

Nursery

Across the Nursery PSED curriculum, adults maintain high, consistent expectations and model inclusive behaviour, supporting children to participate confidently in the classroom community.
 Children are guided to develop independence in routines, self-care and use of the environment, while learning to cooperate, communicate boundaries and resolve difficulties with others. Safeguarding is embedded through explicit teaching of personal space, voice and respect, ensuring children feel secure, included and able to seek help when needed.

**** Bolded statements identify foundational knowledge expectations.**
 Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.
 Key skills show how children practise managing themselves and relating to others. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat routines and provide calm, consistent support rather than expecting independence.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Managing Myself and My Body	Independence in the Classroom	Feelings, Rules and Behaviour	Friends, Boundaries and Consent.	Cooperation and Problem Solving	I'm Proud of What I've Achieved
Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	I take part in toileting and handwashing routines. Routines help everyone feel safe and ready to learn.	Everyone belongs in the classroom and can take part. I can choose, use and return resources. Looking after resources (tidying, carrying carefully, returning items) helps everyone use them.	Feelings can affect how we act. Rules help us play and work together.	My voice matters and adults will listen to me. I can say no. I stop when others say stop.	Friends don't always agree. Problems can be solved by talking and getting help.	Trying again helps me improve actions I find tricky. I can feel proud of myself.
Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Handwashing using a simple sequence with increasing independence. Managing toileting with minimal support. Following snack routines with increasing independence.	Selecting resources for a chosen purpose. Tidying and caring for shared spaces.	Naming emotions and causes. Following agreed rules with adult support. Beginning to use calming strategies with support.	Using words to express boundaries. Beginning to resolve conflict with support.	Beginning to negotiate roles in play with others. Finding compromises.	Talking about achievements. Persisting with tasks that feel challenging.
Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children's understanding over time</i>	Explicit modelling, visual sequences, clear and consistent expectations.	Resource maps, shared helper roles, tidy-up routines.	Emotion coaching, clear and agreed rules, calm-down strategies.	Social stories, puppets, role-play scenarios.	Small group games, adult-supported problem solving.	Shared reflection circle times, learning celebrations.
Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	wash, toilet, clean, ready, safe, wait	choose, use, tidy, help, try again	happy, sad, angry, calm, stop, listen	no, stop, my turn, fair, my body	share, wait, help, take turns, try again	proud, keep going, finished, I did it

Communication and Language	<p>In Nursery, children learn that language helps them to think and belong. They move from communicating needs to sharing ideas, feelings and experiences. Vocabulary development is planned systematically alongside knowledge and skills. Adults identify and model key words linked to stories, play, routines and curriculum content, supporting children to use increasingly precise vocabulary and longer sentences. Children are encouraged to combine words, explain ideas and begin to use language to reason, reflect and connect their thinking.</p>				<p>** Bolded statements identify foundational knowledge expectations.</p> <p>Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.</p> <p>Key skills show how children practise listening, understanding and using language to communicate and think. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat language, model responses and increase interaction rather than expecting children to respond independently.</p>		
	Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Autumn 1 Listening helps me understand and join in.	Autumn 2 Sentences help me be understood.	Spring 1 Vocabulary allows me to describe and explain.	Spring 2 Talk helps me connect socially.	Summer 1 Talk can describe events and stories.	Summer 2 Talk helps me plan, solve problems and reflect.
	Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>What children are coming to understand over time</i>	Listening helps me understand what is happening in stories, play and routines. Words can be used to talk about things that are not here.	Words can be combined to share meaning. The order of words can change what is meant.	Words can describe how things look, feel or happen. Choosing specific words can help explain ideas clearly.	Conversations involve taking turns and listening to others. Talking can help solve simple social problems.	Events happen in an order. Stories have characters and events.	Talking helps me plan what to do. I can use words to guide what I am doing. Some words help explain ideas (because, same, different).
	Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Remaining engaged in small group experiences Responding to instructions with support Showing understanding through action or talk	Using short sentences (often 3–5 words) Combining nouns and verbs Using simple pronouns and plurals.	Using descriptive vocabulary Naming familiar emotions Talking about simple actions or choices	Initiating conversations with peers Remaining involved in shared talk for several turns Using talk in pretend play	Talking about familiar stories Describing personal experiences Using time-related language	Verbalising plans during play Talking about choices and outcomes Using simple reasoning words (because, so)
	Adult Interaction Focus (ShREC Lens) <i>How adults support children's understanding through talk and interaction</i>	Support attention before speaking Use the child's name to refocus listening Reduce language load without reducing ambition Comment on good listening explicitly	Recast and expand children's sentences Model correct grammar without correction Model sentence structures in play Respond meaningfully to what the child says	Introduce precise, relevant vocabulary Explain word meanings in context Repeat and revisit new vocabulary Encourage elaboration through comments	Model social language explicitly Join play to extend dialogue, not dominate it Scaffold peer-to-peer talk Narrate social situations sensitively	Model sequencing language Use shared texts as language anchors Support recall through open comments Value meaning over accuracy	Think aloud as a model Model problem-solving talk Use sustained shared thinking prompts Give time and space for responses
	Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	listen, look, join, understand	sentence, word, say, tell, join	describe, explain, because, think	talk, listen, turn, share, explain	first, then, next, because, explain, plan	explain, because, remember, plan, organise

Physical Development	Physical development is supported through daily opportunities for movement, deliberate practice with tools and consistent routines that promote independence, strength and coordination. Adults closely monitor children’s posture, grip, stamina and control, responding with targeted support and repeated practice where needed. Children’s physical health and development are recognised as essential to their learning, self-regulation and participation.					
Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	I can control my body when I move and sit. Their body can move in controlled ways, including stopping, starting and changing direction. Strong core muscles help them sit upright and move safely. Movement takes place in shared spaces and needs awareness of others. Keeping their body steady helps their hands work with more control.	I can stay steady and use both hands together. Balance improves with practice. Stable shoulders support control of hands and arms. Using one hand while the other steadies gives greater accuracy. Carrying and transporting objects requires balance and control. Their body can stay steady for longer during seated activities.	My body can stay stable while my hands work carefully. Stability helps movements flow more smoothly. Both sides of the body can work together in coordinated and purposeful ways. Wrist movement helps refine mark making. Sitting upright supports longer periods of focused work.	I can move smoothly and control my marks. Movements can be combined smoothly and confidently. Stronger fingers allow more controlled tool use. Pre-writing shapes can be formed with growing accuracy. Practice improves stamina and coordination.	I can stay steady and work for longer. Good posture supports learning and tool use. Mark making can be controlled in size and direction. Sustained effort allows them to complete physical and table tasks.	My body is ready for writing and independence. Efficient movement shows growing whole-body control. Steady shoulders and wrists support early writing. Their grip is becoming more refined and controlled. Fine motor control allows them to complete tasks independently. Managing routines requires physical control and coordination.
Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Starting, stopping and changing direction confidently Moving safely around others in shared spaces Maintaining upright posture during seated tasks Holding tools with increasing control Managing toileting, dressing and belongings with less support	Balancing for longer periods Climbing using coordinated upper and lower body movement Using one hand to hold while the other works Making deliberate marks using controlled movements Carrying and transporting objects steadily Fastening and unfastening clothing with growing control.	Moving smoothly between positions e.g., sitting to standing. Crossing the midline during play and mark making Using controlled wrist movements when drawing Sitting and focusing during longer table tasks Copying simple lines and shapes	Combining movements smoothly in climbing and play Using fingers to control tools more precisely Forming recognisable pre-writing shapes Sustaining fine motor tasks to completion Managing dressing and hygiene routines more independently.	Maintaining posture during extended seated work Controlling the size and direction of marks Using tools with increased accuracy Coordinating movements during group games Sustaining physical effort during active play	Moving confidently across varied equipment Balancing while carrying or manipulating objects Using a more refined grip during drawing and writing Completing table tasks independently Managing daily routines with minimal adult support Managing dressing and hygiene routines independently and with increasing efficiency
Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children’s understanding over time</i>	Clear boundaries and expectations for controlled movement. Adults reinforce upright posture at tables. Provision allows movement in shared spaces safely. The coat flip technique is explicitly taught and practised daily.	Activities that require one hand to stabilise and one to manipulate (e.g., cutting, drawing, etc.) Adults deliberately model this during mark making and construction. Balance challenges built into outdoor play. Adults resist over-helping during dressing routines.	Planned activities that require crossing the midline. Adults explicitly model wrist movement separate from shoulder movement. Daily practice of simple pre-writing lines and shapes. Seated tasks gradually lengthened.	Daily pre-writing shape practice with attention to smoothness. Fine motor strengthening through practical tasks (threading, cutting, malleable play). Adults reinforce completing tasks without rushing.	Length of seated and fine motor tasks deliberately increased. Adults reinforce posture and sustained effort. Group games that require coordinated movement.	Grip and shoulder stability closely monitored during writing. Adults intervene early if grasp remains immature. Independent task completion expected. Encouraging independence within known routines.
Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	control, space, near, far, around, steady	balance, stable, hold, steady, careful	both sides, across, middle, smooth, turn	shape, line, straight, curved, circle, control	posture, upright, longer, careful, control	grip, hold, control, size, direction
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Key skills show how children practise controlling and coordinating their bodies and movements. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat experiences and adapt the level of support rather than increasing physical demands.						

In Nursery, literacy builds on strong foundations of oral language, with children learning that sounds, words, stories and marks carry meaning and are used to communicate with others. Stories and books are a central driver of the curriculum and are revisited regularly to support anticipation, enjoyment and language development through high-quality dialogic book talk. Children experience daily pre-phonics through songs, rhymes, sound play and oral blending modelled by adults, alongside purposeful mark making and interactive writing where adults scribe children’s ideas and re-read them together. Formal phonics teaching is introduced only when children are developmentally ready, typically in the summer term. Adults work in partnership with families to encourage shared stories, rhymes and talk at home, strengthening continuity between home and nursery.

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Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.

Key skills show how children practise engaging with sounds, stories, books and early mark making. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat shared experiences and model meaning rather than moving learning on.

		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Literacy	Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Listening to Sounds and Making Marks	Rhymes, Initial Sounds and Meaningful Marks	Blending Sounds and Planning Marks	Sound Order and Emerging Letter Knowledge	Linking Sounds, Letters and Writing	Using Sounds and Writing to Share Meaning
	Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	Sounds, stories, words and marks help us make sense of the world and share ideas. Sounds can be heard, noticed and talked about. Marks can be made using different parts of the body and simple tools. Spoken stories can be listened to and talked about.	Some words sound the same at the end (rhyme). Some words start with the same sound. Repetition helps us remember words, actions and stories. Marks can stand for people, objects or ideas.	Spoken words can be heard as whole words or said in sounds. Words can be heard as separate sounds that are heard together. Marks can be made on purpose to stand for ideas, messages or objects in play.	Sounds happen in an order within words. Changing the order of sounds can change the word. Some letters represent sounds. Events in stories happen in an order.	Some sounds can be linked to letters. Writing can be used to represent spoken words. New words from stories can be used in talk and play.	Words are made up of sounds that happen in an order. Letters represent sounds. Writing can be used to share ideas and messages with others. We can talk about what happened first and next.
	Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Listen and respond to environmental and body sounds. Join in with songs, rhymes and repeated refrains. Show interest in books, pictures and shared stories. Explore large-scale mark making using whole-arm and hand movements.	Join in with familiar rhymes, songs and stories through repetition. Copy rhythms, vocal patterns and actions. Notice initial sounds in familiar words, particularly names. Make repeated marks and sometimes talk about what they represent. Follow segmented instructions within routines (put on your c-oa-t) with gestures to support.	Respond to changes in sound (e.g., loud/quiet, fast/slow). Begin to join in with simple oral blending during play and routines. Use marks purposefully in play	Experiment with orally segmenting and blending simple words. Recognise a small number of letters, particularly from their own name. Use marks purposefully in play	Orally blend familiar words with adult support. Begin to use letters meaningfully in play Begin to write own name, or parts of it, with support	Attempt oral blending in familiar contexts. Write own name, or some of it, with increasing independence. Use marks, letters and symbols meaningfully in play and routines. Talk about what has been written and what it means.
	Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children’s understanding over time</i>	Daily shared reading with clear book-handling routines Adults explicitly introduce and revisit key story vocabulary Listening walks/ sound games Daily shared songs and rhymes Listening walks, sound games and musical play. Large-scale mark making indoors and outdoors as part of continuous provision. Adults model sound play and oral blending naturally in routines (put on your c-oa-t, coat)	Rhymes and songs repeated frequently across the day Syllable awareness through names and familiar words Alliteration games using names and objects Sound play using names and familiar words. Purposeful mark making in role-play areas. Adults model oral blending during play and routines, encouraging children to join in or follow the segmented instruction.	Broad phonological awareness experiences - rhyme, syllables, initial sounds, sound play Sound games using voices, instruments and the environment. Oral blending games embedded in routines and play (Fred Talk), without expectation of secure use. Interactive writing- adults scribe children’s spoken messages and re-read together Role-play areas supported with meaningful writing opportunities. Fine motor development woven throughout provision.	Sound sequencing games and oral rehearsal. Continued adult modelling of oral blending, adjusted to individual readiness. Letter exposure through names, stories and the environment. Shared stories revisited to support talk about events and meaning. Print directionality modelled during shared reading and writing Re-reading shared writing to support meaning	Short, targeted Set 1 phonics sessions for children who are ready. Oral blending continues to be modelled and practised alongside phonics. Name writing supported through daily routines and meaningful play. Writing opportunities embedded across provision.	Continued revisiting of key songs, rhymes and stories. Writing for real purposes across play and routines. Adult support focused on meaning, intention and message. Continued modelling of oral blending. Adults talk about audience and purpose (Who/what is this for?)
	Concept Vocabulary	sound, mark, story, book, page	rhyme, same sound, start sound, mark	sound, syllable, blend, mark, idea	sound order, letter, name, word	sound, letter, write, name, word	word, sound, letter, message, meaning

In Nursery, children deepen their understanding that mathematics helps them make sense of quantities, space and the world around them. The curriculum prioritises number sense and spatial reasoning, with number, spatial understanding and measures taught together through play, routines and interaction rather than as isolated areas. Children learn to notice, compare and reason about small quantities before counting is introduced as a purposeful tool. Subitising, counting and cardinality are revisited and strengthened across the year through daily routines, play and interaction. Alongside this, children develop spatial understanding through movement, construction and small-world play, using positional language and exploring shape, fit and routes in meaningful contexts. Measures are experienced through real materials and comparison, helping children notice difference and change before formal units are introduced. Adults support children to explain their thinking through talk, gesture and action, building secure conceptual understanding that prepares them confidently for Reception.

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Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.

Key skills show how children practise using early number, spatial and pattern ideas through play and exploration. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat experiences and model mathematical thinking rather than introducing new content.

	Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
		Seeing and Comparing Small Groups	Counting to Check What We See	Knowing How Many Without Recounting	Seeing and Counting Groups Within 5	Seeing Parts That Make a Whole (Within 5)	Being Confident with Numbers We Know
Mathematics	Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	Quantities can be compared (more/fewer/same) Small quantities (1–3) can be recognised without counting. Position words describe where objects are in relation to other objects and people. Shapes can be identified and described by their features (sides, corners, curved edges).	Counting links number words to objects (1:1) Shapes can be composed/decomposed, turning/flipping supports fit A repeating pattern is made of a unit that repeats in the same order.	The last number counted tells the total (cardinality) Quantity doesn't change when rearranged (early conservation) Objects look different when turned, viewpoint matters	5 is a whole that can be seen in parts (structured images) 5-frames support visualising number (cap here in Nursery) Directions and routes can be followed and described	Numbers within 5 can be composed/decomposed Shapes can be combined to make other shapes, shapes exist within shapes Repeating patterns can be created, extended and checked against a rule.	Subitising, counting and cardinality are connected Scale models represent real spaces, maps show routes/relationships (early, simple)
	Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Subitising to 3, noticing change Using comparison language accurately Following/using position words in play (in, under, next to)	1:1 counting to 3 (within routines) Counting to confirm a subitised set Solving 'will it fit?' problems, rotating pieces to fit puzzles/tracks Copy and continue a simple repeating pattern (e.g., AB)	Answer 'how many?' without recounting (to 3) Give-N from a larger set (to 3) - crucial cardinality understanding. Rearranging groups and holding the total steady, rotating/turning objects intentionally	Structured subitising to 5 (frames, fingers, dot patterns) Counting to 5 accurately Following/giving simple directions with landmarks, building obstacle courses	'I can see 3 and 2' talk (conceptual subitising within 5) Solving 'one more / one less' within 5 through structure Making/spotting shapes within constructions and pictures, building arches/enclosures Create, extend and check a repeating pattern.	Reliable counting to 5, stable cardinality, fewer recounting habits Using 5-frames fluently to reason ('spaces left') Creating simple small-world layouts and describing routes, interpreting very simple maps/photos
	Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children's understanding over time</i>	Notice when children compare quantities visually, for example lining up groups of objects. Name more, fewer and the same consistently. Delay counting until children have looked closely. Use snack and tidy-up to compare groups naturally.	Use counting in routines to confirm quantities, such as checking how many plates are needed. Count alongside children using objects, not fingers in the air. Notice which children rely on counting and which recognise quantities without it. Support some children through focused interaction using small sets of objects.	State totals clearly and repeat them after objects are rearranged, for example when items are moved on a table. Notice children who recount automatically. Intervene using gesture and restating the total rather than prompting recounting. In routines, ask How many now? when nothing has changed.	Notice use of small groups and structured arrangements, such as objects placed in rows or lines. Model accurate counting and directional language. Support movement and routes through play, for example obstacle courses or track building. Use lining up and transitions to practise counting within 5.	Notice combining and separating during construction and play, such as building and rebuilding with blocks. Use part-whole language as children make and change structures. Watch how children explain what they have made. During snack and sharing routines, highlight parts and totals.	Notice children applying known numbers across the environment, including outdoors. Encourage description of quantities, routes and positions, for example in small-world play or map making. Address remaining gaps through focused interaction. Use routines to revisit familiar quantities with confidence.
	Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	more, fewer, same, different, group, compare, notice, in, under, big, small, subitise	count, number, how many, last, altogether, shape, turn, fit, check, next to, on top, full, empty	how many, total, still the same, change, notice, look carefully, move, around, big, small	one, two, three, four, five, group, same number, next to, through, between, heavy, light	part, whole, split, share, make, altogether, change, build, combine, full, empty	number, group, more, fewer, same, different, explain, check, turn, fit, long, short

In Nursery, children are learning to talk about the world rather than just experience it. They notice more, ask questions and begin to compare what they see. Children still arrive with very different experiences, so our curriculum focuses on a small number of important ideas that are revisited often. Children explore living things, people who help us, places and routines so they can begin to describe what is the same, what is different and why things happen. Learning is rooted in play, talk and hands-on experiences, because this is how young children make sense of new ideas. Cultural traditions, languages and celebrations are woven into everyday learning so children grow in understanding and respect for others without being overwhelmed.

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Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.

Key skills show how children practise observing, exploring and talking about the world around them. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, revisit experiences and model thinking rather than expecting children to explain or remember facts.

		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
		How have I grown and who do I belong with?	Who helps us and how do we stay safe?	How do I know if something is alive?	How do plants grow and change?	Why do living things live in different places?	How do tools help people do things?
Understanding the World Nursery: describe and compare	Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>						
	Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	People change as they grow (bigger, older, able to do more). Families can look different. Daily routines help us stay healthy (e.g., handwashing, toileting, rest, food). Some things happened before now, and we can talk about them (e.g., when I was a baby / in the holidays).	Some people do jobs that help us at home, in school and in the community (e.g., crossing patrol, doctor, shop worker). Rules help keep us safe in familiar places (e.g., indoors/outdoors rules, road safety routines). My local area has places and features I recognise and name.	Living things grow and change. Living things need care to stay well (water, food, suitable handling, suitable place). Some things are not living.	Plants grow from seeds. Plants change as they grow. Plants can grow in different places if they have what they need (soil/light/water).	Animals live in places that help them survive. Different animals live best in places that meet their needs (food, shelter, safety). People can help living things or harm them (litter, damage plants, rough handling).	Machines and tools help people do jobs. Different tools are chosen for different jobs (the tool needs to match the task). I can do more things than I could before.
	Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Describe what they did and what happened. Sort experiences into same and different. Talk about past and present in familiar contexts.	Describe places. Talk about what rules are for. Talk about how people help us.	Describe what happened when things changed. Group living and non-living things. Use simple reasons to explain ideas.	Describe changes. Notice similarities and differences between plants. Connect care to growth.	Describe environments. Match animals to places. Talk about ways people can help living things.	Select tools for a task. Talk about what they have made or done. Use simple problem-solving strategies.
	Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children's understanding over time</i>	Home languages and family traditions. Family stories and photographs. Autumn changes as lived experience.	Encounters with people who help us in everyday life. Religious and cultural celebrations as shared experiences. Weather affecting routines and clothing.	Ice, frost and melting experiences. Seasonal language used to describe changes. Cultural stories involving animals.	Drawing to notice plant changes. Spring as context for growth. Stories about plants from different cultures.	Sharing where their families live or come from. Caring for outdoor spaces. Seasonal changes outdoors.	Cultural tools used at home. 'If' language in problem-solving. Looking back at changes across the year using photos or objects.
	Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	grow, change, family, before, now, same, different	job, rule, helper, safe, because	living, non-living, grow, need, change, notice	plant, grow, water, before, after, change	environment, animal, home, need, help, because	tool, machine, use, change, if, explain

In Nursery, children are learning to use creative experiences to represent ideas, not just explore them. They begin to repeat actions with purpose, combine materials, and share pretend play with others. Children still need time, space and repetition, so the curriculum focuses on developing control, choice and meaning through art, music, movement and role play. We prioritise opportunities for children to experiment, practise and talk about what they are making, rather than rushing to finished products. Creative experiences are social as well as individual, helping children develop confidence, imagination and the ability to express ideas alongside others. This approach supports children to see themselves as creators and communicators.

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 Children are not expected to progress to later content unless these are secure. If they are not secure, teaching prioritises repetition, adaptation and targeted interaction.
 Expressive Arts and Design is the only area where a small number of skills are foundational, because without them children cannot take part in the learning itself. If these skills are not yet secure, adults slow down, repeat experiences and model choices rather than focusing on outcomes.

		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	
Expressive Arts and Design Nursery: Create and represent	Conceptual Focus: <i>Big Ideas children are building</i>	Exploring materials and marks	Repeating and patterning	Changing how things look and sound	Joining and building	Representing ideas	Improving through repetition	
	Core Knowledge to Secure: <i>what children are coming to understand over time</i>	Materials behave differently. Tools create different marks and effects.	Repetition creates patterns. Songs and rhymes have parts that repeat in the same order.	Changing how we move or press can change what happens. Sounds can be loud or quiet, fast or slow.	Materials can be joined to make something new. Pretend play can involve shared roles.	Marks, movements and sounds can be used to show ideas or meaning. Enclosed shapes can be used to represent objects.	Repeating actions, marks or movements can make them clearer or more controlled. Songs and sequences can be remembered.	
	Key Skills to Develop: <i>How children use, apply, explain and connect their understanding</i>	Explore materials with increasing purpose. Select tools based on interest or effect. Notice differences in marks, materials or movement.	Repeat actions, sounds and movements with more control. Join in with rhythmic songs. Take part in patterned movement or sound.	Try different actions. Notice what happens with actions change. Explore contrast through movement, sound and mark making.	Combine materials using simple joining methods. Coordinate movement, sound and action. Take part in pretend play with others.	Create enclosed shapes. Use drawing, movement or sound symbolically. Use marks, movement or sound to show ideas.	Repeat marks, models or performances with more control. Remember and perform familiar songs. Collaborate in shared expressive experiences.	
	Teaching Lens and Levers <i>How adults support children's understanding over time</i>	Texture exploration tables. Tool comparison stations. Large-scale drawing opportunities.	Pattern-making provocations. Rhythm and beat instruments. Familiar songs are repeated across routines.	Painting experiences that invite contrast (thick/thin, fast/slow) Sound exploration with varied instruments. Movement responding to music.	Junk modelling and construction areas. Role-play with open-ended props. Collaborative building spaces.	Opportunities for drawing for meaning. Movement and sound storytelling. Display spaces for symbolic work.	Revisiting favourite materials. Opportunities to share performances. Collaborative art spaces.	
	Possible artist exposure (not study) matched to children's developmental stage:							
		Anwar Jalal Shemza – simple shapes, repetition, bold contrast	Benjamin Britten – repeating musical phrases, listening again and again	Camille Saint-Saëns – clear contrasts in tempo and mood		Henri Rousseau – recognisable scenes, animals, people (supports 'this is my...')	Bridget Riley – repetition and visual rhythm (<i>used for looking, not copying</i>)	
Concept Vocabulary: <i>Words children need to hear, understand and begin to use as they build understanding</i>	mark, line, tool, soft, hard	pattern, repeat, same, beat	fast, slow, loud, quiet, change, notice	join, build, make, together	represent, shape, picture, idea	practice, again, improve, remember		