



Nursery Progression of Skills Overview – 2026/2027



Nursery Progression of Skills Overview						
The objectives for each area of learning are mapped progressively across the year, however in line with the EYFS curriculum they are taught holistically throughout the whole year, building on prior knowledge and experience. We use our knowledge of each individual child and cohort to guide our curriculum, looking closely at each child's starting point and interests. Teaching and learning takes place through child-initiated experiences which can be unplanned, alongside carefully planned adult interactions. We revisit objectives throughout the year, ensuring our children are confident and independent learners ready to start their journey in Reception.						
Nursery	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Communication and Language	3 – 4 Year Olds Communication and Language: - Enjoy listening to longer stories and can remember much of what happens. - Pay attention to more than one thing at a time, which can be difficult. - Use a wider range of vocabulary. - Understand a question or instruction that has two parts, such as "Get your coat and wait at the door". - Understand 'why' questions, like: "Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?" - Sing a large repertoire of songs. - Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books, and be able to tell a long story. - Develop their communication but may continue to have problems with irregular tenses and plurals, such as 'runned' for 'ran', 'swimmed' for 'swam'. - Develop their pronunciation but may have problems saying: - some sounds: r, j, th, ch, and sh - multisyllabic words such as 'pterodactyl', 'planetarium' or 'hippopotamus' - Use longer sentences of four to six words. - Be able to express a point of view and to debate when they disagree with an adult or a friend, using words as well as actions. - Start a conversation with an adult or a friend and continue it for many turns. - Use talk to organise themselves and their play: "Let's go on a bus... you sit there... I'll be the driver."					
	Sing a large repertoire of songs. Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books.	Enjoy listening to longer stories and can remember much of what happens. Use a wider range of vocabulary.	Understand a question or instruction that has two parts, such as "Get your coat and wait at the door". Understand 'why' questions, like: "Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?" Use longer sentences of four to six words.	Use talk to organise themselves and their play: "Let's go on a bus... you sit there... I'll be the driver." Start a conversation with an adult or friend and continue it for many turns.	Develop their communication but may continue to have problems with irregular tenses and plurals, such as 'runned' for 'ran', 'swimmed' for 'swam'. Develop their pronunciation but may have problems saying: - some sounds: r, j, th, ch, and sh - multisyllabic words such as 'pterodactyl', 'planetarium' or 'hippopotamus'	Be able to express a point of view and to debate when they disagree with an adult or a friend, using words as well as actions.

			Pay attention to more than one thing at a time, which can be difficult.			
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	3-4 Year Olds Personal, Social and Emotional Development: • Select and use activities and resources, with help when needed. This helps them to achieve a goal they have chosen, or one which is suggested to them. • Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community. • Become more outgoing with unfamiliar people, in the safe context of their setting. • Show more confidence in new social situations. • Play with one or more other children, extending and elaborating play ideas. • Find solutions to conflicts and rivalries. For example, accepting that not everyone can be Spider-Man in the game, and suggesting other ideas. • Increasingly follow rules, understanding why they are important. • Remember rules without needing an adult to remind them. • Develop appropriate ways of being assertive. • Talk with others to solve conflicts. • Talk about their feelings using words like 'happy', 'sad', 'angry' or 'worried'. • Understand gradually how others might be feeling. • Be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs, e.g. brushing teeth, using the toilet, washing and drying their hands thoroughly. • Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and tooth brushing.					
	Increasingly follow rules, understanding why they are important. Remember rules without needing an adult to remind them. Talk about their feelings using words like 'happy', 'sad', 'angry' or 'worried'. Be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs, e.g. brushing teeth, using the toilet, washing and drying their hands thoroughly. Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and tooth brushing.	Select and use activities and resources, with help when needed. This helps them to achieve a goal they have chosen, or one which is suggested to them. Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community	Become more outgoing with unfamiliar people, in the safe context of their setting. Show more confidence in new social situations.	Play with one or more other children, extending and elaborating play ideas. Understand gradually how others might be feeling.	Develop appropriate ways of being assertive. Talk with others to solve conflicts.	Find solutions to conflicts and rivalries. For example, accepting that not everyone can be Spider-Man in the game, and suggesting other ideas.

Physical Development	3 – 4 Year Olds Physical Development: - Continue to develop their movement, balancing, riding (scooters, trikes and bikes) and ball skills. - Go up steps and stairs, or climb up apparatus, using alternate feet. - Skip, hop, stand on one leg and hold a pose for a game like musical statues. - Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks. - Start taking part in some group activities which they make up for themselves, or in teams. - Increasingly able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm. - Match their developing physical skills to tasks and activities in the setting. For example, they decide whether to crawl, walk or run across a plank, depending on its length and width. - 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, carrying large hollow blocks. - Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. - Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. - Show a preference for a dominant hand. - Be increasingly independent as they get dressed and undressed, for example, putting coats on and doing up zips.					
	Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks.	Continue to develop their movement, balancing, riding (scooters, trikes and bikes) and ball skills. Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. Show a preference for a dominant hand. Be increasingly independent as they get dressed and undressed, for example, putting coats on and doing up zips.	Increasingly able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm. Start taking part in some group activities which they make up for themselves, or in teams. Match their developing physical skills to tasks and activities in the setting. For example, they decide whether to crawl, walk or run across a plank, depending on its length and width. Use one -handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors	Go up steps and stairs, or climb up apparatus, using alternate feet. 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, carrying large hollow blocks.	Skip, hop, stand on one leg and hold a pose for a game like musical statues. Increasingly able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm. Start taking part in some group activities which they make up for themselves, or in teams. Continue to develop their movement, balancing, riding (scooters, trikes and bikes) and ball skills.	Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. Show a preference for a dominant hand. Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.
Literacy	3 – 4 Year Olds Literacy: - Understand the five key concepts about print: - print has meaning - the names of the different parts of a book - print can have different purposes - page sequencing - we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom					

	• Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: - spot and suggest rhymes - count or clap syllables in a word - recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother • Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary. • Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; writing 'm' for mummy. • Write some or all of their name. • Write some letters accurately.					
	Understand the five key concepts about print: - print has meaning	Understand the five key concepts about print: - the names of different parts of a book - page sequencing	Understand the five key concepts about print: - we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom. Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary. Write some or all of their name. Write some letters accurately.	Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; writing 'm' for mummy. Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: - spot and suggest rhymes	Understand the five key concepts about print: - print can have different purposes Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: - count or clap syllables in a word - recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother. Write some or all of their name. Write some letters accurately	Write some or all of their name. Write some letters accurately.
Maths	3 – 4 Year Olds Mathematics: • Develop fast recognition of up to 3 objects, without having to count them individually ('subitising'). • Recite numbers past 5. • Say one number for each item in order: 1,2,3,4,5. • Know that the last number reached when counting a small set of objects tells you how many there are in total ('cardinal principle'). • Show 'finger numbers' up to 5. • Link numerals and amounts: for example, showing the right number of objects to match the numeral, up to 5. • Experiment with their own symbols and marks as well as numerals. • Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5. • Compare quantities using language: 'more than', 'fewer than'. • Talk about and explore 2D and 3D shapes (for example, circles, rectangles, triangles and cuboids) using informal and mathematical language: 'sides', 'corners'; 'straight', 'flat', 'round'. • Understand position through words alone – for example, "The bag is under the table," – with no pointing. • Describe a familiar route. • Discuss routes and locations, using words like 'in front of' and 'behind'. • Make comparisons between objects relating to size, length, weight and capacity. • Select shapes appropriately: flat surfaces for building, a triangular prism for a roof etc. • Combine shapes to make new ones – an arch, a bigger triangle etc. • Talk about and identifies the patterns around them. For example: stripes on clothes, designs on rugs and wallpaper. Use informal language like 'pointy', 'spotty', 'blobs' etc.					

	- Extend and create ABAB patterns – stick, leaf, stick, leaf. - Notice and correct an error in a repeating pattern. - Begin to describe a sequence of events, real or fictional, using words such as ‘first’, ‘then...’					
	Talk about and explore 2D and 3D shapes (for example, circles, rectangles, triangles and cuboids) using informal and mathematical language: ‘sides’, ‘corners’, ‘straight’, ‘flat’, ‘round’. Talk about and identifies the patterns around them. For example: stripes on clothes, designs on rugs and wallpaper. Use informal language like ‘pointy’, ‘spotty’, ‘blobs’ etc. Select shapes appropriately: flat surfaces for building, a triangular prism for a roof etc. Extend and create ABAB patterns – stick, leaf, stick, leaf.	Say one number for each item in order: 1,2,3,4,5. Recite numbers past 5. Show ‘finger numbers’ up to 5.	Develop fast recognition of up to 3 objects, without having to count them individually (‘subitising’). Know that the last number reached when counting a small set of objects tells you how many there are in total (‘cardinal principle’). Link numerals and amounts: for example, showing the right number of objects to match the numeral, up to 5. Understand position through words alone – for example, “The bag is under the table,” – with no pointing. Make comparisons between objects relating to size, length, weight and capacity.	Experiment with their own symbols and marks as well as numerals. Compare quantities using language: ‘more than’, ‘fewer than’. Combine shapes to make new ones – an arch, a bigger triangle etc. Talk about and identifies the patterns around them. For example: stripes on clothes, designs on rugs and wallpaper. Use informal language like ‘pointy’, ‘spotty’, ‘blobs’ etc.	Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5. Discuss routes and locations, using words like ‘in front of’ and ‘behind’. Describe a familiar route.	Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5. Talk about and explore 2D and 3D shapes (for example, circles, rectangles, triangles and cuboids) using informal and mathematical language: ‘sides’, ‘corners’, ‘straight’, ‘flat’, ‘round’.
Understanding of the world	3 – 4 Year Olds Understanding the World: - Use all their senses in hands-on exploration of natural materials. - Explore collections of materials with similar and/or different properties. - Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary. - Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family’s history. - Show interest in different occupations. - Explore how things work. - Plant seeds and care for growing plants. - Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal. - Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things. - Explore and talk about different forces they can feel. - Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice. - Continue developing positive attitudes about the differences between people.					

	• Know that there are different countries in the world and talk about the differences they have experienced or seen in photos.				
	Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history. Use all their senses in hands-on exploration of natural materials. Explore collections of materials with similar and/or different properties. Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice. Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal.	Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary. Show interest in different occupations.	Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things. Know that there are different countries in the world and talk about the differences they have experienced or seen in photos.	Plant seeds and care for growing plants. Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal.	Explore how things work. Explore and talk about the forces they can feel.
Expressive Arts and Design	3-4 Year Olds Expressive Arts and Design • Take part in simple pretend play, using an object to represent something else even though they are not similar. • Begin to develop complex stories using small world equipment like animal sets, dolls and dolls houses etc. • Make imaginative and complex 'small worlds' with blocks and construction kits, such as a city with different buildings and a park. • Explore different materials freely, to develop their ideas about how to use them and what to make. • Develop their own ideas and then decide which materials to use to express them. • Join different materials and explore different textures. • Create closed shapes with continuous lines, and begin to use these shapes to represent objects. • Draw with increasing complexity and detail, such as representing a face with a circle and including details. • Use drawing to represent ideas like movement or loud noises. • Show different emotions in their drawings and paintings, like happiness, sadness, fear etc. • Explore colour and colour-mixing. • Listen with increased attention to sounds. • Respond to what they have heard, expressing their thoughts and feelings. • Remember and sing entire songs. • Sing the pitch of a tone sung by another person ('pitch match'). • Sing the melodic shape (moving melody, such as up and down, down and up) of familiar songs.				

	• Create their own songs or improvise a song around one they know. • Play instruments with increasing control to express their feelings and ideas.				
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