

Understanding the Natural World

ELG: Children at the expected level of development at the end of reception will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Nursery	Reception
Building blocks to achieve PLANTS • Noticing change in a plant growing • To know what a plant needs to sun, water to grow • To know that plants are flowers, grass, trees ANIMALS INCLUDING HUMANS • To group animals according to features and their habitats. EG farm animals • To know and be able to name a pig, cow, sheep live on a farm • To know and be able to name a tiger, elephant, giraffe, lion, zebra • Naming basic parts of the body • To know the difference between food that is good for us and a treat EVERYDAY MATERIALS • Sensory experiences to explore textures and properties of materials SEASONAL CHANGE • Daily weather observations • Linking clothes to seasons • Sensory experiences to explore different types of weather	Building blocks to achieve PLANTS • Know that a flowering plant consist of roots, stem, leaves and flowers, • Know the concept of growth, change and decay • Know ivy, daisy and a daffodil by sight • Know a sycamore tree by sight ANIMALS INCLUDING HUMANS • To know that a pig is a farm animal, a rabbit can be a pet, an elephant is a wild animal and a whale is a sea creature, a ladybird is an insect • To group animals according to features and their habitats. • Must take care when observing and handling animals • To know what factors contribute to a healthy lifestyle EVERYDAY MATERIALS • To know an object is made from a type of material • Know that materials can be hard, soft, strong, weak, absorbent, heavy, light, solid and runny, smooth and rough • To know how to group materials according to own criteria SEASONAL CHANGE • To know a year is split into 4 seasons and the names of the seasons • From own observations and books, be able to name changes caused by seasons eg know that the weather changes, hotter in the summer, colder in the winter Recall key vocabulary and facts identified from planning through regular, planned retrieval session
These are examples of provision and does not cover everything that is provided in our Early Years classrooms as a number of areas are driven by children's interests and how children develop their learning through exploration and enquiry with the support of the adults around them. Provision in both Nursery and Reception will be similar. However, through more direct teaching in reception and role of adult support provides opportunities for the children to further develop skills and knowledge.	

Continuous Provision	Opportunities for exploration and enquiry	Links to science curriculum
sand/water	Collect information through senses how liquids and solids behave under different conditions (eg adding other things to the water or sand to cause a change) sieving(filtration) dissolving floating and sinking movement How water pushes up when try to push boat underneath water	To understand animals and humans Forces Materials
Construction/ creative/ fine motor table	Properties of materials (rigid, flexible, stable, fragile) Mixing paint, viscosity in liquids Exploring how things work	Materials Forces
Cooking/baking	Heating, cooling, melting, dissolving, mixing, changing, healthy eating	To investigate living things To understand animals and humans
Outdoor large play	Climbing frame Pushing and pulling Friction of different surfaces Weight Use of wheels	To understand animals and humans Force materials
Outdoor garden	Planting, growing, seasonal change, changing materials (mud kitchen), mini beast hunts, looking at decay eg change in an apple core when left Exploring environment, comparing to other environments Observing and naming plants and animals Sound walks- distinguishing environmental sounds	Understanding plants Investigating living things Sound Earth, space and Seasonal change
Small world play	Animals Buildings Settings (pond, beach, swamp, forest,space, field, sea etc) Vehicles (magnetic attraction and repulsion with trains) Natural and man-made materials (pebbles, cones,shells, bark etc) Using magnifying glasses, torches(can the light shine through the material?) Exploring how things work	Investigating living things Earth, space and Seasonal change Materials Force
Mid morning snack, lunchtime	Different types of food, healthy eating	To understand animals and humans
Role of adult: • Encourage children to talk about what they see. • Model observational and investigational skills. Ask out loud: “I wonder what will happen if...?” • Plan and introduce new vocabulary, encouraging children to use it to discuss their findings and ideas.		

Vocabulary	Vocabulary PLANTS: growth, evergreen, flower, plant, tree, roots, stem, leaf, trunk, same, similar, different, sort, language to describe colour, shape, comparative language of size. ANIMALS INCLUDING HUMANS: growth, habitat, fish, bird, mammal, offspring, skeleton, same, similar, different, sort, language to describe colour, shape, comparative language of size, health, names of body parts, exercise, sleep, water, healthy, unhealthy, food, teeth EVERYDAY MATERIALS: Object, material, wood, plastic, glass, metal, water, rock, paper, fabric, elastic, foil, card/cardboard, rubber, wool, clay, hard, soft, stretchy, stiff, bendy, floppy, waterproof, absorbent, breaks/tears, rough, smooth, shiny, dull, see-through, not see-through SEASONAL CHANGE: Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer, grow, evergreen, flower, plant, tree, leaf, sun, wind, freeze, melt, ice, hibernate, migration, weather, same, similar, different, language to describe colour, shape, clothes.
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