EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	
Art & Design: Curriculum Progression Map	
Area of Learning:	**Aspects of Learning:**
Expressive Arts & Design	Creating with Materials Being Imaginative & Expressive

Intent

To provide a range of opportunities to explore materials, develop creativity, and express their ideas and experiences through a range of artistic activities.

Curriculum intent for Art & Design:

- Use a range of tools and materials safely and with purpose.
- Experiment with colours, textures and shapes.
- Share creations and explain the processes that can be used.
- Make use of props and materials when representing ideas or experiences.
- Express own ideas and feelings through a range of imaginative approaches.
- Make independent creative choices and have confidence in themselves and their abilities.
- Value the process of making rather than the final product and demonstrate creative thinking through reflection and adaptation as necessary.
- Have an awareness of artists, artworks and cultural creative practices.

Created by Louise Cheetham (Early Years Team Leader) with reference to Mary Sheridan: From Birth to Five Years: Children's Developmental Progress (2014), DfE: EYFS Statutory Framework (2025), DfE: Development Matters (2023) and Early Years Coalition: Birth to 5 Matters (2021).

Child Development Map: Creating with Materials
0-12 months *Children will: build the foundations for creativity through sensory exploration, motor development and early curiosity about how the world feels, looks and sounds.*
*Explore objects using mouth, eyes and hands. *Respond to textures, sounds and colours. *Eyes begin to track moving objects and colours. *Notice that shaking, touching or squeezing can make something happen, e.g. a sound or movement. *Enjoy sensory play with trusted adults, showing excitement or calmness. *Enjoy exploring a wide range of textures, sounds and colours. *Can bang, squeeze, drop or shake objects. *Notice patterns, reflections and changes, e.g. light, colour. *Express enjoyment through babbling, laughing or gestures during sensory play.

12 – 24 months *Children will: start to use their hands and tools more purposefully, enjoy making marks and noticing the effects of their actions.*
*Explore with all senses- touching, smelling, tasting, hearing and seeing. *Start to control hands and fingers – pouring, squeezing, patting, poking, stirring. *Understand that actions change materials – paint smears, dough squishes. *Enjoy making visible marks by scribbling. *Use creative play to show feelings. *Begin to test how materials behave when squeezed, mixed or layered. *Start to notice differences in texture, temperature and colour. *Begin to stick, press or stack objects together. *Express preferences for colours, textures or sounds. *Start to use words to describe play, e.g. “soft”, “sticky”, “red”

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CREATING WITH MATERIALS: Progression of Knowledge and Skills **2-3years** *Children will: explore and experiment with a wide range of materials, developing early understanding of colour, texture, shape, and form, while learning to express ideas creatively and confidently.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**End of Stage**
*Explore a variety of textures and materials freely. *Use tools and hands to manipulate materials. *Develop sensory language.	*Explore how colours can mix and change. *Respond to and create sounds using materials. *Begin to make simple creative choices.	*Explore ways to build, stack and join materials. *Begin to plan what to make, e.g. "I'm building a tower". *Use trial and error to solve creative problems.	*Use simple tools safely and with control. *Begin to make marks intentionally to represent things. *Show increasing confidence in exploring new creative materials.	*Begin to choose materials for a purpose. *Start to describe the idea or plan. *Explore colour, shape and form in their creations.	*Begin to talk about their creations, "I made a flower." *Take pride in work and share it with others. *Combine different techniques and materials.	*Knows that different materials have different textures, colours and effects. *Explores material freely. *Uses simple tools with increasing control. *Makes simple choices in painting, drawing or model-making.

CREATING WITH MATERIALS: Progression of Knowledge and Skills **3 – 4 years** *Children will: move from exploration to purposeful, expressive creation as they share creations, talk about ideas and use materials to express themselves.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**End of Stage**
*Explore a range of textures and media, e.g. paint, clay, fabric, natural materials. *Begin to make marks and patterns. *Use hands and tools to manipulate materials with purpose, e.g. rolling, pressing, patting.	*Experiment with joining materials, e.g. glue, tape, slotting, stacking. *Begin to select materials for a purpose, e.g. "I need sticky tape for this". *Explore construction to build and balance.	*Mix colours and notice changes. *Explore different painting tools. *Create representations with paint.	*Explore shape through collage, printing and drawing. *Begin to arrange and repeat shapes to make patterns. *Experiment with simple symmetry.	*Plan simple creations, "I'm making a rocket". *Select and combine materials for an idea. *Talk about what they are making and why. *Begin to adapt if something doesn't work.	*Combine learned skills to create imaginative artwork or models. *Represent stories, experiences and emotions in art. *Begin to talk about the strengths of an idea or what might be changed.	*Knows that materials can be used in different ways to create effects, patterns and textures. *Understands that tools allow more precise manipulation of materials. *Recognises that projects can have stages and outcomes.

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4 – 5 years *Children will: experiment with a variety of media, combine colours, shapes and textures intentionally, use tools and materials with purpose and create through ways that express ideas, stories or imaginative concepts.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**ELG**
*Explores different materials, paper, card, fabric, playdough. *Identify materials with senses. *Handle materials carefully.	*Uses simple tools safely. *Develops fine motor control with more intricate tasks. *Cut, tear and stick materials.	*Makes shapes and simple forms with materials. *Roll, pinch, squash and mould malleable materials. *Fold, crumple or scrunch paper.	*Combines materials to make simple constructions. *Join materials together with glue, tape or folding. *Experiments with layering.	*Explores colours, patterns and textures. *Applies colours using brushes, fingers or stamps. *Creates simple patterns and textures.	*Plans, makes choices and talks about their work. *Makes simple decisions about materials and colours. *Shares ideas and describe creations. *Begin evaluating own work.	*Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. *Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. *Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

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Child Development Progression Map: Being Imaginative & Expressive
0 – 12 months *Children will: explore pre-symbolic behaviour through sensory experience, emotional expression and early communication.*
*Learns that sensations and feelings can be enjoyable and interesting *Begins to understand that sounds and gestures create social connection *Recognises that objects can be explored in different ways *Understands that expression communicates mood or interest *Begins to recognise simple images or songs as representations of familiar things *Reacts with smiles, coos, movements to express enjoyment *Repeats actions to create sound or movement *Uses voice, gestures or movement expressively

12 – 24 months *Children will: begin to be imaginative and expressive by engaging in simple pretend play using gestures, sounds or single words to represent objects or actions, and explore creative ways to express feelings and ideas during everyday routines and play.*
*Begins to understand that one thing can represent another *Understand that adult actions can be copied for fun or meaning *Understands own actions can create emotional or sensory responses *Understands marks, sounds and movements can be expressive *Uses objects symbolically *Imitates everyday routines, e.g. sweeping, talking on the phone *Gives teddies food, hugs a doll or copies adult routines

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2-3years *Children will: engage in more complex pretend play, use language and gesture to act out roles or stories and will express ideas, emotions and experiences through play and creativity.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**End of Stage**
*Begins to understand that pretend play represents real experiences. *Recognises familiar songs, actions and routines. *Engages in simple pretend play. *Joins in with songs and rhymes. *Imitates every day routines.	*Understands that play can represent feelings or ideas. *Starts linking imagination with language, "daddy cook", "baby sleep". *Combines toys in pretend play. *Uses simple phrases in imaginative contexts. *Uses more varied vocabulary in play.	*Recognises story patterns and characters. *Begins to use imagination to re-enact experiences. *Retells simple parts of familiar stories using toys or movement. *Acts out daily experiences.	*Understands roles and emotions in play. *Begins to use imagination to explore feelings or solve problems. *Plays alongside others in simple shared pretend play. *Assigns roles. *Begins to adapt storylines creatively. *Uses expressive intonation when speaking or singing.	*Understands that music, dance and art express mood or meaning. *Recognises that marks and sounds can represent ideas. *Sings short songs. *Creates movements to music. *Combines imaginative play with drawing or movement.	*Understands imagination can create new ideas beyond reality. *Begins to plan or sustain imaginative themes. *Develops simple storylines in play. *Combines props, actions and words to express ideas. *Draws or marks with symbolic meaning. *Sings, dances, or performs spontaneously.	*Understands objects can represent real-life items or events. *Assigns roles in play. *Begins to narrate parts of pretend scenarios. *Uses objects creatively as symbols. *Plays alongside or with peers in simple, shared imaginative scenarios.

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3 – 4 years *Children will: engage in sustained pretend play, create stories and scenarios with peers, experiment with a variety of material and media, and use language, movement and art to represent ideas and emotions.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**End of Stage**
*Understands that pretend scenarios can represent both real and fantasy experiences. *Recognises that stories, songs and movement express ideas. *Engages in short imaginative play sequences based on real life. *Begins to sing familiar songs independently and experiment with sounds.	*Understands that roles in play have meaning and purpose. *Begins to connect actions and emotions to character roles. *Takes on simple roles in pretend play. *Uses expressive voices, actions, or sounds to represent feelings. *Starts dancing or moving rhythmically to music.	*Recognises story structure- beginning, middle, end. *Begins to express own ideas. *Creates imaginative storylines in play. *Combines talk, props, and movement to develop narratives. *Sings or performs familiar songs with actions.	*Understands that imagination can create new non-real ideas. *Begins to use expressive language to extend play. *Invests characters or imaginary events. *Plays cooperatively with peers in imaginative scenarios. *Begins to use props creatively.	*Understands that music, art and movement communicate emotions and stories. *Recognises patterns, sounds and shapes as expressive tools. *Uses drawing and mark-making to represent stories or ideas. *Creates simple dances or sound effects to match play themes. *Chooses colours intentionally.	*Understands that creative ideas can be shared, changed, and developed with others. *Begins reflecting on own creations. *Plans and develops imaginative play collaboratively. *Combines movement, speech and art to express complex ideas. *Shows confidence performing to others.	*Engages in imaginative play with multi-step sequences, combining props, actions and speech. *Can invent short narratives independently or with peers. *Explains, narrates, and describes actions, characters or events within imaginative play.

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BEING IMAGINATIVE & EXPRESSIVE: Progression of Knowledge and Skills **4 – 5 years** *Children will: plan and sustain complex pretend play, create detailed artwork or constructions, use language and gestures to tell stories and explore ideas, emotions and experiences creatively across different media.*						
Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**	**ELG**
*Understands that stories and roles can be imagined and modified. *Knows that music, art and movement can express ideas or feelings. *Begins sustained imaginative play using multiple props or scenarios. *Plans own actions in pretend play. *Sings familiar sounds independently. *Moves rhythmically.	*Recognises character, plot, and sequence in stories. *Understands simple rules in cooperative play. *Engages in longer, imaginative narratives with peers. *Assigns roles, acts out story events, and negotiates storylines. *Begins drawing or making props to support play.	*Understands that ideas can be combined creatively (mixing reality and fantasy). *Create original stories or scenes in play, using speech, props and movement. *Explores expressive art, drawing scenes or characters.	*Recognises that actions, music and art can communicate complex ideas and emotions. *Performs imaginative stories or dances for others. *Combines expressive language, movement, and music in play. *Collaborates to plan play events.	*Understands that creativity can be shared, discussed and refined with others. *Uses imagination to solve problems in play or games. *Creates more detailed drawings, models or story props. *Explains ideas clearly to peers.	*Understands story structure, role-play rules and symbolism. *Appreciates imaginative ideas of others. *Sustains complex pretend play, combining storylines, roles and props. *Participates in group performances or collaborative, creative projects. *Communicates intentions and ideas effectively.	*Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. *Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. *Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

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The Reception Year provides the foundation for skills the children will build upon in Year one. **Y1 Progression & Expectations:**		
Art & Design	**Design & Technology**	**Music**
Year 1 National Curriculum Pupils should be taught: *To use a range of materials creatively to design and make products *To use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination *To develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space *About the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers, describing the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines, and making links to their own work	KS1 National Curriculum Pupils should be taught to: Design * Design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and other users based on design criteria *Generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, information and communication technology Make *Select from and use a range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks [for example, cutting, shaping, joining and finishing] *Select from and use a wide range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles and ingredients, according to their characteristics Evaluate *Explore and evaluate a range of existing products *Evaluate their ideas and products against design criteria Technical knowledge *Build structures, exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable *Explore and use mechanisms [for example, levers, sliders, wheels and axles], in their products	KS1 National Curriculum Pupils should be taught to: *Use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes *Play tuned and untuned instruments musically *Listen with concentration and understanding to a range of high-quality live and recorded music *Experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter*related dimensions of music

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Implementation – Art & Design
Intentional Teaching
Enabling Environment

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Impact
Impact will be achieved by:

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