



St Michael's
C.E. Primary School

Nursery Curriculum



"Courage to Flourish in the Love of God"

Curriculum Intent

Our aim	At St Michael's C.E. Primary School, our Nursery curriculum is designed to provide our youngest children with the strong foundations they need for life-long learning. We aim to nurture confident, happy and curious children who feel safe, valued and ready to explore the world around them. Through warm relationships, rich experiences and high-quality interaction, children develop early communication, social skills, physical confidence and a positive sense of self. Our curriculum reflects the Educational Programmes within the Statutory Framework for the EYFS and is guided primarily by Birth to 5 Matters and supported by Development Matters, to ensure learning is developmentally appropriate and meaningful.
Strong foundations	In Nursery, we prioritise the prime areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. These areas are essential for children's wellbeing and form the foundations for all future learning. Alongside this, children are introduced to early experiences in literacy, mathematics and understanding the world through carpet sessions, play, stories, songs, exploration and adult interaction. Children develop attention and listening skills, early vocabulary, turn-taking, self-regulation, independence and physical control through carefully planned routines and a stimulating learning environment. Learning is rooted in playful, hands-on experiences that are repeated, revisited and deepened over time so that children can develop confidence, security and enjoyment in learning.
Responsive teaching	We recognise that children enter Nursery with a wide range of experiences, interests and developmental starting points. Staff build strong relationships with children and families and use professional observation, interaction and assessment, informed by Birth to 5 Matters, to understand each child's development. Teaching and provision are responsive and flexible, shaped by children's needs, observations, assessment information and next steps. Adults model language, extend play, scaffold learning and provide sensitive support to help children make progress. Where children need additional support, early intervention, targeted strategies and consistent routines are used to ensure they feel secure and included. High expectations are maintained for all children, including those with SEND, disadvantaged children and EAL learners, so that every child can access a broad, enriching and ambitious curriculum.
Transition to Reception	Our Nursery curriculum is carefully planned to support a smooth transition into Reception. Throughout their time in Nursery, children gradually develop the skills, routines and independence needed for the next stage of learning, such as managing personal care, following simple instructions, sharing, communicating needs and sustaining attention for short periods. In the final term, transition is supported through familiarisation with Reception routines, environments and adults, while maintaining developmentally appropriate Nursery practice. Key information about each child's learning, development, strengths, needs, successful support strategies and next steps are shared with Reception staff so that learning continues seamlessly and children feel confident and secure as they move into the next stage of their education.

Our half-termly themes, texts, visits and experiences provide meaningful contexts for learning. However, key foundational knowledge and skills are taught, revisited and embedded over time, as we recognise that children need repeated opportunities to practise and apply what they have learned.

Our Nursery curriculum runs on a two-year rolling programme because some children join as Rising 3s and spend longer than one academic year in Nursery. Cycle A and Cycle B ensure that children revisit key themes and concepts without repeating the same vehicle texts. This allows children to deepen vocabulary, knowledge and skills over time while maintaining progression towards Reception readiness.

How this Curriculum Document is Organised

Half-termly overviews show the themes, big questions, vehicle texts, enrichment texts, vocabulary, songs, visits and experiences that provide meaningful contexts for learning.

Termly foundational progression shows the key knowledge and skills that children need time to practise, revisit and embed across the year.

Wider curriculum progression shows how children build knowledge of the world, RE and expressive arts through carefully sequenced half-termly themes.

Inclusion and Adaptation

All children access a broad and ambitious curriculum. Adults adapt teaching, provision, resources, language, routines and adult support so that children with SEND, disadvantaged children, EAL learners and those with lower starting points can participate successfully. Adaptations may include visual support, repetition, sensory support, simplified language, small-group work, targeted adult interaction, routines and additional practice. Adaptations support access without lowering ambition.

Continuous Provision

Continuous provision is planned to help children practise, revisit and apply taught knowledge and skills through play, exploration and high-quality adult interaction. Adults introduce resources, model how to use them and support children to develop language, independence, relationships, curiosity, creativity and physical confidence over time.

Half-Termly Overview

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Big Question	How am I special?	What is a special time for me?	Who are some people that help me?	What is my home like?	What happens on the farm?	How can we travel to different places?
Themes	Me, my family, my friends, my classroom, my teacher, my school	Special times, familiar places, birthdays, celebrating, Diwali, Bonfire Night, Christmas	Teachers, doctors, nurses, dentists, vets, police, fire service, lollypop person, bus driver, taxi driver	Houses, homes, food, cooking, baking, environment	Farm, animals, looking after animals, growth, flowers, plants	Transport, travel, car, bus, taxi, train, bicycle, aeroplane, boat, starting Reception
Vehicle Text/ Love of Reading (Cycle A)	Hello Friend	Where's Lenny?	All Through the Night	Three Little Pigs	Little Red Hen	Car, Car, Truck, Jeep

Vehicle Text/ Love of Reading (Cycle B)	Hello Friend	Where's Lenny?	Lulu Loves the Library	Goldilocks	Errol's Garden	Toot, Toot, Beep, Beep
Enrichment Texts	My Mums Love Me Peace at Last And Tango Makes Three	Merry Whatmas? Kipper's Birthday Leaf Man	I'm a Bin Lorry Driver People Who Help Us Books	All About Families We're Going on an Egg Hunt The Large Family	Noisy Farm Farmer Duck The Tiny Seed	The Colour Monster Goes to School Mr Gumpy's Motor Car
School Values	Courage	Hope	Thankfulness	Love and Forgiveness	Trust	Community
British Values	Individual Liberty Rule of Law Tolerance Mutual Respect Democracy Rule of Law					
St Michael's Learning Behaviours	Be Ready Be Respectful Be Responsible					
Behaviour Curriculum	The behaviour curriculum is taught, modelled and revisited throughout the year: 3 Rs, Wow Walking, STAR, Marvellous Manners (peers, adults, lunchtime), The A Choice, Voice Levels and Outside Behaviour					
Key Vocabulary	Special, colours, clothes, face, hair, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, arms, legs, family, mom, dad, brother, sister, pet, teacher	Birthday, cake, candles, present, invitation, games, Christmas linked vocabulary, celebrate, friends, family	Teacher, doctor, nurse, dentist, vet, police, fire service, lollypop person, bus driver, taxi driver, help	House, home, big, small, kitchen, living room, lounge, bedroom, bathroom, garden, food, cook	Farm, animal, sheep, horse, goat, chicken, pig, cow, donkey, duck, goose, hen, field, grow, change, plant, seed, care, look after	Travel, car, bus, taxi, train, bicycle, aeroplane, boat, driver, station, airport, place
Rhymes and Songs	Days of the Week Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes I've Got a Body	Happy Birthday Autumn Leaves are Falling Down Christmas Songs	5 Little Fire Fighters Miss Molly Had a Dolly There are Lots of People Who Help Us	Easter Songs When Goldilocks Went to the House of the Bears There's a Worm at the Bottom of the Garden	Old MacDonald Had a Farm Dingle Dangle Scarecrow The Farmer's in his Den	I've Been Working on the Railroad Down at the Airport My Ship Rolls Over the Ocean
Educational Visits					Farm	
Parental Involvement	Meet the Teacher Pupil Progress Meeting	Carol Service Christmas Crafts		Pupil Progress Meeting Easter Bonnet Parade		Sports Day Parent's Picnic Open Evening Graduation

Termly Progression in Foundational Knowledge and Skills

The following foundational knowledge and skills align with the St Michael's Securing Strong Foundations progression document. They identify the essential foundations children need to secure in Nursery so they are ready for Reception.

Communication and Language

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Listening and understanding	<p>Look towards the person speaking during short adult-led moments.</p> <p>Follow a simple instruction with one key word, supported by gesture or routine.</p> <p>Respond to familiar words and phrases used every day.</p>	<p>Listen to short songs, rhymes or stories for a short period with adult support.</p> <p>Follow a simple instruction linked to play or routine.</p> <p>Point to, choose or name familiar objects when asked.</p>	<p>Listen to a short story, rhyme or adult instruction and respond through an action, word or short phrase.</p> <p>Follow simple instructions in familiar routines.</p> <p>Answer simple questions about immediate experiences, using single words or short phrases.</p>
Speaking	<p>Use single words and short phrases to communicate needs, choices and interests.</p> <p>Copy familiar words or phrases modelled by adults.</p> <p>Join in with repeated words in songs, rhymes and stories.</p>	<p>Use short phrases and simple sentences during play and routines.</p> <p>Use words to name, request, comment or describe.</p> <p>Begin to use talk with familiar adults and peers during play.</p>	<p>Use simple sentences to talk about what they are doing, what they need or what has happened.</p> <p>Speak clearly enough to be understood by familiar adults.</p> <p>Use familiar vocabulary from stories, songs, routines and play.</p>
Vocabulary	<p>Children begin to build vocabulary linked to themselves, family, Nursery, feelings, routines, body parts, colours, stories, rhymes and songs.</p> <p>Adults model and repeat new words in meaningful contexts.</p>	<p>Children build vocabulary through stories, rhymes, role play, visitors, local community themes and first-hand experiences.</p> <p>They begin to use new words in play and conversation.</p>	<p>Children use a wider vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences.</p> <p>They use words linked to growing, animals, transport, places, transition and the wider world with increasing confidence.</p>
Story and explanation	<p>Children enjoy sharing books, songs and rhymes.</p>	<p>Children listen to familiar stories with increasing recall.</p>	<p>Children talk about stories, events and experiences in more detail.</p>

	They begin to join in with familiar phrases and talk about pictures, characters and events with adult support.	They join in with repeated refrains, use story language in play and begin to talk about what happened first, next or at the end.	They begin to explain why things happen, how things work and what might happen next, using talk to organise their thinking and play.
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Personal, Social and Emotional Development / Behaviour for Learning

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Self-regulation and relationships	<p>Children begin to separate from familiar adults with support and build relationships with key adults.</p> <p>They begin to play alongside and with others, seek comfort when needed and start to recognise simple feelings.</p>	<p>Children seek out adults and peers to share play and experiences.</p> <p>They begin to understand that actions have consequences, respond to the feelings of others and take part in simple cooperative play with adult support.</p>	<p>Children show increasing confidence in relationships and begin to manage feelings with adult support.</p> <p>They practise negotiation, compromise and conflict resolution, and begin to adapt their behaviour in different routines and social situations.</p>
Independence and personal needs	<p>Children begin to manage simple self-care routines with adult support, including handwashing, feeding themselves, drinking safely, toileting communication and putting on simple clothing items.</p>	<p>Children develop increasing independence with handwashing, toileting, dressing and managing basic needs.</p> <p>They begin to tell adults when they are hungry, tired or need help.</p>	<p>Children become more independent in self-care, including dressing, toileting and managing belongings.</p> <p>They are supported to develop the independence needed for Reception routines.</p>
Learning behaviours and resilience	<p>Children begin to understand Nursery routines and expectations.</p> <p>They learn to explore new situations, try new activities, follow simple boundaries and begin to cooperate in favourable situations.</p>	<p>Children become more involved in daily tasks and routines.</p> <p>They begin to listen, join in, have a go, wait for short periods and understand that they are part of the Nursery community.</p>	<p>Children show growing confidence, self-esteem and willingness to try new things.</p> <p>They take small risks, ask adults for help when needed and begin to keep going when learning or social situations feel challenging.</p>
Health, wellbeing and belonging	<p>Children develop a sense of belonging in Nursery.</p> <p>They learn their own name, talk about preferences and interests, and begin to recognise danger with adult support.</p>	<p>Children begin to understand healthy routines such as handwashing, food, rest, toileting and physical activity.</p> <p>They learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others.</p>	<p>Children talk about themselves, their family, friends and experiences with increasing confidence.</p> <p>They understand some ways to keep healthy and safe and prepare emotionally for transition into Reception.</p>

Physical Development

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Gross motor and movement	<p>Children develop confidence moving around the Nursery environment.</p> <p>They begin to run, jump, climb, squat, sit comfortably, use wheeled toys and move safely on different levels and surfaces with adult support.</p>	<p>Children move with increasing control, balance and spatial awareness.</p> <p>They run safely, climb, negotiate space, use large muscle movements, throw and catch large objects, and begin to join in with simple movement games, songs and actions.</p>	<p>Children move energetically with increasing coordination and control.</p> <p>They hop, skip, balance, ride, climb, dance, use movement sequences and collaborate with others to move large resources safely.</p>
Fine motor and tool control	<p>Children begin to show control when holding, using and manipulating a range of tools and objects.</p> <p>They explore mark-making tools and may begin to show preference for a dominant hand.</p>	<p>Children use one-handed tools and equipment with increasing control.</p> <p>They develop hand strength, grip and coordination through cutting, painting, playdough, threading, puzzles, construction and mark making.</p>	<p>Children manipulate tools and equipment with greater control and purpose.</p> <p>They choose resources for their plans, use tools safely, and show increasing accuracy when drawing, cutting, constructing and creating.</p>
Physical foundations for writing	<p>Children develop core strength, posture, shoulder stability and large muscle control through movement play and large-scale mark making.</p> <p>They begin to make marks using whole-arm movements and hold mark-making tools with increasing control.</p>	<p>Children create lines, circles and marks using shoulder, elbow, wrist and finger movements.</p> <p>They use a comfortable grip with growing control when holding pens, pencils, crayons and other mark-making tools.</p>	<p>Children hold pencils and crayons with increasing control to make marks, draw and attempt early writing.</p> <p>They develop the strength, posture and coordination needed for more controlled mark making and name writing in preparation for Reception.</p>

Reading and Phonics

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Little Wandle Foundations	<p><u>Rhyme Time</u> Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star Wind the Bobbin Up 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive Incy Wincy Spider</p>	<p><u>Tuning into sounds</u> s a t p i n</p> <p><u>Rhyme Time</u> Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star Humpty Dumpty</p>	<p><u>Tuning into sounds</u> m d g o c k e</p> <p><u>Rhyme Time</u> Miss Molly Had a Dolly Hickory, Dickory, Dock</p>	<p><u>Tuning into sounds</u> u r h b f l j</p> <p><u>Rhyme Time</u> Jack and Jill 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive Pat-a-cake</p>	<p><u>Tuning into sounds</u> v w y z q u c h</p> <p><u>Rhyme Time</u> Round and Round the Garden Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary</p>	<p><u>Tuning into sounds</u> c k x s h t h n g n k</p> <p><u>Rhyme Time</u> A Sailor Went to Sea Row, Row, Row Your Boat</p>

	The Wheels on the Bus	Row, Row, Row Your Boat Baa, Baa, Black Sheep	One, Two, Buckle My Shoe Wind the Bobbin Up	Hey, Diddle, Diddle	Baa, Baa, Black Sheep Incy Wincy Spider Ring-a-ring-a-roses	The Wheels on the Bus Down at the Station The Grand Old Duke of York
Word reading	Make different vocal sounds e.g. animal, vehicle. Copy some familiar letter sounds.		Identify initial sounds of most familiar words and objects (starting with Phase 2 phonemes – s, a, t, p, i, n, d, m, g, o, c, k, e). Blend orally CVC words containing most Phase 2 phonemes – s, a, t, p, i, n, d, m, g, o, c, k, e.		Identify initial sounds of most familiar words and objects (starting with phonemes from Phase 2). Blend orally CVC words containing most phonemes from Phase 2.	
Comprehension	Listen to a short story read to them. Join in with familiar songs.		Hold a book the correct way up. Turn the pages from right to left. Identify characters in stories with support.		Use reading in play e.g. language and characters from familiar texts, and role-playing reading. Talk about characters, events and information in songs and books. Recognise familiar words and signs. Join in with familiar or repeated phrases.	

Writing

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Writing outcomes linked to texts (Cycle A)	To describe how I can be a good friend.	To draw my favourite game/activity.	To say what I would like to be when I grow up.	To draw objects from the story (link to counting 3 pigs, house, material).	To draw events and characters from the story.	To design my own vehicle.
Writing outcomes linked to texts (Cycle B)	To describe how I can be a good friend.	To draw my favourite game/activity.	To say what I would like to be when I grow up.	To draw objects from the story (link to counting 3 beds, chairs, bowls).	To draw events and characters from the story.	To design my own vehicle.
Composition – text structure & effect	Sometimes gives meaning to their drawings and paintings.		Makes up stories and play scenarios in response to experiences.		Say short phrases and single clause sentences. Give meanings to some marks.	

		Gives meanings to their drawings and mark making most of the time.	
Transcription – spelling	Repeats initial phonemes in spoken words when modelled by an adult.	Begins to hear some initial phonemes in spoken words.	Hear the initial phoneme in spoken words.
Transcription – handwriting	Make marks using whole arm movements in different directions on a range of surfaces.	Touch thumb to some fingers. Begin to use wrist movement when mark making. Make continuous lines of shapes and symbols (early writing) from left to right.	Touch each finger with their thumb. Use strong and mobile wrist movements when mark marking. Perform a range of simple cross-body movements. Hold a pencil using a static tripod grip. Attempts to write their own name using letter type shapes. Use a range of tools for a short period of time with support.

Maths

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
White Rose Maths units	More than, fewer than, same Explore and build with shapes Explore repeats Hear and say number names	Begin to order number names I see 1,2,3 Join in with repeats Explore position and space	Show me 1,2,3 Move and label 1,2,3 Explore position and routes Explore own first patterns	Take and give 1,2,3 Match, talk, push and pull Talk about dots Compare and sort collections	Lead on own repeats Start to puzzle Making patterns together Make game and actions	Show me 5 My own pattern Stop at 1,2,3,4,5 Match, sort, compare
Number – fluency	Join in with number rhymes and counting language. Notice small amounts in play (1 or 2).		Recite number names to 5 in songs and routines.		Count up to 5 objects, actions or sounds with one-to-one correspondence.	

	Begin to say number names in order to 3.	Touch or move objects as they count, with support. Count 1, 2 and 3 objects in familiar arrangements with support.	Know the final number counted tells how many there are. Subitise 1, 2 and 3 in familiar arrangements without counting.
Number – place value	Compare groups using lots, a few, more and not many. Match one object to another in practical routines.	Compare two small groups to 5 and say which has more, fewer or the same. Match numerals 1 to 3 to small quantities.	Match numerals to quantities to 5. Order small sets practically. Notice when a quantity has one more or one fewer.
Number – addition and subtraction	Notice when an amount changes because something has been added or taken away. Use words such as more, gone and all gone in play.	Combine two small groups and find how many altogether, with support. Separate small groups and talk about what is left.	Combine and separate quantities within 5 using real objects. Show how a whole group can be split into smaller parts.
Number – multiplication and division	Share resources in play with adult support. Notice when groups look the same or not the same.	Make matching pairs in songs, games and routines. Sort objects into small matching sets.	Share small amounts fairly and say when everyone has the same. Make equal groups with objects in play.
Geometry – shape	Explore shapes through construction and loose parts. Use everyday words such as round, straight, pointy and corner.	Match and sort objects or shapes by one property, such as shape, size or colour. Copy simple arrangements and patterns.	Name familiar 2D shapes in play, such as circle, triangle, square and rectangle. Continue simple repeating patterns with support.
Measurement	Compare size in play using big, small, tall and short. Use routine language such as now, next and later.	Compare length, height, mass and capacity through play. Use words such as longer, shorter, heavier, lighter, full and empty.	Order two or three objects by length, height, mass or capacity. Sequence familiar daily events using first, next and last.

Wider Curriculum Knowledge Progression

Understanding the World

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Past and present	<p>Children talk about starting Nursery, themselves, their family and familiar routines.</p> <p>They begin to understand that they have their own experiences and life story.</p>	<p>Children talk about birthdays, Christmas and special times they have experienced.</p> <p>They begin to remember and talk about events that have happened to them.</p>	<p>Children talk about people who help them and experiences of visiting places in the local community.</p> <p>They begin to make links between past experiences and current learning.</p>	<p>Children talk about their home, school, family customs and familiar routines.</p> <p>They begin to compare experiences such as cooking, baking and celebrations at home and school.</p>	<p>Children talk about significant events such as getting a pet, visiting a farm or seeing animals.</p> <p>They begin to describe simple changes over time, such as animals and plants growing.</p>	<p>Children talk about their first school trip, Sports Day, summer experiences and moving to Reception.</p> <p>They begin to notice that transport, people and places can change over time.</p>
People, culture and communities	<p>Children become familiar with key adults, the Nursery classroom and outdoor learning environment.</p> <p>They begin to understand that they belong to a family, class and school community.</p>	<p>Children learn that families and people can celebrate in different ways.</p> <p>They talk about birthdays, Christmas and family traditions, and begin to recognise similarities and differences.</p>	<p>Children learn about people who help us, such as doctors, nurses, dentists, vets, police, firefighters, bus drivers and the lollipop person.</p> <p>They begin to understand that people have different jobs and roles in the community.</p>	<p>Children learn about homes, school and familiar places.</p> <p>They compare rooms, types of homes and places they know, and begin to locate their house and school in simple ways.</p>	<p>Children learn about farms, farm workers, vets and how people care for animals and plants.</p> <p>They talk about pets, animals and how people look after living things.</p>	<p>Children learn about transport, journeys and places beyond school.</p> <p>They talk about different modes of transport in Bartley Green, places they have visited and countries or places they have seen in photographs.</p>
The natural world	<p>Children explore familiar places, journeys and seasonal change.</p> <p>They observe autumn and begin to notice similarities and differences in the natural world.</p>	<p>Children notice detailed features of objects, plants, animals and natural materials.</p> <p>They observe autumn to winter changes and talk</p>	<p>Children ask questions about their familiar world and the natural world.</p> <p>They observe winter, explore the local environment and begin to understand</p>	<p>Children use their senses to explore natural materials and compare materials with similar and different properties.</p> <p>They talk about changes they notice</p>	<p>Children plant seeds, care for growing plants and begin to understand simple life cycles.</p> <p>They learn to care for living things and the natural environment, noticing growth,</p>	<p>Children talk about what they see using a wider vocabulary.</p> <p>They explore forces they can feel, talk about why things happen and how things work, and observe summer</p>

		about what they can see, hear and feel.	that their behaviour can affect the environment.	and continue to observe seasonal change.	decay and change over time.	changes in the natural world.
Technology	Children begin to operate simple digital equipment with adult support. They explore cause and effect through water play and simple tools.	Children operate mechanical toys and use simple equipment such as pipes, funnels and tools to move water or objects.	Children use simple equipment and technological toys with knobs, pulleys, buttons, real objects and touchscreen devices.	Children make toys or objects work by pressing, lifting, touching or moving parts to create sound, movement or images.	Children explore a range of materials and simple tools to learn about cause and effect.	Children learn that information can be found using digital devices and the internet with adult supervision.

RE

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Focus story	The Lost Sheep	Nativity Story	The Good Samaritan	Wise and Foolish Builders	Noah's Ark	Jonah and the Big Fish
Knowledge	Children know that Christians believe God cares for everyone. They know that everyone is important, even if they feel lost, worried or left out.	Children know that Christians believe Jesus is special. They know that Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birth and a time when Christians remember love, hope and joy.	Children know that Christians believe people should show kindness and care to others. They know that helping someone is important, even if they are different from us.	Children know that Christians believe listening to Jesus helps people make good choices. They know that making good choices can help them feel safe, happy and ready to learn.	Children know that Christians believe God cares for people and animals. They know that people can care for animals, living things and the world around them.	Children know that Christians believe God gives people another chance. They know that people can say sorry, make better choices and try again.

Expressive Arts and Design

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Creating with materials	Children explore colour, marks, textures and materials.	Children continue to explore materials and begin to use them to express ideas.	Children explore colour mixing and begin to notice how colours can change.	Children begin to use tools for a purpose.	Children draw with increasing complexity and detail.	Children develop their own ideas and choose materials to express them.

	They begin to enjoy making marks, experimenting with paint and using 2D and 3D materials to represent ideas.	They explore how sounds, movements and materials can be changed.	They use drawings, marks and materials to respond to music, stories and ideas.	They create lines, circles and closed shapes and begin to represent actions, objects and experiences through drawing and making.	They use lines to enclose spaces and begin to show emotions, ideas and observations in their drawings and paintings.	They join materials, explore textures and use tools with increasing control and purpose.
Being imaginative and expressive	Children begin to take part in simple pretend play, using familiar experiences and objects to represent ideas.	Children use movement, sounds and materials to express experiences, ideas and feelings. They begin to use objects symbolically in pretend play.	Children mirror actions and ideas from adults and peers, adding their own variations. They create sounds, movements and drawings to accompany stories.	Children engage in imaginative play based on their own ideas, first-hand experiences and peer experiences. They begin to develop stories using small world equipment.	Children play alongside others who are engaged in the same theme. They use construction, drawing and role play to represent ideas, experiences and feelings.	Children create more imaginative and complex small worlds using blocks, construction kits, props and resources. They use available resources or imaginary props to support play.
Music, movement and role play	Children create sounds by rubbing, shaking, tapping, striking or blowing. They show interest in sound makers and instruments and join in with simple songs.	Children join in with singing, movement, dancing and ring games. They explore how sounds and movements can be changed.	Children sing familiar songs and tap out simple repeated rhythms. They experiment with movement in response to music, stories and ideas.	Children sing to themselves and use sounds, movement and drawing to support their play and storytelling.	Children pitch-match simple tones and begin to sing the melodic shape of familiar songs. They respond to music and creative experiences with thoughts and feelings.	Children remember and sing entire songs, create their own songs or improvise around known songs. They play instruments with increasing control to express feelings and ideas.

Assessment and Responsive Teaching

Assessment is purposeful and manageable. Adults prioritise knowing the children well, responding in the moment and adapting teaching. Assessment is used to identify what children know, what they can do, what they need to practise further and what support or challenge is needed next.

High-quality interactions are central to assessment and responsive teaching. Adults listen carefully to children, join play sensitively, model language, introduce vocabulary, ask questions, extend thinking and notice gaps or misconceptions. These interactions help adults understand children’s learning and respond immediately through modelling, scaffolding, challenge or additional practice.

Assessment is ongoing and forms part of high-quality interactions, adult-led learning, child-initiated play, routines, observations and discussions. Staff use their knowledge of the children, alongside the EYFS Statutory Framework, Development Matters, Birth to 5 Matters and scheme-specific assessments, to make informed professional judgements.

This approach ensures that assessment supports learning rather than creating unnecessary workload. Staff use high-quality interactions and professional knowledge of each child to secure strong foundations, adapt teaching and make sure children are ready for Reception.

Assessment point	What staff check	What happens next
On entry	Staff identify children’s starting points in communication and language, PSED, physical development, early literacy, early mark making and mathematics. They also consider independence, self-care, toileting, relationships, confidence, interests, routines and any known additional needs.	Provision, routines and adult support are adapted to meet children’s needs. Staff prioritise settling, relationships, language, independence, self-care and early learning foundations. Additional support, intervention or referrals are put in place where needed.
Ongoing daily assessment	Staff notice who is settled, who is communicating confidently, who needs further modelling, who needs more practice and who is ready for challenge. Adults check understanding during play, provision, group times, stories, songs, phonics, early maths, routines and conversations.	Adults respond in the moment through high-quality interactions, modelling, questioning, scaffolding, vocabulary support and additional practice. Children receive targeted adult interaction, small-group support or planned opportunities to revisit learning.
End of term checkpoint	Staff review how securely children are developing against the Nursery foundations, including communication and language, PSED, physical development, early literacy, early mathematics and wider curriculum knowledge.	Teaching, provision and routines are adapted for the following term. Staff identify gaps, plan revisits, adjust support, provide intervention and ensure children who are secure are given appropriate challenge.
End of Nursery	Staff consider children’s readiness for Reception, including communication, relationships, self-regulation, independence, physical development, early phonics, early mark making, mathematics and wider curriculum knowledge. They identify strengths, gaps, support needs and successful strategies for each child.	Key information is shared with Reception staff so that transition is smooth. This includes information about communication and language, PSED, physical development, early literacy, early mathematics, SEND, interventions, adaptations, self-care, independence and next steps.