Early Years Curriculum at Thursfield

VISION

CURRICULUM FOR CHAMPIONS

At Thursfield Primary School, our Curriculum for Champions is a concept-driven curriculum where knowledge, skills and vocabulary are progressively developed through inspiring and engaging learning experiences. Within the Early Years, we provide the strong foundations children need to begin their learning journey, filling their suitcase with the knowledge, experiences, language and skills needed before continuing their journey through school with their 'Ticket to Anywhere'.

Our curriculum is underpinned by our school values:

WE CARE • WE SHARE • WE DARE TO DREAM

INTENT

At Thursfield Primary School, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, vocabulary and confidence needed to succeed in Modern British Life.

Our curriculum is built around ten key concepts which are revisited and deepened throughout Nursery and Reception:

Celebrations
Seasons
Weather
Plants
Trees
Animals
Insects
Ourselves
Families
Community

These concepts have been carefully chosen because they help children understand themselves, their local community and the wider world. Through repeated encounters with these concepts, children develop increasingly secure knowledge and understanding and are able to make meaningful connections between new learning and prior experiences.

WE CARE

We understand that starting school can be a significant step for young children and their families. Through high-quality care, nurturing relationships and effective transition arrangements, we create an environment where every child feels safe, valued and ready to learn.

The prime areas of learning sit at the heart of our curriculum and provision. We recognise that children's communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development are fundamental to future success. We are committed to providing the best for every child. We recognise children's individual starting points and ensure that all children, particularly our disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs, receive the support, experiences and opportunities they need to thrive.

WE SHARE

We recognise parents and carers as children's first educators and place great importance on developing strong partnerships between home and school.

Through effective communication via Class DoJo and Famly, workshops, transition opportunities and shared celebrations of learning, we work collaboratively to support every child's development.

Ongoing assessment allows practitioners to understand what children know, what they can do and what they need to learn next. This ensures learning opportunities remain purposeful, responsive and ambitious.

WE DARE TO DREAM

Our ambitious curriculum has been carefully designed to develop children's knowledge, understanding and vocabulary through a progression of experiences from ages 2–5.

Language development sits at the heart of everything we do. We believe vocabulary is the gateway to learning and therefore explicitly teach, revisit and embed ambitious vocabulary across all areas of learning and continuous provision.

Knowledge, skills and vocabulary are deliberately revisited through direct teaching, continuous provision, story texts, investigations, visits, visitors and child-initiated learning. Through these opportunities, children develop curiosity, creativity and a deep understanding of the world around them.

As children progress through the Early Years, opportunities for sustained thinking, problem solving, independence and guided learning increase to support their successful transition into Key Stage 1.

By the end of Reception, we aim for all children to be confident communicators, independent learners and curious thinkers who can apply their knowledge and vocabulary across a range of contexts and are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

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OUR CURRICULUM STORY

Through our Curriculum for Champions, children develop the knowledge, vocabulary, skills and experiences they need to become confident learners and successful members of society.
Our curriculum is organised around ten key concepts:

🎉 Celebrations
🍂 Seasons
☁️ Weather
🌱 Plants
🌳 Trees
🦊 Animals
🐞 Insects
😊 Ourselves
🏠 Families
🏘️ Community

These concepts are revisited and deepened throughout Nursery and Reception, enabling children to know more, remember more and make meaningful connections within their learning.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN AT THURSFIELD

Our teaching is underpinned by our whole-school pedagogical model:
Connect → Explain → Example → Attempt → Apply → Connect

🔗 CONNECT

Learning begins by connecting new experiences to children's existing knowledge and understanding.
Children:
Recall previous learning - Discuss prior experiences - Make links between concepts - Share observations and ideas.

💬 EXPLAIN

New knowledge and vocabulary are explicitly taught through:
High-quality interactions - Story texts - Discussion - Investigation - Direct teaching - Meaningful experiences.

👀 EXAMPLE

Practitioners model:
Rich language - Thinking processes - Investigation skills - Problem solving - Learning behaviours.

✋ ATTEMPT

Children are given supported opportunities to practise and explore new learning.
Children:
Try new skills with adult guidance - Experiment with ideas and resources - Practise using new vocabulary - Develop confidence through supported exploration - Learn from mistakes and refine their thinking.
This stage allows adults to scaffold learning and identify misconceptions before children apply learning independently.

🎯 APPLY

Children apply knowledge, skills and vocabulary through:
Continuous provision - Play - Investigation - Exploration - First-hand experiences.
Children demonstrate learning independently and use knowledge, vocabulary and skills in meaningful contexts.

🔗 CONNECT

Learning is revisited regularly so that children:
Remember more over time - Deepen understanding - Strengthen vocabulary - Connect new learning to previous experiences - Transfer learning across the curriculum.

Regular opportunities for retrieval and application ensure children develop secure knowledge and understanding that can be built upon throughout their educational journey.

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WHAT WE WANT CHILDREN TO LEARN

KNOWLEDGE

Children develop progressively deeper understanding of the ten key curriculum concepts.

VOCABULARY

Children acquire and confidently use increasingly ambitious and age-appropriate vocabulary.

SKILLS

Children develop transferable skills including:

Communication
Observation
Comparison
Remembering and Recalling
Questioning
Explaining
Investigating
Problem Solving
Collaboration
Independence
Self-Regulation and Executive Function

THE GOLDEN THREAD THROUGH OUR CURRICULUM

Curriculum Concepts
↓
Knowledge Progression
↓
Vocabulary Progression
↓
Skills Development
↓
Connect → Explain → Example → Attempt → Apply → Connect
↓
Continuous Provision
↓
Assessment Checkpoints
↓
Reception End Points
↓
KS1 Readiness

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Early Years team provides a nurturing, stimulating and safe environment that supports our ambitious, coherently planned and carefully sequenced curriculum.
Learning is organised around ten key concepts which are revisited throughout the year and across the EYFS. Planned opportunities for retrieval, revisiting and application enable children to make connections between previous learning and new experiences, supporting long-term understanding.

CURRICULUM CONTENT PROGRESSION

Each concept contains clearly defined knowledge progression statements identifying what children should know and understand at:

2-3 years - Nursery 1 - Caterpillars
3-4 years - Nursery 2 - Butterflies
4-5 years - Reception - Little Explorers

This ensures knowledge builds progressively over time.

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VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Language development sits at the heart of our curriculum.

Children encounter rich vocabulary through:
High-quality story reading - Adult modelling - Sustained shared thinking - Explicit vocabulary teaching - Continuous provision - Meaningful experiences.

Vocabulary progression documents ensure children encounter increasingly sophisticated language as they move through the Early Years.

CURRICULUM SKILLS PROGRESSION

Children progressively develop transferable skills including:
Communication
Observation
Comparison
Remembering and Recalling
Questioning
Explaining
Investigating
Problem Solving
Collaboration
Independence
Self-Regulation and Executive Function
These transferable skills are explicitly revisited through our continuous provision areas and support children to apply knowledge and vocabulary independently.

CONTINUOUS PROVISION

Continuous provision has been carefully planned to support and reinforce curriculum learning.

Each area of provision contains:
Core vocabulary - Progressive vocabulary - Opportunities to revisit knowledge - Opportunities to apply skills independently.

Adults consistently model agreed vocabulary to strengthen understanding and language development.

MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES

Learning is enriched through:
High-quality texts - Seasonal investigations - Outdoor learning - Visits and visitors - Local community experiences - Celebrations and cultural events - First-hand experiences.

These provide meaningful contexts in which children can apply knowledge, vocabulary and skills.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is ongoing and informs future learning.

Practitioners gather evidence through:
Observation - Discussion - Child-initiated play - Adult-led activities - Independent application of knowledge and vocabulary.

Assessment checkpoints linked to each curriculum concept enable practitioners to monitor children's developing understanding and ensure progression towards Reception end points.

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IMPACT

Children leave the Early Years with a secure foundation of knowledge, skills and vocabulary that prepares them for future learning and success within the wider Curriculum for Champions.

Through repeated opportunities to revisit and deepen their understanding of key curriculum concepts, children develop a rich understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world. They are able to make meaningful connections between previous experiences and new learning, demonstrating that knowledge has been embedded and retained over time.

Children leave Reception as confident communicators who can use an increasingly ambitious vocabulary to discuss their learning, explain their thinking and engage in meaningful conversations.

They demonstrate:
Curiosity about the world around them
Positive attitudes towards learning
Independence and resilience
Strong communication skills
Effective self-regulation
Secure understanding of key curriculum concepts

Children are able to apply knowledge, vocabulary and skills within provision, discussion, investigation and adult-directed learning, demonstrating deep and transferable understanding.

Assessment information, professional dialogue and observation show that children know more, remember more and can do more over time.

As a result, children achieve well from their individual starting points and are fully prepared for the transition into Key Stage 1. They leave the Early Years with the knowledge, language, skills and learning behaviours needed to continue their Thursfield journey with confidence and their 'Ticket to Anywhere'.

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EYFS KNOWLEDGE PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK (AGES 2-5)

This progression map outlines the key knowledge and understanding children will develop through repeated experiences and revisiting of curriculum concepts from ages 2-5.

CELEBRATIONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notice special events.	Talk about celebrations they have attended.	Compare different celebrations and traditions.
Join in with simple celebrations.	Recognise that families celebrate in different ways.	Explain why celebrations are important to people.
Recognise birthday celebrations.	Begin to recognise familiar celebrations such as Christmas, Eid and birthdays.	Know key features of a range of celebrations.
Enjoy celebration routines.	Share experiences of celebrations.	Discuss similarities and differences between celebrations.

SEASONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notice changes in the outdoor environment.	Name some seasons.	Name all four seasons.
Experience different weather conditions.	Describe seasonal changes.	Explain how seasons affect the environment.
Observe leaves, flowers and weather.	Talk about what happens in different seasons.	Compare the characteristics of each season.
Talk about clothing for different weather.	Identify changes they can see around them.	Predict seasonal changes throughout the year.

WEATHER		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Experience different weather.	Name common weather types.	Describe daily weather patterns.
Notice rain, sunshine and wind.	Observe and discuss weather changes.	Explain how weather influences daily life.
Begin to use weather words.	Identify suitable clothing for different weather.	Compare weather across seasons.
Look at the weather outside.	Talk about today's weather.	Record and discuss observations.

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PLANTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Explore flowers and plants.	Identify common plants and flowers.	Understand what plants need to grow.
Notice colours and textures.	Observe changes as plants grow.	Explain the basic life cycle of a plant.
Help water plants.	Know plants need water and sunlight.	Compare different plants and their features.
Talk about plants in the environment.	Care for growing plants.	Observe and record changes over time.

TREES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notice trees in the environment.	Identify features of trees.	Understand seasonal changes in trees.
Explore bark, leaves and sticks.	Compare different types of leaves.	Explain how trees change throughout the year.
Collect natural materials.	Observe changes in trees over time.	Recognise that trees provide habitats.
Talk about what they can see.	Name parts of a tree.	Compare evergreen and deciduous trees.

ANIMALS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Recognise familiar animals.	Name a variety of animals.	Group animals by features and habitats.
Make animal sounds.	Talk about where animals live.	Explain basic animal needs.
Match animals to pictures.	Compare animals.	Describe similarities and differences.
Talk about pets.	Know some animals have babies.	Learn simple life cycles.

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INSECTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notice insects outdoors.	Name common insects.	Compare different insects.
Watch insects move.	Observe insects closely.	Understand that insects have different features.
Explore minibeasts through play.	Talk about where insects live.	Recognise the role insects play in nature.
Show curiosity about living things.	Identify insects from pictures.	Describe simple life cycles such as butterfly life cycles.

OURSELVES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Name parts of the body.	Talk about similarities and differences.	Understand what makes them unique.
Recognise themselves in photographs.	Describe themselves.	Describe personal strengths and interests.
Name basic feelings.	Talk about emotions.	Explain ways to manage feelings.
Talk about what they can do.	Recognise their preferences.	Reflect on their learning and achievements.

FAMILIES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Talk about family members.	Describe people in their family.	Understand that families can be different.
Recognise familiar people.	Share experiences from home.	Compare family traditions and experiences.
Talk about who lives at home.	Identify family roles.	Respect differences between families.
Look at family photographs.	Discuss family routines.	Explain why families are important.

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COMMUNITY		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Recognise familiar people in school.	Identify people who help us.	Understand roles within the local community.
Become familiar with school routines.	Talk about different jobs.	Explain how people contribute to society.
Explore places in their local environment.	Visit and discuss places in the community.	Compare different community roles.
Build relationships with others.	Understand how people help us.	Develop respect for different people and occupations.

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EYFS VOCABULARY PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK (AGES 2-5)

This progression framework outlines the key vocabulary children will acquire, revisit and apply through repeated experiences and teaching across the EYFS curriculum. Vocabulary is carefully sequenced from ages 2-5 to support children's communication, language development and understanding of the world.

Children encounter and use increasingly sophisticated vocabulary as they revisit curriculum concepts over time. Through explicit teaching, high-quality interactions, story texts, continuous provision and meaningful experiences, children develop the language needed to describe, explain, compare, question and communicate their learning.

This progression framework ensures that vocabulary develops alongside knowledge and skills, enabling children to build strong foundations for future learning and successful transition into Key Stage 1.

2-3 YEARS
Concrete, familiar naming vocabulary.

3-4 YEARS
Descriptive and categorising vocabulary.
Children begin to discuss and compare.

4-5 YEARS
More subject-specific language.
Supports explanation, understanding and reasoning.
Provides strong foundations for Key Stage 1.

CELEBRATIONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
party	celebrate	tradition
birthday	special	festival
cake	event	culture
present	family	belonging

WEATHER		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
rain	cloudy	forecast
sun	windy	temperature
snow	stormy	observe
wet	weather	record

SEASONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
hot	season	autumn
cold	spring	winter
rain	summer	temperature
sun	change	environment

TREES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
tree	trunk	evergreen
leaf	branch	deciduous
stick	bark	habitat
wood	roots	seasonal

PLANTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
flower	seed	roots
leaf	grow	stem
plant	water	petals
garden	soil	lifecycle

INSECTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
bug	minibeast	antennae
fly	habitat	wings
bee	garden	cocoon
spider	observe	lifecycle

ANIMALS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
pet	farm	habitat
animal	wild	offspring
dog	compare	mammal
cat	features	survive

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FAMILIES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
family	parent	relatives
home	sibling	generation
mummy	routine	tradition
daddy	caring	relationship

Alternatively, consider using:
grown-up
brother
sister
grandparent
to ensure inclusivity across family structures.

OURSELVES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
body	feelings	unique
face	emotions	identity
eyes	healthy	similarities
hands	exercise	differences

COMMUNITY		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
school	community	local area
teacher	occupation	responsibility
friend	helper	contribute
shop	role	service

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EYFS CURRICULUM SKILLS PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK (AGES 2-5)

This progression framework outlines the transferable skills children develop and apply across all curriculum concepts and areas of provision. These skills are explicitly modelled, practised and revisited throughout the EYFS, enabling children to become increasingly confident, independent and effective learners.

The skills progression supports children's ability to apply knowledge and vocabulary in different contexts and complements our knowledge and vocabulary progression frameworks.

COMMUNICATION		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Uses single words and simple phrases	Talks about experiences and interests	Explains ideas and experiences
Communicates wants and needs	Uses longer sentences	Uses curriculum vocabulary independently
Joins in with familiar conversations	Responds to questions appropriately	Maintains conversations
Responds to simple questions	Takes turns in conversations	Speaks confidently within groups

OBSERVING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notices objects and features in the environment	Describes what they can see	Makes detailed observations
Looks closely at people, animals and objects	Notices changes over time	Identifies significant features
Shows curiosity	Observes features carefully	Observes change over time
Points out things of interest	Talks about similarities and differences	Uses observations to explain ideas

REMEMBERING AND RECALLING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Recognises familiar objects and people	Recalls previous learning experiences	Recalls knowledge from previous learning
Remembers simple routines	Retells familiar events and stories	Connects new learning to prior knowledge
Recalls recent experiences	Makes links with previous experiences	Retains and applies vocabulary
Repeats familiar words and actions	Remembers key information	Uses remembered knowledge independently

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COMPARING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Notices when things are the same or different	Groups objects by features	Compares ideas, objects and experiences
Matches familiar objects	Identifies similarities and differences	Identifies patterns and relationships
Sorts simple objects	Explains simple comparisons	Explains similarities and differences
Uses basic comparison language	Sorts using given criteria	Justifies comparisons

QUESTIONING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Shows curiosity	Asks questions about learning	Asks purposeful questions
Uses simple questions	Shows interest in finding things out	Uses questions to deepen understanding
Seeks help when needed	Uses questions during play	Seeks information independently
Responds to adult questioning	Participates in discussions	Builds on answers given by others

EXPLAINING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Talks about what they are doing	Explains choices and preferences	Explains ideas clearly
Shares simple experiences	Describes what happened	Gives reasons for opinions
Uses familiar vocabulary	Explains observations	Uses curriculum vocabulary accurately
Gives simple responses	Uses a wider vocabulary	Explains learning to others

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INVESTIGATING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Explores using senses	Finds things out through play	Investigates independently
Engages in simple exploration	Tests simple ideas	Tests ideas systematically
Tries new experiences	Explores how things work	Draws simple conclusions
Shows curiosity	Makes simple predictions	Uses prior learning to investigate

PROBLEM SOLVING		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Attempts simple challenges	Suggests possible solutions	Solves problems independently
Tries different approaches	Uses previous experiences	Evaluates possible solutions
Persists with support	Tries alternative approaches	Adapts strategies when needed
Explores solutions	Demonstrates resilience	Explains reasoning

COLLABORATION		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Plays alongside others	Works cooperatively with others	Collaborates towards shared goals
Shares resources with support	Shares ideas	Listens to other viewpoints
Participates in group activities	Takes turns	Negotiates and compromises
Builds positive relationships	Participates in small-group learning	Contributes ideas confidently

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INDEPENDENCE		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Makes simple choices	Initiates learning experiences	Plans and carries out activities independently
Selects resources	Selects appropriate resources	Reflects on learning
Attempts self-care tasks	Shows increasing confidence	Demonstrates resilience
Explores independently for short periods	Persists with challenges	Takes responsibility for tasks

SELF REGULATION & EXECUTIVE FUNCTION		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Begins to follow routines	Follows expectations	Maintains focus and attention
Waits briefly for turns	Focuses for increasing periods	Regulates behaviour appropriately
Begins to manage feelings	Manages emotions with support	Plans and reviews learning
Accepts adult support	Begins to persevere	Demonstrates resilience and perseverance

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CONTINUOUS PROVISION VOCABULARY SPINE AND VOCABULARY PROGRESSION

Language development is at the heart of our Early Years curriculum. Our Continuous Provision Vocabulary Spine identifies the key vocabulary that adults consistently model across each area of provision. By repeatedly hearing, seeing and using this language within meaningful contexts, children develop secure understanding and confidence in communicating their ideas. Alongside the Core Vocabulary Spine, our Vocabulary Progression Framework provides age-related vocabulary that develops from ages 2–5. Vocabulary is carefully sequenced to move from simple naming and action words towards increasingly descriptive, subject-specific and explanatory language. Through high-quality interactions, sustained shared thinking and purposeful play, children are supported to acquire, revisit and apply new vocabulary across a range of experiences. Together, the Core Vocabulary Spine and Vocabulary Progression Framework ensure that language is taught intentionally, consistently and progressively, enabling children to build strong foundations for communication, future learning and success beyond the Early Years.

VOCABULARY FRAMEWORK: CORE VOCABULARY SPINE AND PROGRESSIVE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTINUOUS PROVISION

CONSTRUCTION AREA

Core Vocabulary: build, join, stack, balance, strong, design

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
block	connect	structure
tower	support	stable
wall	secure	plan
bridge	arrange	improve
big	position	problem
shape	combine	evaluate

SMALL WORLD

Core Vocabulary: character, story, journey, explore, pretend, adventure

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
people	habitat	setting
animal	village	sequence
car	location	anticipate
house	pathway	solution
family	travel	interpret
place	map	recall

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ROLE PLAY

Core Vocabulary: imagine, create, explain, choose, help, community

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
home	occupation	collaborate
baby	customer	organise
shop	visitor	responsibility
doctor	uniform	negotiate
food	assistant	represent
family	workplace	contribute

SAND AREA

Core Vocabulary: pour, fill, empty, scoop, measure, texture

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
dig	container	capacity
bucket	collect	estimate
sand	smooth	volume
mould	rough	enquiry
wet	depth	contrast
pat	surface	properties

WATER AREA

Core Vocabulary: float, sink, pour, full, empty, flow

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
splash	absorb	waterproof
wet	shallow	container
cup	surface	measure
bubble	ripple	predict
drip	stream	volume
paddle	deep	investigate

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CREATIVE AREA

Core Vocabulary: create, mix, shape, pattern, design, improve

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
paint	collage	technique
colour	decorate	artistic
glue	print	refine
brush	texture	review
cut	media	represent
mark	materials	expression

MARK MAKING & WRITING

Core Vocabulary: draw, line, shape, letter, word, message

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
pen	name	sentence
pencil	sound	caption
paper	writing	punctuation
mark	meaning	description
circle	label	communicate
scribble	recognise	finger space

MATHEMATICS AREA

Core Vocabulary: count, more, fewer, compare, pattern, measure

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
one	order	calculate
two	match	quantity
big	sort	estimate
small	group	addition
lots	numeral	subtraction
same	arrangement	reasoning

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READING AREA

Core Vocabulary: book, story, character, author, predict, retell

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
page	beginning	sequence
picture	ending	opinion
turn	title	information
favourite	rhyme	description
animal	setting	problem
name	remember	solution

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

Core Vocabulary: listen, talk, explain, question, answer, describe

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
voice	conversation	discuss
words	opinion	clarify
tell	respond	reason
friend	remember	detail
speak	idea	agree
share	discussion	disagree

PLAY DOUGH AREA

Core Vocabulary: squash, roll, stretch, flatten, shape, create

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
dough	twist	manipulate
ball	mould	transform
press	assemble	construct
poke	curve	refine
fingers	detail	sculpt
make	tool	modify

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OUTDOOR PROVISION

Core Vocabulary: explore, climb, balance, move, challenge, adventure

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
run	trail	navigate
jump	discover	resilience
fast	pathway	strategy
slow	environment	assess
outside	nature	achieve
space	direction	risk

FINE MOTOR

Core Vocabulary: pinch, thread, twist, grip, control, strengthen

2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
pick	fasten	precision
hold	clip	dexterity
squeeze	manipulate	accuracy
press	coordinate	refine
fingers	position	fluent
tool	isolate	efficient

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ASSESSMENT

Assessment helps us understand what children know, say and do. It is used to identify strengths, inform next steps and ensure learning builds progressively from ages 2–5.

Assessment takes place through:
Observation - Discussion - Adult-led learning - Child-initiated play - Continuous provision - Independent application of learning

WHAT DO WE ASSESS?

Knowledge: What children know and understand.
Vocabulary: What children can understand and use.
Skills: What children can do and apply independently.

CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT CHECKPOINTS

Assessment checkpoints support practitioners in identifying the knowledge, vocabulary and skills children are developing within each curriculum concept. They provide clear expectations for what children may know, understand, say and do at different stages of their learning journey. Checkpoints are not intended to be used as a checklist or formal test; instead, they support ongoing professional judgement through observation, discussion, child-initiated play and adult-directed learning.

The checkpoints help practitioners to:
Recognise and celebrate children's progress - Identify gaps in knowledge, vocabulary or skills - Plan purposeful next steps - Ensure learning is building progressively from ages 2–5 - Monitor how effectively children are applying learning within continuous provision and across different contexts.

Assessment should focus on what children can demonstrate independently and consistently over time, ensuring that knowledge, vocabulary and skills are embedded, remembered and transferable. Through regular observation and reflection, practitioners can use the checkpoints to ensure every child makes strong progress from their individual starting points.

ASSESSMENT JUDGEMENTS

Assessment is used to identify whether children are making expected progress within their current age phase.

ON TRACK

Children are demonstrating the expected knowledge, vocabulary and skills for their age and stage of development.
Children may:
Recall previously taught learning - Use age-appropriate vocabulary - Apply skills independently or with minimal support - Demonstrate understanding consistently across different contexts.

NOT YET ON TRACK

Children are not yet consistently demonstrating the expected knowledge, vocabulary or skills for their age and stage.
Children may:
Require additional adult support - Use vocabulary inconsistently - Need more opportunities to revisit learning - Find it difficult to apply learning independently.

Assessment information is used to identify next steps, adapt provision and ensure children receive the support and challenge needed to make strong progress.

PRACTITIONER REFLECTION

When assessing learning, consider:
What do children know?
What do children say?
What do children do?
Can they apply learning independently?
Can they connect learning to previous experiences?

KEY PRINCIPLE

Assessment focuses on what children remember, understand and can apply over time, ensuring every child makes strong progress from their individual starting point.

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CELEBRATIONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Notices when something special is happening • Joins in with celebration activities • Recognises their own birthday • Uses words such as party, cake and present	• Talks about celebrations they have experienced • Recognises different families celebrate differently • Uses celebration vocabulary appropriately • Shares experiences with others	• Compares celebrations and traditions • Explains why celebrations are important • Uses vocabulary such as tradition and festival • Recalls previously learned information

SEASONS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Notices weather changes • Identifies hot and cold • Talks about outdoor changes • Chooses clothing with support	• Names some seasons • Describes seasonal changes • Talks about weather linked to seasons • Uses vocabulary such as spring and summer	• Names all four seasons • Explains seasonal changes • Compares seasons • Uses vocabulary such as autumn and temperature

WEATHER		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Experiences different weather • Identifies rain and sunshine • Uses simple weather words • Looks and comments on weather	• Names common weather types • Discusses weather changes • Chooses suitable clothing • Talks about daily weather	• Describes weather patterns • Explains impact of weather • Compares weather across seasons • Records observations

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PLANTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Explores flowers and plants • Identifies plant parts in play • Helps care for plants • Talks about plants in the environment	• Identifies common plants • Observes plant growth • Knows plants need water and sunlight • Cares for growing plants	• Explains what plants need to grow • Describes a simple lifecycle • Compares different plants • Observes changes over time

TREES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Recognises trees outdoors • Explores bark, leaves and sticks • Collects natural materials • Comments on what they see	• Identifies parts of a tree • Compares leaves • Observes changes over time • Uses vocabulary such as trunk and branch	• Explains seasonal changes in trees • Recognises trees as habitats • Compares evergreen and deciduous trees • Uses related vocabulary accurately

ANIMALS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Recognises familiar animals • Matches animals to pictures • Talks about pets • Uses animal names	• Names a range of animals • Talks about habitats • Compares animal features • Knows animals have babies	• Groups animals by features • Explains basic animal needs • Uses vocabulary such as habitat and mammal • Describes simple lifecycles

INSECTS		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Notices insects outdoors • Observes insects moving • Shows curiosity about minibeasts • Identifies common insects in play	• Names common insects • Talks about where insects live • Observes insects closely • Identifies insects from pictures	• Compares insects • Explains simple insect features • Recognises the importance of insects • Describes a lifecycle

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OURSELVES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Names body parts • Recognises themselves in photographs • Names simple feelings • Talks about what they can do	• Describes themselves • Talks about emotions • Identifies likes and dislikes • Recognises similarities and differences	• Explains what makes them unique • Discusses strengths and interests • Explains ways to stay healthy • Reflects on achievements

FAMILIES		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Talks about family members • Recognises familiar people • Talks about home life • Looks at family photographs	• Describes family members • Shares family experiences • Identifies family roles • Talks about routines	• Understands families are different • Compares traditions • Respects differences between families • Explains why families are important

COMMUNITY		
2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
• Recognises familiar adults in school • Follows routines • Explores local places • Builds relationships with others	• Identifies people who help us • Talks about jobs • Discusses community places • Explains how people help	• Explains community roles • Understands contributions of others • Compares occupations • Shows respect for different roles

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RECEPTION END POINTS

These end points identify the key knowledge, vocabulary and skills children are expected to demonstrate by the end of Reception. They reflect the cumulative impact of our curriculum and provide a clear destination for learning across the EYFS. The end points support practitioners in understanding what children are working towards and how knowledge, vocabulary and skills build progressively through repeated experiences, high-quality interactions and continuous provision.
They are not intended to replace the Early Learning Goals but to complement them by making our curriculum expectations explicit and ensuring children are well prepared for the transition into Key Stage 1.
The Reception End Points identify the cumulative knowledge, vocabulary and skills children are expected to demonstrate by the end of Reception and act as the bridge between the EYFS curriculum and Key Stage 1.

🎉 CELEBRATIONS

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Different people celebrate different events and traditions.
- Celebrations are important to individuals, families and communities.
- People may celebrate in different ways.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- tradition
- festival
- culture
- belonging

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Compare different celebrations.
- Talk about similarities and differences.
- Explain why celebrations are important to people.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Communication
- Comparing
- Explaining
- Remembering and Recalling

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Building Relationships

🍂 SEASONS

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- There are four seasons.
- The environment changes throughout the year.
- Seasons affect weather, plants and animals.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- autumn
- winter
- temperature
- environment

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Name all four seasons.
- Compare seasonal changes.
- Explain observations linked to seasonal change.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Comparing
- Remembering and Recalling
- Explaining

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World

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☁️ WEATHER

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Weather changes daily and seasonally.
- Different types of weather affect daily life.
- Weather can be observed and recorded.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- forecast
- temperature
- observe
- record

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Describe weather patterns.
- Compare weather conditions.
- Discuss weather observations.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Questioning
- Explaining
- Remembering and Recalling

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World
- Mathematics: Numerical Patterns

🌱 PLANTS

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Plants need water and sunlight to grow.
- Plants change over time.
- Plants have a simple lifecycle.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- roots
- stem
- petals
- lifecycle

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Explain what plants need to grow.
- Describe changes over time.
- Compare different plants.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Comparing
- Explaining
- Remembering and Recalling

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design: Creating with Materials

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🌳 TREES

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Trees change throughout the seasons.
- Trees provide habitats for living things.
- Different trees have different features.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- evergreen
- deciduous
- habitat
- seasonal

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Describe seasonal changes in trees.
- Compare different types of trees.
- Explain how trees support living things.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Comparing
- Explaining

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World

🦊 ANIMALS

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Animals have different features and needs.
- Animals live in different habitats.
- Animals grow and change.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- habitat
- offspring
- mammal
- survive

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Group animals by simple features.
- Explain what animals need to survive.
- Compare different animals and habitats.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Comparing
- Explaining
- Remembering and Recalling

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World

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🐞 INSECTS

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Insects have distinctive features.
- Some insects go through a lifecycle.
- Insects play an important role in nature.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- antennae
- wings
- cocoon
- lifecycle

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Compare different insects.
- Describe insect features.
- Explain a simple lifecycle.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Observing
- Comparing
- Explaining
- Investigating

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Understanding the World: The Natural World

😊 OURSELVES

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Everyone is unique.
- People have similarities and differences.
- Healthy choices support wellbeing.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- unique
- identity
- similarities
- differences

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Describe themselves confidently.
- Talk about healthy choices.
- Recognise similarities and differences between people.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Communication
- Comparing
- Explaining
- Self-Regulation

Contributes To
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Self-Regulation
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Managing Self
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Physical Development

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FAMILIES

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Families can be different.
- Families have routines, traditions and responsibilities.
- Families are important to people's lives.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- relatives
- generation
- tradition
- relationship

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Talk about their family.
- Compare family experiences and traditions.
- Respect differences between families.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Communication
- Comparing
- Remembering and Recalling

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Building Relationships
- Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities

COMMUNITY

By the End of Reception, Children Will Know
- Communities contain different people and places.
- People have different jobs and responsibilities.
- People contribute in different ways.

By the End of Reception, Children Will Use Vocabulary Such As
- neighbourhood
- responsibility
- contribute
- citizen

By the End of Reception, Children Will Be Able To
- Describe community roles.
- Explain how people contribute to a community.
- Compare different occupations.

Relevant Curriculum Skills
- Communication
- Explaining
- Comparing
- Questioning

Contributes To
- Communication and Language: Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Building Relationships
- Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities

Early Years Curriculum at Thursfield

EYFS TO KEY STAGE 1 PROGRESSION

WHY THIS MATTERS

Our EYFS curriculum provides the foundations for future learning by developing secure knowledge, ambitious vocabulary and transferable skills. The concepts children revisit throughout Nursery and Reception prepare them for the increasing demands of the National Curriculum and support a smooth transition into Key Stage 1.

EYFS Concept	Progresses Into
🎉 Celebrations	RE, History, PSHE
🍂 Seasons	Year 1 Science: Seasonal Changes
☁️ Weather	Year 1 Science, Geography
🌱 Plants	Year 1 Science: Plants
🌳 Trees	Year 1 Science, Year 2 Habitats
🦊 Animals	Year 1 Science: Animals Including Humans
🐞 Insects	Year 2 Science: Living Things & Habitats
😊 Ourselves	Science, PSHE
🏠 Families	PSHE, History
🏘️ Community	Geography, History, PSHE

RECEPTION END POINTS

By the End of Reception, Children Will:
Recall and discuss key knowledge from all ten curriculum concepts.
Use a broad and increasingly ambitious vocabulary.
Explain ideas, observations and experiences using full sentences.
Make connections between previous and new learning.
Apply skills independently across different contexts.
Demonstrate curiosity, resilience and confidence when learning.

Early Years Curriculum at Thursfield

SKILLS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

The skills children develop throughout the EYFS continue to support learning across all areas of the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

EYFS Skill	Supports Learning in KS1
Communication	Speaking, listening and discussion
Observation	Scientific enquiry and investigation
Comparing	Science, Geography, History and Mathematics
Remembering & Recalling	Retrieval and long-term retention
Questioning	Enquiry and reasoning
Explaining	Oracy and written reasoning
Investigating	Scientific enquiry
Problem Solving	Mathematics and wider curriculum learning
Collaboration	Group work and discussion
Independence	Independent learning behaviours
Self-Regulation & Executive Function	Focus, resilience and perseverance

OUR PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

Connect → Explain → Example → Attempt → Apply → Connect

Connect: Activate prior knowledge and experiences.
Explain: Introduce new knowledge and vocabulary.
Example: Model language, skills and thinking.
Attempt: Practise and explore with support.
Apply: Use learning independently.
Connect: Revisit learning and make meaningful links.

WE KNOW CHILDREN ARE READY FOR KEY STAGE 1 WHEN THEY CAN:

Recall key knowledge.
Use curriculum vocabulary confidently.
Apply skills independently.
Make links between concepts and experiences.
Explain their thinking.
Demonstrate resilience and curiosity.

Through repeated opportunities to revisit knowledge, develop vocabulary, strengthen skills and apply learning through meaningful experiences, children leave the Early Years with secure foundations and the confidence to continue their learning journey through the Curriculum for Champions with their **Ticket to Anywhere.**