



Curriculum & Assessment

Ages 0 - 2

September 2026

**High-quality learning & development
through core experiences and routines**



The key to rapid progress.....High well-being and involvement

First and foremost, and before we expect children to be challenged in their learning, we need high levels of well-being and involvement. Each child's development is unique. They learn best when they are happy and secure. All children have a key person. The relationship starts with a home visit to put the child and family at ease. The key person ensures we are tailoring a child's experience to their emotional needs.

Well-being	Involvement
<i>The baby looks happy, smiles, beams, and cries out / squeals in fun, expresses emotion, plays with sounds, shows relaxed posture, takes interest in surroundings is lively and energetic, looks confident and assured</i>	<i>The baby is continuously engaged in activity and absorbed in it. Engaged without interruption. There is focused attention, attending to detail. The baby is motivated, not easily distracted, shows intense mental activity, using their full capabilities and imagination. The baby is enjoying being engaged in activity.</i>

Long term planning

- Areas of provision – continuous provision is established and set up offering open ended, curious resources for many different learning opportunities and ensuring excellent coverage of the educational programmes in the EYFS framework
- As part of the ongoing evaluation, environments are well resourced to support children's interests. Some core resources look the same so that children can plan their learning and work at depth. We want to enable children to become experts as their fascinations grow and are supported.

Emerging skills	Mastering skills	Becoming experts
• Core routines • Language teaching • Establishing rules • Knowledge & skills teaching in each space	• Children investigating possibilities of resource and areas • Developing interests • Learning from others and with others	• Children developing own interests further • Developing depth in own interests over time

Time is driven by the needs of the child and children attend the 0-2 provision for between 1 and 9 terms. Children will also be at different stages of development over different interests and experiences.



We pride ourselves on providing a high-quality curriculum which is broad, balanced and meets individual needs.



1 High-quality interactions with well skilled adults around children's interests

We interact with children in their everyday play because we know this is where they are most highly motivated. We know that co-play is where the best learning happens.

2 An environment that promotes curiosity, awe and wonder and the widest possible range of possibilities

We challenge our thinking continuously and provide often unconventional opportunities to offer endless opportunities for independent thinking and planning.

3 A planned and purposeful introduction to core stories, songs and rhymes

Singing and sharing stories are central to our practice. A progressive introduction to learning stories and songs by heart is offered to all children.

4 A commitment to nurturing every child to ensure the highest possible levels of well-being and involvement

We use the Love and Nurture Rating Scales to help us to evaluate, plan and design our curriculum around nurture.

5 Invitations to engage with nature through real experiences throughout the year

We use the outdoor environment throughout the year and take children through the year in nature through independent and guided experiences.

6 Learning beyond the nursery in the wider world

We include regular 'out and about' experiences to broaden children's experiences and as key influencers in early vocabulary development and engagement.

Outcomes from core experiences -

When children leave Childhaven they will be

Communicators..... with the confidence to start conversations with others (CL)

Happy and enthusiastic singers, knowing at least 10 songs (CL EAD)

Individual and independent learners in our environment (PSED)

Looking for opportunities to spread kindness in the world (PSED)

Drawing with enjoyment and using writing in their play to make meaning (PD W)

Happy children with a sense of joy and fun and a spring in their step (PSED)

Adventurers and adventure seekers within and beyond nursery, including walking to the beach and back again (PD)

Very eager to count (to at least 10), recognise groups of up to 3 objects and solve problems as they play (MD)

Engaging in the magic of storytelling, knowing at least 3 stories by heart and telling their own stories using the Tales Toolkit symbols (CL L)

Nurturing of plants and animals and curious about the natural world (UW)

Assessment

- All children are offered a home visit before they start. This starts the essential relationship forming process between the key person and the family. Parents are asked to complete 'This is Me' information about their child's usual behaviours at home, including essential information about feeding and sleeping.
- Children settle into nursery at their own pace. This is done on an individual basis. Once children are settled, the key person considers everything they have learned about the child and completes an entry assessment against key milestones. This also indicates where children are meeting age related expectations. We call this 'nurturing beginnings'
- Where children are not meeting age related expectations, clear next steps are planned. Support is quickly targeted and involves families at the very earliest opportunity.
- At their 6 month and 12-month birthdays, a further 'nurturing beginnings' spotlight is carried out with parents completing one at home and the key person completing one at nursery. These are shared, compared and used to plan the future experiences for the child.
- In nursery, the information is used to inform planning for interests, interactions and environments.
- In between the 6- and 12-month spotlight months, the staff gather significant 'wow' moments for children to add to their ability to 'tell the child's story'.
- The key person briefly reviews the child's progress in months 3 and 9 to ensure they are on-track and highlight any changes that are needed in provision.

High-quality responsive teaching

Staff work together to adapt approaches and inspire learning based on immediate outcomes of interactions and assessments.

Core books and songs – are planned to support communication and vocabulary development. Repetitive and rhyming popular children's texts are chosen carefully for their quality. They are guided by adults and also offered as provocations for independent play and learning.

Routines for learning– how the children are accessing provision is regularly reviewed. This is to ensure challenge in the areas increases the longer the children have been here and that core routines are establishing. Routines are critical learning opportunities for our youngest children and we use songs to embed key skills and independence.



Assessment cycle

	MONTH 3	MONTH 6	MONTH 9	MONTH 12
ENTRY SPOTLIGHT	REVIEW MONTH	SPOTLIGHT MONTH	REVIEW MONTH	SPOTLIGHT MONTH
ENTRY NURTURING BEGINNINGS ASSESSMENT	KEY PERSON REVIEWS AND ADJUST PLANS IF NEEDED / SHARES ADJUSTMENTS WITH OTHER STAFF / PARENTS	KEY PERSON UPDATES NURTURING BEGINNINGS ASSESSMENTS AND SHARES WITH THE FAMILY	KEY PERSON REVIEWS AND ADJUST PLANS IF NEEDED / SHARES ADJUSTMENTS WITH OTHER STAFF / PARENTS	KEY PERSON UPDATES NURTURING BEGINNINGS ASSESSMENTS AND SHARES WITH THE FAMILY
PARENTS COMPLETE 'THIS IS ME AT HOME' (entry version)		PARENTS COMPLETE 'THIS IS ME AT HOME'		PARENTS COMPLETE 'THIS IS ME AT HOME'
Parent meeting to share what next...	Conversations with parents if concern arises	Parent meeting to share what next...	Conversations with parents if concern arises	Parent meeting to share what next...

Each key person gets to know their children very well

'Nurturing beginnings' enables us to tell the child's story

We use information from home in equal balance

Children are plotted onto an annual plan so that it is clear when their spotlight and review months are

Staff meetings discuss individual next steps and needs regularly cover

- CPD / learning to share
- Spotlights – what next for those children?
- Provision and practice – ongoing interests and routines – are we meeting children's needs?
- Closing the gap – additional and different provision

Each key person has PPA time to dedicate to completing observations and planning for their children's needs

Nurturing beginnings assessments are moderated with senior members of staff.

Short term planning

- Day-to-day provision is tweaked to fit the children who are using it – ‘in the moment’
- Staff work in a spark-teach-outcome cycle
- Members of staff in spaces have a focus on learning which will offer many possibilities. These will happen over time in order to build skills and let children come back, add their ideas, and have the opportunity to be an expert. These focuses will happen in the areas and be led by an adult in terms of the direction of the learning. They will have come from what the children were doing in that space in the previous day / week. The adult threads together interests and learning needs. The more open-ended the focus, the easier this is.
- The whole team observes all the children. Observations, teaching and outcomes are noted and then collated by the key person.
- Children have a physical ‘learning story’ book which is a record of observations and wow moments.
- Staff include 6 key elements into their adult role in order to give a high priority to language development;
 - A curious and inviting provocation
 - A celebration of kindness
 - An episode of thinking together
 - A story (told or read)
 - Taught vocabulary
 - A golden 15 minutes of co-play We call this **‘Every session counts’**



**Is there a curious provocation? Is it inviting?
Has it been maintained and refreshed
through the session?
Every child is curious....let them know....**

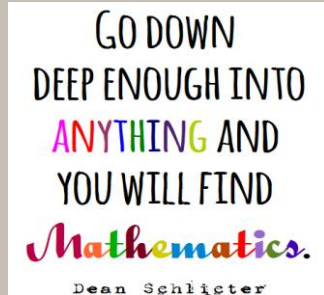
Every session counts ... 6 key ingredients.....

EXPLOREPLAY.....LEARN



Have you told a story? Anywhere and about anything? You can even use a child's own story to tell to others.

Every child is an author....let them know



Have you used some mathematical language / problem solving or counting in a real context?

Every child is a problem solver....let them know.....



Have you modelled kindness?

Every child is worthy....let them know....

Have you had your 15 golden minutes of co play.....?

Every child wants to co-play....jump into their world.....



Have you used any new words? How did you use them? In what context?

Every child is capable....let them know.....

Personal, Social and Emotional Development –

Children will express a range of feelings and begin to show awareness of others' feelings

They will know their own name and assert their likes and dislikes

Children will be interested in being alongside and with other children

There are planned daily opportunities to engage with others

Communication and Language - Speaking

Children will copy familiar expressions using 2 or 3 words

They will put 2 words together themselves to communicate intentionally

Children will use gestures alongside talk to make their needs known

There are planned opportunities to develop new vocabulary

There is a planned introduction to core songs and rhymes

Physical Development

Children will sleep during the day to support their healthy development

They will be confident movers and will be able to walk confidently and use the stairs with support

Children will eat a wide range of healthy foods and feed themselves with increasing control

Children will be able to communicate a wet or soiled nappy

There are daily opportunities to use the outdoor area

There are specific sessions with a focus on developmental movement play.

OUR JOURNEY.....

MOVING ON WE HOPE.....

Mathematics

Children will respond to words like 'lots' or 'more'

Children will use some number words

Children will subitise to two objects (give me 1, give me 2)

Children will enjoy filling and emptying

Children will become familiar in patterns in daily routines

Children will explore arranging things in different ways

Children are introduced to a variety of loose parts and intelligent resources for open ended mathematical exploration

Communication and Language - Listening and Understanding

Children will select familiar objects when named

They will understand simple sentences

Children will enjoy the rhythmic pattern of rhyme and stories

There are planned opportunities to learn daily routines

There is a planned introduction to core songs and rhymes

Understanding the World

Children will be curious and interested in their world

Children will match where objects belong and remember where things are

Children will be curious about people and interested in photographs of themselves and people that they know

Children will enjoy stories about families things – pets / nature etc

Children take part in an 'out and about' visits in the local area

Visitors are invited into nursery and links are made with families

Children have ongoing encounters with nature in a planned programme of work



Expressive Arts and Design

Children will express themselves with all physical actions and sounds

Children will pretend that one object is another

Children will create sound effects

Children will use everyday materials to represent their world

Children will enjoy music, mirror actions and move with freedom

Children will enjoy exploring a variety of media and materials during their own investigations

Children have continuous access to a wide range of creative experiences.

There are monthly music sessions with a musician where children experience opportunities to develop skills in rhythm and listening.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

- playing & exploring – children will investigate & experience things, and ‘have a go’
- active learning - children will concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children will have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Literacy

Children will be interested in books and rhymes

Children will have favourite books and rhymes

Children will begin to join in with actions in books and rhymes

Children will enjoy making marks in a variety of ways

Children’s marks will have special meaning to them

Children are introduced to mark making in a wide range of forms, moving into message making and then finally emergent writing.

This is ongoing work as part of the continuous provision and planning systems.

There is a planned introduction to core songs and rhymes

MATHS FOR THE UNDER TWO'S



Babies and toddlers explore
Size, shape, space, pattern
movement, cause and effect and quantity
through-
Play, sensory exploration, relationships
And repeated experiences
within the Curiosity Approach ethos
maths is wonder, exploration, connection
Noticing patterns in the world

Maths is Everywhere
We are not teaching numbers!
We are
Building mathematical thinking
Developing schemas
Creating connections in the main
Encouraging deep curiosity

What maths looks like for 0 to 2's
0 to 12 months
Early maths is:
rhythm
repetition
anticipation
filling and emptying
positioning
movement

Examples:
dropping spoons repeatedly
kicking legs
reaching for objects
peekaboo
songs and rhymes
Mathematical learning:
cause and effect
object permanence
prediction
pattern
spatial awareness

1 to 2 year olds
They begin exploring:
transporting
stacking
posting
hiding
matching
comparing

Examples:
carrying objects around
putting lids on containers
climbing
lining objects up
filling baskets

Mathematical concepts:
volume
size
shape
sequence
comparison
positional language

Curiosity Approach Environments
A maths-rich environment does NOT mean bright number posters everywhere.
Instead think:
authentic resources
loose parts
open-ended play
natural materials
real-life objects

Examples
baskets
tins
wooden rings
shells
scarves
boxes
tubes
treasure baskets

These encourage:
sorting
comparing
problem solving
spatial awareness

The Adult Role
Adults should:
slow down
observe carefully
narrate mathematical language naturally
wonder alongside children
Instead of: "What colour is that?"
Try: "You fitted the big lid on the small pot... I wonder why it wobbles?"
Or: "You carried all the blocks across the room."

Keep it simple

Math's language The goal is immersion, not testing.
Use rich everyday language:
full/empty
in/out
on/off
big/little
more
heavy
under
next to
fast/slow

Provocations to Support Early Maths
Simple invitations:
baskets of different sized containers
posting objects through tubes
scarves in boxes
stacking natural blocks
treasure baskets with metal objects
rolling balls down ramps

The Role of Schemas
Schemas are repeated patterns of behaviour that help children build understanding.
Important schemas linked to maths:
transporting
rotation
trajectory
enclosure
connection
positioning
Instead of stopping repetitive behaviour, we observe:
"What mathematical thinking is happening here?"

Ask yourself-
"What maths could children discover here?"
A Good Reflection Question
Ask practitioners:
"Are we recognising maths... even when there are no numbers involved?"
Final Thought
Children become confident mathematicians when they:
feel curious
explore freely
repeat experiences
solve problems independently
feel emotionally secure

The foundations of mathematical thinking begin in loving, playful, connected experiences — Maths in babies and toddlers is about:
patterns
movement
connection
schemas
exploration
rather than "counting activities."
not formal teaching.