



Planning learning through Project Work

What is Project Work?

This is sometimes called an 'emergent' curriculum'.

Our planning has 3 layers:

1. **Continuous provision**, which is our planned learning environment, both inside and outside. We have thoughtfully planned **workshop areas** which are organised to spark learning opportunities and children's interests, provoking children to make choices as they play alone or with others.

Children can select and replace resources as they need them. They know that these resources and materials will always be available

Our workshop areas are:

- **The Studio** (where children explore paint, malleable materials and learn to join and construct in the workshop with different materials)
- **The Laboratory** (where children explore properties of sand, water, the natural world, light, magnets and a host of other scientific resources. This area also includes the snack area and maths resources)

- **Let's Imagine** (where children develop imaginative skills in the home bay, with small world resources, constructional resources. They explore music and instruments. This area also includes a cosy reading and writing area.)
- **Outdoors** (a large, well-resourced area where children can move, build and investigate on a larger scale. It includes a large sandpit, a stream, a mud kitchen and natural wooded area)

2. **Enhanced provision**, which is how staff develop our workshop areas, by adding enhancements. We observe children's interests and development needs and add resources to reflect and develop a skill, concept or interest.

3. **Project planning**, this is developed across Nursery through noticing emerging 'themes' of interest as children work in our rich nursery environment. Staff working within a workshop area work on 'mini-projects' which they plan and develop with the children.

What is Project Work?

Projects allow study of a 'topic' or theme in more depth, over extended periods of time. Staff within each workshop area plan and develop the particular project within their area of responsibility, but the project is decided following observations of children's developing interests and fascinations across the Nursery setting.

Staff document children's fascinations in their Learning Journeys (see separate leaflet), on planning boards and on a staff room board. The staff meet to discuss the direction of our Nursery project.

Why projects and not 'activities'?

We want to provoke children's thinking and learning and the best way to do this is by following their interests. Children become intensely involved and show deep-level and lasting learning when they are naturally exploring and questioning their interests in the environment.

Our projects follow the children's interests and they can plan what they want to find out about, not be presented with an isolated 'activity'.

How do we plan our projects?

We plan with the children using 'provocations'. This enables staff to find out what the children know already and any questions they may have, which will steer the direction of the project in the workshop area. Provocations can be as simple as objects, pictures or use of i-pads, or they can be a collection of resources in a box around a theme e.g. a box of wheels.

Adults make a note of what the children are telling us, both in what they say and how they respond physically to the provocation.

Look out for the **planning boards** in each workshop which shows the beginning and development of our projects in nursery.



How can you teach across the curriculum through project work?

We document children's learning on our planning boards and in their electronic Learning Journeys. This includes reflection on children's thinking and learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, including important aspects such as persistence and problem-solving.

Children do not think about learning 'maths' or 'science', but they form ideas about the world around them, build concepts, ask 'internal' questions and perform their own 'experiments' as they play. We notice which areas of our curriculum the children are learning about, support and extend this and document the learning. We call this support 'scaffolding' a child's learning with 'teachable moments'.

Projects in an emergent curriculum often focus on answering children's questions, such as "Why are things different colours?" or "What kind of homes do animals have?"

Through this approach, learning about maths, writing and indeed all the areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, are incorporated naturally into the project as the children are so interested and highly involved. The staff are mindful of supporting children's development across the whole curriculum and continuously reflect on our environment and provision.

How do parents find out about Nursery projects?

We show the planning and direction of our projects on the [planning boards](#) around Nursery, so please have a look at these.

We will also send a flyer with an outline of an upcoming project.

We welcome any contributions that you may have, in terms of resources or what you have noticed about your child's learning at home. You can add observations to your child's electronic learning journey, or just mention what you have noticed to your child's key worker.

We will be making books about projects as the school year progresses, so please have a look at these with your child.

Given the right opportunities
your child will:

question

explain

wonder

research

explore

engage

record

plan

describe

reason

evaluate risk

predict

revisit