



## Our curricular goals 2024/25

'To inspire a community of life-long learners' – the beginning

### 1. Settle in and become a confident learner

**First milestone:** children make a strong relationship with the Little Acorn staff. Increasingly, they separate confidently from their parent at the start of the session and become involved in their play. They use the familiar staff as a 'secure base' throughout the session, 'touching base' as/when needed.

**Second milestone:** children take part in pretend play, communicating and negotiating with their friends.

**Third milestone:** children persevere with difficulties. They make comments about their learning and play to both familiar and some unfamiliar adults.

**Final milestone:** children reflect on their learning, through on going photographic displays and learning behaviours. They comment on their 'thinking' and the ways they involve themselves in their learning. They reflect on what helps them to persevere through difficulties and what helps them when they find things hard.

Where children need individualised and additional help, this will be offered promptly. Help includes: individual meetings with parents to map a way forward, surgery appointments between SENCO/class teacher and SFSS and regular observations and adaptations to the environment.

As children grow in confidence, their involvement in nursery activities deepens. They explore a wider range of activities. They play for longer periods of time. They play alongside friends. They play collaboratively. They develop their 'pretend play'.

As children's engagement and perseverance grows, they either challenge themselves with more difficult activities, or they respond positively to adults challenging them.

As children play and learn more collaboratively, over longer time periods, and taking part in more challenging activities, they talk about and reflect on their learning.

## 2. Follow a recipe to bake a bread roll

**First milestone:** with adult support, children mix different ingredients, including: sand and water, and flour and water to make simple playdough. They use the following tools: wooden spoons, sieves, scoops, rolling pins, cookie cutters and knives. They follow simple recipes in areas such as the mud kitchen.

As children take part in these activities, they become more precise in using scoops (filling the scoop carefully to the top); they count the scoops as they tip them out; they use a wide range of different-sized buckets, tins and other containers. Children become confident in using tools at the snack table to prepare their own snack e.g. spreading butter on toast.

**Second milestone:** in a small group, children follow the steps in making a flat bread with an adult. The adult draws children's attention to the recipe card. With adult help, children use measures (teaspoon, tablespoon, cup etc) and tip in the ingredients. With adult help, they knead the flour until it becomes soft. With adult help, they roll the dough into small balls and flatten. They help to cook these and reflect on the process.

As children become more used to cooking, the adult reduces their support for the group. Children also mix other substances together carefully, with adult guidance, e.g. mixing water and powder paint.

**Third milestone:** In small group cooking activities, children follow the steps in making a bread roll with an adult. They independently fill measures carefully to the top (teaspoon, tablespoon, cup etc). They recognise the numerals in the recipe card. When they count out quantities (e.g. 3 teaspoons of salt) they say the numbers in the correct order (1-2-3) and they know that the last number they say (3) is the total number of spoonfuls they have added.

As children become more independent, there is minimal adult support as they follow recipe cards and follow paint-mixing cards.

**Final milestone:** children follow the steps of a recipe independently. They measure ingredients, mix them and create their own bread roll by placing the mixture onto a greaseproof tray ready to be baked.

### 3. Investigate the world around us by using question vocabulary

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| <b>First milestone:</b> Children will show brief interest in changes/subjects of interest when these are pointed out to them by an adult                                                                                             | Children's attention will be drawn to changes around them when directly pointed out by an adult. They may give the changes their attention for a short time, making brief comments but not asking for more details                                           |
| <b>Second milestone:</b> children will notice changes and comment on them factually as opposed to asking any questions                                                                                                               | When children notice changes around them, they will comment on them eg 'the leaves have fallen on the floor' rather than 'why are the leaves on the floor'. If something is of interest to the child, they may begin to ask simple questions such as 'where' |
| <b>Third milestone:</b> children ask simple questions about changes/subjects of interests when prompted and modelled by an adult or when the subject is obvious                                                                      | Children may use question words but these may not always be correct. Children listen to the answers to their questions and this may lead to follow up questions.                                                                                             |
| <b>Final milestone:</b> children confidently ask questions using 'what' 'where' 'why' 'how' 'when' appropriately and consistently about the world and their immediate environment. They may also ask about things not in direct view |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

#### 4. Move confidently on a balance bike

**First milestone:** children sit on a trike with good balance and scoot along.

As children become more confident at scooting, they will develop more control through steering and stopping/starting. They will not crash into so many things.

**Second milestone:** children pedal and steer their trike.

As children become better at co-ordinating pedalling and steering, they will be able to navigate challenges e.g. riding in and out of cones, or over a set of hollow blocks.

**Third milestone:** children sit on a Balance Bike with good balance, with both feet on the ground.

Once children become confident at balancing, they scoot slowly along keeping one or both feet on the floor. They begin to use the handlebars to avoid obstacles and other children. Adults will slowly raise the seat to encourage balancing.

**Final milestone:** children ride a Balance Bike, balancing with both feet off the ground, and maintaining control by steering and being able to slow down or speed up. They can ride a Balance Bike safely along the pavement.

## 5. Perform own dance to a piece of music

**First milestone:** Children respond by moving their whole bodies to sounds they enjoy, such as music or a regular beat.

**As children join in with repeated experiences they grow in confidence and begin to join in with repeated words or actions e.g. “I’ve got a body, a very busy body...”**

**Second milestone:** children enjoy joining in with dancing and ring games. They can follow simple instructions such as “Clap your hands” or “Let’s turn around.”

**Third milestone:** children explore a wide range of music from different cultural backgrounds and can describe the sudden changes they hear e.g. Loud, fast, slow etc.

They explore different ways of moving their bodies and can follow an adult’s lead.

**Final milestone:** children choose a piece of music individually or in a small group. They create their own dance routine, moving in time to the pulse of the music being listened to and physically responding to changes in the music, e.g. jump in response to loud/sudden changes in the music.

Children develop their spatial awareness and enjoy moving to music, listening to rhymes/songs and join in.

As children’s interest and understanding of music develops, they begin to move rhythmically and in response to the music they hear. They can use props such as ribbons or pom poms to create different actions.

As children become more confident in themselves and the space, they can follow a simple dance routine led by an adult.

They can then perform their dance routine in front of a small group.

## 6. Control fine motor equipment to complete a running-stitch

**First milestone:** children use upper body strength to hang on A frame or ropes etc.

Children weave ribbons in and out of a large frame outdoors on a large scale with adult support. As they grow in confidence, they begin to do this independently on a smaller scale.

**Second milestone:** children will begin their interest in sewing by looking at examples and designs. Adults will model the process and they will observe.

Children will select their colour of thread and continue practising threading the floss through the eye of the needle.

**Third milestone:** children will thread the needle through the aida/binka cloth using the desired coloured thread.

Children will think about the size of the aida/binka cloth that they need as part of the design and can cut it out themselves. Children are thinking about how their design will fit into a space.

**Final milestone:** children think about the pattern or design they want to create. They cut out the binka or aida cloth they need, choose the colour thread they want, and thread the needles. They use running-stitch to create their pattern or design.

With adult support children thread beads/pasta onto a piece of string. Adults model how to thread the floss through the eye of the needle.

Children will start to think more purposefully about their designs i.e. what colour thread for what purpose and in which direction they want their pattern to flow. They will begin to master the skill of threading the needle using a running stitch.

Children will reflect upon and discuss the trials they faced whilst taking part in this activity.

## 7. Listen to and retell familiar stories confidently, adding in additional details and new vocabulary

**First milestone:** children take part in pretend play, making up or developing a story.

Children may begin by pretend-playing on their own with toys like farm animals, wild animals, dinosaurs or people. Over time, their play becomes more complex. They are able to play with other children, developing the play together (e.g. deciding who will play what role in the home corner, or telling a story with the small world people where different mini people have different characters).

**Second milestone:** children take part in interactive reading. They respond to the features of the story. Children engage in number rhymes with props and join in with the actions.

As children become more used to interactive reading, they ask questions and make links between what happens in the story and their own experiences.

Children join in with rhymes and songs e.g. repeating words or following actions.

Children play with props to retell/make up their own stories, including use of the 'Helicopter Story' approach.

**Third milestone:** children take part in telling a story with adult help is necessary. They begin to become familiar of the way stories are structured including storytelling language such as next, then, after that, finally.

As children become more used to using Tales Toolkit, they can increasingly take over and use the symbols and the props. They can make up their own story or 'tell the story of their day in nursery' with little prompting from the adult.

**Final milestone:** children use learnt skills to develop the character, setting, problem and solution for their story. They tell their story to one or more people following the narrative in sequence.

## 8. Write their first name using correct pencil grip

**First milestone:** children can use the muscles in their hands and arms to make big movements and bring together hand and eye movements to fix on and make contact with objects.

**Children will increasingly become confident in engaging in activities such as: throwing and catching balls, pushing the wagon, exploring a musical instruments, playdough and paint.**

As children build up their large and fine motor skills they engage in activities for a longer period of time. They can grasp objects and can focus on what they are doing e.g. hold arms out and wait to catch a ball, thread beads on to a piece of string or build a stable tower of up to 10 blocks etc.

Where children need individualised and additional help, this will be offered promptly through fun fit both fine and gross motor focused.

**Second milestone:** Children can make random marks with their fingers and some tools. Children will engage in a variety of ways to make marks e.g. making marks in dough/clay/sand, holding a paint brush to make marks or using chalk on the ground in the garden etc.

As children become more confident in making marks they begin to talk about their marks with others and give meaning to these e.g. "That's mummy" or "It's a dinosaur."

Where children need individualised and additional help, this will be offered promptly. Help includes: dough disco, fine motor movement to music, funky finger challenges and where necessary individual meetings with parents to map a way forward.

**Third milestone:** as children's mark making develops they make more small controlled movements and can draw lines and circles. They can distinguish between these marks e.g. 'line, circle, zig zag' etc. They begin to use anticlockwise movements and retrace vertical lines. Children are familiar with language of directionality such as 'up, down, round and round.'

Children can find their name card and are look at it when attempting to write their name.

As children use their name cards repeatedly and becoming familiar with the Little Wandle formation rhymes they become more confident in attempting to form letters. Some children will begin to form recognisable letters.

**Final milestone:** children hold their pen or pencil with a comfortable grip, using the 'put the pencil to bed' technique. They write the letters of their name clearly and with correct directionality.

