

Year R Curriculum Overview 2025-26

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Play and explore:
Engagement

Active Learning:
Motivation

Thinking creatively
and critically:
Thinking

Our curriculum provides rich opportunities for children to:

- **Play and Explore** by investigating, experimenting, and engaging with a broad range of experiences in a safe and stimulating environment.
- **Active Learning** by showing resilience, persistence, and a willingness to take risks, knowing their efforts are valued and supported.
- **Think Creatively and Critically** by making connections, developing their own ideas, and solving problems in ways that make sense to them.

These characteristics guide our teaching strategies, the organisation of our learning environments, and the interactions between adults and children. They ensure that our curriculum not only meets statutory requirements but also nurtures a lifelong love of learning, independence, and the foundations for future success.

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Prime Area

Communication and Language

<p>Listening and attention</p>	<p>Listen to familiar stories and rhymes</p> <p>Focus attention</p>	<p>Listen to others one-to-one and in small groups when the conversation interests them</p> <p>Join in with repeated refrains in rhymes and stories</p>	<p>As for Terms 1 and 2 with increasing complexity of stories and length of conversation</p>	<p>As for Terms 1 and 2 with increasing complexity of stories and length of conversation</p>	<p>Demonstrate listening behaviours in a variety of situations</p>	
<p>Understanding</p>	<p>Follow directions (not intently focused)</p>	<p>Show understanding of prepositions</p> <p>Follow instructions with more elements</p> <p>Begin to understand how and why questions</p>	<p>Able to follow a story without pictures or props</p>	<p>Listen and respond to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion</p>	<p>Understand a range of complex sentence structures including negatives, plurals and tense markers</p> <p>Understands questions such as who; why; when; where and how</p>	<p>Beginning to understand humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes</p>
<p>Speaking</p>	<p>Uses talk to explain what is happening and what might happen next</p> <p>Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play</p>	<p>Recreate roles and experiences in play situations</p>	<p>Begin to use more complex sentences using 'and' and 'because'</p>	<p>Use language in recalling past experiences</p> <p>Retell a simple past event in correct order</p> <p>Introduce a storyline or</p>	<p>Question why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. who, what, when, how</p>	<p>Talks more extensively about things that are of particular importance to them</p>

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				narrative into their play		
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Prime Area

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

<p>Making relationships</p>	<p>Learning rules and routines e.g. tidying up Building new relationships with peers and adults</p>	<p>Include others when working and playing</p>	<p>Work well with a partner or in a group Helping others</p>	<p>Try to keep themselves and others safe</p>	<p>Resolve friendship issues as they occur</p>	<p>Know who to ask for help</p>
<p>Sense of self</p>	<p>Working with others e.g. sharing and turn taking</p>	<p>Accept that everyone is different Use kind words</p>	<p>Stay motivated when doing something challenging</p>	<p>Know why it is important to wash hands</p>	<p>Make a healthy choice (food)</p>	
<p>Understanding emotions</p>	<p>Managing my feelings</p>		<p>Set a simple goal and work towards it</p>		<p>Know how to help themselves and others when they feel upset</p>	<p>Express how they feel when change happens Talk about worries and things to look forward to in Year 1</p>

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Prime Area

Physical Development

<p>Fine motor skills</p>	<p>Dough disco</p> <p>Write from the start (Book 1):</p> <p>Drawing/painting dots</p> <p>Drawing circles – clockwise and anticlockwise</p> <p>Drawing triangles and squares</p>	<p>Dough disco</p> <p>Write from the start (Book 2):</p> <p>Drawing circles inside and outside of squares and triangles</p> <p>Bumpy lines</p>	<p>Write from the start (Book 3):</p> <p>Horizontal and vertical lines</p> <p>Foreground/background</p> <p>Visual closure</p>	<p>Write from the start (Book 4):</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Fluency</p> <p>Understanding size</p>	<p>Write from the start (Book 5):</p> <p>Spatial organization</p> <p>Write from the start (Book 6):</p> <p>Symmetry</p> <p>Orientation and directionality</p>	<p>Write from the start (Book 7):</p> <p>Detailed motor control</p> <p>Spatial organization</p> <p>Write from the start (Book 8):</p> <p>Perceptual skills</p> <p>Fluency, rhythm and flow</p>
<p>Gross motor skills</p>	<p>BEAM:</p> <p>Develop balance</p> <p>Develop co-ordination</p>	<p>Agility:</p> <p>Standing on one foot</p> <p>Jumping on the spot with two feet together</p> <p>Walking on tiptoes</p> <p>Able to walk along a line</p> <p>Able to balance on a plank</p> <p>Able to hold a balance</p>	<p>Agility:</p> <p>Move at different speeds, change direction and stop promptly</p> <p>Can move in a variety of ways: skipping, hopping, jumping, running, climbing, crawling</p>	<p>Obstacle courses:</p> <p>Travel confidently under, over, around and through equipment</p> <p>Jump off an object, landing appropriately using their hands, arms and body to stabilise and balance themselves.</p> <p>Jump over an object landing with both feet together.</p> <p>Run around obstacles, negotiating space.</p>	<p>Bean bag/Ball skills:</p> <p>Catch a ball by holding their arms out and pulling it into their body</p> <p>Catch a ball that has been bounced</p> <p>Throw a ball underarm</p> <p>Throw with accuracy</p> <p>Throw a ball to a peer</p>	<p>Ball skills:</p> <p>Kick a ball forwards</p> <p>Kick a ball at a target</p> <p>Use a bat to hit a ball</p>

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Specific Area						
Literacy						
Word Reading (see Twinkl phonics)	Level 1: Environmental sounds Instrumental sounds Body percussion Rhythm and rhyme Alliteration Voice sounds Oral blending and segmenting Recognise own name	Level 2: Level 2 GPCs Blending Level 2 GPCs Tricky words	Complete Level 2: Level 2 GPCs Blending Level 2 GPCs Tricky words	Level 3: Level 3 GPCs Blending Level 3 GPCs Tricky words	Complete Level 3: Level 3 GPCs Blending Level 3 GPCs Tricky words	Level 4: CVCC words CCVC words Adjacent consonants Polysyllabic words Three-letter adjacent consonants
Comprehension	Listen to and joins in with stories and poems, when reading one-to-one and in small groups	Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories	Talks about events and principal characters in stories and suggests how the story might end	Describe main story settings, events and principal characters in increasing detail	Listens to a range of different text types (fiction and non-fiction) Know that information can be retrieved from books, computers and mobile digital devices	Recall and discuss stories or information
Writing	Story dough	Drawing Club Letter recognition, formation and direction	Drawing Club CVC word writing	Drawing Club Phrase writing with finger spaces	Drawing Club Short sentence writing with full stops	Drawing Club Short sentence writing with capital letters and full stops

Specific Area

Maths

<p>Number</p>	<p>Subitise within 3</p> <p>Explore how all numbers are made of ones</p> <p>Focus on composition of 3 and 4</p> <p>Subitise objects and sounds (including circles and triangles)</p>	<p>Focus on the five-ness of five using 1 hand and the die pattern for 5. Five frames.</p> <p>Explore the concept of whole and part</p> <p>Focus on the composition of 3, 4 and 5</p> <p>Match numerals to quantities within 10</p>	<p>Subitise within 5, focusing on die patterns (including squares and rectangles)</p> <p>Composition – focus on 5</p> <p>Composition of 6 and 7</p>	<p>Composition of 7</p> <p>Doubles – explore how some numbers can be made with two equal parts</p>	<p>Counting larger sets and things that cannot be seen</p> <p>Subitising to 6 – including in structured arrangements</p> <p>Composition – 5 and 1 more, 2 more etc</p> <p>Composition of 10</p>	<p>Review and assess:</p> <p>Subitise to 5. Introduce the rekenrek.</p> <p>Automatic recall of number bonds to 5</p> <p>Composition of numbers to 10</p>
<p>Numerical patterns</p>	<p>Match sort and compare (WR for two weeks)</p> <p>Focus on counting skills</p>	<p>Comparisons of sets just by looking. Use the language of comparison – more than and fewer than</p> <p>Focus on counting skills</p> <p>Use the language of comparison – more than, fewer than and equal number.</p> <p>Practice object counting skills</p>	<p>Match numerals to quantities within 5</p> <p>Counting – focus on ordinality and the staircase pattern seeing that each number is one more than the previous number</p> <p>Compare sets and use the language of comparison – more than, fewer than and equal number and make unequal sets equal.</p>	<p>Focus on the staircase pattern and ordering numbers</p> <p>Focus on ordering of numbers to 8</p> <p>Use the language of less than</p> <p>Sorting numbers according to attributes – odd and even numbers</p>	<p>Comparison – linked to ordinality. Playing track games.</p>	<p>Comparison</p> <p>Number patterns</p> <p>Counting</p> <p>Visualise, build and map (WR)</p>

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		Verbal counting beyond 20				
Geometry	Subitise objects and sounds (including circles and triangles)		Subitise within 5, focusing on die patterns (including squares and rectangles)			

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Specific Area						
Understanding the World						
Past and present		Remember and talk about significant events in their own experience using photographs, objects and stories			Know that they started as a baby but have since grown and changed	
People, culture and communities	<p>Show interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them</p> <p>Knows some of the things that make them unique, and can talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends or family</p> <p>Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society</p>	<p>Know that other people’s families may have different celebrations.</p> <p>Know some of the traditions that occur within different celebrations.</p>	<p>Comments on features of their familiar world they see in home and school using the vocabulary field, building, road, house etc.</p>	<p>Talk about how environments in stories and images are different to the environment they live in</p> <p>Talk about how the lives of people in stories might be similar and different to our lives.</p>		
The Natural World	<p align="center">Observe weather across the seasons Know that some trees change in the four seasons Know different weather types</p>					
					Know the names of familiar animals and common body parts	Know the names for basic plant parts

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					<p>e.g. legs, wings, fur, tail.</p> <p>Know animals live in different types of places (e.g. hot and cold)</p> <p>Know where animals might be found on the school site</p>	<p>Know that seeds grow into plants</p> <p>Observe and draw plants in the immediate environment.</p>
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Specific Area						
Expressive Arts and Design						
Creating with materials	Make use of props and materials to role play characters from own narratives and familiar stories					
	Explore mark making with a range of drawing materials Investigate marks and patterns when drawing	Investigate how to make large and small movements when drawing	Explore paint, using hands as a tool Explore what happens when paint colours mix	Explore and describe paint textures, for example mixing in other materials	Explore the properties of clay/playdough Use modelling tools to cut and shape Talk about colour, shape and texture	Investigate different ways of cutting e.g. straight, wavy lines Explore techniques for joining paper and other materials together Share and evaluate their own work
Being imaginative and expressive	Join in with singing nursery rhymes and songs Engage in imaginative play based on own ideas or first hand experience	Perform songs with others Play alongside other children who are engaged in the same play theme	Create representations of both imaginary and real-life ideas, events, people and objects Explore different types of spontaneous movement in response to music	Introduce a story line or narrative into their own play Choose different instruments for their own imaginative purpose	Play cooperatively as part of a group to create, develop and act out an imaginary idea or narrative	