

Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

Key Experiences Curriculum Autumn 2026

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and Nursery School
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Reviewed and Approved: Autumn 2023	Next review: Autumn 2026
Then review every 2 years	

Introduction to the Key Experiences Document – what we teach

Key Experiences is a working document written by staff at Thomas Coram Nursery School and Centre to help explain how we deliver the early years curriculum. We base our work directly on the 2021 revised document Development Matters but also use guidance from Birth to Five Matters (2021).

Thomas Coram's Key Experiences gives a concise overview of the important learning experiences that we want all our children to have before they leave the nursery and it shows how we deliver the curriculum through these experiences.

The staff team chose these particular experiences because they judged them to offer a range of rich, often playful activities that would introduce children to key concepts and give them lots of opportunities to practice important skills. Across the key experiences children will be given opportunities to experience the whole early years curriculum including all seven areas; communication and language, personal social and emotional development, physical development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. Every area includes lots of opportunities for speaking and listening as research shows that the development of communication and language is fundamental to learning in other areas.

We have thought about the opportunities for children to progress in their learning and development in each Key Experience. For example, a younger child might be learning that we plant seeds in the soil, older children might learn about the seasons and all the things plants need to grow as well as characteristics of different plants.

Each Key Experience also has some information about how we make the experience accessible to children with different development and special educational needs and disabilities. There is more information about this in our SEND policy and SEND information report. We want all children to have access to the full curriculum. It also includes some initial ideas to engage parents in the experience so we can work together to offer children rich, meaningful experiences at school and at home.

The Thomas Coram Key Experiences document, alongside Development Matters (2021) focuses on **what** we teach children or the content of the curriculum. Our curriculum Statement focuses on pedagogy or **how** we teach children. Our pedagogical approach is also summarised below.

Summary of our Pedagogy – how we teach

We adopt this particular pedagogy (way of teaching) because we believe it offers the best conditions for young children's optimal development. Our approach is based on research evidence. To find out more about research see references at the end of this document.

Our pedagogy is characterised by:

- Children learning actively through play. We believe play is a natural and very effective vehicle for holistic and deep learning.
- Children being able to make choices from wide range of high quality play based activities accessible everyday as part of **core provision** (see below)
- The majority of the time children lead their learning experiences through free play and making free choices (including accessing the indoor and outdoor environment) but some of the time adults lead activities. As children get older the time that adults lead activities increases in line with children's developmental needs. All children are offered at least one adult led small group session daily.
- We value children's interests and will adapt core provision to include materials and experiences that reflect what motivates children. For example, we might adapt the water play area to reflect a child's interest in sharks or the garden to reflect a child's interest in things that roll.
- We value children's relationships with adults and also with other children. We actively facilitate children making friendships to enable them to learn through play and interaction with each other, as well as with practitioners.
- Children have access to the outdoor learning environment every day and usually throughout the day (except in extreme weather). We believe the outdoors offers high quality and unique opportunities to learn.
- Providing opportunities to support children to develop self-regulation, for example if a child is impatient for a turn or needs help to calm down. Practitioners actively teach children about emotion through conversation, stories or teaching a strategy such as how to ask for a turn or how to take deep breaths to calm down. Self-regulation is important because when children are better able to calm and manage their emotions they are better able to communicate what they want and need. It also helps them in all areas of life including forming relationships and participating in the activities that help them learn and develop. Good self-regulation supports executive function, being able to plan, problem solve and focus well.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning and Supporting Self-Regulation and the development of executive function

Part of our pedagogy is our commitment to teaching and supporting children to develop skills that will help them throughout their lives to continue to learn and develop. These include the characteristics of effective teaching and learning outlined in *Development Matters* (2021); *Playing and Exploring*, *Active Learning*, *Creating and Thinking Critically*.

Examples of this might be;

A practitioner supporting a child to settle into the toddler base might help them choose an activity by showing them two or three activities and encouraging them to indicate where they'd like to start their day (supporting *Playing and Exploring*)

A practitioner helping a child reflect on why their block tower has fallen down might encourage them to try again and think about what they might do differently to make it more robust (supporting Active Learning)

A practitioner working with children who have decided to build a den in the garden could encourage them to decide what materials they need, solve problems themselves, try out different solutions and begin to plan what they will do next (supporting Creating and Thinking Critically)

Core Provision

Core provision refers to way we prepare, maintain and manage the learning environment indoors and outdoors so children can consistently access high quality experiences. We choose our core provision so that it offers learning across the whole early years curriculum. We believe it is important for children to be able to reliably and regularly revisit materials and experiences so they can deepen their learning and develop their skills. Practitioners then work with children as they access the provision to support the development of skills, understanding and characteristics of effective learning (see below).

We aim to take advantage of the different learning opportunities offered by the indoor and outdoor environment. For example, outside activities can often be messier, louder, and take up more space. They also offer children chances to engage with natural materials, plants, animals and weather.

We commit every day (barring exceptional circumstances) to offering children access to the following core provision (either indoors or out, or represented in both):

Water and sand play, block play, paint and mark making, books and stories, role play and 'small world' play (small figures), playdough and/ or clay, gross motor physical activities (e.g. climbing, bike riding), collage/ model making, construction toys, puzzles and mathematical toys and musical instruments/ sound makers.

We also regularly offer access to technology such as using a computer, iPad or camera, sensory play with messy materials and woodwork. We have a specialist music practitioner who works with the children once a week in term time.

All children have a language and literacy based small group experience usually including songs, rhymes and stories every day.

Assessment of learning

(Please see our **assessment statement** to understand how we assess children's progress)

Key Curriculum experience: **Making Friends**

What will the children be doing?

- Playing independently and exploring the environment
- Playing alongside other children and with other children
- Initiating play with others, leading and following
- play partnering with one child
- Playing within a small group
- Practising taking turns and sharing
- Making choices about who they want to play with
- Exploring emotions and ways to manage conflict
- Learning about other people and about relationships
- Exploring stories about friendships

How to involve parents

- Books/ made by children which can be taken home featuring friends
- Encourage families to share whether their child has opportunities to play with other children outside nursery
- Facilitate events when parents and children can mix fostering friendships between children and adults for mutual support. For example community day, stay and play sessions for particular groups

By 3 years old

- Make themselves understood and can become frustrated when they cannot.
- Start to say how they are feeling, using words as well as actions.
- Use a wider range of vocabulary
- Start to develop conversation, often jumping from topic to topic.
- Express preferences and decisions. They also try new things and start establishing their autonomy.
- Engage with others through gestures, gaze and talk.
- Begin to show effortful control (resisting snatching a toy for example)
- Be increasingly able to talk about and manage their emotions
- Develop friendships with other children

And By 4 years old

- Start a conversation with an adult or a friend and continue it for many turns
- Use talk to organise themselves (and others in play)
- Be able to express a point of view and to debate when they disagree with a friend or an adult
- Develop their communication
- Develop their pronunciation
- Find solutions to conflicts and rivalries
- Develop appropriate ways to be assertive
- Talk with others to resolve conflicts
- Understand gradually how others might be feeling

- Grow in independence, rejecting help ("me do it").
- Have favourite books and seek them out, to share with an adult, with another child, or to look at alone
- Develop play around favourite stories using props
- Notice differences between people

- Play with one or more other children, extending and elaborating play ideas.
- Talk about their feelings using words like 'happy' 'sad' 'angry' or 'worried'
- Start taking part in some group activities which they make up themselves or in teams
- Develop play around favourite stories using props
- Continue developing positive attitudes about the differences between people`
- Take part in simple pretend play

Make a Friend; How to include all children

- Adult led/ facilitated Social games, chasing games, stories and circle games
- Plan environment to offer opportunities for collaboration; two rider bikes/ shared equipment, ask children to help each other rather than an adult helping, monitor and foster social relationships between all children
- Cooking activities and other small group activities
- Close communication between SEN staff and Key workers
- Talk to children about how to be a good friend, use stories and real examples



Key Curriculum experience: **Educational Visits**

What will the children be doing?

- Road safety and walking safely
- Physical stamina in walking a distance
- Experience of a broad range of venue - galleries, museums, parks, shops, market, restaurant, farm/ zoo, church/ mosque, theatre and music- use a range of transport. Including short trips and more formal visits.
- Join the forest school programme
- Following instructions and rules, remembering rules - new and old
- Learning new vocabulary/revisit vocabulary
- Cultural capital- London landmarks
- Awareness of local environment
- Children help plan the trip- problem solving, use maths and literacy skills, maps, websites
- Making books, art, models, role plays and displays quickly to follow up
- Learning about the visual arts from all around the world (museum and gallery trips)
- Beginning to get a sense of the past (museums)

How to involve parents:

- Inviting into school to plan and share follow up
- Helping us to go on visits- parent accompanying and leading
- Show us places to go
- Going on trips to the shop to buy ingredients with families- families helping to cook
- Parental donation £ and support? - contact galleries etc...
- Parents to gather information on up and coming trips
- Share Educational Visits Policy procedures.

By 3 years old

- Listen and respond to a simple instruction
- Use a wider range of vocabulary
- Understand why questions
- Engage with others through gesture, gaze and talk
- Feel confident when taken out around the local neighbourhood and enjoy exploring new places with their key person.

And By 4 years old

- Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important
- Use a wider range of vocabulary
- Increasingly follow rules understanding why rules are important
- Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk run jump and climb and start to use the stairs independently • Notice some print such as the first letter of their name, a bus, door number or a familiar logo • Count in everyday contexts • Explore and respond to different natural phenomena in their setting and on trips • Talk about what they see using a wide vocabulary • Explore collections of materials with similar or different properties • • Make simple models which express their ideas • Explore different materials using all their senses to investigate them | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember rules without needing an adult to remind them • Understand key concepts about print • Use some print and letter knowledge in early writing • Discuss routes and locations • Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to five • Begin to describe a sequence of events using words such as 'first' 'then' • Talk about and identify the patterns around them. • Show interest in different occupations • Explore how things work • Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment • Draw with increasing complexity and detail • Join different materials and explore different textures • Explore colour and colour mixing |
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Educational Visits; How to include all children

- Ensure generous adult support with parents and volunteers
- Adapt content of visits to ensure all children can participate
- Use visual supports & alternative communication system
- Plan for medical and mobility needs in advance- plan if children need to return early
- Consult families with experience of what helps their child to help plan



Key Curriculum experience: **Gardening**

What will the children be doing?

- Using tools to dig, plant, water, weed and harvest
- Planting seeds, bulbs and vegetables, caring for plants and harvesting any produce
- Developing fine/gross motor skills
- Learning new vocabulary
- Learning about growth/decay and life cycles
- Learning about mini-beasts/ insects and the life cycle of some animals
- Observing the natural environment and learning to care for it
- Drawing, painting and making models related to growing and produce
- Learning songs and rhymes related to growing things
- Reading stories and looking at non-fiction books
- Cooking with produce
- comparing seeds, measuring heights of plants, weighing produce, counting out seeds
- Learning about Healthy eating
- Learn about seasons
- Use literacy for a purpose ie write labels or their name on a seed pot

How to involve parents:

- Inviting parents in to participate and share produce
- Sending seeds and plants home
- Informing parents about our related activities
- Cooking with families using produce
- Donations- seeds and sets

Information on cultural variations

By 3 years old	By 4 years old
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand why questions • Understand simple instructions like "give to nanny" or "stop". • Identify familiar objects and properties for practitioners when they are described • Identify familiar objects and properties for practitioners when they are described • Engage with others through gestures, gaze and talk. • Begin to show 'effortful control'. For example, waiting for a turn and resisting the strong impulse to grab what they want or push their way to the front. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new vocabulary • Pay attention to more than one thing at a time, which can be difficult. • Engage in non-fiction books • Use longer sentences of four to six words. • Start a conversation with an adult or a friend and continue it for many turns. • Understand 'why' questions, like: "Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?" • Select and use activities and resources, with help when

- Explore and respond to different natural phenomena.
- Use all their senses in hands on exploration of natural materials
- Talk about what they see using a wide vocabulary.
- Explore different materials and tools
- Develop manipulation and control
- Use large and small motor skills to do things independently
- Compare amounts saying: - lots/more/same
- Compare sizes, weights, heights
- Notice patterns
- Make marks to stand for their name
- Manipulate and play with different materials.



- needed. This helps them to achieve a goal they have chosen, or one which is suggested to them.
- Choose the right resources to carry out their own plan.
- Use one handed tools and equipment.
- Use some of their print and letter knowledge in early writing.
- Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to five
- Make comparisons between objects relating to size length weight capacity.
- Plant seeds and care for growing plants.
- Talk about what they see using a wide vocabulary.
- Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plants and animals
- Begin to understand the need to respect and care for natural environment and all living things.
- Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice
- Create closed shapes with continuous lines and begin to use these shapes to represent objects.

Gardening; How to include all children

- Repeat activity so children have lots of chances to reinforce learning
- Allow some children to participate for short periods (at first)
- Consider individual children's daily routine and appropriate times
- Use Visual cues and objects to aid communication
- Introductory exploration, allow children time to play freely with materials/ tools and natural materials when appropriate
- Adapt tools if needed and have a range available
- Involve parents, send seeds and other materials home and invite families in to participate

Key Curriculum experience: **Learning to Ride a Bike**

What will the children be doing?

- Gradually developing their motor skills to be able to confidently and safely ride a balance bike and also a pedal bike
- Developing the skills to be able to do a wide range of gross motor activities including; running, jumping climbing, hanging, trampolining and balancing as well as building with large blocks.
- Learning to operate a range of wheeled toys including trikes, 4, 3 and 2 wheeled scooters, wheelbarrows, buggies, trolleys and 2 person trikes.
- Creating and negotiating obstacle courses for children and for bikes
- Helping to put away large items (planks, bikes) as appropriate
- Pretend play with bikes and blocks including washing bikes, garages, delivery bikes (Deliveroo!) and building a wide range of constructions with blocks.
- Using mathematical and literacy skills in role play- e.g. numbered parking spaces, tickets, writing down your name for a turn
- Playing and riding around with other children.
- Playing with balls, beanbags and bats. Sweeping up and digging to develop body strength and co- ordination.
- Learning to select from a range of tools to choose the right one for the job
- Bike maintenance with adult support.
- Practice taking turns with others.

How to involve parents:

- Scoot and ride to school/work- walk or scoot to school weeks
- Pimp your ride! (dress up your scooter/ bike) competition
- Encourage and support families to access local play spaces
- Offer this play at stay and play groups whenever possible

By 3 years old

- Listen and respond to a simple instruction.
- Make themselves understood and can become frustrated when they cannot.
- Understand and act on longer sentences like 'make teddy jump' or 'find your coat'.
- Understand simple questions about 'who', 'what' and 'where'.

By 4 years old

- Understand a question or instruction that has two parts, such as: "Get your coat and wait at the door".
- Use talk to organise themselves and their play: "Let's go on a bus... you sit there... I'll be the driver."
- Develop appropriate ways to be assertive
- Take turns with others

- Develop friendships with other children
- Enjoy starting to kick throw and catch balls
- Build independently with a range of appropriate resources
- Walk run jump and climb and start to use stairs independently
- Spin, roll (and independently use ropes and swings)
- Sit on a push along wheeled toy, use a scooter or ride a tricycle
- Peddle a tricycle - checkpoint
- Build with a range of resources
- Explore natural materials, indoors and outside.
- Respond emotionally and physically to music when it changes.
- Start to develop pretend play, pretending that one object represents another.



- Develop healthy choices about activity
- Continue to develop their movement, balancing, riding and ball skills
- Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks.
- Skip hop and stand on one leg or hold a pose for a game
- Go up steps or stairs or climb up apparatus using alternate feet
- Start taking part in some group activities which they make up themselves or are in teams
- Choose the right resources to carry out their own plan
- collaborate with others to manage large items
- Understand position through words alone - for example, "The bag is under the table," - with no pointing.
- Write some or all of their name
- Say one number for each item in order
- Talk about and explore 2D and 3 D shapes
- Select shapes appropriately
- Understand position through words alone
- Discuss routes and locations using words like ' in front of' 'behind'
- Use all their senses in hands-on exploration of natural materials.
- Explore and talk about different forces they can feel.
- Engage in simple pretend play
- 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.

How to include all children

- Avoid gender stereotyping and expectations with active play and bikes
- Support turn taking so less assertive children or children with less clear communication are included
- Offer a range of wheeled toys to allow children at different development levels to join in
- Offer Double bikes as often as possible - to allow social experience and to help with taking turns
- Some children need encouragement and support to try bikes (work with parents)
- Show children how to scoot
- Look out for children who are overweight
- Make sure wheeled toys are at the right level of challenge for all children
- Use PECS and other communication support
- Encourage **ALL** parents to stop using a buggy



Key Curriculum experience: **Cooking**

What will the children be doing?

- Mixing, spreading, cutting, stirring, grating, spooning, pouring
- Measuring
- Take part in 'taste club' learning about fruit and vegetables
- Counting- amounts and sharing out
- Noticing change in materials
- Sharing/turn taking
- Independently using their own bowls and spoons to measure and mix
- Talk about what they are doing/ have done (use photos afterwards)
- Talking about caring for teeth and healthy food
- Reading recipes, writing shopping lists, writing recipes including numerals
- Follow instructions, take turns
- Growing herbs, salad, potatoes, sprouting pulses (to make dips etc.)
- Repeating recipes to aid deeper learning and adapting recipes

How to involve parents:

- Workshops, displays, cooking activities shared in children's profile books with food going home sometimes
- Helping us to cook, we help them to cook, sharing recipes
- Helping ensure diversity in the range of food we cook
- Part of healthy eating discussions
- Going on trips to the shop to buy ingredients
- Reading recipes with their children
- Extending cooking at home- sending produce and recipes home
- Parental donations including ingredients

By 3 years old

- Understand simple questions
- Understand simple instructions
- Understand and act on longer sentences
- Grow in independence, rejecting help
- Begin to show effortful control - e.g. waiting for a turn and resisting the strong urge to grab
- Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and tooth brushing
- Use large and small motor skills to do things independently
- Start eating independently
- Explore different materials and tools
- Notice some print

By 4 years old

- Use a wider range of vocabulary
- Use longer sentences of 4-6 words
- Use talk to organise themselves
- Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and tooth brushing
- Use large and small motor skills to do things independently
- Use one handed tools and equipment
- Use some of their print and letter knowledge in early writing
- Understand the five key concepts of print
- Make comparisons between objects relating to size length, weight and capacity

- Compare sizes, weights etc. using gesture and language
- Explore materials with different properties

- Say one number for each item in order up to five
- Know the cardinal principle
- Recite numbers past five
- Link numerals and amounts
- Begin to describe a sequence of events using words such as 'first then'
- Talk about differences between materials and changes they notice

How to include all children

- Repeat activity to support a feeling of mastery
- Use back chaining to help children participate and master practical skills
- Hand over hand support when needed - cutting fruit, modified utensils
- Shorter participation and revisiting during the session
- Use clear short sentences, simple instructions, one step at a time
- Use Visual cues/physical objects
- Include their interest
- Involve SEND support staff (or SEND support staff lead the cooking activity)



Key Curriculum experience: **Loving Books, Reading and Writing**

What will the children be doing?

- Singing, saying and listening to rhymes and songs
- Taking part in small group song, rhyme and story sessions including conversation and discussions about a wide range of topics
- Mark making with a wide range of materials and in a wide range of contexts
- Making marks on a large as well as smaller scale, indoors and outdoors
- Using large and finer motor skills (sweeping, mopping, playdough, whisks, pipettes etc.)
- Listening to stories and poems (and sharing stories interactively with or without a book) on a range of themes and topics
- retelling stories and discussing stories,
- Predicting endings and alternative endings in stories
- Using familiar vocabulary and learning new vocabulary
- Joining in with repeated refrains in books
- Sharing books including nonfiction with children and adults
- acting out stories using a range of props and in different ways, watching others act them
- make books about many events/ experiences and record own stories and ideas in a range of other ways
- make labels, lists, captions, tickets, maps, recipes and always writing your name on things you make
- Recognise familiar logos and signs, recognise familiar letters, recognise your own name and begin to recognise how your friends names (using name cards etc.)
- Writing your name to make sure you get a turn at an activity (like riding a bike)
- Developing phonological awareness

How to involve parents:

- Workshops, parent meetings, leaflets about early literacy and how to help
- Inviting into school to participate in literacy based activities including sharing stories
- Ensure diversity in books and literature we share with children and families
- Home library
- Inform each other about current favourite books of children, discuss regularly
- Encourage children to share favourite books from home with school

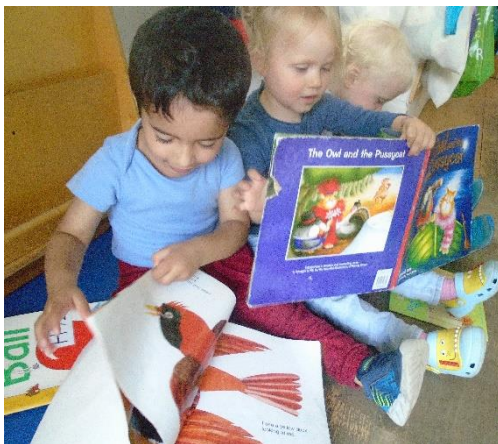
By 3 years old	By 4 years old
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to simple stories and understand what is happening with help of pictures • Use gestures like waving or pointing to communicate • Start to say how they are feeling using words as well as actions • Understand simple questions • Understand longer sentences • Notice and ask questions about differences (skin, hair, gender, SEND, religion etc.) • Safely explore emotions beyond their normal range through play and stories. • Clap and stamp to music • Develop manipulation and control • Explore different materials and tools • Join in with songs and rhymes, copying sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempo • Say some of the words in songs and rhymes • Copy finger movements and other gestures • Enjoy sharing books with an adult • Pay attention and respond to the pictures or the words. • Have favourite books and seek them out, to share with an adult, with another child, or to look at alone. • Repeat words and phrases from familiar stories. Ask questions about the book. Make comments and shares their own ideas. • Develop play around favourite stories using props • Notice some print, such as the first letter of their name, a bus or door number, or a familiar logo. • Enjoy drawing freely. • Add some marks to their drawings which they give meaning to • Make marks on their picture to stand for their name. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy listening to longer stories and understand much of what happens • Use a wider range of vocabulary • Understand why questions • Sing a large repertoire of songs • Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books be able to tell a long story • Use longer sentences of four to six words • Be able to express a point of view and be able to debate with an adult or friend • Notice and ask questions about differences (skin, hair, gender, SEND, religion etc.) • Develop a sense of responsibility and membership of a community • Talk about their feelings • Understand gradually how others might be feeling • Use one handed tools and equipment • Use comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils • Show a preference for a dominant hand • Understand the five key concepts about print (meaning, purpose, left to right, different parts of a book, page sequencing) • Develop their phonological awareness, (so that they can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spot and suggest rhymes • count or clap syllables in a word • recognise words with the same initial sound • Begin to engage in extended conversations about stories and learn new vocabulary • Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing • Write some or all of their name • Write some letters accurately • Show finger numbers up to five

- Take part in finger rhymes with numbers
- Count in everyday contexts
- Make connections between the features of their family and other families.
- Enjoy and take part in action songs
- Express ideas and feelings through making marks, and sometimes give a meaning to the marks they make.

- Begin to describe a sequence of events real or fictional
- Continue developing positive attitudes about the differences between people
- Begin to develop complex stories using small world equipment like animal sets, dolls and dolls houses, etc.
- Remember and sing entire songs
- Draw with increasing complexity and detail

How to include all children

- Offer adapted ways to present books and rhymes such as 'special time' including sharing books and rhymes
- Offer sound and light up books for children who enjoy these
- Mark make with a range of materials including salt, sand, water and on different scales
- Offer mark making as part of workstation if appropriate or special time and bucket time
 - Include children's particular interests e.g. Peppa Pig, Sharks or Maps



Key Curriculum experience:

Being Independent

What will the children be doing?

- Learning to serve themselves food and drink independently and sensibly
- Showing increasing desire to be independent including wanting to feed and dress themselves
- Learning to wash their hands, put on and take off their outdoor and other clothes
- Increasingly taking part in routines at nursery such as laying the table and tidying up
- Learn to use the toilet independently
- Choosing activities independently
- Increasingly make choices about how they want to do things, choosing tools and materials, for example deciding what materials they need to build a den or make a model
- Solve problems themselves and offer solutions
- Help to plan activities by making suggestions about what is needed in advance, for example for a picnic or trip to the park
- Expressing their needs and wants verbally and in other ways
- Being supported to increasingly understand, manage and express their feelings to support the development of self-regulation
- Be encouraged to develop independent ideas and viewpoints and be able to discuss these with others, understanding people have different views
- Making requests verbally, with gesture and alternative communication systems
- Actively exploring materials and making decisions about what to use for different tasks

How to involve parents:

- Ongoing conversations with parents about children's developing skills outside nursery
- Encourage parents to encourage children to walk or scoot to school and to progress from dummies when children are using them
- Help parents to collaborate in planning goals/ next steps for children
- Regularly invite in the school to see first hand
- Offer parenting workshops on particular topics
- Outside professional support when appropriate
- Invite parents to see lunch and to try our food
- Share videos of children's successes (i.e. transitional objects, lunch, using PECS)

By 3 years old

- Start to say how they are feeling using words as well as actions

By 4 years old

- Understand a question or instruction that has two parts
- Be able to express a point of view and debate when they disagree

- Identify familiar objects and properties (e.g. my coat, Charles' shoes)
- Understand and act on longer sentences (e.g. please get your coat and hat)
- Understand simple questions (e.g. what would you like to eat?)
- Find ways to calm themselves
- Express preferences and decisions
- Find ways to manage transitions
- Play with increasing confidence on their own and with other children because they know their Key person is nearby
- Feel confident when taken out around the local neighbourhood and enjoy exploring
- Feel strong enough to express a range of emotions
- Grow in independence rejecting help
- Begin to show 'effortful control' for example waiting for a turn
- Be increasingly able to talk about and manage their emotions
- Learn to use the toilet with help and then independently
- Walk, run, jump and climb and start to use the stairs independently
- Use large and small motor skills to do things independently, for example manage buttons and zips, and pour drinks.
- Show an increasing desire to be independent, such as wanting to feed themselves and dress or undress.
- Start eating independently and learning how to use a knife and fork
- Have favourite books and seek them out, to share with an adult, with another child, or to look at alone

with an adult or friend using words as well as actions

- Use talk to organise themselves
- Select and use activities and resources, with help when needed. This helps them to achieve a goal they have chosen or one that is suggested for them
- Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community
- Show more confidence in new social situations
- Find solutions to conflicts and rivalries
- Develop appropriate ways to be assertive
- Talk with others to solve conflicts
- Be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs
- Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and tooth brushing
- Go up steps and stairs, or climb up apparatus, using alternate feet.
- Be increasingly independent as they get dressed and undressed, for example, putting coats on and doing up zips
- Choose the right resources to carry out their own plan.
- Ask questions about the book. Make comments and shares their own ideas
- Write some or all of their name
- Explore how things work
- Develop their own ideas and then decide which materials to use to express them.

- Ask questions about the book. Make comments and shares their own ideas
- Make marks on their picture to stand for their name
- Explore natural materials, indoors and outside.
- Explore different materials, using all their senses to investigate them. Manipulate and play with different materials

How to include all children

- Offer Workstation when appropriate to support independent working
- Use communication systems such as PECS to help children make independent requests
- Offer adapted cutlery and visual menus with the option to use PECS to request to support independence at meal times
- Support families with toilet training - use the five step process and visual supports at home and at nursery
- Use back chaining (and forward chaining) to help children be more independent in dressing and other self-care tasks
- Use motivators to help children manage the anxiety around using the toilet, mealtimes and transitions
- Use transition objects to help children manage transitions more independently
- Share progress with families with video and photographs



Key Curriculum experience: **Design and Pattern- Making (including Woodwork)**

What will the children be doing?

- Making patterns both mathematical and decorative with a variety of materials for example; drawing, printing and painting, making marks in clay or arranging natural materials, blocks, beads in patterns
- Looking at decoration and pattern in the environment e.g. on clothes, utensils, as part of art work, in nature
- Visiting places with interesting objects (galleries, museums etc.) and meeting artists/ craftspeople invited into the nursery
- Using Construction kits, play dough, woodwork, clay, blocks etc. to make 3 D structures
- Developing awareness of shape, pattern, size
- Developing new vocabulary to name tools, describe shape, pattern and texture
- Using paint and other materials to decorate models and structures
- Learning how to join materials including collage, clay, recycled materials, wood using glue, tape, string, scissors, fasteners
- Problem solving as they paint and construct and evaluate and adapt their design
- Using a range of tools - their purpose (hammers, saws, glue-gun, scissors, hands, rolling pins...)
- Exploring materials to discover their various properties e.g. clay is different to dough
- Learning about safety with tools
- Develop hand/eye co-ordination
- Developing fine/gross motor skills
- Planning and using imagination creatively to achieve the effect they want
- Making models and useful objects like insect hotels, bird tables, feeder
- Writing/ dictating captions to tell people about their work, writing their name on

How to involve parents:

- Invite them in to join in and share any skills or artefacts they have
- Send models home with information
- Send 'homework' home with a 3D model task
- Take families on visits to sculpture and other visual arts at galleries/ museums and encourage them to visit at other times
- Ask them to help us or to join/ teach a workshop
- Display models for parents to see
- Ask parents to help us source materials including wood, recycled materials

By 3 years old

- Listen and respond to a simple instruction
- Start to develop conversation

By 4 years old

- Use a wider range of vocabulary
- Understand why questions

- Grow in independence rejecting help
- Build independently with a range of appropriate resources
- Use large and small motor skills to do things independently
- Enjoy drawing freely
- Build with a range of resources
- Combine objects like stacking blocks and cups. Put objects inside others and take them out again.
- Notice patterns and arrange things in patterns
- Explore materials with different properties (WW)
- Start to make marks intentionally. Explore paint, using fingers and other parts of their bodies as well as brushes and other tools.
- Explore different materials, using all their senses to investigate them.
- Manipulate and play with different materials. Use their imagination as they consider what they can do with different materials.
- Make simple models which express their ideas.



- Use talk to organise themselves and their play
- 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.
- Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example
- Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. Show a preference for a dominant hand.
- Develop understanding of key concepts about print
- Talk about and explore 2D and 3D shapes (for example, circles, rectangles, triangles and cuboids) using informal and mathematical language: 'sides',
- Select shapes appropriately: flat surfaces for building, a triangular prism for a roof, etc. Combine shapes to make new ones - an arch, 'corners', 'straight', 'flat', 'round'.
- Talk about and identify the patterns around them.
- Extend and create ABAB patterns
- Notice and correct an error in a repeating pattern
- Explore and talk about different forces they feel
- Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice.
- 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
- Explore colour and colour mixing.

How to include all children

- Offer mark making and model making with a very wide range of resources and on a large as well as small scale
- Demonstrate what can be done with materials like blocks, collage, clay
- Use 'hand over hand' teaching where appropriate
- Use visual supports when needed
- Include mark making and cutting/ building tasks in work station
- Encourage parents to repeat experiences at home



Key Curriculum experience: **Role-Play and Pretend Play (including drama/ music performance)**

What will the children be doing?

- Acting out own experiences - e.g. home corner - shop role play
- Taking on a role - e.g. superhero play - babies and dolls
- Using stories/characters from TV as basis to pretend and invent narratives
- Collaborating with other children (and adults) - building shared narrative
- Den building
- Small world play- creating imaginative play with small figures
- Make puppets and doing puppet shows
- Dressing up and pretending or acting out a story
- Learn songs and actions to participate in a performance
- Watching adults and other children acting out stories and make music
- Performing stories including learning a range of songs
- Using instruments with songs to tell stories
- Listening to a wide range of types of music and sometimes responding with mark making or moving
- Join adult led and facilitated music sessions including using instruments, singing and rhymes and inventing songs and rhymes.
- Freely exploring instruments and singing songs as part of their play throughout the day.

How to involve parents:

- Invite to take part - be audience - e.g. Nativity, familiar and traditional stories
- Ask parents to share children's experiences and interests from home with us to be able to offer within setting and vice a versa
- Contribute artefacts & resources - e.g. for home corner/music
- Offer feedback - praise - photos to extend child's talk beyond Nursery surrounding their day's experience
- Stay and play

Ask parents to bring in props

By 3 years old	By 4 years old
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy singing, music and toys that make sounds • Copy what adults do, taking turns in conversation and activities. • Develop pretend play: 'putting the baby to sleep' or 'driving the car to the shops'. • Start to develop conversation • Develop friendships with other children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy singing a large repertoire of songs • Using a wider range of vocabulary • Use take to organise themselves and their play • Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books, and be able to tell a long story.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely explore emotions beyond their normal range through play and stories. • Clap and stamp to music • Fit themselves into spaces, like tunnels, dens and large boxes, and move around in them. • Enjoy songs and rhymes, tuning in and paying attention. Join in with songs and rhymes, copying sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempo. • Say some of the words in songs and rhymes. Copy finger movements and other gestures. • Sing songs and say rhymes independently, for example, singing whilst playing. • Take part in finger rhymes with numbers. • Explore natural materials, indoors and outside. • Show attention to sounds and music. Respond emotionally and physically to music when it changes. Move and dance to music. Anticipate phrases and actions in rhymes and songs, like 'Peepo'. Explore their voices and enjoy making sounds. • Join in with songs and rhymes, making some sounds. Make rhythmical and repetitive sounds. Explore a range of sound makers and instruments and play them in different ways. • Start to develop pretend play, pretending that one object represents another. • Use their imagination as they consider what they can do with different materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with 1 or more other children, extending and collaborating 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 • Become more outgoing with unfamiliar people, in the safe context of their setting. • Start taking part in some group activities which they make up for themselves, or in teams • Increasingly be able to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm • Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spot and suggest rhymes • count or clap syllables in a word • Take part in finger rhymes with numbers (continued) • Show interest in different occupations. • 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. • Listen with increased attention to sounds. Respond to what they have heard, expressing their thoughts and feelings. • Use drawing to represent ideas like movement or loud noises. • Remember and sing entire songs. Sing the pitch of a tone sung by another person ('pitch match'). |
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- 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.

How to include all children

- Support children to attend music sessions and go in and out or attend for shorter periods if appropriate
- Offer lots of practice with instruments and songs away from performance or group sessions
- Use visual objects or pictures, for example to indicate a particular song or rhyme
- Include music in special time
- Model pretend play, adding a step to help children expand their range of actions in play
- Include the child's special interests (characters etc)
- Use multi- sensory sound toys that may also have texture or lights
- Offer music led sessions in the sensory room
- Ensure a broad range of dressing up clothes to reflect the whole community and to avoid gender stereotypes



Key Curriculum experience - Celebrating Diversity (through festivals and events)

What will the children be doing?

- Celebrating and learning about a range of important events based on seasonal change and cultural/ religious festivals including: Christmas, Mother's and Father's Day, Eid al Fitr, Diwali, Hanukkah, Chinese New Year, Black History Month, Pride, World Book Day Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer.
- Joining discussions and listening to stories linked to key events
- Celebrating an annual Community Day
- Talking about their family and people who are important to them via Key groups and other discussions, using their Special Place Family information sheets, (including countries of origin, family members)
- Looking closely at fabric, art works, decorated artefacts and decorations
- Making decorations, cards and signs/ captions
- Making and looking at visual art works, dressing up, singing songs and rhymes, listening to and moving to music, cooking linked to special events, planning and participating in parties linked to festivals and celebrations
- Participating in activities designed to promote inclusion with differing needs, for example using PECS (picture exchange cards) with friends at snack time
- Encourage all children to develop a sense of belonging and pride in their cultural heritage.

How to involve parents

- At home visit/ new starter meeting gather family information and invite parents to contribute throughout the year depending on their preference.
- Contribute information for their child's Key group family poster.
- Share information about important cultural or religious events for their family and how they are marked.
- come into nursery to share directly with children and staff aspects of events that are important to their family (activities, cooking, art or music for example)
- Help plan and run events
- Participate in events and celebrations
- Seek parents views on how events should be marked and celebrated
- Respond to communications via parent hub about up and coming events and festivals
- Support their child to contribute

By 3 years old

- start to develop conversation often jumping from topic to topic
- listen to simple stories
- feel strong enough to express a range of emotions
- Notice and ask questions about differences, such as skin colour,

By 4 years old

- Sing a repertoire of songs
- Using a wider range of vocabulary
- be able to express a point of view and be able to debate when they disagree
- Notice and ask questions about differences, such as skin colour,

types of hair, gender, special needs and disabilities, religion and so on.

- Clap and stamp to music.
- Sing songs and say rhymes independently, for example, singing whilst playing.
- Add some marks to their drawings, which they give meaning to. For example: "That says mummy." Make marks on their picture to stand for their name
- Make connections between the features of their family and other families.
- Notice differences and similarities between people.
- Respond emotionally and physically to music when it changes. Move and dance to music.
- Join in with songs and rhymes, making some sounds. Make rhythmical and repetitive sounds. Explore a range of sound makers and instruments and play them in different ways.
- Enjoy and take part in action songs, such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'.
- Explore different materials, using all their senses to investigate them. Manipulate and play with different materials.

types of hair, gender, special needs and disabilities, religion and so on.

- Develop their sense of responsibility and membership of a community.
- Understand the five key concepts about print
- Talk about and identify the patterns around them. For example: stripes on clothes, designs on rugs and wallpaper. Use informal language like 'pointy', 'spotty', 'blobs', etc.
- Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary
- Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history.
- 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.
- 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.
- Show different emotions in their drawings - happiness, sadness, fear, etc.
- Remember and sing entire songs
- Play instruments with increasing control to express their feelings and ideas.

How to include all children

- Liaise closely with families to ensure important events at home are acknowledged/ celebrated at nursery
- Support children with challenges to shared attention to join activities briefly
- Ensure celebrations include rich sensory experiences
- Allow children to revisit favourite pieces of music or particular objects as often as they want to

- Share activities with families so they can continue activities at home
- Offer quiet spaces at big events (such as community day) so children can withdraw if overwhelmed
- Encourage families to participate in events and festivals to help support their child to participate
- Ask staff members with community languages other than English to discuss festivals and events with families to support participation
- Include seasonal and cultural activities in small group 'special time' 'bucket time' and 'story time'



Key:

Key areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- **Communication and language.**
- **Personal, social and emotional development.**
- **Physical development.**
- **Literacy.**
- **Mathematics.**
- **Understanding the world.**
- **Expressive arts and design**