big nursery year:

Rights, different, same, rules, community/ies, feeling words, respect, listen, friend, safe, healthy, clean, danger, germs, privacy, pavement, road, seatbelt

By the End of Big Nursery, children will:

- Show awareness of the feelings of others and begins to respond thoughtfully
- Know what they want to play with and where to find it
- Play with others, sharing what they are using with help
- Play imaginatively with other children and listens to their ideas
- Plan and carry out own ideas
- Be confident to have a go and try new things.
- Talk about some things they like or don't like and why.
- Persist in activities that motivate them without being distracted by other things or people.
- Understand and follow some rules.
- Be able to make friends.

LITERACY

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: Children have increasing focus during story time and will sometimes choose to look at the available books within the classroom, retelling some of their favourite stories during continuous provision. Children can use muscles in their hands and arms to make big movements and bring together hand and eye movements to fix on and control objects, beginning to make a range of marks.	**Second Milestone:** Children take part in shared reading, and use characters from stories in play and retelling stories. They join in with repeated refrains and make predictions. Children are familiar with Nursery rhymes and props, and join in with actions. Children are mark making in a purposeful manner, e.g. 'That's Mummy', in a range of ways- using dough, clay, paintbrushes etc.	**Third Milestone:** Children autonomously use literacy as a form of communication and expression within their play. They use available props to re-tell stories and demonstrate a love of reading. Mark making is more controlled, enabling them to draw lines and circles. Children can find their name card and use it to attempt to write their name. Some children will begin to form a range of recognisable letters. Children are becoming more able to identify the initial sounds of words and link some graphemes to their phonemes.
Has some favourite stories, rhymes, songs, poems or jingles Repeats and uses actions, word or phrases from familiar stories. Fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme, story or game, e.g. Humpty Dumpty sat on a …… Begins to recognise familiar logos from children's popular culture, commercial print or icons for apps. Listens to and joins in with stories and poems, when reading one-to-one and in small groups Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories Looks at and enjoys print and digital books independently	Recognises familiar words and signs such as own name, advertising logos and screen icons Knows that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom Talks about events and principal characters in stories and suggests how the story might end Knows information can be relayed through signs and symbols in various forms (e.g. printed materials, digital screens and environmental print) Claps or taps the syllables in words during sound play Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness	Begins to be aware of the way stories are structured, and to tell own stories Continues to develop their phonological and phonemic awareness Hears and says the initial sound in words Show awareness of alliteration Begins to segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together. Uses vocabulary and forms of speech that are increasingly influenced by their experiences of reading Describes main story settings, events and principal characters in increasing detail Begins to navigate apps and websites on digital media using drop down menu to select websites and icons to select apps

Shows interest in illustrations and words in print and digital books and words in the environment Can distinguish sounds heard in the environment and can create a range of sounds using different parts of their body, e.g. clapping Distinguishes between the different marks they make Enjoys drawing and writing on paper, on screen and on different textures, such as in sand or play dough and through using touch screen technology Includes mark making and early writing in their play.	Recognises rhythm in spoken words, songs, poems and rhymes Shows awareness of rhyme Imitates adults writing by making continuous lines of shapes and symbols (early writing) from left to right Sometimes gives meaning to their drawings and paintings. Shows interest in letters, identifying the initial letter of their name and other familiar words.	Begins to make letter type shapes to represent the initial sound of their name and other familiar words Enjoys creating texts to communicate meaning for an increasingly wide range of purposes, such as making greetings cards, tickets, lists, invitations and creating their own stories and books with images and sometimes with words, in print and digital formats.

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

Key vocabulary to be taught by the end of big nursery year:

Write, draw, pencil, paintbrush, story, print, characters, beginning, end, villain, hero, front cover, back cover, spine, author, illustrator, list, menu, letter, invitation.

By the End of Big Nursery, children will:

- Enjoy listening to stories and making up play scenarios
- Look at books and has some favourites
- Talk about stories as they are read to them
- Recall what happened in a story

- Know the difference between pictures and words
- Begin to recognise familiar letters or words e.g., letters in their names, familiar names and shop signs
- Make many different marks
- Make marks to represent their name
- Form shapes that are starting to look like letters
- Use letters or symbols to convey meaning
- Talk about their drawings
- Begin to recognise similarities in words e.g., words that rhyme audibly, words that start with the same letter audibly or visually

MATHEMATICS

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: Children engage with mathematical concepts through every-day play, routines, snack time, story time etc following the rhythm of the day, understanding now and next, sequence of the Nursery day. Children explore building with medium sized blocks and materials beginning to comment on if they need 'more' bricks/materials. Children are listening to and beginning to join in with the actions and words of simple number songs.	**Second Milestone:** Children are counting incidentally, they are noticing and commenting on amounts and numerals in their environment. Children can show an understanding of some prepositional language. They are comparing size, weight, shape, composition, comparing groups, know 'more than' 'fewer than'. Recognise ABABAB patterns and are beginning to subitise with small numbers up to 2.	**Third Milestone:** Children can build with a range of shapes, selecting them appropriately, combining shapes to make new ones e.g. an arch. Makes comparisons between objects relating to size, length, weight and capacity. Extend and create ABAB patterns – stick, leaf, stick, leaf. Recognise and subitise up to 3 objects, understand number concepts to at least 5 (reciting, counting objects- cardinality, show finger numbers, link numerals).
Comparison Beginning to compare and recognise changes in numbers of things, using words like more, lots or 'same' **Counting** Begins to say numbers in order, some of which are in the right order (ordinality) Uses some number names and number language within play, and may show fascination with large numbers	**Comparison** Compares two groups of up to three objects saying when there are the same number of objects in each group, e.g. you've got two, I've got two, same **Counting** Counting verbally as far as they can go Begin to recognise numerals 0 to 10 Points or touches (tags) each item, saying one number for each item, using the stable order of 1, 2,3,4,5.	**Comparison** Compares two groups of up to five objects saying when there are the same number of objects in each group, e.g. you've got four, I've got four, same Begins to use number names and symbols when comparing numbers, showing interest in large numbers. **Counting** Enjoys reciting numbers from 0 up to 10 (and beyond) and back again

Cardinality Begin to notice numerals Beginning to count on their fingers **Composition** Beginning to use understanding of number to solve practical problems in play and meaningful activities **Spatial Awareness** Begins to remember their way around familiar environments Responds to some spatial and positional language **Measures** Explores differences in size, length, weight and capacity **Shape** Recognises that two objects have the same shape Makes simple constructions Chooses puzzle pieces and tries to fit them in Responds to both informal language and common shape names **Pattern** Is interested in what happens next using the pattern of everyday routines	**Cardinality** Explores using a range of their own marks and signs to which they ascribe mathematical meanings Links numerals with amounts up to five and maybe beyond. Counts up to three items, recognising that the last number said represents the total counted so far (cardinal principle) Subitises one, two and three objects (without counting) **Composition** Through play and exploration, beginning to learn that numbers are made up (composed) of smaller numbers. **Spatial Awareness** Responds to and uses language of position and direction Predicts, moves and rotates objects to fit the space or create the shape they would like. **Measures** In meaningful contexts, finds the longer or shorter, heavier or lighter and more/less full of two items Recalls a sequence of events in everyday life and stories **Shape**	Increasingly confident putting numerals in order 0 – 10 (Ordinality) **Cardinality** Counts up to five items, recognising that the last number said represents the total counted so far (cardinal principle) Begins to subitise up to five objects (without counting) **Composition** Beginning to recognise that each counting number is one more that the one before. Separates a group of three or four objects in different ways, beginning to recognise that the total is still the same. **Spatial Awareness** Uses spatial language, including following and giving directions, using relative terms and describing what they see from different viewpoints. **Measures** Enjoys tackling problems and making predictions involving length, weight or capacity- paying attentions to fairness and accuracy. Becomes familiar with measuring tools in everyday experiences and play. **Shape** Enjoys partitioning and combining shapes to make new shapes with 2D and 3D shapes

	Attempts to create arches and enclosures when building, using trial and improvement to select blocks Chooses items based on their shape which are appropriate for the child's purpose. Shows awareness of shape similarities and differences between objects. **<u>Pattern</u>** Explores and adds to simple linear patterns of two repeating items e.g. stick, cone, stick, cone Joins in with simple patterns in sounds, objects, games and stories, dance and movement, predicting what comes next.	Uses a mixture of mathematical language and informal language to describe shapes, e.g. heart shaped Uses own ideas to make models of increasing complexity, selecting blocks needed, solving problems and visualising what they will build. **<u>Pattern</u>** Explores and adds to simple linear patterns of three repeating items e.g. stick, cone, leaf, stick, cone, leaf Spots patterns in the environment and begins to identify the pattern rule

Assessment Opportunities:

Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments

Key vocabulary to be taught by the end of big nursery year:

Count, number, numeral, more than, less than, total, altogether, positional language, empty, full, fill, long, short, length, weight, heavy, light, measure, shape, 2D, 3D

By the End of Big Nursery, children will:

- Be confident in subitising up to 3 objects.
- Know how to solve everyday problems in their play.
- Recognise numerals in the environment, knowing they are numbers.
- Recognise and name some numbers and is beginning to put them in order.
- Show an interest in counting.
- Count objects in their play.
- Count, mostly accurately, to find out how many things they have, up to 10.

- Understand how different shapes fit together e.g. in artwork or block play.
- Notice (and may comment on) who has more or less.
- Know the names of some shapes.
- Notice and compare size, weight, and capacity in their play.
- Experiment with own symbols and marks representing number or quantity.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: To settle into nursery, recognizing that we have a nursery school family group- to self-register and learn the names of friends and keyworkers. Children are developing a sense of belonging to their key group and wider school community. They begin to make connections between home and nursery through role play, real objects and experiences, e.g. Christmas and Diwali.	**Second Milestone:** Children will confidently explore the indoor and outdoor learning environment. Children are learning how we are alike or different, through cultural celebrations linked to their own experiences. They understand that the natural world changes around us with the seasons, and explore and talk about how things work. Children are aware of life-cycles of animals and plants, and growth and decay- through hands-on experiences.	**Third milestone:** Children understand life beyond home and nursery, and make sense of their physical world and community. Children's knowledge is increasing due to personal experience and information obtained through books, and technology, broadening their understanding of diversity and society. Children know that there are different countries in the world, and show empathy, respect and tolerance towards other cultures. Children proudly talk about their own uniqueness and what makes them special.
Shows interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them. In pretend play, imitates everyday actions and events from own family and cultural background. Beginning to have their own friends Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines	Remembers and talks about significant events in their own experience Shows interest in different occupations and ways of life indoors and outdoors Beginning to have an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time Begin to understand the effect their behaviour can have on the environment	Knows some of the things that make them unique, and can talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends, family communities, cultures and traditions Recognises and describes special times or events for family or friends

Can talk about some of the things they have observed such as plants, animals, natural and found objects Shows care and concern for living things and the environment. Enjoys playing with small world reconstructions, building on first hand experiences e.g. visiting farms, train track etc. Shows an interest in technological toys with knobs or pulleys, real objects such as cameras, and touchscreen devices such as mobile phones and tablets Shows skill in making toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps to achieve effects such as sound, movements or new images	Comments and asks questions about aspects of their familiar world such as the place where they live or the natural world Talks about why things happen and how things work Knows how to operate simple equipment, e.g. turns on CD player, uses a remote control, can navigate touch-capable technology with support Knows that information can be retrieved from digital devices and the internet	Talks about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another Looks closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change in nature Plays with a range of materials to learn cause and effect, for example, makes a string puppet using dowels and string to suspend the puppet Completes a simple program on electronic devices Uses ICT hardware to interact with age appropriate computer software and the internet (with adult supervision) Beginning to develop digital literacy skills by being able to access, understand and interact with a range of technologies
Assessment Opportunities: Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments		
Key vocabulary to be taught by the end of big nursery year: Religion, community, family, culture, traditions, celebrations, jobs, differences, similarities (specific cultural celebration names). Old, new, young, past, present, future, Queen, King, Princess. Beach, forest, hill, mountain, river, land, sea, spring, summer, autumn, winter, farm, country, world, Birmingham, Earth, map, reptiles, fish, birds, mammals, habitat, plants, seeds, stem, roots, petal, flower, leaf, nocturnal, experiment, rough, smooth, hard, soft, magnetic, old, young, grow, light, dark, day, night, morning, afternoon, freeze, frozen, melt.		

Senses. Information, technology, digital.
By the End of Big Nursery, children will: • Remember and talk about significant events in their own experience • Show care and concern for living things and the environment • Show an interest in technological toys with knobs or pulleys, real objects such as cameras, and touchscreen devices such as mobile phones and tablets • Talk about past and present events in their own life and in the lives of family members • Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change in nature • Know that information can be retrieved from digital devices and the internet. • Develop positive attitudes about the differences between people. • Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal • Use the internet with adult supervision to find and retrieve information of interest to them • Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways • Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

Autumn	Spring	Summer
First Milestone: Children join in with singing songs and explore how to make sounds using body percussion and their voices. They are interested in colour mixing and texture. They explore materials using their senses and begin to 'make believe' by pretending.	**Second Milestone:** Children are able to explore different materials freely, to develop their ideas about how to use them and what to make. They can represent ideas through drawing through movement and music gaining increasing control over instruments. They will explore differences in the sounds that musical instruments make and steady beats and rhythms in songs and rhymes. They begin to develop an emerging preference for a dominant hand. They take part in pretend play using objects to represent something.	**Third Milestone:** Children can use resources to create props which support role play, they can use drawing to represent ideas- with increasing complexity and detail, such as representing a face with a circle and features. They use own ideas to choose materials and explores colour and textures, using tools for purpose. They can create music and song, exploring how sound and movement can be changed.

Enjoys joining in with moving, dancing and ring games Sings familiar songs, e.g. pop songs, songs from TV programmes, rhymes, songs from home Creates sounds by using their voices, clapping, stamping feet etc Enjoys and responds to playing with colour in a variety of ways e.g. combining colours Using everyday materials to explore, understand and represent their world-their interests and fascinations Engages in imaginative play based on own ideas or first-hand or peer experiences Plays alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme Explores and learns how sounds and movements can be changed Notices what other children and adults do, mirroring what is observed, adding variations and then doing it spontaneously	Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed Develops an understanding of using lines to enclose a space, and begins to use drawing to represent actions and objects based on imagination, observation and experience Uses tools for a purpose Develops an understanding of how to create and use sounds intentionally Uses movement and sounds to express experiences, expertise, ideas and feelings Uses available resources to create props or creates imaginary ones to support play Taps out simple repeated rhythms Uses various construction materials, e.g. joining pieces, balancing, making enclosures and creating spaces Continues to explore moving in a range of ways, e.g. mirroring, creating own movement patterns Sings to self and makes up simple songs	Creates sounds, movements, drawings to accompany stories Experiments and creates movement in response to music, stories and ideas Chooses particular movements, instruments/ sounds, colours and materials for their own imaginative purposes Uses their increasing knowledge and understanding of tools and materials to explore their interests and enquiries and develop their thinking Creates representations of both imaginary and real-life ideas, events, people and objects

Assessment Opportunities: Development Matters, Birth to Five Matters, Wellcomm, team meetings/planning meetings, 2 year progress check, observations, floor books, displays, discussion with parents on induction and at twice yearly parent consultations, formative assessment and tri-annually summative assessments
Key vocabulary to be taught by the end of big nursery year: Rolling, patting, pinching, stamping, rubbing, moulding, combine, shapes, lines, detail, thread, weave, primary colour, secondary colour, mix, light, dark, materials, texture, names of instruments Performance, perform, pretend, rhythm, syllable, pace, volume, loud, quiet, dance, movement, quick, slow, build.
By the End of Big Nursery, children will: • Join different materials and explores different textures • Use everyday materials imaginatively in play to explore, understand and represent this world • Begin to develop stories using small world equipment and objects • Develop an understanding of using lines to enclose a space and begins to use drawing to represent actions and objects based on imagination, observation and experience • Engage in imaginative play based on own ideas or first-hand experiences • Return to and build on their previous learning, refining ideas and developing their ability to represent them • Introduce a storyline or narrative into their play

Family Involvement Opportunities		
Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Supporting induction Sharing information with key people. Tapestry (online learning journal) Gathering Autumn artefacts Attending parent consultation sessions. Attending Winter Wonderland. Engaging with the home/school library and reading books at home. Attending a healthy cooking workshop Engaging with the RRS bear coming home Attending toileting workshops Joining in a key group time Coffee mornings End of term trip	Attending Little Readers and Writers workshop Attending toileting workshops Attending maths in everyday contexts at home workshop Tapestry (online learning journal) Attending parent consultation sessions. Engaging with the home/school library and reading books at home. Coffee mornings Joining in a key group time End of term trip	Tapestry (online learning journal) Mini beast hunt in the garden and to and from Nursery Attending parent consultation sessions. Attending the end of year celebration. Attending toileting workshops Attending gardening workshops Attending working with clay workshop Attending loose parts play workshop Engaging with transition opportunities and activities. Sharing artefacts from days out/holidays/journeys undertaken or planned. Attending parent consultation sessions. Engaging with the home/school library and reading books at home. Coffee mornings End of term trip

Reading, Writing and Maths

In Early Years, children enter at many different stages of development in early reading, writing and mathematical skills and no two children have the same needs. To produce a conventional medium-term plan for reading, writing and mathematics would not meet the needs of every child at the appropriate times. Therefore, the list of skills below, though not exhaustive, gives practitioners a guide as to where each child is at in their stage of development and where they need to go next.

The most crucial part of learning to read and write is that children must develop a passion for reading and writing. They must foster a love of books, stories, rhymes and language, and develop an understanding of the reasons we need to read and write. We want children to find pleasure in reading and develop a deep love of stories. We want children to develop a love of writing which is built on exploration of marks through a wide range of activities and experiences. High quality resources coupled with rich experiences enable children to freely explore and develop their writing skills and knowledge. Children need lots of experience of mark making. They require plenty of opportunity to develop muscles in their hands to develop strength and dexterity before effectively writing with a pencil using a pincer grip.

Teaching mathematical skills and concepts in Early Years should be through practical, hands-on activities. There should be little or no written maths produced by the children in adult led sessions, however independent mathematical mark making should always be encouraged. Children should apply maths skills to solve real life/practical problems and be able to apply these skills in different contexts. We intend for children to develop a deep understanding and skill base around mathematical concepts and number to foster a love of maths and confidence in maths in the next stage of their education. Maths mastery is taught by ensuring children do more and remember more; by ensuring learning is recalled regularly and used in different contexts; and by ensuring 'sticky learning' of mathematical concepts through retrieval, opportunities, questioning, using misconceptions and dual coding.

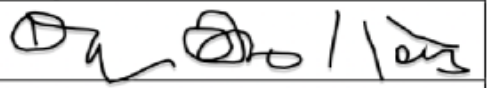
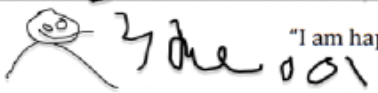
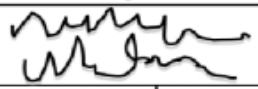
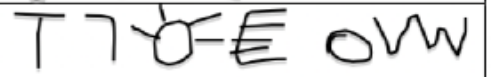
We teach the Foundation of Phonics using Phase One of Letters and Sounds. Phase One activities focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness an oral blending and segmenting. The activities are used as part of a rich language curriculum that has speaking and listening at its centre; a curriculum rich in books and reading opportunities; and an environment rich in print.

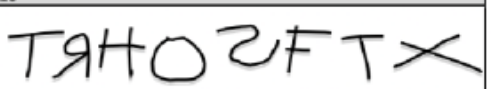
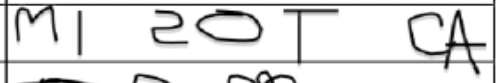
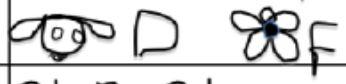
Role of the adult		
Supporting Early Reading	**Supporting Early Writing**	**Supporting Early Mathematical Concepts**
• Be seen as positive reading role models • Read with excitement, engagement and intonation • Model reading for pleasure or as part of shared activities • Ensure children are active participants in story sessions • *Encourage children to choose and peruse books freely as well as share them with an adult • Develop children's comprehension of texts through questioning • Read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books to individuals and groups • Consider the needs and interests of children • Provide purposeful activities and times to read and develop early reading skills • Plan continuous provision activities for reading both inside and outside	• Be a positive writing role model • Model writing regularly and for a range of purposes • Have a genuine interest in what all children communicate • Provide opportunities to explore creating marks in a variety of ways, notice children's marks and talk about them • Ensure children see adults write for pleasure • Write as part of a shared writing activity • Give children the confidence to 'have a go' • Celebrate work produced through marking, sharing with others or displaying • Plan both adult led and continuous provision activities using the Birth to 5 Matters and EYFS Development Matters	• Support mathematical development in continuous provision through the observe - assess - plan cycle • Support mathematical development by singing counting songs and rhymes and encouraging children to join in games that involve counting • To plan both adult led and continuous provision activities that are ability appropriate, using the EYFS Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters • Respond to children in the moment, providing opportunities for them to develop mathematical skills; model mathematical skills, using 'talking aloud commentary'; question children to challenge their mathematical thinking and promote use of mathematical language

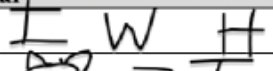
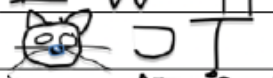
• Nurture and encourage a 'have a go' approach and build confidence in children around accessing books • Plan and deliver Phase One letters and sounds sessions for adult-led teaching time and ensure phase 1 letters and sounds activity opportunities (inc. sound exploration) within continuous provision • Listen to encourage talking • Model good listening and eye contact • Ask questions that attentive listeners ask and comment on what children say • Provide ample opportunities for children to extend their spoken communication • Provide good models of spoken English and speaking clearly, how to structure comprehensible sentences and sustain dialogue (high-quality interactions)		

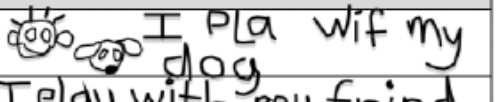
We provide:		
Reading	**Writing**	**Maths**
• A range of reading resources both inside and outside to encourage the development of early reading skills. These include logos, labels, recipes for cooking activities, name cards, digital devices, signs and symbols, props and story sacks. • A quiet area for reading with a selection of quality resources, including fiction/non-fiction books, magazines and comics, story sacks, rhyming sacks, song bags and puppets. • A range of books linked to children's interests • Opportunities to support children and parents at home by providing reading books through the home school library • Regular experience of rhymes and rhythm • Early phonological awareness opportunities, including opportunities to tune into sounds (auditory discrimination), listen to and remember sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and talk about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)	• Free access to quality mark making equipment both inside and outside • Meaningful contexts for children to develop and practice their early writing skills, including writing shopping lists, making appointments in the doctors role play, making a list of minibeasts found in the garden. • Activities that encourage the development of children's pre writing skills - both gross and fine motor skills • Activities that encourage development of making marks, such as: sensory experiences in sand, paint and foam, pencil control activities, gross motor mark making activities and using a wide range of mark making resources	• A range of quality mathematical equipment for exploration in independent play, a range of resources that lend themselves to mathematical exploration and embedding mathematical skills and concepts. • Planned continuous provision activities linking to the children's interest and/or the needs of the children at that time, both indoors and outdoors • Daily adult-led sessions where maths is promoted, and skills are developed • Meaningful contexts for children to count in sequence, problem solve, notice and create patterns.

Developmental Stages of Writing

Pre-Literate	
Stage Description	Sample
Scribble Stage- starting point any place on page, resembles drawing large circular strokes and random marks that do not resemble print or communicate a message	
Symbolic Stage- starting point any place on page, pictures or random strokes/marks with an intended message	 "I am happy."
Directional Scribble- scribble left to right direction, linear, intended as writing that communicates a meaningful message/idea	 "I am playing."
Symbolic/Mock Letters- letter-like formations, may resemble letters but it isn't intentional, interspersed w/ numbers, spacing rarely present	

Emergent	
Strings of Letters- long strings of various letters in random order, may go left to right, uses letter sequence perhaps from name, usually uses capital letters, may write same letters in many ways	
Groups of letters-groupings of letters with spaces in between to resemble words	
Labeling pictures- matching beginning sounds with the letter to label a picture	
Environmental Print- copies letters/words from environmental/classroom print, reversals common, uses a variety of resources to facilitate writing	

Transitional	
Letter/Word Representation-uses first letter sound of word to represent entire word, uses letter sound relationships	 (I went home.)
First/Last Letter Representation- word represented by first and last letter sound	 (cat)
Medial Letter Sounds- words spelled phonetically using BME sounds, attempts medial vowels, uses some known words, more conventionally spelled words, one letter may represent one syllable, attempts to use word spacing, writing is readable	MI CAT IZ BrN (My cat is brown.)

Fluent	
Beginning Phrase Writing- using all of the above skills to construct phrases that convey a message connected to their illustration	 I Pla wif my dog
Sentence Writing- Construction of words into sentence formation, maybe multiple sentences, writing is readable, may use punctuation, known words spelled correctly, topic focused, BME with detail	I play with my frind. We like to jump rop!
Six Traits of Writing- Students use Six Traits of Writing (Conventions, Organization, Voice, Ideas, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency)	

Planning for Phonics

At Allens Croft Nursery School, we use Letters and Sounds (Phase One) as a guide to our phonics approach. This is the speaking and listening phase designed to prepare children to start learning the links between phonemes (letter sounds) and graphemes (letter shapes and combinations). This is achieved through focused teaching, continuous provision, stories, rhymes and songs; all supported within a language rich environment.

During continuous provision and focused group time sessions, children will have regular opportunities to:

- Tune into sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listen and remember sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talk about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

Relevant Terminology

Phonemes

- The smallest units of sound heard/said within a language.

Grapheme

- A letter or letters that spell a sound in a word.

Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence:

- Being able to hear a phoneme and know the grapheme that represents it. (Spelling)
- Being able to see a grapheme and know the phoneme that relates to it (Reading)

Syllables

- These are units of spoken language that usually have one vowel sound (including y), with or without surrounding consonant. They are sometimes referred to as the 'beats' of a word that form its rhythm.

For Example

- Dog has 1 syllable
- Apple (a-pul) has 2 syllables
- Potato (po-tay-to) has 3 syllables
- Activity (ac-tiv-i-tee) has 4 syllables
- Electricity (e-lec-tri-ci-tee) has 5 syllables

Alliteration:

- Alliteration is when a group of two or more words start with the same phoneme (sound). They may not always begin with the same grapheme (letter)

For Example

Blending

- This is the process of combining sounds (phonemes) together to create a word. This is necessary to develop reading skills

Segmenting

- This is the process of splitting words up into phonemes. This is important for developing spelling skills.

Pure Sounds

- When modelling sounds in the spoken word, it is important that children hear the pure phonemic sound. This will help them to join the sounds together to build world recognition and spelling as they get older.

Phonics: How to pronounce pure sounds | Oxford Owl - YouTube

		• "Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers"			
Little Nursery					
Continuous Provision					
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**
Environmental Sounds: Aspect 1	Body Percussion: Aspect 3	Voice Sounds: Aspect 6	Instrumental Sounds: Aspect 2	Rhythm and Rhyme: Aspect 4	Alliteration: Aspect 5
Show an interest in and begin to identify environmental sounds in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Small world play provides opportunities to include, for example, vehicle sounds, animal sounds etc.	Opportunities to listen to and explore creating sounds using different parts of the body through action rhymes and physical, music activities.	Opportunities to listen to and explore creating different sounds using the voice through imaginative play eg. role play and small world play.	Opportunities to listen to and explore creating sounds using traditional musical instruments, other resources through singing and music activities.	Opportunities to listen to and explore words which begin or end with the same phonemes through singing, rhymes and stories.	

Big Nursery					
Continuous Provision and Focused Group Time Sessions					
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**
Environmental Sounds: Aspect 1	Body Percussion: Aspect 3 Voice Sounds: Aspect 6	Instrumental Sounds: Aspect 2	Rhythm and Rhyme: Aspect 4	Alliteration: Aspect 5	Oral Blending and Segmenting: Aspect 7

Key Aspects	Focused teaching (adult led, small group)	Continuous provision	A range of stories, rhymes and songs to choose from	
Environmental Sounds Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – Environmental - YouTube	Listening walks – indoors and outdoors Describe it and find it Enlivening stories Favourite sounds Old Macdonald had a farm	Opportunities to question and identify environmental sounds in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Small world play provides opportunities to include, for example, vehicle sounds, animal sounds etc.	Old MacDonald Had a Farm	The Ding Dong Bag We're Going on a Bear Hunt (Core Text) Animal Fun Peace at Last
Instrumental Sounds Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – Instrumental - YouTube	Animal sounds game Getting to know the instruments New words to old songs Which instrument	Opportunities to explore creating and discriminating sounds using traditional musical instruments, other resources and parts of the body through action rhymes, singing and music activities.	We Can Play on the Big Bass Drum I am the Music Man	Down by the Cool of the Pool Flo the Flamingo And the Train Goes…. Bear Snores On
Body Percussion	Action songs Follow the sound		If You're Happy and you Know it. Here we go Round the Mulberry Bush	

Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – Body percussion - YouTube	Noisy neighbour Sound songs		Hickety Pickety Bumble Bee	
Rhythm and Rhyme Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme - YouTube	Rhyming soup Odd one out Our favourite nursery rhymes Playing with words Rhyming bingo Rhyming pairs	Opportunities to explore creating and distinguishing words which begin or end with the same phonemes through word play, singing, rhymes and stories.	Hickory Dickory Dock 1,2,3,4,5… Jack and Jill The Grand Old Duke of York Mary Quite Contrary Little Bo Peep 5 Currant Buns Miss Polly had a Dolly	Fox's Socks (core text) Rhyming Rabbit Jake's Cakes Clarabelle's Scarf Trish the fish This is the Bear
Alliteration Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 5: Alliteration - YouTube	Silly soup Bertha goes to the zoo Digging for treasure Making aliens Musical corners Our sound box		There's a Worm at the Bottom of the Garden	Digby the Diggedy Dog ClipClop's Picnic Sir Charlies Sticky Socks Millie Makes a Mess Keelo's Cookies Chatty Bat Sally the Sea Lion
Voice Sounds Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 6: Voice sounds - YouTube	Mirror play – model voice sounds. Animal face masks Making trumpets Metal mike Voice sounds game	Opportunities to explore creating and distinguishing different sounds using the voice through imaginative play eg. role play and small world play.	Five Little Ducks Five Speckled Frogs Hickety Pickety Bumble Bee	
Oral Blending and Segmenting Letters and Sounds Phase 1 - Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting - YouTube	I spy Say the sounds Toy talk Which one?	Opportunities for adults to model and children to experiment with blending and segmenting phonemes in key vocabulary.	Click, Clack, Moo Cows that Type Jin's First Day	

Planning for Mathematics

"Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically." (EYFS, 2026)

"Mathematics for young children involves developing their own understanding of number, quantity, shape and space. Babies and young children have a natural interest in quantities and spatial relations – they are problem-solvers, pattern-spotters and sense-makers from birth. This curiosity and enjoyment should be nurtured through their interactions with people and the world around them, drawing on their personal and cultural knowledge. Every young child is entitled to a strong mathematical foundation which is built through playful exploration, apprenticeship and meaning-making. Children should freely explore how they represent their mathematical thinking through gesture, talk, manipulation of objects and their graphical signs and representations, supported by access to graphic tools in their pretend play. Effective early mathematics experiences involve seeking patterns, creating and solving mathematical problems and engaging with stories, songs, games, practical activities and imaginative play. Plenty of time is required for children to revisit, develop and make sense for themselves. This is supported by sensitive interactions with adults who observe, listen to and value children's mathematical ideas and build upon children's interests, including those developed with their families. It is crucial to maintain children's enthusiasm so they develop positive self-esteem as learners of mathematics and feel confident to express their ideas." (Birth to Five Matters, 2026)

Relevant Terminology

Number and Numerical Pattern

Verbal Counting
Verbal counting means that a child can say number words, "one", "two", "three" etc, in a correct sequence both forwards and backwards.

Object Counting (1:1 Correspondence)
In early counting development, this refers to the matching of one object or number word to another (corresponding) object or number word.

Cardinality
Cardinality refers to the capacity to link numbers to collections, e.g., to know that "4" is the correct representation to denote a group of four objects.

Ordinality
Ordinality refers to the capacity to place numbers in sequence
An ordinal number describes the numerical position of an object, e.g., first, second, third, etc.

Comparison
Comparison of quantity refers to identifying which groups of objects, which have more or less items in them.

Composition

Spatial Reasoning, Shape and Measure

Spatial Awareness
This is the ability to perceive two or more objects in relation to each other and to yourself. Spatial reasoning is how we understand how things (including ourselves) move and interact in relation to the physical space around them. It also involves understanding the relationships of objects as they change position.

Positional Language
Positional language (prepositions) refers to the place where something or someone is, often in relation to other things, such as over, under, beside, or beneath.

2D Shapes
2D stands for 2-dimensional. 2-dimensional shapes are flat and only have two dimensions: length and width. They include squares, rectangles, circles and triangles.

3D Shapes
3D (three-dimensional) shapes are solid shapes that have three dimensions including length, depth and width. Different 3-dimensional shapes include cubes, pyramids, spheres, and cones.

Pattern
A pattern in mathematics consists of an arrangement of numbers, shapes, colours, pictures or objects that are repeated in a certain order.

Composition is the understanding that one number can be made up from (composed from) two or more smaller numbers. **Conservation** Conservation of number is the name given to understanding that the number of objects in a set does not change if they are moved around. For example, many young children will recount objects if they are spread out, moved closer together or lined up. **Subitising** Subitising is the ability to instantly recall the number of objects or images without needing to count them individually	**Measurement** Measurement relates to the ability to recognise and define the size or amount of something using standard and non-standard units of measurement.

Little's Nursery				
Mathematical Categories		**Continuous provision (Examples of)**	**A range of stories, rhymes and songs to choose from**	
Spatial Awareness **Shape**		Explore the outdoor environment, moving in and around different spaces, using spatial and positional language in context. Create tunnels and bridges to use with trains and cars. Building train tracks and building joining blocks and construction materials. Use posting toys to experiment with making items fit. Sing songs and share stories with positional language.	Incy Wincy Spider 5 Little Monkeys 5 Little Dragons 5 Little Men in a Flying Saucer Zoom, Zoom, Zoom One Finger One Thumb Keep Moving	Pants The Very Hungry Caterpillar Goldilocks and the Three Bears 1,2,3 To the Zoo Ten Little Ladybugs Monkey Do Where's Spot Elmer One Mole Digging a Hole The Enormous Turnip
Pattern		Explore transient art opportunities in forest school and mud kitchen, arranging natural resources. Explore patterns and sequences through mark making and creative activities using different colours, shapes and resources. Use songs and musical instruments to make repetitive sounds and actions,		
Measures		Use different sized and shaped vessels in the sand and water play when exploring tipping and filling. Use different sized spoons when collecting ingredients in the mud kitchen, mixing table or during cooking activities.		
Number & Numerical Patterns	**Comparison** **Cardinality** **Counting**	Children can use bucket, bags and baskets to create collections in forest school. They can collect, sort, arrange and count objects the objects they have found. Arrange and count cars in trains in small world play. Adults to model the use of number names in sequence in play, emphasising on the final number in a set of objects. Use non-standard measures such as cups and spoonful's to count out ingredients needed for cooking. Use number names to compare quantity in sand and water play. Focus upon the quantity of snack items to be chosen. Sing number rhymes and songs, and beginning to use fingers to represent quantity		

Big Nursery				
Mathematical Categories	**Focused teaching (adult led, small group)**	**Continuous Provision (Examples of)**	**A range of stories, rhymes and songs to choose from**	
Spatial Awareness **Shape**	WellComm activities to introduce and embed positional language. Introduce and create maps Shape Lotto Jigsaws Maths Group Resource Folder **Interactive Screen:** Symmetry Matching - Reflective Symmetry Game (topmarks.co.uk) Shape Monsters - 2D Shapes Matching Game (topmarks.co.uk)	Opportunities for large scale construction both indoors and outdoors. Children have access to a range of resources in different sizes to explore what they can fit in each, which ones fit inside each other and the position and reposition develop an understanding of their properties. During play, children identify and can talk about the properties of 2D and 3D shapes. Playing hide and seek outdoors.	Revisit songs from Little Nursery and 1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive Hickory Dickory Dock Ten Green Bottles 10 in the Bed	10 Black Dots Mouse Count The Shape of Things Absolutely One Thing How Big is a Million? Henry the Fourth Hide and Seek The Great Pet Sale Elmer
Pattern	Threading and loose parts play to explore repetitive sequencing Turn taking games (emphasising the repeating pattern. For example, your turn, my turn, your turn) Visual timetables Maths Group Resource Folder **Interactive Screen:** Shape Patterns (topmarks.co.uk)	During transient art sessions in the outdoor studio, children will have opportunities to gather natural resources and arrange them into patterns. For example, pine cone, stone, pine cone, stone. Providing patterned resources in the studio. For example, different cultures, nature.		
Measures	Chick life cycle focus to include the growth of the caterpillars using mathematical language Visual timetables Growing sunflowers Maths Group Resource Folder	Providing jugs and funnels of varying sizes in water play. Spoons of differing sizes used in cooking, on the mixing table and in the mud kitchen. Adults to model the use of rulers, height charts, timers, scales and tape measures.		

		Interactive Screen: Let's Compare - Early Years Size Comparison Game (topmarks.co.uk)			
Number & Numerical Patterns	**Comparison** **Cardinality** **Counting** **Composition**	Counting the number of children in the group Estimating and checking the number of cups for group time. Number song bags Large dice games Turn taking games (ordinal numbers) Maths Group Resource Folder **Interactive screen:** Learning to Count up to 15 with Teddy Numbers Interactive Maths Game (topmarks.co.uk) The Gingerbread Man Game – Counting, Matching and Ordering game (topmarks.co.uk) Learn to Count up to 10 with Underwater Counting Maths Game (topmarks.co.uk) How to order numbers - BBC Bitesize Missing numbers | Reception maths | Counting - BBC Bitesize Bud's Number Garden (bbc.co.uk) Nursery Rhymes and Songs - A to Z - BBC Teach	Numerals displayed in areas of continuous provision both indoors and outdoors. For example, numbers on toilet doors, numbered potion bottles in the mud kitchen. Adults model the use of higher numbers during activities. For example, the oven needs to be on 200 degrees. In the studio, children are encouraged to get enough paint brushes to have one in each pot. In the construction space, estimating how many blocks they will need to build their structures.		

Planning for Music		
Musical Development: Hearing and Listening. Skills and knowledge progression for Little's – 2–3-year-olds:		
Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Autumn Term 1: Children's Music- Gentle lullabies, traditional nursery rhymes/songs for children to sing and join in. Action rhymes and tunes that get children dancing.	**Spring Term 1:** Country and Western- This genre of music's originates from American folk traditions and emphasises its storytelling aspect. Introduce instruments such as: guitars, fiddles, and banjos, and discuss relatable themes found in country songs, such as family, nature, and everyday life.	**Summer Term 1:** Classical Music-Classical music encompasses a vast range of styles and periods, including: operas, symphonies, choirs and ballets.
Autumn Term 2: Traditional/World Music- folk music, religious music, African drums, Christmas carols, traditional dances and other styles deeply rooted in a culture's history and traditions.	**Spring Term 2:** Reggae- reggae is a type of music from Jamaica, known for its offbeat rhythm, strong bass line, and positive messages.	**Summer Term 2:** Jazz - Jazz is a music genre that originated in the African-American communities of New Orleans, United States, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and developed from roots in blues and ragtime.
Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations. Musical preferences are further developed; often has firm favourites (live & recorded) and is able to express this. Anticipates changes in familiar music e.g., recognises and remembers when music is going to get louder, quieter or stop.	Shows interest in play with sounds, songs and rhymes Describes music, eg "scary music, angry music, happy music". Can identify specific sounds in the environment eg sounds of cars, running water. Explore ways of encouraging active listening; moving with music or painting/drawing with music may support children to listen; listening in large groups/small groups/individually.	Can identify and match an instrumental sound, e.g., hear a shaker and indicate that they understand it is a shaker Can identify specific sounds in the environment. Matches music to pictures/visual resources. Describes music, eg "scary music, angry music, happy music".

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Describes music, eg “scary music, angry music, happy music”. Can identify specific sounds in the environment eg sounds of cars, running water. Can identify and match an instrumental sound, eg hear a shaker and indicate that they understand it is a shaker. Describes the sound of instruments eg scratchy sound, soft sound.	Creates visual representation of sounds, instruments and pieces of music, eg mark making to specific sounds or pieces of music. Associates’ genres of music with characters and stories. Accurately anticipates changes in music, eg when music is going to get faster, louder, slower.	Thinks abstractly about music and expresses this physically or verbally eg “This music sounds like floating on a boat.” “This music sounds like dinosaurs.” Distinguishes and describes changes in music and compares pieces of music, eg “this music started fast and then became slow.” “This music had lots of instruments but this music only had voices.” “This music was spiky and this music was smooth.”

Little Nursery - Core Books

Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
September	Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell	January	The Three Little Pig's	April	Don't Put Your Finger in the Jelly Nelly by Nick Sharratt
October	Fox's Socks by Julia Donaldson	February	Ketchup on your Cornflakes by Nick Sharratt	May	The Gingerbread Man by Mara Alperin & Miriam Latimer (TT)
November	Shark in the Park on a Windy Day by Nick Sharratt	March	Pants by Nick Sharratt	June	Peace at Last by Jill Murphy
December	Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Eric Carle			July	The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

"Literacy should flow on a sea of talk" – Ros Bayley.

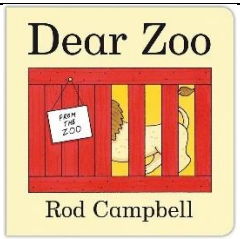
Each key text will cover the Literacy and Commination & Language areas of learning within the EYFS.

We have hand-selected 8-10 key texts that all children will have read to them during a particular half term. This is to promote children's love of reading and their curiosity about written word, illustrations and the language of stories. In order to enhance our children's reading diet, we will also include non-fiction texts and poems.

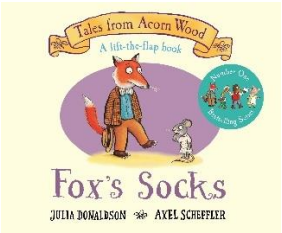
We are not limiting ourselves to these texts; if another story is pertinent to a particular interest, this will also be incorporated into our curriculum.

Autumn Term

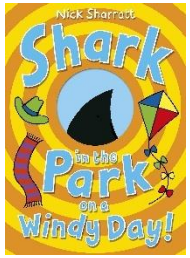
Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell

	Key vocabulary
 A classic lift-the-flap picture book about a child who writes to the zoo asking for a pet. The zoo sends a series of unsuitable animals in various crates and boxes. Finally, the zoo sends a pet that is just right. This book builds anticipation and active physical participation. The repetitive sentence patterns allow children to anticipate what comes next.	Zoo, pet, sent, elephant, giraffe, lion, camel, snake, monkey, frog, puppy, big, tall, fierce, grumpy, scary, naughty, jumpy, perfect, back

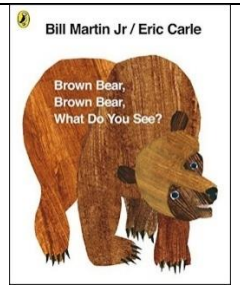
Fox's Socks by Julia Donaldson

	Key vocabulary
 This story has a simple rhyming storyline. It supports children's developing self-help skills by demonstrating getting dressed. Opportunities to develop matching skills. Interactive as children have to lift the flaps to find the missing sock.	Fox, socks, chest, vest, cold, toes, shirt, tie, mat, hat, under, clock

Shark in the Park on a Windy Day by Nick Sharratt

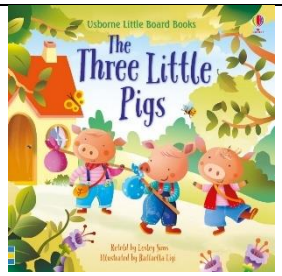
	Key vocabulary
 Timothy Pope looks through his telescope on a windy day, repeatedly thinking he spots a dangerous shark fin. This book has interactive elements (cut holes) building engagement and curiosity. Predictable phrases encourage the children to join in. It has a simple playful rhyming text helping children to tune into the sounds of language.	Telescope, shark, fin, park, pond, windy, breeze, blows, whistling, umbrella, pram, spies/look, shouts, left/right/all around

Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Eric Carle

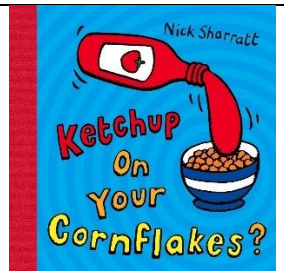
	Key vocabulary
 Highly repetitious language enables children to remember the content. Tuning into a repetitive rhythm and being able to recite this story themselves helps children to develop their auditory memory skills, a key part of early literacy.	Brown, bear, red, bird, yellow, duck, blue, horse, green, frog, purple, cat, white, dog, black, sheep, goldfish, see, looking

Spring Term

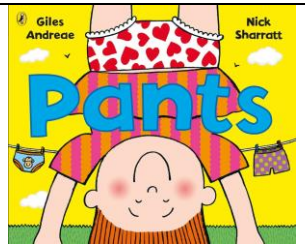
The Three Little Pigs

 A classic traditional story introducing children to a clear narrative structure. Predictable phrases and repetitive patterns help children to anticipate and join in. The story encourages exploration of feelings such as sad, scared and excited.	Key vocabulary Pigs, three, wolf, house, sticks, straw, bricks, build, huff, puff, chimney, down

Ketchup On Your Cornflakes by Nick Sharratt

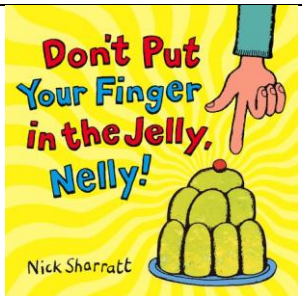
 An interactive and split-page book with the top half asking a question about an item and the bottom half competes the question with a location or food items. Children create silly mismatched combination inviting them to enjoy fantastical scenarios.	Key vocabulary Like, on, in, ketchup, cornflakes, custard, apple pie, ice cubes, lemonade, toothpaste/toothbrush, duck, bath, salt, egg, talcum powder, jam, chips

Pants by Nick Sharratt

 Written in a fast-paced playground rhyme, it features a bizarre variety of animals, people, and objects modelling every type of underwear imaginable. It moves through endless combinations of colours, sizes, patterns, and scenarios, culminating in a question directly to the reader: *"Pants—which ones are your favourite?"* The highly repetitive, bouncy rhythm and end-rhymes are ideal for developing a child's awareness of word patterns, sound structures, and early literacy.	Key vocabulary Small, big, pants, giant, new, wear, colours, pattern, repeat, same

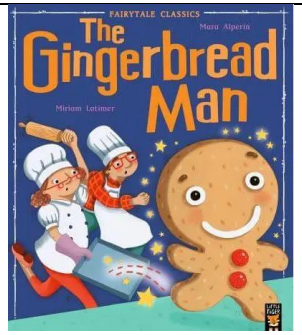
Summer Term

Don't Put Your Finger in the Jelly Nelly by Nick Sharratt

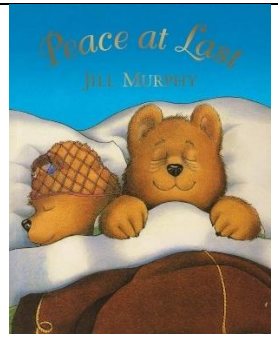
 This interactive picture book warns children (and characters like Nelly) not to poke their fingers into various tasty-looking foods.	Key vocabulary Finger, jelly, pie, cheese, pasta, shake, baker, doughnut, caught, wake, upset

Each page reveals that the food actually hides a funny, unexpected animal or creature. Simple, repetitive rhyming text helps young children tune into phonological awareness, rhythm, and predicting what comes next in a story.	

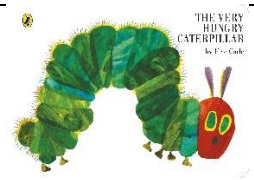
The Gingerbread Man by Mara Alperin & Miriam Latimer

 Communication and Language development is supported by the use of the story's repeated rhyming refrain. As the children join in they are building their attention and listening skills. Early literacy is supported through the growing awareness of the rhythm and pattern involved in story language.	Key vocabulary Gingerbread, man, baker, wife, oven, shout, opened, chased, ran, singing, fast, catch, far, calling, jumped, hungry, wide, sly, swim, wide, heavy

Peace at Last by Gill Murphy

 Children enjoy the familiar noises, repetition and beautiful illustrations in this story**.** The story reinforces the children's knowledge of environmental sounds.	Key vocabulary Peace, last, late, tired, asleep, snore, drip, leaky, animal sounds, shine, alarm, clock

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

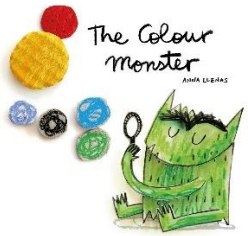
 This story introduces life cycles and supports an emerging understanding of days of the week and time. It encourages early maths skills through counting. The text links to our commitment to Startwell and encouraging healthy eating and lifestyles.	Key vocabulary Hungry, caterpillar, moon, egg, warm, food, days of the week, number names, big, fat, cocoon, beautiful, butterfly

Big Nursery Core Books

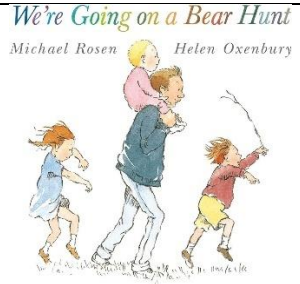
Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
September	Colour Monster by Anna Llenas	January	The Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson	April	Sam Plants a Sunflower by Kate Petty and Axel Scheffler
October	We are going on a bear hunt by Michael Rosen	February	Aliens Love Underpants by Claire Freedman and Ben Cort	May	Whatever Next! By Jill Murphy
November	Room on the Broom by Julia Donaldson	March	Little Red Hen by Lesley Sims (TT)	June	The Hare and the Tortoise by Brian Wildsmith (TT)
December	What Pet to Get by Emma Dodd			July	Colour Monster goes to School by Anna Llenas

Autumn Term

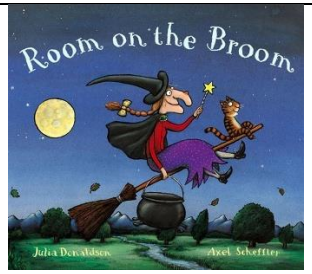
The Colour Monster by Anna Llenas

	Key vocabulary
 A picture book about a friendly monster whose emotions are mixed up in a tangled, multi-coloured muddle. A young girl helps him understand and sort his feelings by assigning each one a specific colour and placing them into separate jars. This book gives children the words to label how they are feeling.	Happy, sad, anger, fear, calm, loved, mixed up / jumbled, confused, safe / courage, colour words

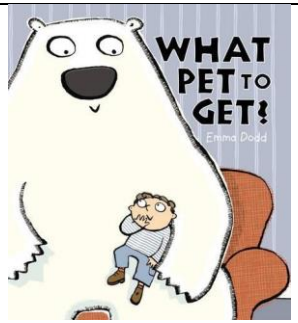
We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen

	Key vocabulary
 A family adventure to find a bear. Repetition throughout for children to join in with. Opportunities to focus on environmental sounds and alliteration.	Going, hunt, catch, big, beautiful, scared, long, wavy, over, under, through, deep, cold, stumble, swirling, narrow, gloomy, tiptoe

Room on the Broom by Julia Donaldson

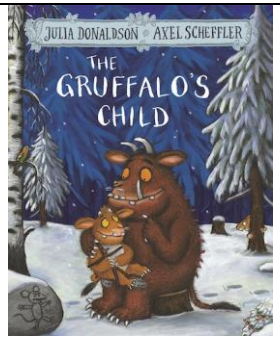
	Key vocabulary
 A rhyming story that travels over different landscapes and terrains as the witch makes new friends. The story incudes friends helping and supporting each other.	Room, broom, witch, ginger, plait, purred, grinned, flew, wailed, searched, bounded, politely, clambered, fields, forests, stormy, shriek, fluttered, reeds, rivers, clutched, wand, pond, dripping, moors, mountains, joy, dragon, higher, cauldron, spell, magnificent

What Pet To Get by Emma Dodd

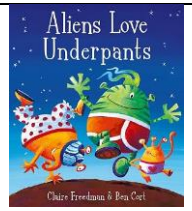
	Key vocabulary
 A picture book that tells the humorous story of a young boy named Jack who gets permission from his mother to choose a family pet. The repetitive 'call and response' dialogue structure encourages children to predict what mum will say. It introduces children to why certain environments or lifestyles are unsuitable for specific animals. It teaches them about compromise and negotiation.	Promise, absent-mindedly, practical, roof-rack, appetites, frighten, playmate, central heating, bison extinct, tall, wide, smelly, snappy, exotic, announced

Spring Term

The Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson

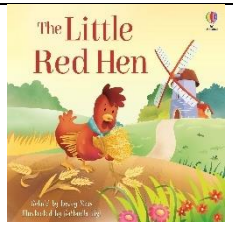
	Key vocabulary
 The Gruffalo's daughter sneaks into the snow to find the terrifying 'Big Bad Mouse'. The predictable rhyme scheme and repetitive refrains help children anticipate words, join in, and build phonological awareness. The story features winter weather, snow, and animal habitats, giving children a springboard to discuss seasonal changes, animal tracks in the snow, and forest creatures (fox, owl, snake, mouse). It also supports children to explore different emotions within the safe context of a story.	Terribly, deep dark wood, snowy, bored, brave, tiptoe, wild, child, trail, scared, creature, underground, trick, feast, shadow

Aliens Love Underpants by Claire Freedman and Ben Cort

	Key vocabulary
 Tells the hilarious story of friendly aliens who travel to Earth for one specific purpose: to play with and steal human underwear.	Alien, underpants, space, surprise, Earth, spaceship, radar, invited, bloomers, frilly, long johns, daring, elastic, neighbour, blame, lurks

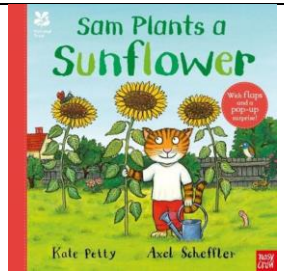
The simple, rhythmic flow helps children anticipate words, develop early phonetic awareness, and happily join in during story time. Children are also taught mathematical concepts and language associated with this (i.e. pattern)	

Little Red Hen by Lesley Sims

 This story shows the stages from wheat to flour to fresh bread. This links to children growing food at nursery and using it for cooking and snack. It has a key message about helping each other.	Key vocabulary Little, hen, busy, creatures, farm, pond, straw, napped, morning, grains, wheat, plant, watered, sprinkled, shoots, taller, harvest, grind, flour, bake, lazy

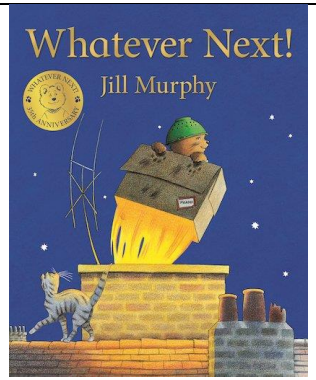
Summer Term

Sam Plants a Sunflower by Kate Petty

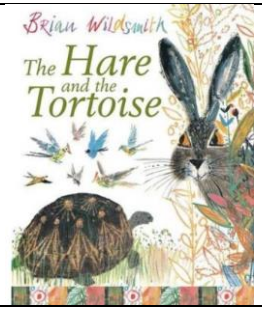
	Key vocabulary Plant, sunflower, sun, seed, damp, warm, hole, cover, water, big/little, grow, root, burst, case, change, wait, soil, bud, taller, petal, wither, summer, patient, stem

This book introduces life cycles as Sam plants a seed and nurtures it until he has grown a beautiful yellow sunflower. This story links to planting sunflower seeds at nursery.	

Whatever Next by Gill Murphy

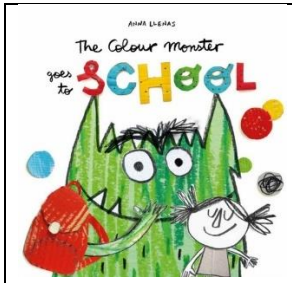
 This story celebrates the importance of imagination. As children develop in imagination and creativity they are able to tell a story, relate to other people, keep themselves emotionally grounded and enter their imaginary worlds.	Key vocabulary Next, moon, rocket, first, under, space, helmet, draining board, mat, journey, chimney, aeroplane, passenger, millions, landed, boring, picnic, down, dripped, smart, roared, above, through, state

The Hare and the Tortoise by Brian Wildsmith

	Key vocabulary Hare, tortoise, clever, argument, agree, challenged, cart, steady, careless, gathered, offered, spectators, swelled, signal, encouragement, dashed, resist, astonishment

This a classic Aesop's fable that teaches the timeless moral that "slow and steady wins the race. "This book has a repetitive rhythm, reinforcing narrative structures. It teaches children resilience, perseverance and self-regulation.	

The Colour Monster goes to School by Anna Llenas

	Key vocabulary
 Preparation for the transition to school is a focus this half term but what are children's expectations and what do they know. This book tackles fears and misconceptions.	School, ruck sack/book bag, coat, teacher, classroom, friends, lesson, story, playground, lunch, day, end/afternoon/morning, coat peg, names of feelings, learn, play, first, up scary, jungle, guarded, favourite, hungry, exhausted

Songs, Signs, Rhymes and Article Curriculum

Autumn 1	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article
Week 1	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	Baa, Baa, Black Sheep	Hello Mummy	Flower Breathing	28 – Access to Education
Week 2	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	Baa, Baa, Black Sheep	Hello Mummy	Flower Breathing	28 – Access to Education
Week 3	Baa, Baa, Pink Sheep	Wind the Bobbin Up	Home Toilet	Palm Tree	28 – Access to Education
Week 4	Incy, Wincy Spider	5 Little Speckled Frogs	Nappy Drink	Feather Breathing	28 – Access to Education
Week 5	Teddies On A Trampoline	5 Little Dragons	Snack Coat	Frog Pose	12 – Respect for Children's Views
Week 6	Miss Polly Had A Dolly	5 Little Monkeys Swinging In A Tree	Lunch Daddy	Finger Breathing	12 – Respect for Children's Views
Week 7	5 Little Monkeys Jumping On The Bed	1,2,3,4,5, Once I caught A Fish Alive	Yes No	Warrior Pose	12 – Respect for Children's Views
Week 8	Spooky Spider	Incy, Wincy Spider	Outside Sad	Belly Breathing	12 – Respect for Children's Views

Autumn 2	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article
Week 1	It's Diwali Song	Happy Diwali	Diwali Ok	Happy breathing	15 – Right to choose own friends and set up or join groups
Week 2	Old McGregor Had A Zoo	Ring-O-Roses	Wash hands More	Downward Facing Dog	15 – Right to choose own friends and set up or join groups
Week 3	Walking Through The Jungle	Shake, Shake, Shake	Excited Bye	Happy Breathing for Kindness	15 – Right to choose own friends and set up or join groups

Week 4	5 Little Dragons	Chick, Chick, Chick, Chick, Chicken	Stop Go	Cow and Cat Pose	15 – Right to choose own friends and set up or join groups
Week 5	Jingle Bells	When Santa Got Stuck Up The Chimney	Party Sit down	Bubble breathing	16 – Right to Privacy
Week 6	Over All The Rooftops	Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	Help Fireworks	Star Pose	16 – Right to Privacy
Week 7	When Santa Got Stuck Up The Chimney	Jingle Bells	Christmas Cold	Rainbow breathing	16 – Right to Privacy

Spring 1	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article
Week 1	Row, row, row your boat	5 Little Ducks	Happy Where	Wave breathing	31 – Right to rest, play, culture and Arts
Week 2	Hickory Dickory Dock	Little Miss Muffet	Look Ill	Rock Pose	31 – Right to rest, play, culture and Arts
Week 3	Wheel on the Bus	Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes	Chick Sleep	Happy breathing for gratitude	31 – Right to rest, play, culture and Arts
Week 4	Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary	Bluebells, Cockle Shells	Friend Brother	Mountain Pose	31 – Right to rest, play, culture and Arts
Week 5	Sleeping Bunnies	I Dig My Garden	Sister Hot	Cloud breathing	7 - Right to a name and nationality
Week 6	I'm a Little Teapot	The Grand Old Duke of York	Hat Flowers Butterfly	River Pose	7 - Right to a name and nationality

Spring 2	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article

Week 1	Hey Diddle, Diddle	Ten in the Bed	Butterfly Caterpillar	Book breathing	27 – Right to food, clothing and a safe home
Week 2	Jack and Jill	There's A Worm At The Bottom of the Garden	Grandad Nan	Plank Pose	27 – Right to food, clothing and a safe home
Week 3	Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer	Tiny Caterpillar	Brush teeth Eid	Happy breathing for focus	27 – Right to food, clothing and a safe home
Week 4	Dingle, Dangle Scarecrow	Peter Rabbit	School Bubbles	Tree Pose	13 – Right to share their voice freely
Week 5	Jelly On A Plate	Hot Crossed Buns	Play Tidy up	Shoulder roll breathes	13 – Right to share their voice freely

Summer 1	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article
Week 1	Tommy Thumb	Two Little Dickie Birds	Sorry Milk	Cake breathing	24 – Right to health, water, food and environment
Week 2	Happy and You Know It	Henry's Happy Hairshop	Strawberry Orange	Lying twist pose	24 – Right to health, water, food and environment
Week 3	Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear	5 Little Firemen	Apple Banana	Lion breathing	24 – Right to health, water, food and environment
Week 4	Miss Polly Had A Dolly	5 Currant Buns	Toast Pizza	Cobra pose	24 – Right to health, water, food and environment
Week 5	10 Fat Sausages	Pease Pudding Hot	Pasta Sandwich	Dragon breaths	2 – No discrimination
Week 6	Turtle Tim	Lucy Ly	Yoghurt Cereal	Dolphin pose	2 – No discrimination
Week 6	Little Bo Peep	The Okey Cokey	Chips Hug	4 and 8 breathing	2 – No discrimination

Summer 2	Little Nursery	Big Nursery	Sign	Wellbeing Yoga Pose / Breathing Technique	UNCRC Article
Week 1	Humpty Dumpty	Twinkle, Twinkle, Chocolate Bar	Spider Monkey	Shark Pose	8 – Right to their identity
Week 2	Hickety, Pickety, Bumble Bee	Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush	Bus Dinosaur	Soup breathing	8 – Right to their identity

Week 3	One Finger, One Thumb	Ten Green Bottles	Sheep Open	Bridge Pose	8 – Right to their identity
Week 4	Cobbler, Cobbler	Chop, Chop, Choppity, Chop	Paint Shoes on	Butterfly breathing	14 –Right to the freedom of thought and religion
Week 5	Zoom, Zoom, Zoom	Sing A Song Of Sixpence	Finished Wait	Boat Pose	14 –Right to the freedom of thought and religion
Week 6	Roly Poly	Happy School Days	Love	Heart breathing	14 –Right to the freedom of thought and religion

Books to Further Enhance our Curriculum	
Celebration Books	
Autumn/Harvest: **Key Vocabulary:** leaves, colours, windy, rain, acorn, conker, branch, squirrel, frost, cold, harvest, farmer, tractor, field, crops, wheat, corn, barley, scarecrow, thanks	
Harvest Days	This book explores various harvest festivals from different cultures to teach children about ancient traditions and the concept of gratitude.
Black History Month: **Key vocabulary:** kind, fair, brave, strong, share, friends, help, hope, proud, love, respect, peace, together, hero, dreams, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, same/different, celebrate, history, culture, equality	
Brown: The Many Shades of Love	In this book a child compares a variety of brown skin colours linked to family members. The main theme is that even though everyone has a different shade of brown, they are all the same and are connected.
Coming to England	This book refers to the experiences of the Windrush generation, Caribbean people who migrated to Britain after World War 2 and the authors memoir of her own journey. They were encouraged to come to help rebuild the country but faced significant racial prejudice and discrimination in their new homes. Despite facing adversity, this generation and their descendants have made immense contribution to British society.
Dream Big Little One	This book showcases women who changed the world inc. 18 trailblazing black women. Among these women are everyday women who did extraordinary things whose actions and beliefs contributed to making the world better.
Halloween: **Key Vocabulary:** pumpkin, hunt, scared, watchful, cobweb, bats, flapping, spooky, trick or treat	
We're Going on a Pumpkin Hunt	A Halloween based version of We're Going on a Bear Hunt. Lots of repetition which will enable children to join in a non-scary story for Halloween.
Funnybones	Funnybones follows the adventures of three skeletons who live in a dark, dark house. They venture out to scare people but as everyone is in bed, they end up scaring each other.
Diwali: **Key Vocabulary:** Diwali, festival, Indian, sari, pedas, jalebis, diyas, Hindu, celebration, divas, rangoli pattern, temple	
Garland of Lights	Introduces the Hindu festival of Diwali through rhyme and narrative about a family lighting lamps. The story explores the meaning behind the festival, by associating different numbers of lit lamps with different blessings, gratitude, and traditions like fireworks, sweets and Rangoli.
Binny's Diwali	This book celebrates the joy of Diwali. Binny has a lovely new outfit to wear. She describes the Hindu Festival of Lights, celebrating victory and hope to her friends. She has sweet jalebis and pedas to share with everyone and shows them how to make pictures with coloured chalk powder. Binny reminds her class that Diwali is just one of thousands of religious festivals that exist in the world, and that they are all special and wonderful.

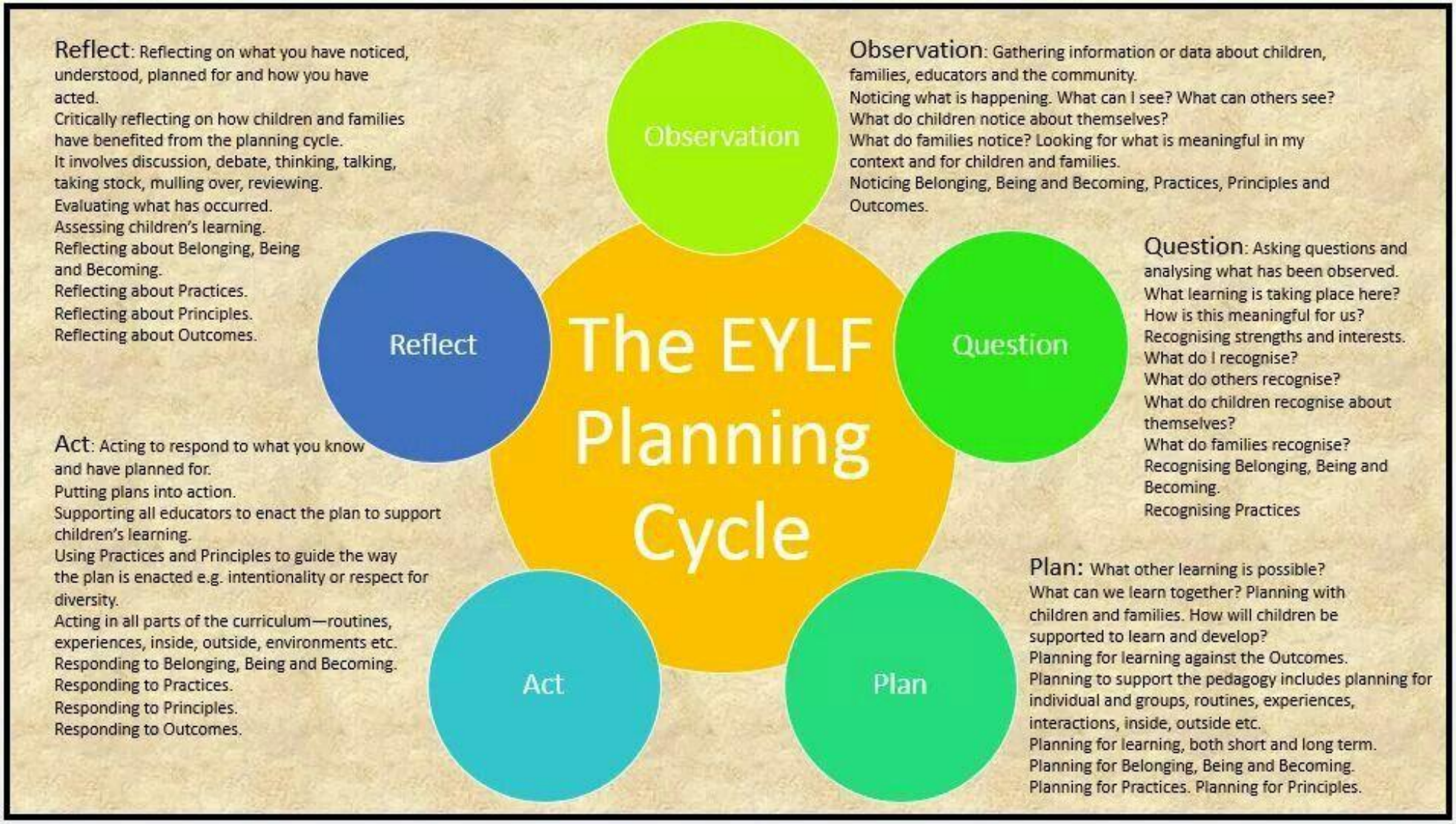
Remembrance Day **Key Vocabulary:** poppy, soldier, remember, peace, respect, hero, brave, thank you, war, love, hope, ceremony, silence, memorial	
Bertie's Poppy	Bertie finds out about the significance of his poppy from his family and teacher. It explains why people celebrate Remembrance Day each year. Textless pages during the two minute silence offers children quiet reflection, as they join Bertie while he thinks back on everything he has found out.
Where the Poppies Now Grow	A narrative poem about two boys growing up and fighting in the Great War. It deals sensitively with war and friendship.
Christmas: **Key Vocabulary:** Christmas, Christmas Eve, postman, letter, Santa, Jesus, innkeeper, stable, shepherds, kings, angels, stockings, chimney, St Nicholas, clatter, sleigh, reindeer, presents, Christmas tree, decorations	
The Night Before Christmas	Every Christmas Eve brings with it hushed anticipation and wonder. Here is the story of this magical night, when children around the world await the arrival of the gifts that symbolise all the warmth and love of Christmas.
Jesus' Christmas Party	A story about the true meaning of Christmas from the perspective of the innkeeper. It includes Mary and Joseph, the stable, the bright star, the shepherds, kings, angels and baby Jesus
Kippers Christmas Eve	Kipper and his friends are preparing for Christmas and trying to decide which is better, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.
The Jolly Christmas Postman	A seasonal rhyming story about a postman delivering letters to lots of familiar characters. Early reading opportunities as children open the letters in the book.
Chinese New Year: **Key Vocabulary:** Chinese, new year, lunar, celebration, tradition, decorate, lanterns, family, noodles, dumplings, China, twelve, animal names, powers, race, ordinal numbers, dragon, lucky, delicious, fireworks, parade	
I Love Chinese New Year	The story of a family preparing for Chinese New Year. Mai-Anne, the main character thinks about the twelve animals, each with special powers, a race to cross the river, decorating their home and enjoying traditional foods such as fish, noodles, dumplings and chicken. But most of all she loves listening to her Grandma telling the story of how the Lunar New Year began
Lunar New Year	This book is a tour of all the traditional activities that families do during the two weeks of Lunar New Year, inc. sweeping away bad luck and evil spirits, polishing the statue of the Kitchen God, and picking fresh flowers.
Shrove Tuesday: **Key Vocabulary:** pancake, delicious, hungry, recipe, ingredients, reading, writing, shopping list, count, cook, share, unhelpful	
Mr Wolf's Pancakes	Mr Wolf wants to make pancakes and asks some familiar characters for help. This story has a similar theme to The Little Red Hen. This story will link to the children making their own pancakes.
Mama Panya's Pancakes	This story about at Kenyan village life teaches the importance of sharing, even when you have little to give, as Mama Panya's son Adika invites everyone he sees to a pancake dinner.
Easter: **Key Vocabulary:** Easter, hunt, excited, find, number names, animal names, egg, found, hooray, under, over, around	
We're Going on an Egg Hunt	Help the Easter bunnies find and count 10 eggs. As in We're Going on a Bear Hunt, there will obstacles along the way to overcome. Lots of repetition for children to join in with .
First Festivals: Easter	This lift-the-flap book introduces Easter traditions like church services, hot cross buns, and Easter egg hunts.
Eid:	

Key Vocabulary: exciting, Eid, moon, henna, decorations, family, pray, Eid Mubarak, presents, neighbours, sharing, love, fasting, Eid-ul-Fitr, Muslim	
The Most Exciting Eid	Safa is excited that there is only one more sleep until Eid. She loves drawing henna patterns on her hands and eating delicious foods such as biryani, kebabs and samosas. Safa is excited about the presents she will receive but as she delivers delicious Eid treats to her neighbours, she realises how nice it is to make people happy and that the most exciting part of Eid is sharing special moments with those we love.
Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr	This book explores how the holy month of Ramadan is filled with fasting, prayer and good deeds; and how families and friends come together to pray and feast for Eid al-Fitr marking the end of Ramadan.
Non Fiction books linked to interests, knowledge development and curricular programmes/threads identified above	
Healthy Eating (Startwell and Health for Life): **Key Vocabulary:** greens, cereal, healthy, breakfast, snack, lunch, dinner, vegetables, treat, grow, fruit names, fruit salad, chop, scrummy, choose, food names, planted, seeds, gazillions, colour names, supermarket, salad	
Eat Your Greens Goldilocks	The story teaches about the importance of a healthy diet and focuses on fussy eaters.
Oliver's Fruit Salad	A story about a boy who loves to grow fruit with his Grandpa but doesn't like to eat fruit until his Grandpa makes it into a scrummy fruit salad. Links to our gardening continuous provision where children help grow their healthy snacks.
Which Food Will You Choose?	This book encourages children to eat fresh, healthy food and try something different. Children are encouraged to decide which foods they would choose from each page. Recommended by dieticians.
Oral Health: **Key Vocabulary:** teeth, brush, healthy, sugar, plaque, milk teeth, false teeth, dentist, toothbrush,	
Why Should I Brush My Teeth?	A question and answer book to cover all aspects of oral health
Forest School: **Key Vocabulary:** woods, stick, trees, bark, nest, leaves, needles, pine cones, seeds, nuts, weather, logs, creatures, treasure, sunlight, breeze	
Look What I Found in the Woods	The story of an outdoor adventure to find natural treasures. It included fact filled nature notes about each of the objects found

Additional Books

Throughout the year, children will also have the opportunity to explore other texts that link to that link to their interests that are developing. Books and magazines can be found all around the environment as well as designated book areas to help develop a passion to read.

Implementation



Our pedogical philosophy is that of play-based learning. We implement our curriculum content by providing an enabling environment that children can play, explore and experiment in, guided by skilled early years practitioners.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Our curriculum intent is implemented through skilled teaching, purposeful environment set up and broad experiences in order to create and maximise opportunities for children to practice these behaviours for learning. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations; our play based curriculum supports this.

These abilities and attitudes of strong learners, as set out below, will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

PLAYING AND EXPLORING	ACTIVE LEARNING	CREATING AND THINKING CRITICALLY
Finding out and exploring	Being involved and concentrating	Having their own ideas
Using what they know in their play	Keeping on trying	Using what they already know to learn new things
Being willing to have a go	Enjoying achieving what they set out to do	Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways

Use of Stories and Play-Based Practice

We use our core book spine and named additional stories to drive the teaching of key knowledge and concepts. Concepts are often explored and discussed through stories and books, and then practiced and revisited over time within children's play and through purposeful environmental provocations.

Pedagogical Teaching Approaches and Strategies

Every moment during the school day is seen as a learning opportunity. Staff use different pedagogical strategies for different learning opportunities that are presented. Qualified teachers and skilled practitioners identify which strategy/strategies are likely to best suit and have the most impact on learning for each particular child/group of children, according to what has been observed.

Staff observe, listen to and work with children to facilitate learning. Ongoing observation assessment allows us to respond quickly to children's learning by enhancing ideas, selecting new resources, challenging their thinking, modelling vocabulary and selecting the most appropriate teaching strategy to move their learning on in the moment.

The variety of pedagogical teaching strategies practitioners use are:

Strategy / method	Description	What might be said
Explicit teaching / direct instruction.	Adult-led teaching that is focused on the child achieving a specific learning outcome. Children are provided with all the information and modelling they need to complete a task/skill independently.	*Today, we are learning about winter.* *Winter is one of the four seasons. It comes after autumn. It is often very cold in winter and people have to dress in warm clothes. Look outside the window, you will see frost on the floor. That is because the temperature outside is very cold today. It is winter.*
Commenting own actions / commenting children's actions / thinking out loud.	Practitioners carry out an action/skill/task whilst purposefully narrating/explaining what they/children are doing as they go along. Quiet pauses are beneficial between commenting and questioning to encourage thinking and processing.	*I'm putting a little bit of water on my clay. My clay is getting softer because the water is breaking it down a little bit. Oh, I forgot to put an apron on, I must do that now otherwise my clothes might get dirty. I'll try and remember before I start playing with the clay next time! I'm squishing it in my hands so that it keeps getting softer.* *I wonder if…* *I wonder why…*

Explicit teaching of vocabulary	Explicitly teaching new vocabulary and its meaning. Key vocabulary is displayed in each area of continuous provision, supported by symbols. Key vocabulary for each book has been identified.	*The hedgehog in this story comes out at night time and SLEEPS during the day. Hedgehogs are nocturnal. Nocturnal means something is awake at night and sleeps during the day. Nocturnal. Can you say that? Noc-tur-nal.* *Hedgehogs are nocturnal because it is safer for them to come out at night.*
Modelling language and use of vocabulary.	Using appropriate language/ vocabulary/ terminology/ grammatical structures purposefully to expose children. Often modelling of vocabulary is used within a period of time after explicit teaching of vocabulary to model its use in context. Adults continue to model vocabulary previously taught to children in order to consolidate and embed.	*That would be a perfect tunnel for a hedgehog to hide in during the day. Nocturnal animals who sleep during the day like to have a cosy place to keep safe and rest during the day, don't they? While we are here at nursery today, I wonder how many nocturnal animals like hedgehogs there are sleeping somewhere safe nearby.*
Modelling (actions/ skills/ behaviours)	Practitioners showing children how something can be done, often without drawing attention to it verbally (if drawing attention to the modelling, see demonstrating). Children learn by observing.	*NA*
Demonstrating	As modelling, with the addition of purposefully verbally explaining what is being shown, in an instructional manner.	*I like how you created a hole in your model to make space for the pipe cleaner. I'm going to use the end of this paintbrush as a tool. Look, I'll show you how I am going to make a hole in my model.*

Questioning	Practitioners ask questions to gain immediate feedback on children's knowledge, thinking and/or understanding.	*It doesn't quite fit, does it? What tool could you use to make a bigger hole?*

	Effective questioning is open-ended, requiring deep thought and a response of more than one word. Practitioners must consider thinking time after asking a question. Practitioners should ensure time for processing/responding before a further question. Practitioners should interweave questions with comments. Practitioners should carefully consider how they word a question and avoid asking rephrased multiple questions at once. Practitioners should ponder with children rather than always question.	*Why?* *Explain…* *Can you tell me how you made that?* *Why do you think…?* *How could we find out…?* *What might happen if…?* *How could you make it better?* *What do you know about…?* *What could you try instead?* *Tell me…* *How did you do that?* *I wonder what would happen if…* *Do you know?*
Observing	Practitioners watch what children are doing in order to decide how best to respond. Observation may be prolonged to see how far children take their own learning themselves before intervening/deciding if intervention is appropriate.	NA
Playing alongside	Practitioners may choose to play alongside children in order to gradually involve themselves in the play or to observe/'listen in' inconspicuously at a closer distance.	NA
Encouraging idea development	Following observation or interaction, where appropriate, practitioners may support children's own ideas by encouraging the extension of their ideas. Questioning is often appropriate here.	*What about having another look on the shelf to see if there is anything else there that might help?* *That was a great idea. What else could you try?* *How could you make it stand up by itself?* *Oh no, I've run out of space. I can't think what else I could use…* *I wonder how / why…*

Proposing ideas	Following observation or interaction, where appropriate, practitioners may support children who are struggling and at risk of giving up, who are lacking	*You could try…* *It might be a good idea to…* *Good try. I think it could stand by itself if you tried…* *I think… because…*

	ideas/knowledge or have exhausted their own ideas, by suggesting an idea.	
Sabotage	Purposeful incorrect modelling or sabotage to elicit a response.	*NA*
Challenging children's thinking/ideas	Following observation or interaction, where appropriate, practitioners may challenge an idea that a child has/children have to encourage deeper thinking.	
Facilitating children working together/ encouraging collaboration	Practitioners encourage children to join others' play, encourage them to allow another child to join their play, make suggestions for working together (often with a great reason why or how they could help each other). Collaborative learning actively encourages learning and focusing together, coming up with solutions/ideas/processes together, sharing roles, negotiating and sharing ownership.	*Amaan is building too. Why don't you build together and then you could make your structure even better?* *Jannat wants to visit the shop but there is no shopkeeper. Would you like to join?* *I'd love someone to come and help us with our instrument show. Wouldn't it be great if we had some more friends playing in our band?*
Giving feedback	Feedback may occur at various points in a learning sequence to keep children on track, encouraging them to achieve their learning goals. Feedback may be in the form of praise or offering thoughts on their learning/ actions/ processes/ outcomes. Effective feedback encourages deeper thinking and may support children to generate questions for further inquiry.	*Thank you for being such a kind friend.* *Please remember to use kind hands. We all have a right to be safe.* *Great jump. It would be much safer if you checked the space was clear before you jumped next time. What might happen if you don't look before you jump?*
Multiple exposure	Deep learning develops most effectively over time via multiple, spaced interactions with new concepts, including different activities/experiences to vary the interactions children have with new knowledge.	NA

Parental Partnership – Understanding the Wider Picture

Research shows that involving parents and carers in their children's learning is the most important factor in enabling some children to do well regardless of background. Working in partnership with parents and carers is central to the early years foundation stage (EYFS, 2026).

Our curriculum is a carefully planned learning experience; the effective implementation of our curriculum is crucial in ensuring we achieve what we set out to achieve, and children learn what we set out for them to learn. To best support this work, we are curious to know about previous learning and the experiences they have had at home and elsewhere, prior to their time with us in order to deliver the planned curriculum in the most appropriate way for each cohort of children. We are passionate advocates of parental partnership. We are proactive in seeking the afore mentioned information regularly and ensure information is shared so that new learning builds upon, complements and strengthens children's previous understanding. The more we know about each child, and what they know and can remember, the better chance we have of planning appropriate new learning experiences to have lasting impact on children's long-term memory.

At ACNS, we value families as children's first educators. The information that they share with us is vital as we develop our relationships with their children. We promote an open-door policy for parents to engage in dialogue with us about their child and their lived experiences. We provide a range of opportunities for parents to take an active part in their child's time at nursery. These include:

- Visit to Allens Croft Nursery
- Induction meetings
- Settling in sessions
- Workshops
- Tapestry
- Parent consultations
- Stay and Play sessions linked to special events or celebrations
- SEN meetings/TACs
- Trips and visits

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All children are individuals with their own unique interests, skills, talents and needs. At Allens Croft our carefully planned environments, resources and adapted planning enable us to ensure that all children make progress and enjoy high levels of well-being. The implementation of the curriculum is adapted to suit the needs of all children. Planned activities aim to foster good social relationships, promote equal opportunities and support special educational needs and disabilities. Positive relationships and good communication play a vital part when planning for individual needs. We are committed to ensuring ALL children have access to high quality teaching.

Children with special educational needs receive some or all of the following to support their access to the curriculum:

- Access to sensory experiences and sensory spaces within the environment.
- Access to low arousal spaces.
- Access an adaptive learning environment and activities within continuous provision
- Utilise Tapestry as a home communication platform
- Individualised plans, including targets. Parents and external professionals contribute to these.
- Individual PIC profile/ targets threaded through planning
- Individualised baskets containing resources that support children's interest
- Small group intervention and targeted 1:1 intervention
- Access to an environment with rich early language opportunities
- Signs and objects of reference used alongside communication
- Specialist resources, including those recommended for specific children by external agencies

We work with a range of external professionals to ensure individualised plans are meeting the needs of our children with special educational needs.

Key Daily Routines and Learning

Routine activity	What we want the children to know and remember?
Arrival at Nursery	• Children develop a sense of security through predictable routines and consistency of familiar adults and environments. • Children develop a sense of belonging as they identify as being members of a key group • Early reading skills are developed through the use of self-registration name cards.
Snack time / Lunch time	• Children learn to make healthy choices. The right to food and water (RRSA ART:24) • Children will recognise and communicate when they are thirsty and hungry • Children learn the expected etiquette of meal-times at nursery e.g. using a knife and fork, sitting at a table, clearing plates away. • Enjoying mealtimes as a social occasion with friends • Children learn to understand the importance of healthy eating and hydration at snack time.
Hand washing	• Children are taught good hygiene practices in order to prevent infections .
Toilet	• Children learn to be independent in their self-care, and can recognise and communicate when they need the toilet or need help dressing and undressing.
Group time, Singing, Story time, reflection	• Expectations of behaviour for group time learning – Good sitting, good looking and good listening. • Children develop communication skills through shared attention activities with an adult focus. • Children are taught early maths, early reading, phonics and gross-motor activities. • Children in Big Nursery have TalkTime. • Supervised toothbrushing in Little's and Big's.
Continuous provision	• Children have the autonomy to choose which area/s of continuous provision they access to further develop their own interests. • Adults scaffold the development of children's skills and knowledge in each area through a combination of adult-led and child-initiated learning.

Transition to and from different spaces e.g. garden, lunch room	• Children develop an understanding of the daily routine of nursery which, over time, they are able to follow. • Children are able to follow and respond to adult direction and instruction.

Learning Environment (Indoors and Out)

Children are unique and holistic learners, thriving within environments that support their individual and diverse motivations, interests and needs. They require a wealth of possibilities within varied contexts, and this is best supported within stimulating and challenging environments that value exploration and play.

(Birth to Five Matters, 2026)

Our purposeful and well-thought-out environment is the platform for which the curriculum is delivered and accessed, promoting the development of skills and knowledge. Our resources are carefully considered and are used to provide challenge, actively encourage curiosity and to match and build on children's interests.

Our classrooms, both indoors and outdoors, provide access to the full curriculum. Both are equally important and are skilfully planned to promote challenging learning opportunities that encourage high levels of engagement and high levels of thinking. The environment promotes the relationship between peers, the teacher and the environment which in turn, facilitates learning.

The environment is the third teacher encouraging explicit play-based experiences and enabling spontaneous moments of learning that the children themselves create. Our engaging indoor and outdoor environments allow children full access to a wide range of experiences that are unique and indivisible.

Our classrooms are like studio style and sensory based workshops with the following key zones:

- Block area
- Cooking
- Role play
- Malleable
- Art studio
- Sand / water
- Library with puppets and books threaded throughout

- Garden with access to large scale physical apparatus, mud kitchen, growing area, Forest School
- Small world
- Performing Arts

We provide a learning environment based on individual children's needs and interests and it allows for building on previous skills and knowledge. It starts with what children know and understand about themselves and their own community. Our flexible curriculum exploits both 'in the moment' and previously planned opportunities to learn about the wider world to support children to become global citizens. Our learning environment offers children the space, freedom and resources to learn with a particular focus on natural, recycled and open-ended materials that promote higher order thinking and exploration. Staff plan for and ensure that both the inside and outside learning spaces are fun, safe, engaging, promote high levels of involvement and offer appropriate challenge.

Individual, Small Group and Class Group Teaching

The curriculum is delivered through a range of methods and strategies. As well as learning through play during free-flow open-ended learning as a whole cohort, children are also taught:

- in whole family groups (ranging from 8-13 children in Big Nursery and 4-8 children in Little Nursery);
- in small groups for focused activities.
- in small groups for targeted intervention.
- individually for 1:1 intervention, where appropriate.

Technology

We use technology to enhance all areas of learning. We recognise the importance of ensuring we prepare our children for growing up in a digital world and ensure opportunities are provided for them to access a range of technology resources across each area of the curriculum. Digital technology plays a huge part in our society.
We agree with the National Literacy Trust (digital technology and early years) who state that, *just like a book, technology is used as a tool for learning and play, rather than a replacement for adult interaction.* Providing opportunities for supervised use of technology as part of early years education means we can support children in developing the digital literacy skills to use technology safely, effectively and moderately, and in this way, positively influence children's ideas and understanding of what digital devices are for.

Staff CPD

Alongside statutory training, staff CPD is focused around:

Knowledge of: child development in all areas (with a focus speech and language development), subject specific study and content, skills progression (including what comes before and what comes next), special educational needs, further safeguarding themes and awareness, health and safety (including risk assessment)

Pedagogy: teaching strategies (as above), our Federation evidence-informed pedagogical approach (drawing upon research and best practice) and learning environment planning, play-based learning in EYFS.

We are passionate about *all* staff always learning and improving. Leaders plan for and deliver/facilitate staff development, drawing upon the expertise across the direct leadership in school, the wider federation and the Early Years Network. Leaders are responsible for holding up to date knowledge of current best practice and statutory requirements, ensuring new knowledge and learning is disseminated across the wider staff team.

How CPD is facilitated: training days, external training sessions, online training platform for self-directed CPD, weekly directed meetings, daily modelling of outstanding practice, ongoing feedback, opportunities for observing good practice, opportunities for reflection, peer on peer professional observation and challenge and supervision.

Impact

Assessment

When	Assessment, Screening and Observations
Induction **(termly as applicable)**	• Pre-intake assessment, health and development summary • Meetings with new parents and completion of induction packs • All About Me profiles given to parents to complete
Autumn	• 2-year progress checks for all 2-year-olds. • Baseline brushstroke assessments within 4 weeks of start date (Prime Areas for Little's; Prime and Specific for Big's).

	• Wellcomm screening of all new children. Wellcomm re-screening of all children scoring red/amber below their age expected level. Intervention groups/targets for those children working below age-related expectation. • Liaison with SENDCo for children new to Allens Croft working significantly below age-related expectation. SENDCO to arrange initial meetings with parents of new children and discuss next steps. • SENDCo to complete/update PIC profiles and use Early Support Tracker. SENDCo to initiate/review/update short term targets on Early Support Plans or EHCPs • Observations of children's skills, learning and interests discussed at regular planning meetings. From these discussions, learning objectives are planned and implemented.
Spring	• Baseline brushstroke assessment for children starting after Christmas (3 Prime Areas for Little's, 7 areas of learning for Big's) within 4 weeks of start date. • Child assessment and review points approaching set milestones (3 Prime Areas for Little's, 7 areas of learning for Big's). Intervention groups/targets reviewed for children identified as working above or below age-related expectation. • Wellcomm screening of all new children. Wellcomm re-screening of all children scoring red/amber below their age expected level. Intervention groups/targets for those children working below age-related expectation. Seek advice from SENCo regarding referrals to be made. • Liaison with SENDCo for children new to Allens Croft Nursery working significantly below age-related expectation or not making expected progress. SENDCO to arrange meetings with parents and discuss next steps. • SENDCo to complete/update PIC profiles and use Early Support Tracker. SENDCo to initiate/review/update short term targets on Early Support Plans or EHCPs • Observations of children's skills, learning and interests discussed at regular planning meetings. From these discussions, learning objectives are planned and implemented.
Summer	• Baseline brushstroke assessment for children starting after Easter (3 Prime Areas for Little's, 7 areas of learning for Big's) within 4 weeks of start date. • Child assessment and review points approaching set milestones (3 Prime Areas for Little's, 7 areas of learning for Big's). Intervention groups/targets reviewed for children identified as working above or below age-related expectation. • Wellcomm screening of all new children. Wellcomm re-screening of all children scoring red/amber below their age expected level. Intervention groups/targets for those children working below age-related expectation. Seek advice from SENCo regarding referrals to be made. • Liaison with SENDCo for children new to Allens Croft working significantly below age-related expectation or not making expected progress. SENDCO to arrange meetings with parents and discuss next steps. • SENDCo to complete/update PIC profiles and use Early Support Tracker. SENDCo to initiate/review/update short term targets on Early Support Plans or EHCPs.

	• Observations of children's skills, learning and interests discussed at regular planning meetings. From these discussions, learning objectives are planned and implemented. • Transition documents shared with parents and new settings.

WellComm Time Line

On Entry (weeks1-3)

Initial Screen

For all children

Used to inform EYFS Baseline Assessments

Intervention Weeks (approx. 9 weeks)

Assessment used to plan interventions 1:1, small group and through play and routines

End of Autumn term

Progress Screen

For those children not on track from the previous screen

Intervention Weeks (approx. 9 weeks)

Assessment used to plan interventions 1:1, small group and through play and routines

End of Spring term

Progress Screen

For those children not on track from the previous screen

Used to update EYFS Assessments

Intervention Weeks (approx. 9 weeks)

Assessment used to plan interventions 1:1, small group and through play and routines

On Exit or Transition

Final Progress Screen

For those children still not on track from the previous screen

informing EYFS Exit Assessments and transition information

Toolkit used for Assessments:

- 2-year progress checks
- Development Matters
- Birth to 5 Matters
- PIC profile & WellComm
- Sensory Differences Profile.

Children's progress is monitored closely from the moment they start, and their journey is tracked throughout the year allowing appropriate support and challenge to be in place. Our assessments are integral to effective learning and teaching. The results of this are that our children and families have a sense of belonging and a positive disposition to learning. They transition into primary and special schools with confidence and with the strong character needed to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Formative Assessment

We assess children through daily observation and by knowing each child well, knowing what they can do, what they know, what they can remember and what they need next. We use this informal assessment to plan for what comes next and how that can be best achieved. This may be appropriate for the next day's learning, the next week's learning or the very next interaction or moment. We use the long-term progression as a guide, and the knowledge of the children to complement that. Staff spend more time with children, engaged in their learning and less time documenting paperwork and evidencing observations.

Summative Assessment

Each child has a summative baseline assessment (within 4 weeks of joining), and again each time they approach their next milestone (maximum of 3 times annually). The purpose of the assessments is to identify whether children are working within their age expected level and / or making good progress. Information from our assessments, informs our planning to ensure we plan provision to further develop children's skills and knowledge.

We carefully analyse patterns in areas of learning and across various pupil groups. This helps us to identify whether any of our intended curriculum has not been learnt, both at an individual level and at a cohort level. We use the follow Development Matters and Birth to 5 as supportive tools for assessment. We

identify whether children are 'on track' or 'not on track' to meet their age-related expectation at the end of Little's and Big's, judging as met or not met at the end of that period.

We use assessment information, both summative and formative, to measure the impact of our curriculum over time. Governors are regularly updated with assessment data through Curriculum and Pedagogy reports presented at Governor Local Committee cluster meetings.

Moderation

We moderate summative assessments within school and across schools. We moderate judgements made by digging deeper into the progress made by individual children, identifying what they practitioner knows about them and how they know that, as well as moderating cohort patterns within school and across Federation schools. The process is led by senior leaders and is a supportive tool to ensure assessment data is accurate and consistent. Moderation often results in sharing of good practice as well as identifying solutions to barriers.

Gathering Feedback

Throughout the year, we gather feedback from both parents and staff through daily dialogue, termly consultations and feedback forms. Feedback gathered from staff helps us to measure the impact of leadership as well as the staff moral and well-being. Feedback from parents helps us to measure the impact of the overall curriculum and the service that our families receive. Analysis of the data helps us to identify areas we can improve on. What parents see as the strengths of the school helps us to recognise what is having positive impact and how we can build on that.

Governance

The role of our governors is to support and challenge our thinking and practice to ensure the children at Allens Croft get the best possible education. Our link governors for safeguarding, curriculum and SEND visit at least twice per year. During the visit, a meeting is held with senior leaders, practice is observed and current challenges are discussed. A report is written, detailing the discussions had, strengths of current practice and areas to consider/ questions raised. The visits ensure that the intended curriculum is effectively delivered, and children have learnt what we intended for them to learn.

Such visits and reports are shared within Local Committee (LC) meetings within the cluster governance as well as at Full Governing Body (FGB) meetings.

Governors ask probing questions, raise issues and queries, and hold leaders to account in order to scrutinise the effectiveness and impact of our curriculum and pedagogy.

The impact of our curriculum and pedagogy at Allens Croft Nursery School is that our children receive the early foundations and building blocks for each area of learning and our children are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

Key Documentation

Statutory Framework for EYFS
EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers
Development Matters (used to guide our curriculum)
Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage
Birth to 5 matters (used as an informative tool to support our assessments)
Birth-to-5-Matters-Doc-Artwork-PT-LINKS-Aug-26.pdf
Working with the revised EYFS Principles into Practice
http://development-matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Working-with-the-revised-Early-Years-Foundation-Stage-Principles-into-Practice-.pdf
Exemplification materials (knowing the expectations of the children at the end of the next phase of their education)
Early years foundation stage: exemplification materials - GOV.UK
The Early Years Evidence Store is a summary of evidence-informed approaches to help educators to understand and reflect on their practice.
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/evidence-for-the-early-years/early-years-evidence-store
The Hundred Languages of Children
https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/reggio-emilia-approach/100-linguaggi-en/
Threads of Thinking (Cathy Nutbrown)
https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Threads_of_Thinking.html?id=DwQHEbnfnhEC&redir_esc=y