



Here for young people  
Here for communities  
Here for you



**YMCA  
DAY NURSERY**  
PART OF YMCA NORTH TYNESIDE

# Creating Positive Outcomes

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Nursery Curriculum



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# Introduction

At YMCA, we value every child as a unique and capable child, who is able to learn and think for themselves. We provide early years settings which enable our children to explore, inquire, be curious and question their learning.

Our settings provide a warm, happy, safe, and stimulating environment, where our children feel safe, secure, held in mind and value. Children are valued as unique and curious learners and we believe our role is to provide a supportive and engaging environment in which every child can flourish and learn at their own pace and in their own individual way.

This curriculum guidance is a working document, to be shared with practitioners and parents, added to and developed throughout its use. Children’s contributions, thoughts and ideas should be noted within the document to further enrich the guidance and allow the curriculum to grow and progress over time. Parent contributions should also be encouraged as well as sharing the curriculum with them to enable parents to support their child’s learning at home.



# Our 6 Pillars for Learning

Our curriculum is underpinned by our 6 pillars of learning

### MIND

Our minds are amazing places; we want our children to explore their thoughts, feelings, emotions, and ideas - to be inquisitive and curious.

We want to facilitate the development of healthy minds that are secure in their uniqueness and individual worth.

### BODY

Our bodies are incredible and capable of amazing things; we want our children to explore the excitement of the movement, space, and the control they have over their own bodies.

To make healthy choices for themselves, and know the importance of respect for the bodies of those around them.

### SPIRIT

Our spirit connects us to each other, to the world around us, and to God - it's the deep held sense of being connected to who we are individually, and to that which is bigger than ourselves.

Through stories, activities and festivals we want our children to develop an understanding of the cultures and communities around them; underpinned by our inclusive Christian ethos and values.

### BELONG

We want our children to have a sense of belonging in our nurseries, for it to feel like a home away from home where they feel safe, liked, accepted, valued, and informed.

We want our children to have a sense of ownership of the space that they share with staff that belong there too.

### CONTRIBUTE

We want our children to contribute to our nurseries, so it's important that they know that their voice and actions matter, that it's okay to try new things, it's okay to make mistakes and it's great to start and try again.

Each new day is a new opportunity to bring their unique selves and add to the tapestry of our nurseries.

### THRIVE

We aspire for every one of our children to thrive in their own special way, they will do this with the support, and encouragement of our staff and their peers.

We want every day to be new and exciting, enabling our children to imagine, dream and flourish.

# Nursery Curriculum Ethos Statement

YMCA North Tyneside is proud to welcome you as part of the wider YMCA family. YMCA is the world's oldest and largest youth organization. YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body, and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energizing communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

Our nursery team will work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals in ensuring our care of children and their families is of the highest standard.

We hold true to our desire to be an inclusive environment , sharing and learning about the cultures, faith festivals and beliefs of all children in our care. We believe that operating in this way gives our children the best opportunity to to develop to their full potential in Body, Mind and Spirit enabling them to belong, contribute and thrive.

YMCA provides extensive programmes and opportunities for children and their families.

# Our Curriculum Intent

It is our intent to provide a curriculum that is interesting, engaging, ambitious and inclusive. We want our children to be inquisitive, curious, independent learners with a lifelong love of learning. Our curriculum is built upon the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), incorporating all 7 areas of learning.

Through our creative and engaging curriculum, we will provide children with opportunities to explore a range of concepts, which not only meet the EYFS requirements, but enable children to belong, contribute and thrive whilst becoming curious and confident learners.

Our curriculum ensures that our children have opportunity to access challenging, playful learning opportunities across both the prime and specific areas of learning. Whilst each setting follows our curriculum, leaders and practitioners are empowered to develop this further to meet the unique and individual needs of the children in their community.

We offer a rich experience that meets the unique needs of all our children, recognising that children learn and develop at their own pace and in their own time. We believe that learning through play is the most accessible way for children to learn. Our curriculum ensures the unique and individual needs of all children are met, including those children with EAL and SEND as well as children who may be disadvantaged.



## FOCUS 1 WHO AM I?

Throughout their early years, young children begin to develop an understanding of who they are. When children are encouraged to think about themselves, they develop a sense of their place in the world and all the things that make them unique.

By learning how to value and respect themselves, they develop confidence, self-esteem, and a positive self-image allowing them to begin to value and respect others.

A true understanding of 'who am I?' allows young children to investigate their thoughts and beliefs, their bodies and actions, their unique skills, and abilities.

This curriculum focus can encourage children to develop a deep understanding of themselves and to value and respect themselves and others.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

Mind – What do I think and feel?

Body – What amazing things can my body do?

Spirit – What makes me unique and yet connected to others?

Belong – Who are my friends and who are the people that care for me?

Contribute – How can I share my thoughts, feelings, needs and ideas?

Thrive – What do I need in order to grow and flourish?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning;

1. How to communicate my needs and feelings, through expression, communication and body language
2. How to move my body, be creative and explore new concepts
3. That I am a unique and individual person with thoughts and ideas
4. That my key person will keep me safe as I explore my surroundings and holds me to mind
5. That my actions have consequences, both positive and negative
6. How to understand my own needs in order to grow and flourish



I am learning about myself and my body, and finding out about the wonderful things my body can do.

Attachments with key care givers is important to me, so that I can feel safe

and secure. My physical development is fast, I'm learning to roll, sit, crawl, stand, walk, balance, run. I'm learning to feed myself, and to make my feelings and needs known. My desire to move my body is strong.

When my key person responds to me, I know that they understand my needs and will respond with love and warmth.

My key person is learning all about me too and we are developing a strong bond which contributes to my wellbeing and emotional development. This relationship helps me to thrive, grow and flourish as I trust my key person to keep me safe when I begin to explore new things.

My language skills are developing all the time as we sing, read and chat. I like it when my key person holds eye contact with me and we sing repetitive action rhymes together. These rhymes help me to practice using my body in new ways, to practice new sounds and learn new vocabulary. I enjoy babbling and I feel connected when my key person repeats the words back to me.

I enjoy exploring new objects and sensory experiences that my key worker provides for me, there's always something new to feel, hear, taste, smell and see. Sensory play allows me to make cognitive connections as I make marks, discover new textures and explore cause and effect.



I am learning about myself and my body, exploring my environment more and taking more risks. Having my key person close to me to check in for

reassurance is important

as I grow in confidence. I am starting to understand the needs of others, growing in empathy as I watch other children around me. I am beginning to co-operate in my play and will share my ideas and preferences in a range of ways.

I am becoming more experimental with the wonderful things my body can do. I am more able to move my body in different ways in order to achieve physical challenges. I like to run, jump, climb and see what my body can do. I am becoming increasingly skilled at using wheeled toys, balls, hoops and tools.

I am starting to show my sense of self, share my likes and dislikes, and make choices and decisions for myself. I am developing a unique personality, and can express my emotions, through actions, behaviours and some words. My key person understands my cues and responds skilfully to help me understand my feelings, especially when I am overwhelmed with intense emotions. Co-regulation is important for me as I begin to assert myself and learn to balance my own needs with the boundaries in place to keep me safe.

I enjoy rhythmic pattern and will try to join in with actions to my favourite rhymes. When my key person reads me stories with patterns, different voice tones and expression, I try to join in and enjoy imitating the sounds s/he makes. I am starting to understand more complex sentences

and enjoy responding to my key persons questions. My language is developing fast and I am beginning to ask simple questions in my play. My key person helps me to find the answers to these questions and I feel proud when I accomplish something new.

I enjoy making marks with different media and will tell my key person all about my creations with simple words and short sentences. My key person encourages me to try new ways to make marks and shows me how I can do things by myself.



I am learning more about relationships with others as I seek out connections and experiences with others. This growing empathy means I am more able to

understand other peoples needs and I am learning to share, co-operate, negotiate and consider others. I am needing less co-regulation from my key person as I am more able to self-regulate, but will sometimes look to my key person for support in new situations or to help me resolve conflict.

I am becoming more aware of the differences and similarities between myself and others, and need guidance in understanding these differences, how this makes us all unique and special in our own rights. I am learning to accept appreciation, help and criticism and my key person is important in helping me to work through some challenges and difficult feelings. I am more able to express my feelings but also have increased feelings of fear and may have nightmares or be worried about things like monsters.

I am taking more risks in my play, I like to push the boundaries and see what my mind and body can do. I am more confident, but will ask for help when I need it. I am more able to balance and I like to see how I can move in different directions and at different speeds. I am getting very skilled at self-care and can use the toilet independently. I enjoy routine and like to know what's happening next. I am becoming increasingly skilled at putting on my own coat and shoes, although it might take me a while, I can do it by myself. My key person is very patient and encourages me to keep trying.

I am enjoying new conversations with my peers and the adults around me and I like to share my news, stories and ideas verbally, recall and retell and offer solutions for challenges. I enjoy my key person's questions and I like to share my own ideas as I begin to understand 'how' and 'why' questions. I am starting to recognise the things that make me unique and I am proud of myself.

I enjoy stories and will join in with actions and rhymes. I like to 'read' a story to my friends; the words are interesting and I will try to recreate them in different ways. I will use mathematical concepts in my play and can make predictions of what might happen next.

## Enabling My Learning

### Books

Sharing books with their key person and friends can support children in developing a sense of self. Books with mirrors are fun and engaging for young children, who will enjoy looking at their faces, copying their expressions and mimicking their key persons expressions such as popping their tongue out.

As a child's sense of self and confidence develops, they will begin to select books independently and possibly share them with their peers. It is important for children to access books with images of children like themselves so that they can identify with them.

Books in languages which reflect the child's home language can also support children in feeling secure, welcome and settled in the setting, whilst enabling them to access text that is familiar to them. Sharing books like this encourages conversation and the development of new language and vocabulary.

Pointing out particular pictures can encourage children to identify themselves such as "where is the teddy's nose?", "Can you show me your nose? Practitioners can use books and stories to positively support children's understanding of their physical selves as well as their social identities. Using books and stories as a method to recognise each child's social and cultural context can also allow children to develop a sense of agency.

As children develop a sense of agency they begin to discover their own confidence and ability to make their own decisions.

Whilst a cosy and calm book corner is a great way to share books, practitioners should ensure books are included across the environment, for example books about self-care in the bath room or role play area. Adding resources into the book corner can bring books to life. Puppets and persona dolls will encourage children to explore topics around differences, unfairness, prejudice and unkindness,

### Some books to include

#### Babies

Who Am I by Ope Davies  
Happy To Be Me by Emma Dodd  
Ten Little Fingers, Ten Little Toes by Mem Fox

#### Toddlers

I'm Big Now by Anthea Simmons  
Red, Red, Red by Polly Dunbar  
I Like It When by Mary Murphy

#### Preschool

The Invisible by Tom Percival  
What Happened To You? by James Catchpole  
Happy In Our Skin by Fran Manushkin



## Songs & Rhymes

The most intensive period for the acquisition of speech and language skills is during the early years, when the brain is developing and maturing at pace. These skills develop best in an environment that is rich with sounds and consistent exposure to the speech and language of others.

Even young children, who may not have the language to sing along to rhymes will learn, grow and find pleasure in joining in with songs and rhymes with their peers and key person. Skilled practitioners should listen, respond and build on babies' expressions, actions, babbles and gestures.

Singing songs and rhymes with young children about their bodies and themselves will encourage them to acquire new vocabulary in context. Practitioners who skilfully and playfully support children with the actions to go along with the rhymes will support brain development and gross motor skills whilst having lots of fun together.

Children will enjoy action rhymes to support them in learning about their bodies and the different ways they can move as well as identifying parts of their bodies. They will begin to attach meaning to the words they use to describe themselves, developing a deeper sense of self.

Practitioners should use these opportunities to talk with children about their individual characteristics, their uniqueness, their similarities and differences. Learning songs in children's home languages can again support their feelings of belonging in the setting.

## Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

### Babies

- ▶ If You're Happy & You Know It  
Clap Your Hands
- ▶ Open Them, Shut Them,  
Open Them Shut Them
- ▶ Ten Tiny Fingers.

### Toddlers

- ▶ I Hear Thunder
- ▶ Tommy Thumb
- ▶ Wind The Bobbin Up

### Preschool

- ▶ One finger, one thumb, keep moving
- ▶ Heads Shoulder Knees & Toes
- ▶ The Hokey Cokey

## Art & Creativity

Young children like to be creative with their whole bodies and see what marks they can make with various materials.

Taking inspiration from Picasso's Abstract Art, Practitioners can offer creative activities and mark making opportunities which encourage children to create using their whole selves. This might include using gloop, foam, paint and other sensory materials to make marks and prints. Older children can explore concepts of abstract art and use a range of materials to create their own abstract artwork. 3D sculptures can add another level of engagement. Providing a range of sculpting materials such as clay, dough and junk modelling materials, with glue, wire and tape can bring abstract art to life and offer many learning opportunities.

Famous for his portraits, Da Vinci can

offer inspiration for creativity in terms of developing self identity. Providing a range of mirrors and creative materials can provide a platform for children to recreate images of themselves and their peers. This investigation in self identity can be further strengthened by adding photos of children within the environment to encourage them to develop a strong sense of self in the setting.

Using natural materials to create self portraits or pictures of themselves can work well. Older children may be encouraged to look at portraits and discuss what they see. For example a practitioner might share a picture of the Mona Lisa with a group of children and encourage them to discuss how the Mona Lisa Feels, what makes her unique and describe what they see.

## STEM

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths can all be used to support children in exploring their identity and considering 'who am I?' Creating gloop from cornflour and water is a wonderfully tactile experience and can offer scientific exploration as children mix the mediums together and talk about how the gloop feels on their skin.

Offering a range of loose parts such as tinker trays and natural resources, can encourage new skills and exploration, whilst building manual dexterity and supporting brain development. Working closely with their friends and peers on joint projects is useful in building self-esteem, confidence, patience and cooperation. Inspired by their art work, children can be invited to use blocks and other resources to recreate the Louvre Museum, investigating shape, design and balance, concept's found with engineering. Perhaps their Picasso art may encourage creations of easels to paint

like Picasso and Da Vinci? Practitioners should build on these lines of enquiry and encourage children to think about what materials they need and how to create them. Further exploration may be along inquiries of other ways can we paint, for example, lying under tables or on Perspex, all leading to using their bodies in different ways.

Mathematical development can be encouraged through exploring same and different, how many people are like me?, counting children's unique features such as hair colour, glasses etc. Older children may be introduced to using a tally chart to record their findings for example.

Sensory play is an important part of early development. Children will enjoy a range of sensory play materials to explore and investigate. Sensory play can be an ideal basis for scientific concepts. For example, practitioners might encourage children's holistic sensory experiences by offering various sensory and malleable play opportunities that will help young children to investigate and share what they think, feel, taste and experience. Gently tickling the palms of a child's hands with a feather and asking how that makes them feel, perhaps offering some new descriptive language. Using sensory pots can be a lovely way for children, to smell new scents as well as familiar ones and describe what they experience or what the smells remind them of.

Providing children with digital cameras to take pictures of themselves and their peers in the environment adds a technological element to this focus. Perhaps they might print off their pictures and cut them up to create a jigsaw of themselves, create a day book of their activities or simply share their pictures with their families.

## Indoor Environment

The environment plays a huge part in enabling children to develop their sense of self and develop their thoughts and ideas. Young babies require plenty of opportunities to explore how their bodies move through free play on a firm flat surface, with plenty of space to move, stretch, roll and explore. Care routines are also an ideal opportunity to support a positive sense of self for babies, through respectful and caring interactions.

The indoor environment should feel safe, welcoming and inviting, allowing children to explore independently. An enabling environment will support children's feeling of safety, warmth and belonging as they see images of themselves and resources that they are familiar with and recognise. Include hats, shoes, glasses, etc in the role play area that are reflective of the children's cultures, backgrounds and experiences. Having access to familiar role play items encourages children to feel secure and share their thoughts, experiences and memories. Think about food boxes from authentic shops, cooking utensils, herbs and spices for example.

Reflective materials are also important in offering children opportunity to look at themselves and consider what they look like, how are they the same as others and what makes them unique. Think about offering foil, mirrors, reflective materials and water in the environment to support them in experimenting with their reflection. Mirrors provide an opportunity to discuss oral health, looking at their teeth and considering how they will keep their teeth clean.

Providing places for children to hide, to be missed and be found is a wonderful way to show children they are held in mind and

loved. Cosy dens, large boxes and hiding places tell children that they can find space to be quiet, reflective and thoughtful as well as enjoying the concept of hide and seek! Even the youngest children enjoy a game of peek-a-boo with their key person!

Light Boxes and shadow play can be offered in the environment to create light and dark and engage in shadow play. What shapes and patterns can I make in the shadows with my body? Placing X-rays onto light boxes to look at bone structures is an engaging way for older children to think and explore concepts of themselves that they not have considered and may lead on to discussions around the way our bodies move and function.

## Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment provides opportunities for larger gross motor development, encouraging children to move their bodies in new and exciting ways. Balance beams, push along, trikes and stepping stones, etc can provide opportunities for children to experiment with different ways to move their bodies and consider what they like and don't like. Play in this way will support children in taking safe risks and persevere in the face of a challenge, building resilience and self motivation.

Practitioners may wish to create physical challenges for children to encourage their risk taking and develop their confidence in the ways their body can move. Mini circuits and assault courses can be great fun for trying out new ways of moving. As children's heart rate and breathing increases with physical activity an opportunity arises to discuss how our bodies work, how the heart pumps blood around our body and why we need oxygen to live, linking to further invitations to explore scientific projects and experiments.

Using the outdoors as a quiet place for reflection, and take some quiet time can help children to tune into themselves. The natural world around them can provide a quiet space to think about their wellbeing, take deep breaths and enjoy tuning into their bodies. Practitioner can lie back with the children, describe what the clouds look like and how it feels to have the sun shine on their face.

Water play outdoors can provide a different level of engagement to indoor water play. Encouraging children to look at their reflection in a puddle or shallow bowl of water and describe what happens to their reflection when the water moves and ripples.

## What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?



## FOCUS 2 MY FAMILY

Building on the concepts explored in Focus 1, this curriculum focus extends children's thinking to their wider families, enabling them to deepen their understanding around what makes their family unique. This curriculum focus will encourage children to develop a broader understanding of the similarities and differences in families, encouraging them to value and respect different family structures.

By scaffolding the learning on identity and self-awareness, this focus encourages children to explore the concepts of 'family' and share their family experiences. Children can share their family traditions, cultural practices, and lifestyles, comparing and contrasting their own families with their peers. This focus will strengthen and extend children's understanding of who they are and where they belong.

My family focus provides a platform for discussion, conversation and exploration as children are encouraged to celebrate their own individuality and the uniqueness of their family. They will also develop their own sense of belonging in their key groups and recognise the feeling of 'family', this will encourage an awareness of their own self worth as a foundation for personal, social and emotional development.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

**Mind** – What can I share about my family and what do I know about other families?

**Body** – What makes my family unique and what do we have in common with other families?

**Spirit** – What faith, practices and special celebrations do my family have?

**Belong** – Who are my family? What do I mean to them and what do they mean to me?

**Contribute** – How do I contribute to my family?

**Thrive** – How do my family help me to grow and flourish?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning;

1. The differences and similarities in a range of families
2. That families have different practices, faiths and celebrations
3. That my family is unique and special
4. How it feels to belong to a family and how I contribute to relationships
5. New and exciting language and vocabulary to enable me to share my thoughts and feelings
6. That my family are important in my personal growth and development



I am learning about relationships with others and enjoy the company of familiar adults. Attachments with key care givers is important to me, so that I can feel safe and secure. I am beginning to

distinguish between people and I recognise the sound, look and smell of my closest care giver. My family is very important to my emotional security and fulfilment of my emotional needs. I usually feel calm when I hear my parents / carers voice, smell their clothing or know they are nearby. My attachment behaviours are developing and I do not always want my parents or carers to leave me. But my close attachment to my key person supports this transition and makes me feel that I am safe and I belong.

I am wary of unfamiliar people, or those I haven't seen in a while and I will look out for my parents or caregivers when I notice someone arrive. My relationship with my family helps me to feel secure and loved. My setting is like an extended family and I feel welcomed when I arrive. As this feeling of security develops, I become more able to explore my environment freely.

My emotional development is limited although there are new connections in my brain which are helping me to be aware of my feelings. I will express my feelings through crying to make sure my needs are met. My family and my nursery family are significant in helping me to co-regulate my emotions and understand my feelings. I will seek out close caregivers for support and to share my feelings.

I am beginning to understand contextual clues, especially those linked with my family,

customs, and practices. I enjoy games and rhymes and will use my finger to point and share attention with adults. I enjoy manipulating new and familiar objects and sharing these with my key person.

Routine is important to me. Sharing books which represent my family and our cultural practices is something I like to do with my key person. I am able to notice pictures and symbols that are familiar to me and I will demonstrate my understanding of these. I can recognise the key people in my life and I will respond and engage with these people.



My understanding of how I fit into other groups of people is developing. I will explore more freely, knowing that I have special people around me to keep me safe. I

am beginning to develop empathy and concern for people who are special to me, and starting to recognise that other people may have different perspectives. I will often watch, follow and imitate other children during play and will experiment with how I might influence others. I can be co-operative in my play with my peers but may also resist coercion in interactions with them.

I enjoy close contact from key care givers, often using physical expressions of feelings to release stress.

I am developing an understanding of and interest in differences of gender, ethnicity and ability and starting to relate these to my own family. I may demonstrate my family cultures, practices and daily lives in my play and will experiment with other view points through trying out different



behaviours, persona and identities. I can become overwhelmed by intense emotions and need support to self regulate. I will seek the comfort of familiar adults to help me with this. I am developing speaking skills and am more able to use language to share my experiences, feelings and thoughts.

I am moving more confidently and using wheeled toys with increasing skill. I am developing control in holding, using and manipulating objects, particularly those objects that are familiar to me. However, I will also explore new and interesting resources and materials.

I am developing likes and dislikes in foods and drinks and will share my thoughts and feelings with others. I enjoy sharing new experiences and will try new food, textures and tastes. I will have some favourite stories and rhymes which I will enjoy sharing, particularly those that are from my family practices and traditions.

I am starting to distinguish between different marks that I make and ascribe meaning to them, often relating them to my family or my personal experiences. I have a growing interest in what happens next and the pattern of every day routine. I am curious about people and will show an interest in stories about people, animals or objects that I am familiar with. I have a growing sense of my own immediate family, relations and pets. Having photographs of my family in my setting helps me to feel at home and secure and encourages me to share experiences and feeling with my key person. Role play provides me with opportunity to imitate everyday actions and events from my own family and cultural background. I am learning that I have similarities and differences that connect me to and distinguish me from others.



I am learning more about relationships with others as I seek out connections and experiences. I am more able to draw on my previous experiences to guide my social relationships.

I am increasingly considerate of other peoples needs and will seek out the support of an adult to help me negotiate conflict and compromise. I am able to represent and recreate what I have learnt from my own family experiences and social interactions in my play and relationships with others. My experiences of family and relationships may be different to my peers and this may have impacted on my understanding of what makes a consistent and stable relationship. For this reason, stable relationships with my nursery family are very important to me.

As my sense of self develops, I am becoming more aware of the similarities and differences between myself, my family and others, in more detailed ways. I am increasingly able to identify myself in relation to social groups and my peers. I'm starting to communicate freely about my family and my home, becoming more aware of my relationships and feeling more sensitive to prejudice and discrimination. I know the things that make me and my family unique and can talk about the similarities and differences in relation to family and friends.

I am ever more understanding that the expectations placed upon me will vary depending on different events, social situations and routines, and will try to adapt my behaviour in response to this. I can recall and retell social events and occasions and will share these with my peers and key person with increased confidence as my

language develops. I enjoy participating in family customs and events and I feel special and held in mind when my key person recognises special events in my life. I am beginning to talk about past and present events in my life and my families life.

I am beginning to understand why and how questions, which enable me to add depth to my thinking and enquiry. I make attempts to compare and contrast my knowledge of families and understand that not all families are like mine. As I learn to understand humour, I can share jokes and rhymes.

I enjoy 'writing', creating marks and even some recognisable letters. Being able to 'write' my name gives me a feeling of pride and belonging. I am able to be more independent with dressing and undressing, and like to try and help others too. My friends are important to me as I begin to think about the families they are from and share in their experiences.

I am beginning to find interest in mathematical patterns. Through play and exploration I am using my understanding of numbers to solve practical problems and use language related to position and direction. I can use my mathematical knowledge to sequence events in my life and use mathematical language in meaningful contexts.

I enjoy music, dance and movement, particularly when this is familiar to me or associated with my culture, customs and experience. I can create representations of my experiences and express myself creatively.

## Enabling My Learning

### Books

What better way to learn about their families than snuggled up with their key person sharing a book? Picture books should be representative of children's families, whatever shape or size their family comes in. Having a range of family types depicted in the books and texts around them will enable young children to explore the unique aspects of their families as well as the similarities they share with others. As a child's confidence develops, they will begin to select books independently and share them with their peers. This sharing can allow a mutual understanding of each other, develop tolerance and provide opportunities for the key person to gently challenge prejudice or bias and support children's understanding of difference. Books in languages which reflect the child's home language can also support children in feeling secure, welcome and settled in the setting, whilst enabling them to access text that is familiar to them. What's more, books that identify and explain family cultures, routines, customs and events can be a wonderful learning opportunity. Practitioners can skilfully present books and stories to enhance learning opportunities or lines of enquiry, for example, in the role play or dressing up areas. Using books and stories as a method to recognise each child's family make up, background, social and cultural context can provide further opportunities to support a child's cultural capital.

Further resources can be presented along with such books, to add depth and breadth to the learning. For example, setting up a

role play area representing the tiger who came to tea, or adding real life, culturally representative resources to the home corner.

Persona Dolls and small world figures that represent the children in the setting will encourage children to explore topics around similarities, differences, unfairness, and prejudice.

Photo books of children's families can make a wonderful learning resource. Help children to create their own books using pictures of their families, their celebrations, pets and homes. These books will be shared time and time again and can be added to over their early years journey, creating a delightful memory book.

### Some books to include

#### Babies

- ▶ The Tiger Who Came to Tea by Judith Kerr
- ▶ All About Families by Usborne
- ▶ Love you Forever by Robert Munsch

#### Toddlers

- ▶ Owl babies by Martin Wadell
- ▶ Titch by Pat Hutchins
- ▶ The Great Big Book of Families by Mary Hoffman

#### Preschool

- ▶ Two homes by Claire Masurel
- ▶ Mommy, Mama and Me by Lela Newman
- ▶ All about Families by Felicity Brooks

### Songs & Rhymes

Communication and language underpin children's learning in all areas. Songs and rhymes are a fun and engaging ways to support children's communication and language development. Sense of belonging and an understanding of family can be supported and enhanced through a range of songs and rhymes in the early years.

Songs and rhymes provide an opportunity for back-and-forth interactions, playing with words and sounds and engaging in playful language exchanges. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. Engagement in songs, rhymes, and poems, provides extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, and will provide children with the opportunity to thrive.

Including traditional rhymes from the children's own cultures can support their understanding of family, and practitioners might invite children's families into the setting to share their songs and rhymes in the group.

Using traditional and cultural music within the environment that reflect children's families and backgrounds will encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings around their own families.

### Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

#### Babies

- ▶ These are grandma's glasses
- ▶ Five little ducks
- ▶ Hush little baby

#### Toddlers

- ▶ This is the ways we
- ▶ This is a family
- ▶ Old mother Hubbard

#### Preschool

- ▶ When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears
- ▶ The farmer in the Dell
- ▶ Old mother Goose

### Art & Creativity

This focus brings a whole host of creative play opportunities and by welcoming the families to participate in this area, it will be celebrated and appreciated effectively. Drawing on the creative aspects of focus one, children may create using the people who are best known to them, making meaning to their marks, and even naming who or what they have created. This may well include other messy play materials such as dough, mud, or foam, as well as crayons, paint, and collage materials. The engagement of the key persons in these experiences will allow the children to be exposed to families different to their own and may even include pets.

The environment can also add to the creativity of this focus-by having photos of different families, artistic family portraits such as Tate's collections of families can engage children in conversations about

different backgrounds and support the understanding of differences and respect for other cultures. This focus is an opportunity to join with families to share their experiences, foods, stories and languages-this will spill into the children's play where more creativity will be explored in the role play areas and with the small world pieces.

Throughout the half term, art and creativity will merge with events and celebrations such as birthdays, key dates in the calendar and historical dates-another opportunity to create in different ways using different media-for example birthday cards, making different foods etc.

Art work can be produced by the children using the influence of George Seurat's pointillism, this can be introduced by using cotton buds to reproduce the unique dotting with paint to make pictures of scenery and objects that they are familiar with - this could include items in their homes, family members etc. The children will make connections between their home and artwork, as well as being able to take something home that has been produced in the setting by the children. Examples of George Seurat's work could also be displayed for inspiration and within a homely environment.

### STEM

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths can be embedded within the practices in the setting. Whilst exploring 'my family' the children can recreate and revisit some of the wonderful experiences from their first focus, building on their experiences and cementing the knowledge and understanding of STEM.

Children could explore families within their role play encouraged by practitioners to consider how they set up their table for dinner and where they may sit. Through



these quality interactions mathematical language will be used with meaning. They could also try to recreate some home-made meals that they experience and consider quantities, transformation, and the way in which some of the tools work. Lots of families in England enjoy a cup of tea and this is something that a lot of children will be familiar with. An excellent contribution to the water tray will be watching what happens to teabags (all kinds) as it mixes into the water. Older children may make predictions and use new vocabulary.

Again, this idea of the key group being a 'family' can move forwards into what each family likes to, and most importantly, how they do it. Examples would be playing games, going outside, and experiencing other family's activities together. Loose parts and tinker trays would have another role here and promote holistic development in they way that each child accesses the play opportunities.

Treasure baskets and heuristic play can be used to support the engineering and technology skills used to create and build. Real life pictures of the different accommodation that families live in, including from around the world can be explored both using the internet to research together and books to investigate.

Sustainability can also be considered within the Science element of STEM- this can start simply with recycling and composting, sharing with families how this is carried out in the setting and how it could be continued at home.

### Indoor Environment

'My family' is an opportunity to reflect on the indoor environment from the children's point of view, what parts of the

setting do they like to be in the most and why? How can they be included in the overall 'feel' of the indoor environment?

Cosy areas provide a space to connect with the children and ensure that they feel heard, this is fundamental to the feelings of safety and security. This can be recreated by engaging with the families and comparing what they like most about home including smells, objects, and sounds. For example, children may have families who do lots of cooking with spices, this could be used in sensory play or for the babies put into sensory socks.

Photo frames are a lovely way of bringing a piece of home into the setting, photos of family events, celebrations, and wider families. This will in turn provoke a lot of reflecting and language when having conversations about the photos.

The small world and role play areas will have representation of different families and the children will be able to explore what it might feel like in different families provoking an appreciation and respect for each other and themselves.

There will be times during the day where the key groups will come together and eat, talk, and learn, at these times children will be listened to and will be learning how to behave in a social context. This learning is life long and crucial to support them being future ready.

The books and visual representations in the setting will promote all families and be representative not only of families attending the setting but also, families from around the world. The resources throughout the setting will reflect this.

### Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment encompasses the physical development aspect of child development, but this can also be a perfect opportunity for holistic development.

Within this focus of my family, the children can engage in team games encouraging socialisation, conversation, and emotional intelligence. The younger children will be learning how to navigate in the larger space and how to use their bodies independently. The older children will be learning the rules of these games and coping with the reality of winning and losing, depending on child order, this may be something that the child only experiences at the setting. They can use props for these games including races on cars or obstacle courses that encourage cheering for their teammates. Families could even be invited to these events and celebrate the efforts of their children.

There will also be opportunities to engage in malleable play such as in the mud, with clay and sand. The transformations that take place when water is mixed in with these objects and how they can create

together in a social group. As they create, there may be natural mimicking of family barbecues or family gatherings which can be repeated with their social groups.

Spaces in the outdoor area that encourage communicating in a group, engaging in conversations, and working together will be available. The outdoor space is a wonderful way of releasing energy but it also has the potential of being a calm space where children can relax, reflect and breathe fresh air into their lungs. Adult led activities will support in this area by encouraging different ways of moving their bodies, this could initially be running in different directions, building to balancing and stretching their bodies. The older children can also begin this half term to consider planting in the setting's garden, this should include things that they can eat once grown. The progress can be shared with the families. The families can also be tasked with going on a nature walk on their way to the setting and bringing in something they have found-bringing the outdoors indoors. This could include things such as pine cones, unusual shaped pebbles and leaves.

### What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?

## FOCUS 3 MY COMMUNITY

The early years really is the best place to start in instilling a sense of community. When children are familiar with the environment around them, their sense of independence will grow and allow for room to explore new environments with more confidence. By learning how to look after the community around them, appreciating the environments around them and embracing new experiences, they will develop their self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy. Community involvement in the early years can serve as a lifelong benefit as they learn to respect and value the people and environments around them. This curriculum focus will give them a sense of belonging-crucial to their identity. As well as the environment, children will learn about the different businesses around them and the people who help us. This can serve as aspiration, appreciation and again, respect and value.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

Mind – What do I think about the community around me?

Body – What wonderful things can I sense with my whole body?

Spirit – What connects me to others in my community?

Belong – What is my role in this community?

Contribute – How can I share my thoughts, feelings, needs and ideas?

Thrive – Who do we know in the community that can help us?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning;

1. New vocabulary that connects to the world around me
2. How to explore the natural environment using all of my senses
3. That I belong in a wider community outside of my family
4. That my key person will support my new experiences
5. That I can be a part of taking care of my community
6. That there are people outside of my family, within my community that can help me to thrive



I love being around the people who are close to me and that are familiar to my surrounding. I depend on my caregivers for almost everything, but I am

starting to discover new things about the world around me. I have strong relationships with my primary carers and will cry for them when they are not around. My key person is beginning to understand my cues as I begin to communicate with them using babbling, one and two word utterances and as I grow, words that my key person understands. I enjoy being close to the grown-ups and children around me, I especially want to watch their faces.

I am exploring using all of my body and I will like to splash in water and other materials that feel nice to touch. I am testing my whole body and experimenting with bigger toys, like trikes and wheeled toys. At feeding, changing and bath times I enjoy it when my grown ups make eye contact and sing to me, some of my favourites are the ones about other people, like Miss Polly had a Dolly. I am learning each day about how to feed myself and whilst I make a mess, I am learning a little more each day and will keep practising.

I am listening and watching all of the time, and I am storing all of the words to be able to say some back to you. By singing songs, pointing things out to me and naming them and reading stories, I am learning. This is especially fun when we are out and about seeing new things in the environment. The noises you make, I am trying to mimic.



It is so interesting now to watch the other children and join in with them when I can. I am getting better at telling my grown ups what I want and communicating my emotions to them. I have

friends in the setting that I share laughing and playtime with, this is developing my social skills. I may even find the confidence to engage with other people such as shopkeepers and the doctor.

I am able to run now without hurting my knees or arms, I can steady myself and make judgements about the height of a step for example, I may still need help and reassurance to build my confidence, especially if it is an unfamiliar area. I can kick a ball now and use my whole body in the indoor and outdoor areas with little support. I am also trying my hardest to strengthen my finger muscles with all of the threading, play dough and loose parts.

I am understanding longer instructions and I have paid lots of attention to the words that have been said to me, I am now able to say some of them back and join in the songs that have been sung to me. I am also understanding questions and may even ask some myself. I may point to the right objects and I love it when I am praised for that.





I know how to operate simple equipment and can use my fine motor skills, as well as my memory to use them. I am more confident when using my body especially when navigating

new areas with hills, and textured floors. I am starting to explore the environment around me whilst taking risks and reflecting on things that have passed.

I am making links to lines and marks, making meaning to them. I can remember special times and can recall them to talk about and answer questions about the special people in my life.

I am interested in the jobs that grown ups do and have seen different places that I can talk about, and maybe even recreate. I enjoy and can request to go to places of my choice, like the park and the garden. I can also choose what I want to do in the indoor and outdoor environment. I have become more curious and can notice changes such as my key person not being in and remembering why. I can talk about the things around me and discuss why things are happening.

## Enabling My Learning

### Books

Sharing books with their peers develops a sense of community when in a group. The selection of books available to explore are diverse and ensure that children are being exposed to different roles in the community and business. This will allow

for representation, building confidence, self-worth and developing a strong sense of belonging. The books shared with the children will promote ways of living in a range of different communities giving opportunities to embrace and explore a wide variety of cultures. Remembering that books can be fiction and non-fiction it is also an opportunity to share how to take care of that environment and the ways in which the children can contribute to it. The key adults will point out similarities and differences, as well as provoke discussion about the different communities shown. The children will ask questions and explore further using books and bringing in technology where answers are more difficult to find.

A key place to display books is usually in a designated area, however the books will also mimic the provocations for example different buildings in the construction area, books about cement etc. Further enhancing this provision will include magazines, and pictures, as well as props to encourage further discussion and exploration.

An area outside with books available will also be included to ensure that all children are exposed to different images, texts, and stories. The key adults will also share the books of interest from home and vice versa. The setting will try to link with local libraries to investigate more non fiction books about the community and will connect with different places that may have text in other formats such as the doctors surgery and local community centre.

### Some books to include

#### Babies

- ▶ Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell
- ▶ Peace at last by Jill Murphy

#### Toddlers

- ▶ Meesha Makes Friends by Tom Percival,
- ▶ We Are Together by Britta Teckentrup
- ▶ Together We Can by Caryl Hart

#### Preschool

- ▶ Jolly Postman and Other People's Letters by Janet & Alan Ahlberg
- ▶ The Smartest Giant in Town by Julia Donaldson
- ▶ Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña
- ▶ Maybe Something Beautiful by Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

### Songs & Rhymes

This focus offers opportunities to the adults and children to learn new songs and rhymes that reflect the community that we are living in. We can reach out to the local community regarding the songs and rhymes that may be shared in group gatherings such as hymns at the local church. It is another way of repeating songs that we already know but also adding to the context and meaning. The words that are being learned and repeated will act as new vocabulary and connected to key events, objects and places within the community. The people that help us in the community will have faces in the children's memories, for example, Miss Polly had a dolly will provoke imagery of a doctor-someone who helps us. We ensure that these images

are inclusive and represent the real adults working in the sectors. Skilled practitioners will point this out when on walks and when looking at books, linking the images to the reality for the children, aiding their understanding and knowledge. Singing songs about the local businesses will help to support children's intellectual skills of assimilation and accommodation. The children will also be moving their bodies in different ways to the music and actions, further developing their physical development. Props can be made as an enhancement to their songs and rhymes, including speckled frogs, current buns etc. Their songs and rhymes will also filter into their role play incorporating the businesses and roles that they have also seen.

### Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

#### Babies

- ▶ Miss Polly had a dolly
- ▶ Pat a cake, pat a cake
- ▶ Wheels on the bus

#### Toddlers

- ▶ Five little speckled frogs
- ▶ Old MacDonald had a farm
- ▶ The farmers in his den

#### Preschool

- ▶ Five current buns in the baker's shop
- ▶ Do you see what I see?
- ▶ London's burning

## Art & Creativity

Being creative is often something that both adults and children enjoy, and in this area we will have a perfect opportunity to get other adults in the community involved including inviting parents and families to share their creative ideas. It may also mean that we can create a community art project that can be celebrated for years to come. Taking inspiration from James Rizzi's cityscapes, we can recreate the colourful pictures of the buildings we can see in our own community. Providing a range of different tools and materials to bring the artwork to life and to add meaning to the children's work-also incorporating the work of Chila Kumari Singh Burman using mixed media.

These learning opportunities will be a way for children to express what they see and to appreciate the community around them. Different collages can also be made around the people that help us to further support understanding and to encourage the children to make sense of what the people do and how they may look, encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion within this aspect.

## STEM

Loose part and heuristic play serve a great purpose when exploring STEM. Children will be engaging in the science of plants in this area, planting, observing, predicting and growing their own fruits and vegetables. This will be further extended into making and preparing food such as soups. This will be linked with new vocabulary to support their speech and language, and the building of parent partnerships when sharing recipes and the project being worked on at home.

Building on the art project of influences such as Chila Kumari Singh Burman and James Rizzi, the children will be making structures,

again observing and predicting. How tall does it need to be? Will this fall down? How can I make it stronger? This may transfer into other areas of play and development, promoting physical development and construction play. Real photos of buildings will be displayed and used in books within these provocations to allow for children to see real representation and draw inspiration for what they may build.

Maths will naturally occur within play through the loose parts that will be available both indoors and outdoors, other areas of provision will incorporate elements such as counting money for car parking in role play, having numbers to park their cars in parking spaces and making maps of their local area with the number of steps taken to get there.

Clay and other malleable materials will be used for the children to recreate items that they have seen when walking in the community. They will be strengthening their fine motor skills in preparation for writing, as well as learning about the science and engineering factors of transformation. Some children will be engaged in making the malleable items.

## Indoor Environment

The children will have settled into their environment and will be comfortable in making choices about their favourite places within the indoor environment. They will feel confident that their voices are heard, and they can offer their ideas about the setup of the indoor environment, with opportunities to select and transport items around. The people that help in the local community will visit the setting on occasions that are suitable and communicated with the families. This may include a police officer, dentist, or shopkeeper for example.

The role play provision will form part of the community that the children have been most interested in-such as dentist or a shop. The authentic items that can be used in this area will reflect the communities that the children live in and beyond, whilst ensuring that sensitivity is given to the local area too. The treasure baskets with the younger children may have items that they may find familiar and some that are unfamiliar for them to explore.

The floor areas will be set up as communities with roads using masking tape on the floor, road signs created by the children and boxes (and other loose part items) for the children to create their own communities. The children can use cameras to take photos of their set ups and reflect on a later date about their creations.

## Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment will double up as their outdoor community space, they will communicate, socialise and interact in the ways that they have experienced. The way in which they move their bodies outside will differ to the indoor environment, with the space to be the car, be the building

and use the roads. The children will be developing their gross motor skills as they play games such as traffic lights and stop/start. They will use vehicles to get faster and test their balancing skills. The children will be able to risk take on a larger scale.

Part of the outdoor area can be transformed into a car wash where the children wash the vehicles with large sponges and soapy water. This will make links to their science skills, watching transformations and considering the ratios when mixing. The car wash will also become a petrol station with children conversing about how much it costs and where to put the petrol. They will be exploring new language of questioning and answering.

The natural world around them is exciting and the curiosity of exploring this will be nurtured by the key persons. Exploring local areas to discover will be encouraged. This can include being quiet in nature and encouraging sensory walks-what can you hear? What can you see? What can you feel? By doing this the children will be going within and connecting with their emotions too, stopping, listening and paying attention to the world around them.

## What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?



## FOCUS 4 MY WORLD

After exploring the community that they live in, the children will have a smooth transition into this focus of the world around them. With so much to explore the children will benefit from new vocabulary, a sense of belonging and acceptance, an appreciation for the world in which they live and a steppingstone to their place in the world.

The children's awareness of the world around them will be extended by the rich environment in which they explore, through books, the use of technology and through having conversations with their grown-ups about things that they observe. It gives the educators an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences too, and representing different people, values, religions, and cultures.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

Mind – What do I think about the world around me?

Body – How can my body travel in different ways?

Spirit – What similarities and differences are there in different countries?

Belong – How can I be kind to myself and others?

Contribute – How can I help to heal the world?

Thrive – What makes me feel grateful in this world?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning.

1. New vocabulary that connects to the world around me
2. New ways of living in different countries in the world
3. That I have similarities and differences to the people around me
4. That there is always something new to learn
5. That I can be a part of taking care of the world
6. How to practice gratitude and give thanks for all that I have



The world around me is interesting and I am enjoying being introduced to new things that keep me interested. I can show you that I am interested in what you are doing by

watching you in the natural environment and having opportunities to use my hands and feet to feel the environment around me. I can start to use my voice to get your attention and let you know that I need you to be near. I like to explore things with my mouth and soon find out the things that I do not want in my mouth. I am beginning to understand what you mean when you use words and actions together and the songs that we are singing together are filling me with lots of new vocabulary to use later on.

The relationships that I have developed have given me a sense of belonging and I now feel more confident to reach out and touch things. I am able to use my whole body to explore and the outdoor environment is a world of curiosity for me, I have lots of time in a safe place to look around and learn more about the world around me.



The world still feels new to me and so I am curious about it, I am enjoying wearing my boots and splashing in puddles, using the mud kitchen to make things like you do and climbing

up the hill to roll down. Sometimes I am unsure and will need the help of my grown ups to support me as I build my confidence. I am learning so much from the books, songs and rhymes that we are learning, new words and new knowledge of the world.

My connections are growing strong with the people who are around me most, I enjoy seeing them close by playing with me and making up games. I am also loving being so creative and learning new ways of expressing myself. I sometimes need help with this too and some of the emotions I am feeling are too big for my body to handle.

I enjoy using my hands but also my whole body to explore the world around me, I am learning when I need to be calmer and gentle-like when I am touching a caterpillar outside and when I can be a little more physical-like when I am kicking a ball.



New knowledge is so interesting to me now and I have lots of questions after listening to all of the new words and information.

The books that I am looking at are helping by providing a visual representation.

Going outside in the provision helps me to put what I have learnt about the world into practice, but I also like doing this inside too, my grown ups have made such interesting spaces for me to explore.

I am expressing myself through art and STEM, experimenting and making new things is really exciting to me and the knowledge that I am learning all the time helps to fuel that further. I am speaking a lot more now and I am able to talk about what I am doing.

Now that I am counting and using different way to explore number, it is fun for me to do it with my hands as it makes more sense.

# Enabling My Learning

## Books

Books are a great way to show children different ways in which the world works, from different people and families, to different foods and environments.

The selection of books that are made available for the children will reflect different countries of the world, as well as teaching the children about the world in which they live in England. This will encourage the children to find out new knowledge, but also to appreciate the world around them.

Within this focus, the educators are able to share how we can also take care of our planet and this will be a perfect time to share books on recycling, fuel and other areas of interest when researching with the children.

The books that are available to the children will be displayed attractively and the children who typically reach for fiction books will be encouraged to page turn in different non-fiction books and listen to audio books, this will allow for exposure to different languages and dialects.

We will also invite guest story tellers in to support in the telling of stories and acting out of the stories. It is possible for the children to transport the books around the setting and use within their play - this is most likely going to encourage more language and conversation in role play too.

## Some books to include

### Babies

- ▶ We Are Going On A Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen
- ▶ Somebody Swallowed Stanley By Sarah Roberts

### Toddlers

- ▶ Sometimes I Feel Sunny by Gillian Shields
- ▶ Here We Are: Notes About Living On Planet Earth by Oliver Jeffers

### Preschool

- ▶ My World Your World by Melanie Walsh
- ▶ Welcome To Our World: A Celebration Of Children Everywhere by Moira Butterfield
- ▶ The World Around Me by Charlotte Guillain

## Songs & Rhymes

The children will be familiar now with all of the songs that are sung in the setting, they will have learned lots of new words and often be initiating the songs themselves. The songs and rhymes that can be introduced within this focus can relate to different areas of the world, but they can also include topics such as weather, the planet and the world around us.

The songs and rhymes can also be in different languages and rhythms, introducing different genres of music too. The children will be linking the music to their creative development and having opportunities to engage in making instruments (see Art section) and imaginative play. Physical development will be developed with the movement of their bodies with the new music and rhythms that they will be exposed to.

The children will also look at poetry to support their understanding of rhyme, letters, and sounds. The poems will be linked to the world around us and can therefore, be diverse and creative. This will enable an appreciation of the world around us and how we connect to it.

## Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

### Babies

- ▶ Row, row, row your boat

### Toddlers

- ▶ The Grand Old Duke Of York

### Preschool

- ▶ Rain, rain, go away

## Art & Creativity

As mentioned in the songs and rhymes section, the children will engage in making their own music in the form of instruments. The different types of instruments and the way that they are played will be of sublime interest to all of the children and support their holistic development. The materials used can be from a range of different media and help to encourage sustainability in using recycled materials- another connection with the home learning environment where parents/carers can support in donating some of the 'junk'.

Through the work of Vincent van Gogh, the children will be interpreting a starry night using fork and foil painting to make the swirly marks that they may observe in the sky. In order to support the children with this, they will have opportunities to lie outside and look at the sky, whilst the practitioners support in what different pictures they can see using the clouds.

Kadinsky's tree circles will act as a catalyst in the children exploring their own creativity in paint, collages and coloured sand. The tough trays will be set up with different circular lids and buttons for the children to create art with. The younger children may create circle printing pictures using different coloured paints, sizes of circles and positioning. The way in which they will explore this media will be individual to the child, which will in turn support their confidence levels when creating.

## STEM

During this focus the children will be exploring being a scientist engaging in experiments such as which items will float and sink. In the younger age groups this will be during water play facilitated by the grown ups in talking to them and narrating what is happening. The older children will be making predications and maybe even recording their findings. The science of the focus will also be looking at life cycles, we will use stories to support this as well as doing some experiments such as keeping a piece of fruit in a jar to see what happens.

The children will also be learning about recycling and this will encourage families to do more at home in terms of healing the planet too. The children can find out about the different materials that can be recycled and even engage in some sorting of what can and can't.

In the mud kitchen and indoors the children will be able to make perfume using different natural materials and this will be extended to introduce colour mixing, natural colours that can be made and the smells that they hold. They will have a chance to experiment with different materials to do this and have some water to fill the bottles, bringing in maths and again, new vocabulary.



### Indoor Environment

The indoor environment will be rich with language from the relational aspect, but also within the provocations that are available. This will incorporate diversity and ensure that all children have access to the wonderful things on offer. To ensure that this focus is celebrated, the tuff trays will include a sensory offering to enable the children to feel the outside, inside. This could include leaves, soil, pebbles etc.

Exploration of other countries that may have been visited, as well as others that can be explored will be discussed and shared. This will be mirrored in the continuous provision of role play and small world. The diversity within the resources offered will be sensitive and well researched.

Celebration of different events from around the world will be promoted within the setting in an inclusive way ensuring that the children are exposed to ways of celebrating. This may be through the food, the dress, and the traditions etc.

### Outdoor Environment

The children will have gained lots of knowledge about the world around them and this will spill into some of the things that they will experience in the outdoor area. The mud kitchen, for example, will have materials to make perfumes, mud pies and the children can create their own recipe books to support their language and literacy. They will be practising their maths skills whilst playing in this area.

The children will have large equipment to navigate and this will give them lots of practice in strengthening their bodies and learning new ways to move their bodies in the outdoor space. They will be using their fine motor skills to feel new materials such as when they are making mud pies.

We will also look at growing some of our own plants and vegetables, this will link nicely with the next two focus areas. The children will be involved in the planting, predicting and observing the growth of the plants and vegetables, seeing the whole life cycles.

### What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?

## FOCUS 5 MY FUTURE

This focus allows for exploration of the natural world and in particular the part we play in taking care of it. Sustainability is something that we take seriously and support the children in learning about, with a sense of action and doing our part in making the world a greener place to be. The children will be supported by the adults in their lives in how they can get more involved in the world around them. The motivation for taking care of the world around us lies in the beauty of the world around us, the noticing and appreciation, through the wonder and curiosity. This focus will see lots more hands-on approaches and support of critical and creative thinking, through the use of loose end, heuristic and natural play. The children will be engaging their higher order thinking skills to discover new facts about the world around them, this will encourage questioning, new vocabulary and increase motivation of learning.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

Mind – What do I notice about the natural environment?

Body – What senses can I use when outdoors?

Spirit – How can I connect with the natural world around me?

Belong – What makes me similar to the animals in my world?

Contribute – What part can I play in healing the planet?

Thrive – How can we work together to create a sustainable future?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning.

1. New vocabulary that connects to the natural world around me
2. All about my senses and how they work
3. That I have similarities and differences to the animals around me
4. That I can make a difference in small ways
5. That I can learn new things every day from others
6. That by working together we can create a sustainable future



I am showing curiosity about objects, events and people so when those people play with me and encourage me to explore, I feel safe in discovering new things. I am now initiating activities and experiences and the people around me are paying attention in how I engage with activities and ensuring that I have time for uninterrupted play.

I listen to familiar sounds, words and songs and use a wide range of animated facial expressions that I have seen my grown ups do too. I have lots of energy that need adult support in order to restore my calm and regulation. I have enough time given to me for respectful care and the words that my grown ups use are gentle and kind.

I am enjoying responding to size now big and small that I see and try to pick up. I am learning how to do that by myself but still need some encouragement. I am enjoying playing with such items and seeing how they feel.



I am beginning to experiment on my own and showing a sense of autonomy through my own ideas and exploration. I am becoming more vocal about this and using words that my grown-ups affirm are correct.

I seek comfort from my grown ups when I am upset, over excited or if I need co-regulation. I feel comfortable in reaching out for this in my setting. I am beginning to explore more and more, enjoying being

social with my peers and learning new things. I use my imagination when playing in the indoor and outdoor environment and have the opportunity to engage in lots of play with my grown-ups and peers.



I am showing confidence in my own competence and speaking to others about my needs, wants, interest and opinions when around my familiar group. I am beginning to prepare for my transition to school and so the fine motor skills that I have been working on will now help me when trying to form letters. I will continue to page turn and enjoy stories.

I am getting very confident now in my gross motor skills and I am practising some appropriate safety measures without instruction. I am showing an understanding of the world around me and engaging in new ideas and activities with competence and confidence.



# Enabling My Learning

## Books

The children will be familiar with their surroundings and have established nooks to get comfy to read with their grown-ups and look at books independently by the time this focus emerges. There will be some stories available about different animals and the similarities that they share with the animals about their homes, the love around them and their emotions. Some of the stories will have meaning and purpose, giving the children a sense of safety, security and love. The books will spill into their play too and the vocabulary learnt will appear in their role play, outdoor play and when accessing continuous provision.

A key factor in this focus though, will be the non-fiction options available. The books will be rich in the natural world around them, as well as far away in the rest of the world. The animals, habitats and food will be of great interest to many of the children. This again will be replicated in the small world; role play and rest of continuous provision. An appreciation and an understanding of the natural world around us will be developed. The work carried out in Art and Creativity will also overlap here, having books about Claude Monet for example and his 'truth of nature'.

There will also be opportunities for the visual and auditory learners to watch and listen to stories/factual documentaries that are age appropriate about animals, the world around us and looking after our planet.

## Some books to include

### Babies

- ▶ The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- ▶ The Big Book Of The Blue by Yuval Zommer

### Toddlers

- ▶ Mad About Minibeasts by Giles Andreas
- ▶ Walking Through The Jungle by Julie Lacome
- ▶ Handa's Surprise by Eileen Browne

### Preschool

- ▶ What The Ladybird Heard by Julia Donaldson
- ▶ We're Roaming In The Rainforest by Laurie Krebs & Anne Wilson

## Songs & Rhymes

With lots of songs and rhymes to choose from under this focus, the children will be adding in lots of actions utilising their gross motor skills as well as the fine motor skills when using their fingers to count and take away. They will be identifying the sounds of the animals, thinking, and making connections to the environment and having lots of fun in the process.

Singing is an amazing tool to raise confidence and self-esteem, as well as to promote holistic development. The children's songs will also filter into their maths work, artwork and continuous provision. The grown-ups will leave the setting singing the songs too and the parents will have plenty of opportunity to learn the songs that are being sung at the setting.

Getting up on their feet and learning through movement will not only support

the memory of the songs, but will also promote the children's intellectual development, movement brings the brain to life. Turning on the light to learning!

## Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

### Babies

- ▶ Down In The Jungle
- ▶ I Hear Thunder

### Toddlers

- ▶ 5 Little Monkeys
- ▶ Old Macdonald Had A Farm
- ▶ 5 Little Ducks
- ▶ Sleeping Bunnies

### Preschool

- ▶ Farmer's In The Den
- ▶ Rain, Rain, Go Away
- ▶ 5 Little Speckled Frogs

## Art & Creativity

Claude Monet's most famous paintings were often based around nature, we will bring the works of Monet to life within the EYFS by using coloured rice, sand, pebbles, cake cases and pipe-cleaners to explore Monet's art in a sensory way, paint our own bridges with water lilies and take a picture of the children to stick it onto the bridge. We will find opportunities to discuss what they can see in his paintings, what they might be able to hear and how that might make them feel.

Georgia O'Keeffe's paintings are instantly recognisable from their unique use of colour and shapes to represent emotion in a physical object or landscape, by exploring her artwork, the children can draw inspiration from this to create their own art and find

their own style in colour and shapes, ensuring that there are tools and material available.

We will also begin to explore sculpture of the natural world, such as Barbara Hepworth's work. Clay is natural, it comes from the earth. It is cool to the touch and soft on our skin. It has a deep earthy smell which invites you in. Clay can be sculpted far more intricately than play dough. The children will be strengthening their fine motor skills as well as express their creativity.

## STEM

The natural world around us is constantly changing and sometimes we don't stop to notice, within this area of focus we will stop to notice, as we will be engaging with the natural environment daily. We will make bird feeders using various materials and watch the birds use the feeders identifying which birds use them and how much food they eat.

We will also be conducting our own experiments such as making volcanoes, this will be supported by researching volcanoes and seeing pictures of what they look like. The children will learn what it looks like on a small scale and be able to make their own volcanoes from paper mâché. Another weather that we will be interested in is the sun, it will be nice to make sun catchers to explore this further and watch how the sun makes shadows and different colours at various times of day.

The curiosity of the children will be heightened further when we explore ice, we will freeze eggs and other items. The children will then have the opportunity to explore what is inside and how they could break the ice or melt the ice to free what is inside. We will also make natural paint brushes from materials that we can find and use them in our artwork.

Technology will be incorporated as we take our camera into the natural environment and capture photos along the way, they will then look at the pictures and reflect on what they have seen. This is a great way to get the children involved but to also extend their vocabulary and meta-cognition skills.

### Indoor Environment

The materials that we use in the tuff trays will vary from week to week depending on what the children are interested in, this will develop as the term goes on and new natural materials become available in the natural environment for bringing inside. One of these things will be flowers in the tuff tray, the children can use these flowers in their collages, playdoh to create a new way of being curious and engaging with the natural environment. They will be using all of their senses and this will encourage talking, questioning and the innate drive to learn more.

Herbs and flowers have natural scents that the children may not yet have been exposed to, having time to play with these materials, create artwork with them and to have them in their play (scented jars and socks) the children will learn more about them and be more switched on to the world around them.

The role play and small world areas will be full of animals, with natural materials for them to explore. For example, what happens when the cows crunch the leaves under their feet? Or what will the birds do if there are no seeds for them to eat? Where do you think the caterpillar will feel most comfortable? The children will come together and discuss some of these questions with their grown-ups, as well as engage in active storytelling.

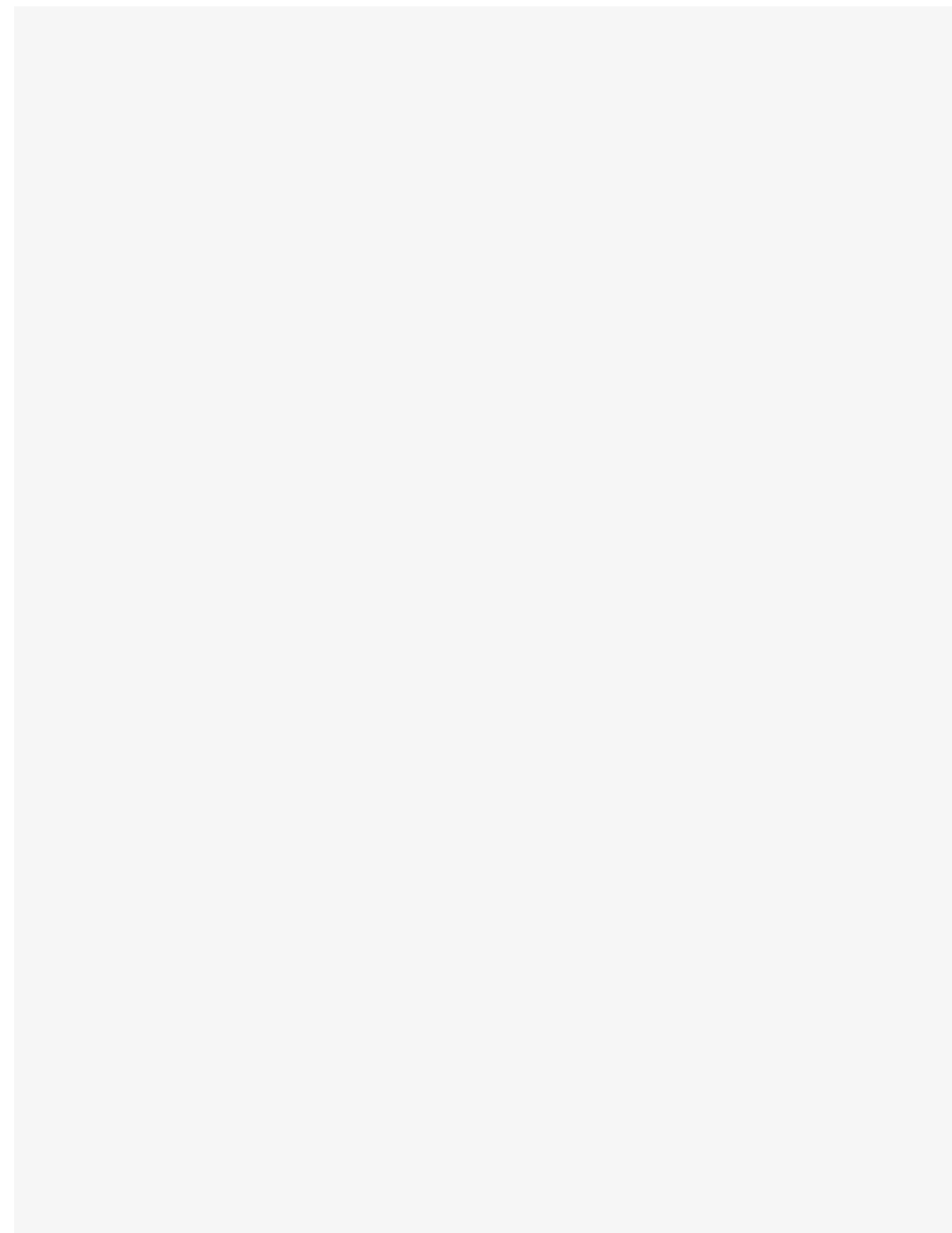
### Outdoor Environment

The excitement and joy of exploring the outdoor area will be enhanced even further during this focus, the children will be planting seeds and watching them grow as part of their STEM learning. In the tuff tray outside there will be chia seeds and coriander seeds to create swamps for frogs and tadpoles. Exploring this will raise questions about life cycles and habitats.

We will also engage in scavenger hunts with the children where a graduated approach will take place for each age group. For example, the preschool children will have a list in picture form to tick off as they find the items. This can also be extended to the home learning environment, where the parents/carers can support a scavenger hunt on the way to the setting or at the weekend.

We will be taking art outside by creating tree bark rubbings, this may be on walks in the natural environment too. The children can make frames for their rubbings out of sticks to create their own masterpieces to display at home or in the setting. A sense of pride and achievement will be instilled. We will also do some leaf threading, again incorporating holistic development of each child, skills such as fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and much more will be practised.

### What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light gray background, intended for users to write their own ideas for children's activities in their settings.



## FOCUS 6

# MARVELOUS ME

The main objective for this focus is to bring together all of the knowledge and understanding gained by the children throughout the year, the children are like sponges absorbing the environment around them, the words spoken and the knowledge that they are surrounded by in such a rich, purposeful manner. Within this focus, the children will have built their self-esteem and confidence, and a sense of identity and belonging.

The vocabulary they have acquired along the way will also stand them in good stead for the next part of their journey, building on and growing their intellectual, emotional and physical development and resilience. There are high expectations for these marvellous humans.

### Curriculum Focus Key Questions

**Mind** – How do I feel?

**Body** – Where do I feel emotions in my body?

**Spirit** – How can I be kind to my peers?

**Belong** – What do I like to do?

**Contribute** – How can I help my peers and grown-ups?

**Thrive** – What can I do now that I couldn't do before?

### In this Curriculum Focus, I am learning

1. All about me, what I like, what I don't and how I learn
2. To challenge myself by trying new things
3. To be proud of myself and my efforts
4. That I can calm big emotions that I feel
5. That I can strive to improve the skills I have already gained
6. That with practice and repetition I can learn new, wonderful things



I have learnt more about myself and my body, as well as the amazing things it can do. I continue to value close relationships with key caregivers in order to feel protected and secure. I am increasing my confidence in rolling, sitting, crawling, standing, walking, balancing, and running at a rapid pace.

My urge to move my body is great, and I know that when my key person responds to me, they will do so with love and warmth. My key person is also continuing to learn everything there is to know about me, and we are forming a deep bond that is beneficial to my overall health and emotional development. As a result of our friendship, I am able to thrive, grow, and flourish.

My speaking skills are constantly improving as we sing, read, and converse. These rhymes allow me to experiment with my body in different ways, as well as acquire new sounds and language.

I adore discovering new materials and sensory experiences provided by my key worker; there's always something new to feel, hear, taste, smell, and see. As I make marks, discover new textures, and investigate cause and effect, sensory play allows me to make cognitive connections.



I'm starting to express myself, share my likes and dislikes, and make my own choices and decisions. I'm establishing a distinct personality and am able to communicate my

feelings through actions, behaviours, and a few words. My key person reads my cues and responds appropriately to help me comprehend my feelings, especially when I'm experiencing strong emotions. As I begin to express myself and learn to balance my personal needs with the boundaries in place to keep me safe, co-regulation is critical for me. As I start to transition into the next stage, all of this will support me emotionally.

I am starting to become more confident in moving my body and navigating the spaces around me. I am also starting to socialise with my peers and build friendships.



I am able to recall and discuss stories and information that has been read to me and the essential people in my life are encouraging me with recalling the words

I say and asking open ended questions, giving me time to answer.

I am showing increasing control in my gross and fine motor skills ensuring that I practice daily and spend time in the indoors and outdoor environments. I am able to take risks with minimal support and talk about what my plans are when taking risks.

My language skills are increasing rapidly, and I am able to hold conversations with my adults and peers effectively. This will set me in the right direction for school to be ready for my arrival.

# Enabling My Learning

## Books

The love of books and reading, is becoming a daily practice for all of the children. They have their preferred books and are constantly being introduced to new ways of telling stories, finding out new things and being surprised by new topics.

We will invite the children to share books within this focus even more, whether that is at home or in the setting. An invitation to read, role play and use props to tell stories to their peers and grown-ups will be of paramount importance to continue the inspiring learning and magic of a book.

The children may have the opportunity to visit local libraries and to donate books to use as a lending library within the setting. There will still be a selection of fiction and non-fiction books, and more books that represent the child, a book that they can see themselves in and identify with.

This will also be a time of transition for a lot of the children and so there will be transition stories available, as well as the children having access to their own floor books with pictures of the setting's journey.

## Some books to include

### Babies

- ▶ The Wonderful Things You Will Be by Emily Windfield Martin

### Toddlers

- ▶ Whatever Next by Jill Murphy
- ▶ Incredible You by Rhys Brisenden

### Preschool

- ▶ Going To School by Usborne's First Experiences
- ▶ The Colour Monster Goes to School by Anna Llenas

## Songs & Rhymes

Songs and rhymes will have been part of the children's days for the past year but there will still be many to explore and the songs and rhymes that they listen to home will have a deep impact on them too.

The grown-ups in the children's lives will enjoy sharing their music with their children, and this focus gives time to revisit the songs learned, as well as adding some other songs, enriching and enhancing their vocabulary and creativity.

The musical instruments, actions and dancing will bring this to life, keeping the children engaged in new songs and rhymes, as well as repeating old ones.

The children will make their own music and have access to technology to support their preferences and choices.

The language acquired from such repetitive and memorable songs and rhymes will be beneficial and support each child in their sense of self.

## Some songs & rhymes to enjoy

### Babies

- ▶ Happy and you know it

### Toddlers

- ▶ Everybody do this

### Preschool

- ▶ This is me - The Greatest Showman

## Art & Creativity

Within the Marvellous Me focus, there is real opportunity to explore colour, mixed media, and expression. The way in which Andy Warhol produces pop art will be the inspiration here, and the children will see their faces in their art using the popular printing that Warhol used. Within art and creativity.

The children will be building their own expressive sense of art and creativity, and so resources will be available as 'creation stations', with all of the inspiration around them and within them, the freedom to explore these materials will unlock their imagination.

This will be extended to being 3D using junk modelling and clay, to allow for the exploration and curiosity that the children innately possess.

## STEM

Loose part and heuristic play will continue to serve a great purpose for exploring science, technology, engineering and maths. As the seasons change in the natural environment, the items will evolve and include pine cones, pebbles, leaves etc that have changed over time.

This will give an opportunity to discuss life cycles again and revisit the processes in more detail.

The children will be focussing on themselves, so this lends itself to learning about their own bodies, the names of body parts, the way that they move and the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Language will be further enhanced and extended.

Maths will be incorporated naturally when looking at body parts, two eyes for example and their shapes. The children will continue to use junk modelling and play dough to construct models of themselves and others, producing self portraits and experimenting with colour and textures.

The use of strategies to extend meta-cognition skills will also be used, this will be enhanced with technology such as cameras, where the children can reflect on their days. Growing their own produce in the garden will also continue and foods used to make their own soups and other items that they have seen the life cycle of.



### Indoor Environment

The indoor environment in this focus will very much be focussed around the child and their journey. It will have photos of them doing all of the wonderful things over the year, their voice in the provision and floor books showcasing what they have achieved. It will provide a celebratory half term of the child and their progress.

A Marvellous me box will encourage the child to discuss whom or what is special to them, encouraging them to discuss why they are marvellous, it could be a hobby or an interest or a unique trait. Each child will be celebrated for their unique contribution.

The use of mirrors, pictures of emotions and calm areas will support the children in getting to know themselves, returning to the start of the year when they participated in 'who am I?' The key persons will be there to support the children on their journey and ensure that the continuous provision reflects what they like to do as well as considering the zones of proximal and actual development.

### Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment will be filled with all of the things that the children have been practising their gross and fine motor skills with, as well as new discoveries to support their continuing curiosity and holistic development. They will engage in social games and adult led activities that will challenge their balance, co-ordination and movement, such as walk the line, obstacle courses and so on.

The natural world around them is fascinating, and the key people will encourage them to explore it. Exploration of local regions for the purpose of discovery will be encouraged. This can include staying silent in nature and going on sensory walks to see what you can hear. What do you think you see? What sensations do you have? Children will delve within and connect with their emotions as a result of this, as well as stopping, listening, and paying attention to the world around them.

### What other ideas do you have for the children in your setting?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light gray background, intended for users to write their own ideas for children's activities in their setting.

# ARTIST PORTFOLIO

A go to guide explaining the artists Early Educators can implement into the learning environments.

## FOCUS 1 WHO AM I?

Pablo Picasso  
Leonardo Da Vinci

## FOCUS 2 MY FAMILY

Henry Tate

## FOCUS 3 MY COMMUNITY

James Rizzi  
Chila Kumari  
Singh Burman

## FOCUS 4 MY WORLD

Vincent Van Gogh  
Wassily Wassilyevich  
Kadinsky  
Banksy

## FOCUS 5 MY FUTURE

Claude Monet

## FOCUS 6 MARVELLOUS ME

Andy Warhol

## FOCUS 1 - WHO AM I?

### Pablo Picasso

Pablo Picasso is a famous Spanish artist from the 20th century. Pablo Picasso is considered one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. Pablo Picasso was born on October 25th, 1881 in Málaga, Spain, Europe. Pablo Picasso was the son of Spanish painter and teacher José Ruiz y Blasco and María Picasso y López.

#### How can we include Pablo Picasso in our learning environments?

As Focus 1 focuses on 'Who am I?' children can explore creativity with their whole body and see the various marks they create.

Taking inspiration from Picasso's abstract art, practitioners can offer creative activities and mark making opportunities encouraging children to use their whole self (e.g. hands/feet/body) this might include using textures such as gloop, paint or foam.

Older children can explore deeper into abstract art as they can use a range of materials to create their own abstract artwork. 3D sculptures add another level of learning- providing a range of materials such as dough, clay, junk modelling.

## FOCUS 1 - WHO AM I?

### Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci was born on April 15, 1452 and he was Italian.

He lived during the Renaissance era, which was a period in time during which important developments and discoveries in areas such as art and science took place.

Leonardo da Vinci was famous for quite a lot; he was a brilliant artist, sculptor, draughtsman, inventor, scientist, mathematician, engineer, costume maker, writer and musician.

He was also very interested in the laws of science and nature, which greatly influenced his work.

By age 20, he had qualified as a master artist in the Guild of Saint Luke, which was a prestigious association for painters and artists, and now had his very own workshop.

#### How can we include Leonardo Da Vinci in our learning environments?

As Focus 1 focuses on 'Who am I?' children can explore creativity with their whole body and see the various marks they create.

As Da Vinci is famous for his portraits- this offers inspiration for creativity in terms of developing self-identity as children can create their own self-portraits. Practitioners can offer a mirrors and other creative materials which provide a platform to recreate images of themselves and their peers.

Older children have the learning opportunities to describe a range of Da Vinci's art work for example; Mona Lisa – I wonder how she feels?



## FOCUS 2 - MY FAMILY

### Henry Tate

It is due to sugar and philanthropy that the Tate Galleries exist. Henry Tate, a 19th century sugar merchant from Liverpool, donated his collection of contemporary paintings and £80,000 to the government. He also introduced sugar cubes to the United Kingdom. Tate & Lyle sugar cubes are now stocked in all supermarkets.

#### **How can we include Henry Tate in our learning environments?**

As Focus 2 focuses on “My family” children have the space to extend their learning by thinking about their wider families which enable them to deepen their understanding about what makes their family unique.

Within this focus children can explore the similarities and differences between one another. Practitioners can scaffold children’s learning on identity and self-awareness as children share own family experiences.

Tate’s collection of family portraits allow children to closely observe characteristics form their own family such as; (single parents, cultures, faiths, brothers, sisters, godparents etc...)

Children can also create their own family portraits using a variety of mark making resources.

## FOCUS 3 - MY COMMUNITY

### James Rizzi

James Rizzi was an American Pop artist best known for his vibrant, youthful graphics and his three-dimensional prints. He was the official artist for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, adorning the famous logo with his noodle-like drawing style.

He studied art first at Miami Dade College, then at the University of Florida, where he developed his method of three-dimensional printmaking by hand-colouring silkscreen prints before affixing cut-outs.

Moving back to New York in the mid-1970s, the artist began taking on projects that included album covers for the Tom Tom Club, puzzle designs, and toy manufacturing.

#### **How can we include James Rizzi in our learning environments?**

As Focus 3 focuses on ‘My community’ children begin to familiarise their environments and begin to explore new environments with more confidence. Children learn to look after the community around them and learn to respect and value people and different communities.

Children can recreate the colourful pictures of the buildings that children see in their community. Practitioners can provide a range of tools and materials to bring the artwork to life.

## FOCUS 3 - MY COMMUNITY

### Chila Kumari Singh Burman

Born in Liverpool, Chila Kumari Singh Burman describes herself as a ‘Punjabi Liverpudlian’ who likes to combine her Indian roots with popular culture. Punjab is a region in the north of India. She has been described as a South Asian pop artist.

She creates art that is fun but also makes you think. She likes using unexpected styles and techniques to create her masterpieces. She loves the energy of different colours. Her work includes collage, printmaking, and video. You could say that she’s a ‘mixed media’ or a ‘multimedia’ artist.

Chila Kumari Singh Burman doesn’t like being labelled as one thing. She combines different techniques including painting, collage, and printing together; this is known as ‘mixed media’. When video or sound is used in artwork it’s called ‘multimedia’.

#### **How can we include Chila Kumari Singh Burman in our learning environments?**

As Focus 3 focuses on ‘My community’ children begin to familiarise their environments and begin to explore new environments with more confidence. Children learn to look after the community around them and learn to respect and value people and different communities.

Extending the creativity work from James Rizzi, children can incorporate Chila’s use of mix media into their pieces of creations.

## FOCUS 4 - MY WORLD

### Vincent Van Gogh

Van Gogh’s most famous work, *Starry Night* was completed while he was residing in an asylum in Saint-Remy-de-Provence, where he was recuperating from a nervous breakdown. His paintings were often completed relatively quickly, as his style was spontaneous and intuitive, which gave some viewers pause.

#### **How can we include Vincent Van Gogh in our learning environments?**

As Focus 4 focuses on ‘My World’ children can look at the world around them. As children increase vocabulary, sense of belonging and appreciation of their world they can use what they learn in their learning environments in their own communities and at home.

Vincent Van Gogh can be used by children interpreting a ‘starry night’ using forks and foil painting to make swirly marks that they may observe in the sky. To enhance children’s experiences, children and practitioners can lie on the floor outside and observe the sky and describe what they can see.

#### FOCUS 4 - MY WORLD

## Wassily Wassilyevich Kandinsky

Wassily Kandinsky was born on 16th December 1866 in Moscow, Russia. His father was a tea merchant. At the age of 30, Kandinsky decided to go to Munich and attend art school. He turned his back on a career teaching law and economics. He was inspired by Claude Monet's Haystacks painting, particularly the artist's use of colour. At art school Kandinsky began to shape and form his own painting style. He started to use colours to express his reaction to a subject. He believed that colour could be both pleasing to the eye in a physical way, and pleasing to the soul in a deeper, emotional way.

### How can we include Wassily Wassilyevich Kandinsky in our learning environments?

As Focus 4 focuses on 'My World' children can look at the world around them. As children increase vocabulary, sense of belonging and appreciation of their world they can use what they learn in their learning environments in their own communities and at home. Children can explore paint, collages and coloured sand by exploring Kandinsky's tree circle. Children can use loose parts such as buttons and lids where children can position and explore the sizes of these loose parts and how they print differently.

#### FOCUS 4 - MY WORLD

## Banksy

Banksy is a pseudonymous England-based street artist, political activist and film director whose real name and identity remain unconfirmed and the subject of speculation. Active since the 1990s, his satirical street art combines humour with graffiti executed in a distinctive stenciling technique. His works of political and social commentary have appeared on streets, walls and bridges throughout the world. Banksy displays his art on publicly visible surfaces such as walls and self-built physical prop pieces. Banksy no longer sells photographs or reproductions of his street graffiti, but his public "installations" are regularly resold, often even by removing the wall they were painted on. Much of his work can be classified as temporary art.

### How can we include Banksy in our learning environments?

Banksy in the learning environment- children can create their own stencils to create artwork- using scissors and tools to develop their fine motor skills. Children can be shown how art can be used as a means of communication or sharing a message. In Banksy's early years he created art with musicians to influence his creations, so why not introduce music to art sessions to allow children to express their feelings and emotions in a new way. British values can be interwoven through conversations about graffiti and vandalism and being respectful of others choices and opinions.

#### FOCUS 5 - MY FUTURE

## Claude Monet

Claude Monet is one of the world's most famous artists, known for capturing the French countryside's true essence like no other painter ever has. He pioneered the impressionist style of painting, which remains popular in the world of art.

Claude Monet managed to be successful despite the critics of that era not embracing his painting style. He still managed to outshine most of the greatest artists of his era effortlessly.

### How can we include Claude Monet in our learning environments?

As Focus 5 focuses on 'My Future' this focus allows exploration of the natural world and the parts we play in taking care of it. During this focus children will support adults in taking care of the world such as recycling and litter picking.

Claude Monet's most famous paintings were often based around nature. Practitioners can bring Monet's paintings to life by using coloured rice, sand, pebbles, cake cases, pipe cleaners to explore Monet's art in a sensory way. Practitioners and children can discuss what they see, the textures and how it makes them feel.

#### FOCUS 6 – MARVELLOUS ME

## Andy Warhol

Andy Warhol was born on 6th August 1928 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

He is known for his pop art and his work focuses of the crossover between celebrity, advertising, and artistic expression.

He worked with many forms of media, including painting, printmaking, photography, drawing, sculpture, film and music. He also started a magazine (called Interview Magazine) and he wrote several books.

He called his studio The Factory and it became a famous meeting place for creative people and celebrities

### How can we include Andy Warhol in our learning environments?

The main objective of Focus 6 is to bring together all of the knowledge and understanding gained by the children throughout the year. Within this focus, the children will have built their self-esteem, confidence and belonging. There are high expectations for these marvelous humans.

Andy Warhol produces pop art which will be the inspiration for children to see. Children can see their own faces in their art using the popular painting that Warhol used. e.g. children can use mirrors to observe their features.



## The EYFS

‘The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

### The EYFS seeks to provide:

- ▶ Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- ▶ A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- ▶ Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- ▶ Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

### The learning and development requirements cover:

- ▶ The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- ▶ The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- ▶ Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)

The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

### Overarching principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- ▶ Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- ▶ Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- ▶ Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- ▶ Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

In our settings, we use our 6 pillars of learning to ensure all seven areas of learning are supported and the overarching principles of the EYFS are fully embedded. Our curriculum provides a sound educational programme which is inclusive, skilfully crafted and enables all our children to thrive.

All seven areas of learning are fully embedded within each focus area, ensuring depth and breadth of learning for each individual child, whilst embracing their communities and developing their cultural capital.

## Our Pedagogy

The word pedagogy is used to describe approaches to teaching, learning and care. Pedagogy considers how practitioners will support children’s holistic development, how children will be offered learning opportunities within the setting and how we will encourage children to learn effectively.

Our pedagogy focusses on unique and individualised care and education for every child, following a holistic approach to nurturing children’s whole self, their social and emotional wellbeing, as well as their learning and development.

Our 6 pillars of learning are incorporated into our pedagogy, providing the foundations that children need to become confident and inquisitive learners. Whilst each pillar plays a part in our pedagogy, we believe that all pillars need to work together to support the development of a well-rounded, unique child. Together, the 6 pillars create firm foundations that our practitioners can build upon, ensuring high standards of care, teaching and learning in all of our settings.

We recognise that children’s learning is reinforced through repetition and application and therefore the 6 pillars of learning inform our pedagogy, which in turn, is interwoven through all provision and environments.

We know that one size does not fit all, and our pedagogy embraces a range of pedagogical approaches in order to ensure that our curriculum is available and accessible for every child. We are influenced by Te Whariki, Reggio Emilia, and the curiosity approach, taking elements from these approaches and using them to provide a variety of learning opportunities. We see every child as unique and recognise that each

family has their own principles, practices and home culture. We aim to include these in the children’s learning, continuous provision and the environment, whilst building upon them to ensure they have the essential skills and knowledge they need to be successful in life.

The individual child is at the heart of our pedagogy and each of our settings will use their knowledge of their local community to inform their pedagogy and curriculum meeting the unique needs of the children. We include natural and authentic resources to support children to think critically, communicate and share meaningful ideas with their peers and the adults around them.

Fundamental to our pedagogy is facilitating opportunities for all children to practice and embed their learning over time, having practitioners around them to scaffold their learning, encourage deeper thinking and facilitate wider learning. This focus on knowing something deeply, investigating, practicing and embedding learning, allows children to develop the confidence to use and apply the learning in broad and deep ways.

The balance between child led and adult initiated play and learning is essential in ensuring children have opportunity to practice their learning and that adults are available to support teachable moments.

## Our Curriculum

Our curriculum describes our aims for children's learning and experiences whilst in our settings. In line with UK guidance, we must base our curriculum on the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the 7 areas of learning. Through our creative and engaging curriculum, we will provide children with opportunities to engage and explore a range of concepts, which not only meet the EYFS requirements, but enable children to belong, contribute and thrive whilst becoming curious and confident learners.

We ensure that our children have opportunity to access challenging, playful opportunities across both the prime and specific areas of learning. Alongside this, our children benefit from additional play and educational opportunities, designed, and contextualised specifically for the development of children in our locality.

Whilst each setting follows our curriculum, leaders and practitioners are empowered to add to this curriculum in order to meet the unique and individual needs of the children in their community. This enables children and families to access high quality early years provision which supports each and every child to achieve their best in an inclusive and supportive environment.

It is our intent to provide a curriculum that is interesting, engaging, ambitious and inclusive. We want our children to be inquisitive, curious, independent learners with a lifelong love of learning.

**Fundamental British Values** are threaded through our curriculum and everything we do in our settings. We aim to provide all children

with the **Cultural Capital** they need for future success. This means giving each and every child who accesses our provision the support they need to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success. We believe this is best achieved through working not only with the child, but with their families and the wider community to achieve a real impact.

We offer a rich curriculum that meets the unique needs of all our children, recognising that children learn and develop at their own rate and in their own time. We believe that learning through play is the most accessible way for children to learn. Through both indoor and outdoor learning environment and a mix of child initiated and adult led experiences, our children are provided with exciting and engaging opportunities to learn.

Our skilful practitioners take the time to observe children in their play, listen to their thoughts, opinions and conversations to offer deeper learning experiences based on children's individual interests. We converse with parents to find out about their child, their expectations and to involve them in their child's learning as much as possible. These interactions with children and parents support our practitioners in planning playful learning activities and creative learning environments, including continuous provision, enhanced provision and in the moment planning, which engage children, provoking their curiosity and inviting them to explore.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning underpin our curriculum. We recognise that an enabling, engaging and well-planned environment encourages playing, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

We understand that language and communication are the cornerstones in all areas of a child's development. We embrace

the culturally diverse backgrounds our children bring and support those children who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language (EAL). Communication and language development are therefore a consistent focus and books, songs and rhymes form a key component of our curriculum. We include core books, songs and rhymes which we share with children frequently, revisiting them many times and on different levels to support language development in all children. We recognise that effective language and communication in the early years is a critical factor in children's long term learning outcomes.

Our curriculum ensures the unique and individual needs of all children are met, including those children with EAL and SEND as well as children who may be disadvantaged. Targeted support is provided to ensure all children flourish in our settings.

## Why use 'I Wonder' questions?

We want our children to explore, be curious and think deeply about the world around them. One way we can do this is to model the use of 'I Wonder...' questions. Children imitate adults and so when we explore, question and show curiosity children will emulate this for themselves.

Practitioners who model being a thinker, encourage children to think and question for themselves. When practitioners demonstrate curiosity, that they are bewildered, baffled or perplexed by something, they will no doubt spark the same sense of curiosity and interest in the children. Wondering out loud can encourage the children to do the same! This is where the I wonder questions can be an extremely useful tool. Throughout this

document, we share a range of I wonder questions within each focus area, such as;

- ▶ I wonder what will happen if...?
- ▶ I wonder how we could make...?
- ▶ I wonder why that happened?
- ▶ I wonder why that didn't work?
- ▶ I wonder what else we could do?
- ▶ I wonder how we could do this differently?
- ▶ I wonder what else we need?
- ▶ I wonder who we could ask to help us?
- ▶ I wonder where that might be?
- ▶ I wonder where we might need to go to get that?
- ▶ I wonder how many we will need?

I wonder questions expose children to the creative process of thinking. When a child and a practitioner share in this two way 'I wonder' conversation, they encourage sustained shared thinking, showing that there are a number of ways of doing things and considering the various solutions. This shared curiosity invites children to think about where they can find their solutions, who or what they need to help them. Key to the success of this process is time. Practitioner's must not rush the child to find the solution, but give them space and time to think, discuss, and talk.

Our curriculum places creativity and art at the centre of its practice and encouraging children to use the plan-do-review processes can assist them in deeper level thinking, planning and expressing their thoughts and ideas. Use open ended questions to encourage children to consider what they need, how they might create and to reflect on their work when they have finished. Encouraging peers to offer suggestions and help along the way can build confidence and express their opinions.



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**YMCA NORTH TYNESIDE**

[nursery@ymcanorthtyneside.org](mailto:nursery@ymcanorthtyneside.org)

0191 282 8137

[ymcanorthtyneside.org](http://ymcanorthtyneside.org)



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