



St Michael's
C.E. Primary School

EYFS Continuous Provision: Resource Progression



"Courage to Flourish in the Love of God"

Purpose

This document outlines how resources within continuous provision areas are intentionally selected and developed from Nursery to Reception. It demonstrates clear progression in challenge, knowledge, vocabulary and independence across indoor and outdoor learning environments.

It is explicitly aligned with Strong Foundations in the Early Years, showing how high-quality interactions, well-chosen resources and coherent progression ensure children are prepared for future learning.

Rationale

In our early years curriculum, continuous provision provides the solid foundation for all learning and teaching. It underpins and gives context to all other experiences children encounter in the early years. A well-planned and carefully organised indoor and outdoor environment supports children's developmental needs, schemas, independence and curiosity, enabling them to explore, practise and apply learning independently.

This document focuses specifically on continuous provision because it is the element of the curriculum that children access most frequently and independently. It is therefore where strong foundations including communication and language, early mathematics, physical development, self-regulation and learning behaviours are most securely formed. Children are explicitly taught how to use the provision, which is designed to meet the specific needs of each cohort. Once established, the provision enables learning to be sustained and moved forward even in the absence of an adult, through carefully chosen resources and clear expectations. Continuous provision enables children to independently revisit, rehearse and apply learning over time, supporting deep understanding, increasing confidence and developing independence as learners.

This document demonstrates how resources within continuous provision are progressive from Nursery to Reception. Most resources are not repeated without purpose; instead, they are deliberately refined, extended and made more complex as children's knowledge, skills and independence develop. This progression ensures that children deepen understanding, encounter increasing challenge and are consistently prepared for the next stage of learning, rather than experiencing unnecessary repetition or premature acceleration.

While this document focuses on continuous provision, it sits alongside our use of enhanced provision, which is layered on top of the continuous provision to complement and extend learning. Enhancements are planned in response to observation and assessment and are used to enrich learning for a fixed period of time. They do not replace continuous provision but add depth and further opportunities for children to revisit learning, address gaps, deepen understanding and extend ideas. This document provides clarity on the stable, progressive foundation upon which enhancements are built.

Assessment takes place continuously through observation of children's independent application within provision. Observations are used to inform interactions, enhancements and next steps, ensuring learning remains responsive, ambitious and closely matched to children's developmental needs.

This document also supports staff development and consistency. By clearly setting out expectations for progression within continuous provision, it enables practitioners to understand not just what resources are available, but why they are there, how they support learning, and how they should be used to move learning forward.

High Quality Interactions

High-quality adult interactions are central to the effectiveness of continuous provision. In daily practise, all staff draw on evidence-informed approaches to ensure interactions consistently move learning forward.

Adults use Little Wandle interaction techniques to:

- Model clear, accurate language and sentence structures
- Recast and extend children's spoken language
- Encourage children to explain their thinking
- Support early literacy and phonological awareness within play

These shared approaches ensure that interactions are intentional, consistent and effective across Nursery and Reception, regardless of which adult is present.

Transition, Coherence and Building Strong Foundations

Provision in Reception builds directly on Nursery experiences to ensure no break in learning. Key resources, routines and expectations are intentionally repeated, refined and extended so children deepen understanding rather than encounter unnecessary novelty.

This coherence ensures children leave Reception with strong foundations in communication, self-regulation, early literacy, early mathematics and learning behaviours, preparing them effectively to further secure these in Year 1.

What Secure Foundations Look Like

Children:

- Sustain engagement within provision for increasing periods of time.
- Apply taught vocabulary independently within play.
- Revisit, practise and build on previous learning.
- Solve problems, test ideas and adapt thinking.
- Use resources purposefully and creatively.
- Demonstrate increasing independence, resilience and confidence.
- Communicate ideas clearly with adults and peers.

- Apply learning independently across different areas of provision.

Continuous Provision Areas

Construction

Intent:

- To develop children’s spatial awareness, problem-solving, mathematical thinking, language and collaboration through carefully planned construction experiences that build strong foundations for reasoning, design and early engineering.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Mathematics – shape, space, measure, number
- Communication and language – explaining, negotiating, reasoning
- Physical development – control, strength, coordination
- Personal, social and emotional development – perseverance, teamwork, negotiation

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Large wooden blocks, large rectangular and cylindrical shapes, stacking bricks, large vehicles, flat baseboards, mats, mobilo	Blocks of varied shapes and sizes, interlocking construction resources, ramps, tubes, rods, wheels, axles, tools, smaller construction kits, design prompts, stimuli photographs
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores how blocks fit together through trial and error. • Begins to understand size, balance and cause and effect. • Builds vertically and horizontally • Experiences success through simple stacking and knocking down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands how shape, size and position affect stability. • Plans structures before building • Adapts designs when problems occur. • Builds with a specific purpose or function in mind.
Vocabulary Progression	Big, small, tall, heavy, fall, up, down	Balance, stable, unstable, structure, design, stronger, wider, heavier, lighter
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale resources support access for all children • Visual prompts and photographs support understanding • Opportunities for collaborative building reduce barriers • Resources can be adapted or simplified to meet individual needs 	

Domestic Role Play

Intent:

- To develop children’s communication and language skills through rich roleplay experiences, encouraging them to talk about their families and make connections to

people and communities. Role play provides meaningful opportunities for children to rehearse, revisit and make sense of real-life events.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Communication and language – developing vocabulary, storytelling, turn taking, questioning and expressive language through shared roleplay experiences.
- Understanding the world – talking about families, communities and real-life events, helping children make connections to their own experiences.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence to share personal stories, practising cooperation, empathy and listening within roleplay scenarios.
- Literacy – rehearsing narratives, sequencing events and using language structures that support early storytelling.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Small kitchen furniture, oven, sink, microwave, table and chairs, dressing up rail, selection of dressing up clothing, selection of plastic food, plates, cups, cutlery, cake tin	Small kitchen, dressing up hooks, table, chairs, real China spoons and forks and plates, dolls house, babies and moses basket, toaster, kettle, baking trays, muffin cases, sand timer, cutlery
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Notices what other children and adults do, mirroring what is observed, adding variations and then doing it spontaneously. • Begins to make believe by pretending using sounds, movements, words, objects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing alongside others and engage in parallel play. • Shares resources, begins to negotiate roles. • Collaborates, takes turns, and knows how to manage conflicts. • Can make believe with others by pretending. • Writes shopping lists, order pads, menus on white boards. • Uses phonics knowledge to attempt spellings to write simple shopping lists or orders from a menu. • Uses role play to recreate familiar experiences and explore new ideas and scenarios independently.
Vocabulary Progression	Family related words (e.g mum, dad, sister, brother), food related words (e.g. fruit, vegetables, cake, bread)	Table, chair, sofa, cook, stir, mix, breakfast, lunch, dinner, hot, cold, clean, bedtime, story, shopping

Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifying language and modelling • Offering choices in involvement • Role play acting out • Providing supportive roles for different comfort levels offering dressing up clothes. • Picture labels on resources
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Painting

Intent:

- To develop children’s creative skills through open ended exploration, encouraging them to be imaginative and expressive with a range of materials. The painting area provides opportunities for children to adapt, edit and refine their work, drawing inspiration from models and examples while also creating their own original pieces.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Expressive arts and design – experimenting with colour, texture and technique; developing imagination; creating with increasing independence.
- Physical development – strengthening fine motor control through mark making, brushwork and tool use.
- Communication and language – talking about their ideas, describing processes, discussing changes and reflecting on their creations.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence to express themselves, developing perseverance when improving work, and taking pride in their artistic choices.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Paints, wide brushes, thin brushes, stampers, paper, rollers	Oil paints, paper, thin brushes, stamps, art books, water colour paints
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys drawing and writing on paper. • Distinguishes between the different marks they make • Shows increasing control in holding, using and manipulating a range of mark making tools. • Creates lines and circles pivoting from the shoulder and elbow. • Manipulates a range of tools and equipment in one hand, tools include paintbrushes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chooses colours intentionally. • Begins to represent simple objects, people or scenes. • Experiments with brush strokes, mixing colours and patterns. • Paints with purpose, representing ideas clearly copied from other artists. • Creates more detailed pictures with features (faces, houses, nature).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses language to share feelings, experiences and thought. • Creates drawings to accompany stories. • Enjoys and responds to playing with colour in a variety of ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixes colours confidently to create secondary colours, tints and shades. • Uses a range of techniques (wash, stippling, thick/thin lines). • Uses a tripod grip more consistently. • Controls brush movement with more accuracy.
Vocabulary Progression	Red, blue, yellow, green, black, white, paint, brush, pot, tray, sponge, roller, fingers, dab, dip, press, mix, big, small, wet, dry, line, shape, pattern	Orange, purple, pink, light, dark, shade, tint, primary colours, blend, layer, fine brush, thick brush, stroke, outline, detail, texture, wash, splatter, bright, pale, bold, background, foreground, effect, first, next, then, because
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to paint at a lower level (e.g. low tables or floor-based painting) • Visual prompts and photographs to support understanding and independence • Opportunities for collaborative painting • Tools and resources can be adapted or simplified (e.g. chunky brushes, paper secured to tables/floor) 	

Water

Intent:

- To provide meaningful, hands-on experiences that nurture children’s early scientific thinking, mathematical understanding, language development and fine motor control. Through purposeful exploration, children grow as curious, confident learners who investigate, test ideas and solve problems both independently and alongside others.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Mathematics – exploring shape, space and measure through practical investigation.
- Communication and language – explaining thinking, negotiating ideas and reasoning with peers.
- Physical development – developing control, precision and coordination through careful handling of tools and materials.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Set of sea creatures, shells, boats in various sizes, funnels, buckets in various sizes, measuring scoops in	Mop and bucket, graded cylinders and beakers, graded jugs and funnel, water wheel, buckets of different

	various sizes, water wheel, watering can, bowls in various sizes, selection of guttering and stands, metal tubs in various sizes.	sizes and colours, kitchen utensils, some with holes, transparent tubing of different lengths and widths, basters and pipettes, measuring cups and spoons, a tea set, pebbles, shells, wood, corks, sea creatures, people and boats, stimuli photographs.
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. fast/slow, good/bad). • Understands use of objects (e.g. Which one do we cut with?). • Shows understanding of prepositions such as under, on top, behind by carrying out an action. • Shows increasing control in holding, using and manipulating a range of tools and objects such as jugs, bowls and beakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled pouring and pincer grip. • Constructing water pathways and adjusting angles to control flow. • Explore filtering and draining with purpose. • Comparing quantities, measurements and capacity. • Explore sinking and floating and predicting what will happen. • Creating stories with small world. • Becomes familiar with measuring tools in everyday experiences and play.
Vocabulary Progression	Cup, jug, bowl, tap, bucket, water, splash, pour, fill, empty	Capacity, full, empty, flow, measure, heavier, lighter, predict, test, equal/same, more/less
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear space around the water area • Visual prompts and photographs support understanding and independent use of the area • Small-group access to the water area supports children who may feel overwhelmed in busy spaces • Equipment can be adapted or simplified (e.g. easy-grip jugs, shallow containers) 	

Dough

Intent:

- To develop children's malleable skills and fine motor control through hands on exploration with dough. This area supports children in building wrist and upper body strength while experimenting with shaping, moulding and patternmaking.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Physical development – strengthening fine motor muscles, wrist rotation, hand control and upper body stability.

- Mathematics – exploring shape, pattern, size and comparison through hands on manipulation.
- Expressive arts and design – creating models, experimenting with form and developing imaginative representations.
- Communication and language – talking about their creations, describing processes and sharing ideas with others

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Assorted baking tins, silicone muffin cases, rolling pins, patterned rolling pins, patterned cutters and wheels, dough stampers, bowls, plastic cutters, craft colourful lolly sticks	Dough cutters, dough stampers with different patterns, rolling pins - plain and patterned, cookie cutters, biscuit cutters, muffin cases, cake tins, cake boards, cake decorations, numbered birthday candles, coloured lolly sticks and match sticks, buttons, measuring bowls, stimuli texts and Images.
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores dough through squeezing, patting, poking and rolling • Develops hand strength and coordination through repetitive actions • Begins to use simple tools (rollers, cutters) with support • Shows curiosity about changes in shape and texture • Engages in sensory exploration and simple imaginative play (e.g. “making cakes”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a wider range of tools with increasing control (cutting, shaping, joining) • Demonstrates improved fine motor control and hand strength to support early writing • Combines techniques (rolling, flattening, joining) to create purposeful outcomes • Plans and creates models with increasing intention • Understands how to manipulate materials to achieve a desired effect • Applies learning from adult modelling and previous experiences independently
Vocabulary Progression	Dough, soft, squishy, sticky, smooth, round, roll, squeeze, squash, pat, poke, press, pull, pinch, cut, push, roller, cutter, board, tray, shapes, flat, round	Shape, twist, pattern, texture, cutter, stamper, decorations, ingredients, recipe, measure, smooth, rough, design, decorate., bumpy, stretchy firm, mould, sculpt, join, stretch, flatten, decorate, create
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softer dough and varied textures (e.g. scented, coloured) • Non-slip mats and dough boards keep materials stable • Individual dough portions and personal tools • Tools can be adapted or simplified (e.g. chunky rollers) to meet individual needs 	

Workshop/Junk Modelling

Intent:

- To provide opportunities for children to explore junk modelling materials and develop their creative thinking through designing, building and attaching a range of items. The workshop area encourages children to use stimulus to spark ideas, experiment with different joining techniques and bring their own imaginative creations to life.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Expressive arts and design – planning, constructing, adapting and refining models using a variety of materials.
- Physical development – strengthening fine motor control through cutting, joining, twisting, fastening and manipulating tools.
- Communication and language – discussing ideas, explaining choices and problem solving collaboratively.
- Personal, social and emotional development – developing independence, perseverance and pride in their creations.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Selection of cardboard boxes, selection of plastic containers, egg boxes, bottle caps, selection of coloured paper, crayons, felt tip pens, scissors, tape, glue	Cardboard boxes (small & medium), cereal boxes, egg boxes, kitchen roll tubes, yoghurt pots, clean food trays, cartons (washed), cardboard sleeves, foil trays, lollipop sticks, clear labelled tubs, string/wool/ribbon, glue sticks, sellotape, masking tape, scissors
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores a range of materials through handling and joining • Develops hand strength and coordination through tearing, sticking and placing • Begins to use simple tools with support • Experiments with combining materials without a fixed outcome • Shows curiosity about how materials can be attached or changed • Engages in simple imaginative creations • Begins to talk about what they are making using simple vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects from a wider range of materials and tools independently • Uses tools with increasing control and precision • Chooses appropriate materials based on purpose (e.g. strong, flexible, light) • Plans and creates models with a clear intention (e.g. vehicles, structures, props) • Combines materials using different joining methods (folding, cutting, attaching) • Evaluates and adapts creations (e.g. fixing, strengthening, improving)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works alongside others, beginning to share resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains engagement and completes more complex projects over time • Uses more precise vocabulary to explain choices and processes (e.g. join, attach, fix, design) • Applies previous learning independently and builds on ideas • Collaborates with others, sharing ideas and negotiating roles
<p>Vocabulary Progression</p>	<p>Box, tube, pot, lid, bottle, paper, card, foil, scissors, glue, tape, brush, cut, stick, tear, fold, press, squeeze, join, big, small, long, short, round, flat, smooth, rough, soft, hard, make, build</p>	<p>Cardboard, fabric, plastic, string, pipe cleaner, container, cylinder, cube, glue stick, PVA glue, masking tape, hole punch, stapler, attach, decorate, design, assemble, strong, weak, flexible, stiff, shiny, dull, light, heavy, edge, corner, surface, base, opening, problem, fix, first, next, then, because</p>
<p>Inclusion and Adaptations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-cut and pre-sorted materials • A range of joining methods (tape, sticky dots, split pins, PVA with spreaders) • Visual idea cards and real-life examples support children who need help generating ideas or planning models • Tools and resources can be adapted or simplified (e.g. loop scissors) to meet individual needs 	

Maths

Intent:

- To provide opportunities where children explore early mathematical ideas through play. The maths area supports children in developing number sense, understanding of shape, space and measure, and the confidence to talk about their thinking. Through practical investigation, children build the foundations needed to compare, sort, count, estimate, recognise patterns and solve problems with increasing independence.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Mathematics – exploring number, shape, pattern and measure through hands-on resources that build early reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Physical development – strengthening fine-motor control through sorting, counting, positioning, stacking and manipulating small objects.

- Communication and language – using mathematical vocabulary, explaining thinking, comparing quantities and discussing strategies with others.
- Personal, social and emotional development – developing independence, confidence and perseverance when tackling challenges and exploring new concepts.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Assorted wooden play shapes, spools, cubes, reels, small discs with holes, small flat discs, semi spheres, small, medium and large chunky wooden rings, bowls, weaving rings, wooden mug tree, number lines to 5 and 10, number cards, whiteboards, whiteboard pens (range of colours), five sorting trays , small world counting animals/objects, assorted natural materials	Assorted animals for counting, number lines and cards 0-10 and 1-20, whiteboards and pens, mathematical signs and symbols (+, =, -), 1-20 number bean bags, assorted sand timers, magnetic numbers, tape measures, dice, number spinners, five frame, ten frame, balance scale, counters, natural materials, number spinners, small world counting objects, number formation mats
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores number and quantity through play and everyday routines. • Begins to notice differences in size, shape, and quantity. • Experiments with counting objects through trial and error. • Develops an awareness of number through sorting, matching, and grouping. • Shows curiosity about shapes and patterns in the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores number, patterns, and measure through purposeful play. • Develops understanding of number, size, and quantity through problem-solving and practical activities. • Builds confidence in recognising numbers and matching them to quantities. • Experiments with shapes, measures, and patterns in everyday contexts. • Experiences success through counting, ordering, and simple number operations. • Begins to explain mathematical thinking using familiar vocabulary such as more, less, equal, and bigger.
Vocabulary Progression	Count, number, one, two, three, big, small, tall, short, long, more, less, few, circle, square, triangle, in, on, under, next to, behind, in front, same, different, match, group, full, empty, heavy, light, fast, slow.	Count on, count back, more than, fewer than, equal, total, altogether, bigger, smaller, taller, shorter, longer, heavier, lighter, rectangle, square, triangle, circle, corner, side sphere, cube, cylinder, cone, edge, face,

		vertex, between, beside, above, below, pattern, repeat, sort.
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured maths resources (e.g. Numicon, ten frames, counting trays) support children to see and feel number concepts • Visual number supports (number lines, dot cards, part-whole models) help children make sense of quantity and relationships • Task cards with different levels of challenge (e.g. count 5 objects / make 10 / solve a simple problem) support mixed-ability access • Maths resources can be adapted or simplified (e.g. fewer counters, larger numerals, colour-coded sets) to meet individual needs 	

Mark Making and Writing

Intent:

- To develop children’s confidence, control and enjoyment in mark making and writing by providing meaningful opportunities to communicate ideas, thoughts and experiences through a range of tools, materials and purposeful experiences.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Communication and Language – developing vocabulary, speaking and listening through discussion and storytelling.
- Physical Development – developing hand strength, coordination, fine motor control and pencil grip.
- Literacy – understanding that marks and writing carry meaning and beginning to apply phonics within writing.
- Expressive Arts and Design – using drawing and mark making to express ideas, imagination and creativity.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – developing confidence, independence and sustained engagement in writing experiences.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Fine motor games and activities, chunky pencils, chunky pencil crayons, wax crayons, large white boards, white board pens, plain paper, envelopes, colouring sheets, chalk boards, envelopes, paper, post it notes, lined paper, chalk, felt tip pens, board marker pens, name cards available.	Pencils, crayons, felt-tips, pencil crayons, dry-wipe markers, gel pens, paper and card in various shapes, colours & sizes, printed papers, notebooks, envelopes, selection of joining materials (treasury tags, split pins), clipboards and dry-wipe boards, colouring pictures, sound mats, letter formation mats, writing stimuli
Progression of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores marks using a range of tools and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a range of tools with increasing control and precision

Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops hand strength and coordination through large and small movements • Experiments with lines, circles, shapes and patterns • Begins to give meaning to marks and talk about creations • Begins to hold mark-making tools with increasing control • Uses mark making within play and across different areas of provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms recognisable letters, shapes and patterns • Uses drawing and writing to communicate ideas and meaning • Applies taught letter formation with increasing accuracy • Uses writing for different purposes within play • Applies phonics knowledge to write words and simple sentences • Selects appropriate tools independently and sustains concentration during writing tasks
Vocabulary Progression	Mark, draw, write, pencil, pen, chalk, paint, line, circle, zig-zag, dot, name, picture, big, small	Write, letter, sound, word, sentence, label, caption, message, finger space, phonics, pattern, shape, describe, write, explain, detail, because
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative writing tools (e.g. thick pencils, short crayons, chunky chalk) • Paper and boards can be stabilised (taped down, clipboards, non-slip mats) to support children with poor motor control • Adapted surfaces (e.g. sloped boards, vertical whiteboards) 	

Book Corner

Intent:

- To develop a love of stories, language and early reading by providing an inviting, language rich space where children can explore books, develop listening and comprehension skills, and build the foundations for literacy. The area encourages curiosity, imagination and communication, supporting children to engage with texts independently and with others in meaningful, joyful ways.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Literacy – developing early reading behaviours through sharing books, exploring pictures, listening to stories, and engaging in simple storytelling with puppets and props.
- Communication and language – listening to familiar stories, joining in with repeated phrases, talking about pictures, and using simple vocabulary linked to books and stories.
- Physical development – developing control through handling books carefully, turning pages, and manipulating puppets and story props.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence, enjoyment and engagement as children share stories with others, take turns, and express preferences for books and characters.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Board books, paperback books, finger puppets, hand puppets, wooden story telling props	Paperback books, finger puppets, hand puppets, wooden story telling props
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows interest in books and enjoys looking at pictures independently or with an adult. Handles books appropriately, learning how to hold them the right way up and turn pages. Listens to familiar stories and rhymes with increasing attention. Begins to comment on what is happening in pictures using simple language. Talks about favourite stories, characters or events with adult support. Uses puppets, props or small world resources to explore and retell stories. Begins to sequence main events from a familiar story through play or talk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chooses to access the reading area independently and shows sustained interest in books. Handles books confidently, understanding front/back, title, and the direction of print. Listens attentively to stories and responds appropriately to what they hear. Talks about characters, settings and main events in familiar stories. Begins to retell stories in correct sequence, using pictures, puppets or props. Shows understanding of stories by answering questions and making comments. Recognises familiar words, signs, logos or book titles within the reading area. Uses story language, vocabulary and narrative structures within independent play and storytelling.
Vocabulary Progression	Book, page, cover, picture, story, words, turn (pages), character, favourite, feelings (happy, sad, scared), beginning, end, once upon a time	Author, illustrator, sentences, title, retell, describe, predict, setting, problem, events, next, finally, in the middle, blend, segment
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of book formats (e.g. board books, large-print books) Story props, puppets, and visual story maps to understand and retell stories Quiet, partially enclosed spaces support children who find busy environments overwhelming Books and resources can be adapted or simplified (e.g. fewer books displayed at once, clearly themed baskets) to reduce cognitive overload and support choice 	

Small World

Intent:

- To develop imaginative play, storytelling and early problem solving by offering rich, open ended small world environments where children can explore characters, settings and narratives. The area supports language development, social interaction and creative thinking, enabling children to make sense of their world, rehearse real life experiences and build the foundations for early literacy, communication and cognitive development.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Literacy – developing early narrative and comprehension skills as children explore familiar and imaginary stories through small world play, characters and story props.
- Communication and language – building vocabulary, listening and speaking skills through role play, storytelling, dialogue and shared imaginative scenarios.
- Personal, social and emotional development – fostering confidence, cooperation, empathy and emotional understanding as children act out experiences, take on roles and share ideas with others.
- Understanding the world – broadening children’s knowledge of people, places, communities and events by recreating real-life and imaginary situations through small world resources.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Vehicles, wooden town signs and props, animals, dinosaurs, family people set, wooden scenery featuring wooden discs, play blocks, cut out trees and wooden paddock play fences	Everyday people, real life characters, fantasy characters, themed characters, various animals, pets, range of vehicles, fences, trees, glass pebbles, natural and everyday objects, high quality texts
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses toys and figures to represent real people, animals or vehicles. • Engages in simple pretend play, often based on familiar experiences. • Begins to move objects in purposeful ways (e.g. pushing, placing, lining up). • Uses simple language to describe actions and events during play. • Shows interest in other children’s play and may play alongside them. • Uses small world resources to explore simple storylines with adult support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and uses small world resources independently and with purpose. • Creates and sustains imaginative play scenarios based on real or imaginary experiences. • Uses figures, vehicles and props to represent characters, settings and events. • Collaborates with others, sharing ideas, negotiating roles and developing play together. • Uses small world play to retell familiar stories or create new narratives. • Demonstrates understanding of emotions, relationships and cause and effect through play.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draws on knowledge of the world to enrich play (e.g. homes, jobs, cultures, environments).
Vocabulary Progression	People, animals, house, tree, road, bridge, farm, zoo, hide, big, small, fast, slow, loud, quiet, in, on, under, next to, behind, in front, happy, sad, scared, tired, home, mummy, daddy, baby, friend	Firefighter, builder, forest, mountain, desert, ocean, travel, build, enormous, tiny, fierce, gentle, brave, dangerous, safe, between, besides, around, though, above, below, problem, solution, adventure, journey, map
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larger-scale figures and vehicles Simplified small world scenes (fewer pieces, uncluttered bases) Symbol or photo mats (e.g. “people” “animals”, “buildings”) Small world resources can be adapted (e.g. magnetic figures, Velcro-backed pieces, stable bases) 	

Music

Intent:

- To provide meaningful, hands-on opportunities for children to explore sound, develop early musical understanding, and express themselves creatively. The music area nurtures children’s awareness of rhythm, beat, pitch, and tempo through playful experimentation with instruments, singing, and movement.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Expressive arts and design – exploring sounds, rhythm and instruments, creating music and experimenting with ways to express ideas.
- Physical development – strengthening fine-motor and gross-motor skills through tapping, shaking, beating and handling instruments.
- Communication and language – developing listening skills, new vocabulary, and the ability to follow and create simple patterns.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence, turn-taking skills, cooperation and self-expression through shared musical experiences.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Bells, maracas, musical triangles with beaters, drum, egg shakers, wooden guiros, chime bars, tambourines, plain wooden traditional scrapers	Bells, castanets, maracas, musical triangles with beaters, drum, rain sticks, egg shakers, wooden guiros, tambourines, plain wooden traditional scrapers
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys making sounds through shaking, tapping, banging and scraping instruments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects and uses musical instruments independently and purposefully.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiments with how sounds can be made and changed. Listens to and shows interest in different sounds and simple pieces of music. Begins to join in with familiar songs and rhymes through actions or vocal sounds. Uses voice to make sounds, copy noises and explore pitch. Responds physically to music through movement, clapping or swaying. Shows awareness of loud and quiet sounds through play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explores and controls sound by changing tempo, pitch and volume. Creates and repeats simple rhythms and patterns. Uses music and movement to express ideas, feelings and imagination. Collaborates with others to perform and create music together. Sustains engagement within musical experiences and adapts ideas independently.
Vocabulary Progression	Song, sound, noise, quiet, loud, beat, rhythm, tap, bang, shake, hit, clap, stomp, ring, drum, shaker, chime instrument names, fast, slow	Music, rhythm, pattern, pulse, pitch, tune, beat (noun and verb), tempo, repeat, copy, perform, soft, strong, steady, smooth, instrument names
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of instruments (e.g. lightweight shakers, drums, bells, sound buttons) Instruments that produce sound with minimal effort Adults model simple musical actions and rhythms 	

Science

Intent:

- To develop curiosity, exploration and early scientific thinking by providing hands on opportunities for children to investigate the natural world. The area encourages questioning, observing, predicting and experimenting, helping children to develop language, problem solving skills and an understanding of cause and effect.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Understanding the world – exploring materials, forces, living things and simple scientific concepts through hands-on investigation.
- Communication and language – developing questioning, describing observations and using scientific vocabulary in meaningful contexts.
- Physical development – strengthening fine-motor skills through handling tools, sorting objects and carrying out simple experiments.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building curiosity, confidence and perseverance as children test ideas and explore how things work.

	Nursery	Reception
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Resource Progression	Assorted pull-back and pop-up toys, racing cars, trains, rainbow spring slinkies, magnifying glasses, plastic paddles, colour paddles, glitter stick wands, kaleidoscopes, telescopes, mirrors, magnets	Magnifying glasses with investigation resources, collecting pots, sorting trays, mini insects, natural materials, magnets with magnetic and non-magnetic objects, colour paddles, mirrors, telescopes, kaleidoscopes, sand timers, objects to support enquiry and prediction, artefacts, annotated diagrams, photographs, scientific prompts
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows curiosity about objects and living things. • Uses simple actions to investigate. • Notices similarities and differences between objects and materials. • Begins to talk about what they can see, hear or feel using simple language. • Begins to ask simple questions such as “what is it?” or “what happens?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects resources independently to explore and investigate. • Uses senses carefully to observe changes, patterns and differences. • Talks about what they notice using more detailed vocabulary. • Uses simple tools and equipment safely (e.g. magnifiers, pipettes, containers). • Attempts to explain why things happen using simple reasoning.
Vocabulary Progression	Big, small, long, short, heavy, light, look, smell, touch, hear, feel, soft, hard, smooth, rough, metal, plastic, wood, push, pull	Shiny, dull, bumpy, stretchy, bendy, fabric, rubber, paper, cardboard, magnetic, change, minibeast, heavier, lighter, stronger, weaker, thicker, thinner, test, measure, experiment
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult modelling, questioning and commentary • Flexible expectations allow children to investigate at their own level, whether through sensory exploration, observation or simple problem-solving 	

Outdoor Building and Construction Area

Intent:

- To develop children’s problem-solving, collaboration, creativity and physical development through large-scale, open-ended construction experiences. The area provides opportunities for children to explore shape, space, balance and design while developing communication, resilience and critical thinking through active, hands-on learning.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Communication and language – developing language through discussing ideas, explaining what they are building, describing problems and solutions, and working collaboratively with others.
- Physical development – strengthening gross-motor skills through lifting, carrying, stacking, balancing and joining large construction materials, and developing coordination and control.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence, resilience and perseverance as children plan, construct, test ideas, and adapt their builds when challenges arise.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Crates, poles, planks, pipes, tyres, fabric covers for dens, tarpaulin, clips and pegs, blocks, waffle construction	Stacking crates, shallow crates, wooden planks of different lengths, wooden poles, plastic tubing pipes, tyres, steering wheels, large den covers, clips
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores large construction materials using whole-body movement. • Lifts, carries, pushes and moves construction resources safely. • Experiments with joining, balancing and knocking down structures. • Uses trial and error to see what fits or stays upright. • Engages in simple pretend play using construction resources. • Uses simple language to describe actions (e.g. <i>up, down, big, heavy</i>). • Plays alongside others and begins to share materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and uses large construction resources independently and purposefully. • Plans and builds structures using a range of materials and components. • Experiments with balance, weight and size to solve practical problems. • Works collaboratively with others, sharing ideas and taking on roles. • Perseveres when structures fall down and adapts designs. • Incorporates imaginative ideas and real-life experiences into constructions. • Demonstrates confidence, independence and pride in completed builds.
Vocabulary Progression	Build, block, brick, tube, crate, carry, push, pull, stack, join, place, tip, heavy, light, tall, short, tools, make.	Structure, tower, wall, ramp, arch, beam, pipe, balance, design, plan, create, attach, secure, test, improve, strong, weak, wobbly, straight, curved.
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lightweight and easy-to-grip resources • Open-ended materials allow children to engage at their own level • Adult modelling, scaffolding and encouragement 	

Mud Kitchen

Intent:

- To develop imaginative play, exploration and early scientific thinking by giving children opportunities to mix, pour and experiment with natural materials, supporting language, creativity and collaborative play outdoors.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Communication and language – developing language through role play, discussing ingredients, explaining actions, and sharing ideas as children create recipes and scenarios together.
- Physical development – strengthening gross- and fine-motor skills through scooping, pouring, mixing, stirring, lifting containers and using a range of tools with control.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building confidence, cooperation and perseverance as children experiment with materials, take turns, negotiate roles and adapt their ideas during play.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Trays, cauldron, herbs, spoons, pans, mixing jugs, bottles, utensils, bowls, measuring cups	Trays, cauldron, herbs, spoons, pans, mixing jugs, bottles, utensils, bowls, measuring cups, food stones and recipe cards
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores natural materials such as mud, water, sand and leaves using their senses. • Enjoys scooping, pouring, mixing and stirring materials. • Uses simple tools and containers to fill, empty and transfer materials. • Notices changes when materials are mixed together (wet, dry, messy). • Uses simple pretend play, often copying familiar cooking actions. • Plays alongside others and begins to share resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and uses mud kitchen resources independently and with purpose. • Experiments with quantities, noticing how adding or removing materials changes outcomes. • Uses tools with increasing control and coordination. • Engages in sustained imaginative role play, creating recipes or scenarios. • Uses descriptive language to explain what they are making and why. • Collaborates with others, sharing ideas, roles and resources. • Demonstrates early understanding of cause and effect through mixing and experimentation.
Vocabulary Progression	Mud, water, spoon, bowl, pot, pan, mix, stir, pour, scoop, wet, dry, dirty, full, empty, make, cook, soft, hard	Recipe, ingredients, measure, whisk, pour, stir, mix, blend, full, empty, heavy, light, texture, liquid, solid,

		container, scoop, create, design, change, because, first, next, then
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of tools, containers and utensils (e.g. different sizes, lightweight items, easy-grip handles) • Adult modelling and commentary support children to explore vocabulary, routines and imaginative ideas during play 	

Sand and Gravel

Intent:

- To provide open-ended opportunities for children to dig, pour, fill and explore materials, supporting early mathematical thinking, problem-solving, language development and imaginative play through hands-on sensory experiences.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Mathematics – exploring capacity, quantity, comparison, shape and early problem-solving through filling, pouring and building.
- Physical development – strengthening fine-motor and gross-motor skills through digging, scooping, lifting and manipulating tools and materials.
- Communication and language – using descriptive vocabulary, discussing discoveries and collaborating during shared play.
- Personal, social and emotional development – developing cooperation, turn-taking, confidence and resilience through open-ended, sensory exploration.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Sand wheels, sand moulds, spades, buckets, pattern/track rollers, trucks, diggers, sieve, scoops, small brooms for sweeping	Free standing weighing scale, buckets of different sizes, short and long handled spades, large scale small world construction, trucks and vehicles
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores sand using hands and senses, enjoying its texture and movement. • Scoops, pours, fills and empties sand using simple tools and containers. • Notices changes in sand when it is dry or wet. • Experiments with making marks, shapes or simple heaps in the sand. • Uses simple comparative language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and uses sand resources independently and with purpose. • Combines sand with water to explore changes in texture and consistency. • Uses a range of tools with increasing control (sieves, moulds, containers). • Experiments with filling, measuring and comparing quantities. • Works collaboratively, sharing resources and negotiating ideas.

Vocabulary Progression	Sand, soft, hard, rough, smooth, dry, wet, cold, warm, pour, scoop, dig, fill, empty, mix, soft, hard, rough, smooth, dry, wet, cold, warm, sand	Grains, rough, smooth, bumpy, crumbly, gritty, solid, firm, dry, damp, wet, sticky, runny, clumpy, heavier, lighter, sprinkle, mould, shape, heavy, light
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lightweight, easy-to-handle resources • Adult modelling and language support help children to explore concepts such as full/empty, wet/dry, more/less and to extend play 	

Gardening and Growing

Intent:

- To provide children hands-on opportunities to care for plants, observe growth and explore the natural world, supporting early scientific understanding, responsibility, language development and a sense of curiosity about how living things grow and change.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Understanding the world – exploring plants, seasons, growth and change through hands-on care of living things.
- Communication and language – developing vocabulary, asking questions and discussing observations about nature.
- Physical development – strengthening fine-motor and gross-motor skills through digging, planting, watering and using tools.
- Personal, social and emotional development – building responsibility, patience, confidence and a sense of pride as children nurture and care for plants.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Wheelbarrows, watering cans, spades, sieves, rakes, forks, trowels, gardening gloves	Watering cans, spades, forks, trowels, gardening gloves, seed packets, plant pots, measuring sticks, plant labels, magnifying glasses, compost tools, clipboards for recording growth
Progression of Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows curiosity about plants, insects and small creatures found outdoors. • Uses simple tools such as trowels and watering cans with support. • Notices obvious features of plants and minibeasts (e.g. colour, movement, size). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plants seeds or bulbs and cares for growing plants over time. • Observes changes in plants and living things, noticing growth and development. • Begins to talk about what plants and minibeasts need to survive. • Uses magnifiers and containers to observe minibeasts during bug hunts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches living things closely, noticing when they move or change. • Uses simple language to talk about what they can see. • Begins to understand that plants and creatures need care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares similarities and differences between plants and creatures. • Shows care and concern for living things and their habitats.
Vocabulary Progression	Garden, soil, mud, seed, compost, plant, flower, root, water, dig, sun, rain, wet, dry, vegetable, harvest.	Seedling, stem, shoot, bud, compost, vegetable, fruit, herbs, greenhouse, watering can, plant (verb), harvest, weed, observe, compare, grow, change, sunlight, nutrients, life cycle.
Inclusion and Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of child-friendly tools and equipment (e.g. lightweight trowels, different-sized watering cans, gloves) • Raised beds, containers and tabletop planting • Open-ended gardening tasks (digging, planting, watering, observing) • Bug jars, magnifiers and clear containers 	

Outdoor Games

Intent:

- To develop children's gross and fine-motor skills through a range of active, engaging opportunities that build strength, coordination, confidence and independence as they move, explore and play.

This area is a key vehicle for securing strong foundations in:

- Physical development – building strength, balance, coordination and control through climbing, running, jumping, riding and active play.
- Personal, social and emotional development – developing confidence, resilience, turn-taking and risk-awareness in a safe, challenging environment.
- Communication and language – using movement-related vocabulary, following instructions and collaborating during games and activities.
- Understanding the world – exploring the outdoor environment, noticing changes, and learning how their bodies move and respond during physical activity.

	Nursery	Reception
Resource Progression	Cones, numbered cones 1-5, variety of balls, hoops, trikes, balance bikes, 2 and 3 wheeled scooters, quoits, bean bags, egg and spoon, Let's Get Physical prompt cards	Cones, numbered cones 1-10, variety of balls, hoops, stilts, two wheeled scooters, pedal bikes, bean bags, balls and scoopers, Let's Get Physical prompt cards
Progression of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores large outdoor equipment using whole-body movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves confidently and independently across a range of outdoor equipment.

<p>Knowledge and Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runs, climbs, pushes and pulls with increasing confidence. • Enjoys riding bikes or scooters, using feet to move forwards. • Begins to steer bikes or scooters, showing emerging control. • Enjoys moving freely in a range of ways, such as jumping, rolling and crawling. • Explores throwing, kicking, rolling and chasing balls. • Shows enjoyment in simple movement and chasing games. • Begins to understand simple rules, such as stopping, starting or waiting for a turn, with adult support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rides bikes or scooters with increasing speed, control and coordination. • Uses pedals or push-along movement effectively to travel forwards. • Steers, stops and starts bikes or scooters safely, showing awareness of space and others. • Demonstrates control when running, jumping, climbing and balancing. • Uses coordination when throwing, catching, kicking or hitting balls. • Takes part in simple team or group games, understanding basic rules and boundaries.
<p>Vocabulary Progression</p>	<p>Run, jump, hop, skip, crawl, roll, slide, throw, catch, kick, push, pull, stomp, march, up, down, under, over, in, out, on, off, behind, next to, around, fast, slow, high, low, tunnel, steps, ramp</p>	<p>Balance, sprint, leap, stretch, twist, turn, bounce, aim, steer, pedal, glide, between, besides, forwards, backwards, though, across, strong, gentle, powerful, quick, speed, obstacle</p>
<p>Inclusion and Adaptations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult modelling, encouragement and scaffolding • Activities can be broken into smaller steps or offered with choice (e.g. walking alongside a bike before riding independently) • A range of bikes, scooters and ride-on equipment (e.g. different sizes, pedal-free bikes, push-along options) 	