Burnwood Primary Academy

Pre-school Long Term Curriculum Map 2026-2027

Our Pre-School curriculum has been carefully designed in response to the specific needs of our current cohort, many of whom enter with delayed communication and language skills, emerging personal, social and emotional development, and limited access to wider experiences. A high proportion of children are learning English as an additional language and benefit from consistent, repetitive language modelling and real-life contexts. In addition, our boy-heavy cohort requires a curriculum that is highly engaging, physical and rooted in purposeful play. As a result, the curriculum prioritises the Prime Areas of Learning, with a strong emphasis on developing communication, emotional security and independence as the foundations for all future learning. Drawing on our pedagogical approach of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Early Excellence model, we ensure that children feel safe, secure and valued, while accessing rich, language-focused experiences through high-quality interactions, continuous provision and child-led exploration. Seasonal themes are carefully woven throughout the year to provide meaningful, real-life contexts that children can relate to, helping to build vocabulary, understanding of the world and shared experiences. Topics are used as flexible vehicles to introduce purposeful language, routines and experiences, rather than as content-driven themes, enabling all children to build knowledge, confidence and cultural capital over time.

	Autumn 1 weeks	**Autumn 2 weeks**	**Spring 1 weeks**	**Spring 2 weeks**	**Summer 1 weeks**	**Summer 1 weeks**
Vehicle Theme Overarching Theme and sub-topics Themes have been selected to support the delivery and coverage of objectives of the EYFS curriculum.	**All about me**	**My Family**	**Let's Play**	**Animals and Sounds**	**On the Move**	**Out and About,**
Core Focus	Settling, attachment, routines	Familiar language, belonging	Turn-taking, social skills	Vocabulary and Imitation	Verbs, Physical Language	Experiences, Conversation
Seasonal links, enhancements	Seasonal Link: Autumn – weather, change, routines	Seasonal Link: Autumn celebrations & light/dark	Seasonal Link: Winter – cold, ice, snow ice play, freezing	Seasonal Link: Spring – new life, growth	Seasonal Link: Summer – sun, outdoor play	Seasonal Link: Summer – local environment

and core vocabulary	Exploring leaves, wind, rain Outdoor play in changing weather Vocabulary: cold, wet, windy	pumpkins, night/day simple celebrations (Diwali, Bonfire Night, Christmas exposure) focus on home routines in colder weather Vocabulary: light, dark, night, family, warm	dressing for cold weather sensory snow/ice trays Vocabulary: cold, ice, coat, gloves	baby animals plants growing outdoor exploration Vocabulary: baby, grow, flower, chick	water play outdoor movement sun safety Vocabulary: hot, fast, run, jump	walks in local area parks, shops nature exploration Vocabulary: park, tree, shop, go
Core Texts	*That's Not My…* *Where's Spot?* From Head to Toe	*Peepo!* *The Family Book* *Five Minutes' Peace*	*The Bear Who Wouldn't Share* *Hands Are Not for Hitting*	*Dear Zoo* (revisited for repetition) *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* – Eric Carle *Walking Through the Jungle*	*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* – Michael Rosen *Go, Go, Go! Stop!* *The Train Ride*	*Rosie's Walk* – Pat Hutchins *Maisy Goes Shopping* *Shark in the Park*
Linked Nursery Rhymes	Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes If You're Happy and You Know It	Twinkle Twinkle / This is the Way We…	Ring a Ring o' Roses Pat-a-Cake Turn-taking songs (Soundpots)	Old MacDonald Had a Farm Five Little Ducks	The Wheels on the Bus Row, Row, Row Your Boat Action songs (jump, run)	Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush Five Little Speckled Frogs Walking, Walking song

Language Focus	Body parts Emotions Simple requests	Family members Routines Daily actions	Sharing Turn-taking language Simple social phrases	Animal names Sounds Verbs (run, jump)	Verbs Directional language	Real-life vocabulary Positional language (in, on, under)
Key Vocabulary	me, my, mummy, daddy, drink, snack, happy, sad, no	family, baby, house, sleep, eat	share, turn, stop, go, friend	animal names, sounds (moo, roar)	run, jump, fast, slow, up, down	park, bus, shop, go
Key Skills	▪ Respond to name ▪ Follow 1-step instructions ▪ Begin expressing needs	▪ Label familiar objects ▪ Begin to join words (e.g. "mummy go")	▪ Play alongside others ▪ Participate in simple games	▪ Imitate sounds ▪ Begin simple sentences	▪ Follow simple movement instructions ▪ Use verbs	▪ Talk about experiences ▪ Begin conversation attempts
Key Knowledge	• I have a name and identity • I belong to a family • My body has parts • I have feelings	• Families are important • Homes have routines • Day/night changes	• People play together • Turn-taking is important • Rules exist	• Animals have names and sounds • Animals move in different ways • New life occurs in spring	• Bodies move in different ways • Movement words describe action • Outdoor play changes in summer	• The world includes places beyond home • We can visit parks and shops • Experiences can be talked about
Key Experiences	▪ Soundpots (name songs) ▪ Story repetition (*That's Not My…*) ▪ Emotion naming	▪ Family photos discussion ▪ Simple storytelling	▪ Turn-taking songs ▪ Group games	▪ Animal songs (Soundpots) ▪ Story repetition (*Dear Zoo*)	▪ Action songs ▪ Squiggle sessions	▪ Local walks ▪ Real-life role play

Prime Areas of Learning – Communication and Language Key Skills Progression			
	Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Listening & Attention	• Notices sounds, voices and movement • Responds to own name • Attends briefly to an adult 👉"Pay attention to dominant stimulus and are easily distracted"	• Listens to familiar stories and rhymes • Responds to prompts ("stop and listen") • Maintains attention for short periods 👉"Listen to rhymes and familiar stories with interest"	• Attends for longer periods • Listens in small groups • Follows routines
Understanding	• Understands familiar single words • Responds to simple instructions • Begins to recognise routines 👉"Understand single words in context and simple sentences"	• Follows instructions with 2 key words • Understands simple questions (what? where?) 👉"Understand 'who, what, where' in simple questions"	• Understands simple sentences • Follows 2-part instructions • Understands positional language (in, on, under) 👉"Understand more complex sentences and instructions"
Speaking	• Uses single words and sounds • Uses gesture and pointing • Imitates words 👉"Use sounds and single words to communicate"	• Combines 2 words • Labels objects and actions • Begins to ask simple questions 👉"Begin to join two or three words together and learn new words rapidly"	• Uses 2–3 word sentences • Begins back-and-forth interaction • Asks simple questions 👉"Use simple sentences and a variety of questions"
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know:	Children begin to know:	Children begin to know: • sentences communicate ideas

	• words represent objects, people and actions • familiar routines have language attached (coat, snack, sit) • sounds and words can be copied • communication can happen through gesture, sound and words	• words can be combined to make meaning • questions have meaning (what, where) • language can be used to interact with others • vocabulary grows through repetition and experience	• conversations involve turn-taking • language can describe experiences • questions can be used to find out information
Prime Areas of Learning – Personal, Social and Emotional Development Key Skills Progression			
	Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Self-Regulation / Feelings	• Seek comfort from familiar adult • Begin to express basic feelings (crying, gestures) • Respond to simple boundaries ("no", "stop") 👉Children "use a familiar adult for emotional refuelling and understand 'yes' and 'no'"	• Begin to express emotions (happy, sad, frustrated) • Seek comfort appropriately • Begin to understand simple rules 👉Children "show determination and begin to respond to boundaries"	• Begin to manage emotions with adult support • Start to recognise own feelings • Begin to understand impact of actions
Managing Self	• Begin to separate from carer with support • Explore environment using adult as secure base • Show preferences ("no", "mine") 👉Children "separate from carers with support and show a sense of self"	• Begin to follow simple routines • Start basic self-care (coat, snack, washing hands) • Begin to tolerate waiting briefly	• Show increasing independence • Follow routines more consistently • Manage basic self-care 👉Children "seek independence and follow instructions"

Relationships	• Show interest in others • Engage brief interactions with adults • Begin parallel play 👉Children "play alongside others and show interest in what others are doing"	• Play alongside and beginning to interact • Take turns with adult support • Begin to share with support • 👉Children "play cooperatively with adult support and begin forming relationships"	• Play with others (not just alongside) • Initiate simple interactions • Begin forming friendships 👉Children "play cooperatively and start forming special friendships"
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • familiar adults provide safety and comfort • routines help them feel secure • they are separate individuals ("me", "mine") • others exist alongside them	Children begin to know: • feelings can be expressed and named • rules and boundaries exist • other children can be part of play • turn-taking is part of interaction	Children begin to know: • feelings can be managed with support • their actions affect others • friendships can form • independence is possible in routines
Prime Areas of Learning – Physical Development Key Skills Progression			
	Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Gross Motor	• Move around environment with support • Sit, squat, move between positions • Begin climbing with adult help 👉Children "walk, squat and begin to navigate simple obstacles"	• Start to run • Navigate obstacles • Climb and pull up on equipment 👉Children "start to run and navigate obstacles"	• Run confidently • Kick a ball • Climb and balance 👉Children "run, climb and kick a large ball

Fundamental Movement Skills	**Stage 1: Exploration & Core Stability** **FMS focus:** • **balance** (standing, wobbling, stepping) • **body awareness** **FMS Activities:** • stepping stones / balance beams • walking through leaves • climbing low-level equipment • moving in different ways (crawl, roll)	**Stage 2: Coordination & Control** **FMS focus:** • **locomotor skills** (run, jump, hop) • **coordination** **FMS Activities:** • obstacle courses • animal movements (jump like a frog, crawl like a bear) • throwing and rolling balls • chasing and stop/go games	**Stage 3: Confidence, Agility & Precision** **FMS focus:** • **agility** (changing direction) • **coordination** (whole body) • **control** **FMS Activities:** • bike riding / scooters • kicking balls • balancing on beams • navigating outdoor trails
Fine Motor	• Hold objects and explore tools • Use whole-hand grip (palmar grasp) • Make random marks 👉Children "hold a crayon and make marks using whole hand"	• Begin to control mark making • Turn pages in books • Use simple tools (spoons, cups) 👉Children "start to show control when using tools and making marks"	• Make lines and circles • Use tools with control • Begin early drawing shapes 👉Children "copy lines and circles and develop control in tool use"
Self-Care	• Begin to cooperate with care routines • Start helping with dressing	• Help with dressing/undressing • Begin to use utensils	• Increasing independence • Manage own needs with support • Participate in routines

Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • their body can move in different ways • balance helps them stay upright • movement can be controlled • tools can be held and used	Children begin to know: • movement can be controlled and directed (run, jump) • objects can be moved (throw, roll) • coordination is needed to navigate space • hands can control tools more precisely	Children begin to know: • movement can be adapted (fast, slow, direction) • their body can balance, climb and move confidently • tools can be used with increasing accuracy • physical control supports mark making and writing
Specific Areas of Learning – Literacy Key Skills Progression			
Reading / Comprehension	• Show interest in books • Handle books (open, turn pages) • Look at pictures 👉Children "show interest in books and have favourites"	• Recognise familiar pictures • Anticipate repeated phrases • Begin to name objects in books 👉Children "recognise pictures in books and often name them"	• Follow simple stories • Talk about pictures • Begin to recall elements 👉Children understand what is happening in stories with picture support
Phonics / Rhymes (Early foundations)	• Listen to rhymes • Join in with repeated sounds • Develop awareness of rhythm 👉Children "enjoy listening to rhymes and sometimes join in"	• Join in with repeated phrases • Recognise familiar rhymes • Begin sound discrimination	• Join in confidently with rhymes • Recognise rhythm and repetition • Begin recalling familiar songs

Writing / Mark Making	• Make random marks • Explore textures (paint, sand, etc.) • Use whole-arm movements 👉Early mark making is a sensory experience, not yet symbolic	• Make marks and give meaning • Use different tools (crayons, chalk) • Begin to control movements 👉Children "begin to ascribe meaning to marks"	• Make controlled marks • Begin drawing lines/circles • Give meaning to drawings 👉Children "make lines and circles and represent ideas through marks"
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • books contain pictures and meaning • pages turn and stories flow • rhymes have rhythm and repetition • marks can be made	Children begin to know: • pictures represent objects and ideas • repeated phrases can be anticipated • marks can represent meaning • stories and rhymes can be joined in with	Children begin to know: • stories have structure (beginning/middle through experience) • marks and drawings communicate ideas • print carries meaning • familiar stories and rhymes can be recalled
Specific Areas of Learning – Mathematics Key Skills Progression			
Number	• Show awareness of quantity (more, lots) • Begin to notice small groups (1–2 objects) • Explore counting through rhymes 👉Children begin to notice **quantity without counting (early subitising)**	• Begin counting (1–3) • Match objects (one-to-one) • Compare quantities (more/less) 👉Children begin to **count in everyday contexts and compare amounts**	• Count up to 3–5 objects • Understand "one more" • Begin recognising numerals informally 👉Children begin developing **secure early number sense (subitising + counting)**

Shape, Space & Measure	• Explore shape through play • Post objects into spaces • Begin to understand positional language (in/on)	• Recognise basic shapes (circle, square) • Use positional language: in, on, under • Begin building and stacking	• Combine shapes to build • Use positional language confidently • Compare size and quantity
Pattern & Measure	• Notice simple patterns • Explore size (big/small)	• Copy simple patterns • Notice repetition	• Create simple patterns • Spot patterns in environment
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • amounts exist (more, lots, little) • objects can be grouped • shapes and spaces can be explored • size differences exist (big/small)	Children begin to know: • numbers relate to quantity • small amounts can be counted • comparisons can be made (more/less) • shapes have properties • patterns repeat	Children begin to know: • counting represents quantity • "one more" changes amount • shapes and objects can be combined • patterns and order exist in the environment • positional language describes location
Specific Areas of Learning – Knowledge and Understanding Key Skills Progression			
People & Communities	• Recognise familiar people (family/key adults) • Show interest in familiar routines	• Show awareness of others • Begin to copy adults and peers • Talk about familiar experiences	• Talk about familiar places (home, park, shops) • Show interest in different experiences • Begin to understand routines in wider world

	☞Children begin to **recognise and respond to familiar people and experiences**		
The World (Environment)	• Explore immediate environment • Notice weather (cold, wet, windy) • Engage in sensory exploration (leaves, water)	• Notice changes (ice melting, plants growing) • Explore animals and their sounds • Begin to group by features (e.g. animals) ☞Children begin to **notice patterns and changes in the natural world**	• Explore outdoors with purpose • Notice differences (places, objects, environments) • Begin simple comparisons ☞Children begin to **talk about what they see and experience in their world**
Technology	• Use everyday technology in role play (phones, tills) • Show understanding of how things are used	• Use simple equipment with purpose • Begin to show curiosity about how things work	• Use everyday technology in role play (phones, tills) • Show understanding of how things are used
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • familiar people and environments • routines structure their day • the environment changes (weather, seasons) • objects can be explored and investigated	Children begin to know: • change happens (ice melts, plants grow) • animals have features and sounds • differences exist between objects and environments • simple cause and effect	Children begin to know: • environments differ (home, park, shops) • experiences can be talked about • the world extends beyond immediate surroundings • technology has simple purposes
Specific Areas of Learning – Expressive Arts and Design Key Skills Progression			

Creating with Materials	• Explore materials (paint, sand, leaves) • Make random marks • Use whole-body movements 👉 Children begin through **sensory exploration rather than intentional creation**	• Begin to make choices in materials • Combine materials (glue, collage) • Show preference for colours and textures 👉 Children begin to **create with intention**	• Use materials to represent ideas • Begin controlled mark making with purpose • Explore colour, shape and pattern 👉 Children begin to **express ideas through creation**
Being Imaginative & Expressive	• Copy simple actions (clapping, tapping) • Join in with songs and actions • Begin pretend play (home role play) 👉 Children **imitate what they see and hear**	• Join in with familiar songs and rhymes • Begin role play (animals, characters) • Use objects to represent something else 👉 Children begin **symbolic play (one object = another)**	• Act out familiar stories • Use imagination in role play • Create own simple narratives 👉 Children begin **early storytelling through play**
Key Knowledge	Children begin to know: • different materials feel different (soft, rough, wet, dry) • marks can be made in different ways • actions can be copied from adults • familiar songs and rhymes have repeated patterns • objects can represent real-life items (e.g. cup in role play)	Children begin to know: • materials can be combined to create something new • colours and textures can be chosen deliberately • familiar songs and stories can be joined in with • objects can represent something different (symbolic play) • sounds and actions can represent animals and experiences	Children begin to know: • marks and creations can represent ideas (drawing = meaning) • materials can be used to express thoughts and experiences • stories follow a simple structure (beginning/middle through play) • actions, movement and role play can communicate ideas • imagination can create new ideas beyond real-life experience

While our progression is informed by the EYFS statutory framework and aligns with the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning, it is further broken down into smaller developmental steps using Development Matters and Focus Education progression. This ensures that learning is appropriately sequenced for our 2–3-year-old cohort and supports staff in identifying precise next steps on the journey towards the Early Learning Goals.

"Our curriculum is built using Focus progression and Development Matters to break learning into small, sequential steps appropriate for 2–3 year olds. These are carefully mapped across the year to ensure children move from early development into the end goals we have set for our cohort, which align with EYFS expectations and prepare them for Nursery."