



Phoenix Infant Academy

Together We Soar

Curriculum Progression: The Nest

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



**THAMES LEARNING
TRUST**

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Introduction

At Phoenix Infant Academy, we continuously strive to ensure children achieve their full potential. We pride ourselves on our inclusive environment where children with SEND can develop a range of skills.

With this in mind, we have designed our Curriculum offer for those children with SEND who access our Resource Base provision; also known as The Nest. By doing this, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares children for the future.

Our **Curriculum Drivers** are:

- Opportunity for all
- Aspirations for all
- Communication for all

Our **Curriculum implementation** is:

- To have a Curriculum that focuses on a range of skills that consolidate and extend children's knowledge and understanding. These skills are delivered individually, in groups or as part of their Mainstream class.
- Individualised and child-centred to ensure children make progress
- To give children opportunities to learn in ways that suit their needs and EHCP targets

Our **Curriculum impact** is that children:

- Are prepared for the future
- Can communicate in their chosen form
- Learn alongside their peers
- Achieve their potential and make progress from their starting points
- Develop independence
- Are involved in the school and wider community

Dependent on the skill, they are taught explicitly or implicitly and focus on the child's needs. It follows the TEACCH approach:

- Teaching – sharing autism knowledge and increasing the skill level of professionals and practitioners.
- Expanding – increasing own knowledge to provide high-quality services to autistic people and their families.
- Appreciating – appreciating the strengths and uniqueness of autistic culture.
- Collaborating and Cooperating with colleagues, other professionals, autistic people and their families.
- Holistic – adopting a holistic approach, looking at the person, their family and community.

www.autism.org.uk

This approach promotes an individualised approach that focuses on the child, their development and their interests. It has an emphasis on visual supports to organise the environment and promote independence.

The delivery of the Curriculum is overseen by the Assistant Principal and taught by the SEND Teacher. However, we recognise that it is the responsibility of all staff to implement the Curriculum successfully.

Inclusion support staff receive fortnightly training in specific areas of the Curriculum. Teaching staff have opportunities to observe each other and have additional support from the Assistant Principal when needed.

Language and communication

Visual Supports

Children are progressed through stages of visuals, with the aim of removing the reliance on them. However, children are not rushed through them and they can skip stages if deemed appropriate.

The stages are:

Stage 1 – Now and Next throughout the day

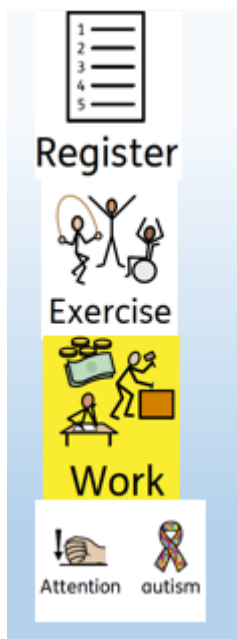
Stage 2 – Half day visual timetable on desk and Now and Next for transitions

Stage 3 – Full day visual timetable on desk and Now and Next for transitions

Stage 4 – Full day visual timetable

Stage 5 – Written visual timetable

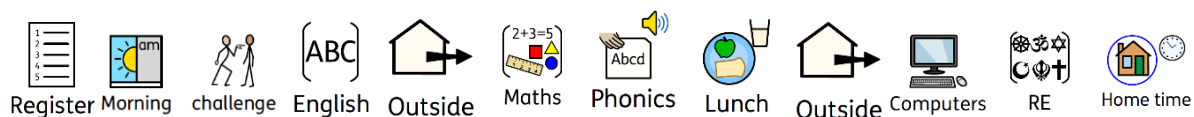
Stage 6 – No visuals required



This is an example of a Stage 2 timetable. The pupil would also have a Now and Next for transitions, for example to lunch. When the activity is starting, the children are encouraged to exchange the visuals, either placing them on coloured trays where their work is, or on the carpet or wall where their next input is.

The 'Work' visual is not yet subject specific. This is because the child is not yet able to differentiate or understand subjects mean.

Below is an example of a Stage 4 timetable. It shows the full school day and is now needed as a visual reminder rather than as a reliance tool. Subjects are used and children might not exchange the visuals, this is dependent on the child's development.



Speech and Language

From their EHCPs, children have individualised Speech and Language targets. Every child has a specific SAL session daily, however promoting communication throughout the day is a key philosophy of ours.

Updates from the Slough SALT service are requested throughout the academic year. They also provide training for staff.

We use Hanen’s Four Stages of Communication to determine and assess where children are in their communication development:

Stage	Descriptor	Examples of Support in School
Discoverers	A child will react to how they feel and to what is happening around them, but have not yet developed the ability to communicate with a specific purpose in mind. They communicate through body movements and facial expressions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makaton signs • Repeat key words (please, thank you, toilet, more, drink) • Choice boards • Model joint attention and how to request item
Communicators	A child is not yet using words, but will communicate with more purpose. They will look at you, make gestures, point and make sounds. Joint attention is more established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeating requests • Provide commentary throughout the day (“Now, we are going outside to play.”) • Model eye contact
First word user	A child has now started to talk or use signs. They are now developing a vocabulary of single words. The words tend to be important to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model joining words together • Opportunities to speak in different contexts • Model enjoyment of communication
Combiners	A child is now combining words, and usually have a clear message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model extending sentences • Expectation that language is now used constantly • My turn, your turn SAL activities • Labelling the world around us

The vast majority of our SAL is taught through play and opportunities for shared enjoyment of communication. We want children to understand the benefits of communicating and do not simplify vocabulary. Rather, we might chunk instructions or use reduced language.

Social understanding

Building children's social awareness covers a range of skills, includes developing relationships with staff and their peers, sharing and regulating their behaviour.

Through explicit and implicit methods, children will be taught skills depending on their developmental stage:

Stage 1	Maintaining eye contact Developing isolated play skills Accepting presence of others in familiar environment within close proximity
Stage 2	Accepting an adult and/or peer playing alongside them Developing explorative play Starting to share resources with an adult
Stage 3	Accepting an adult and/or peer playing with them Starting to share resources with an adult and peers
Stage 4	Sharing resources with an adult and peers Developing imaginative play Developing turn taking skills
Stage 5	Consistent imaginative play Consistent turn taking skills Initiates communication with others Joins others already involved playing

Throughout every stage, children are taught to regulate their behaviour through the Zones of Regulation, sensory awareness (please see below), social stories and social commentary.

Routines

Children are taught routines implicitly through daily activities and expectations. This includes:

- Transitioning around the school with adult and visual support
- Transitioning around the school with adult support
- Transitioning independently around the school
- Specific timetabled activities and locations within the classroom

Children are also taught to anticipate change of routine. This includes fire drills, changing lessons and introducing less familiar adults to them.

We place a strong emphasis on building independence. We encourage the children to complete as many routine-based tasks independently, with adaptations where necessary, such as:

Routine	Adaptation
Answering the register	Using a Makaton sign Using a visual cue
Zones of Regulation check-in	Hand over hand to find their photo Verbal prompts Prompts to visit the area
Lunch selection	Choice board Sentence builder using IT
Putting their coat/bag away	Peg is named and/or has a picture of them Verbal prompts Ordered pictorial prompts
Carrying trays/lunchbox to the lunch table	Hand over hand Staged – carry food first, then drink
Queuing for transitions	Buddy system Visual cues Move the child to the front, if necessary

Keeping healthy

The keeping healthy area of the curriculum covers a vast range of skills. Its main focus is to build confidence, independence and self-care skills so children leave our setting as prepared as possible for their next stage of education and development.

Children are supported in toileting depending on their needs. Ideally, we would expect children to progress through these stages. However, we recognise there can be a range of barriers to achieving this and there might be children who cross over stages due to a specific need. For example, they are unable to clean themselves due to a specific need.

Nappies	Toilet training	Toilet trained but require cleaning support	Fully toilet trained but have accidents
Children are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull items of clothing up/down • Clean themselves • Wash their hands independently 	Children are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull items of clothing up/down • Clean themselves • Wash their hands independently • Say when they need the toilet 	Children are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean themselves • Wash their hands independently • Share when they need to excrete 	Children are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share when they have had an accident • Fully change themselves
There are always 2 adults present when changing a child for safeguarding purposes. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the child has privacy • Talk through each stage of the process • Refer to visual cues when needed • Share successes and tips with parents 	There are always 2 adults present when changing a child for safeguarding purposes. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the aforementioned points • Work alongside parents to ensure consistency • Use social stories • Initially, take the child to the toilet every hour • When appropriate, will ask the child if they need the toilet 	There are always 2 adults present when changing a child for safeguarding purposes. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the aforementioned points 	If a child requires support with changing, adults will support in the same way as outlined previously. If not, adults will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a social story with the child • Identify times of day/triggers • Speak to parents

Children are taught healthy living/eating through snack times and balanced lunch meals. Staff also model eating healthily. Children are expected to wash their hands before snack and lunch time.

Children are given opportunities to exercise throughout the day, through OT, playtimes and PE lessons.

Sensory awareness

Children are taught sensory awareness throughout the day to ensure they are in a calm state of alertness and ready to learn.

The environment in The Nest is purposefully split into two areas:

- Learning area
- Sensory/calming area

Children are taught to show their emotions through Zones of Regulation. Daily, they self-assess their feelings using visual supports. When over aroused or overwhelmed, children will be encouraged to use the Zones area. In this area, there are self-soothing resources, a tent and activities to encourage self-regulation.

Children are taught to explore their sensory needs through exposure to a range of tools and materials. Through this, children are taught to voice or share their feelings in relation to sensory input. Where needed, visual supports are used.

Throughout the day, children have access to sensory equipment to aid their sensory needs. This can include; ear defenders, fidget toys, wobble cushions and blankets. Children are taught to self-select to grow their independence.

Sensory breaks

Children access planned and unplanned sensory breaks throughout the day. This may include time in the sensory room, the dance studio or using preferred sensory tools. These sessions are used to develop sensory tolerances and an opportunity to teach self-regulation.

Children may require unplanned sensory breaks. This might be when a child is dysregulated and requires a break from the planned teaching input and/or activity. During these sessions, there is a planned Speech and Language focus based on the child's individual targets. It is always the aim to transition the children back into the main teaching session.

Reading

Children are exposed to a range of high-quality texts throughout the school day and attend story time in their Mainstream classes.

Across the school year, children are taught to develop early reading skills, progressing when appropriate. The below are individualised for each child and use their preferred method of communication to support them.

Sensory based	Intent	Skill development	Functional based skills	Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with story bags/sensory stories Explore tactile books, and sound button books with adult support Enjoy songs, nursery rhymes and rhythms Respond to repeated phrases in a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop interests in particular reading material Match pictures to pictures Respond to a story Understand anticipation by turning a page or lifting the flap Label what can be seen on a page Self-select props for a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care for books appropriately Recognising and differentiating between pictures, photos and symbols Match words to words Recognise pictures tell a story Develop play based on a story Increased attention and listening for story time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show an interest in print Sight reading is developing Matching single words to a picture Recognise familiar words in the environment Locate key characters Vocabulary increases and includes topical words Follow text from left to right Share likes and dislikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting reading material based on interest Selecting reading material based on the activity Adding a word to a short sentence Identify aspects liked and disliked as a response to the familiar text Read a short sentence Match a sentence to an appropriate picture Enquire about a text Predict what's going to happen next Retell a story

Phonics

We use ReadWriteInc to teach the children phonics.



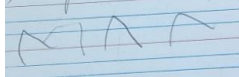
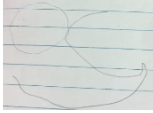

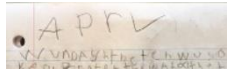

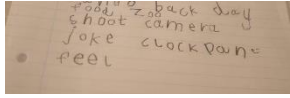
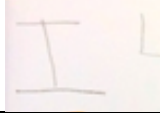



Children progress through each stage as appropriate. If children are preverbal, they are taught to respond to sounds, rhythms and rhymes.

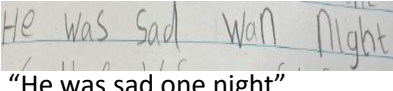
Some children have daily phonics sessions and sounds are revisited in daily Speech and Language interventions.

Writing

Stages of writing:

Children will learn how to develop their initial mark making skills into more formal letter forms. Children's stages are related to their developmental stage and they are not rushed through stages.

Stage	Evidence	Example
Preliterate	Scribbling – larger strokes and random marks that do not resemble print or communicate a message.	
	Symbolic – random strokes, of any size, with an intended message.	 "Brown leaves on the tree."
	Directional scribble – directional from left to right, intended as writing to share a message or idea.	 "My name!"
	Symbolic/mock letters – letter-like formations which may look like letters but unintentionally. They might contain numbers and spacing is sparse or non-existent.	
Emergent	Strings of letters – long strings of different letters in random order. They are usually capital letters and can repeat the same letters.	
	Groups of letters – groups of letters with spaces in between. They resemble words but are not spelt correctly.	
	Labelling pictures – using initial sounds to label a picture.	
	Environmental print – copies words from print. This might include letter reversal and using different tools to write.	
Transitional	First letter representation – using initial sounds to represent words.	 "I like"
	First and last letter representation – using the first and last letter of a word to represent it.	 "Dog"
	Medial letter sounds – first, last and some medial letter sounds used in words.	 "Mouse"
Fluent	Beginning phrases – sentences that are phonetically plausible.	 "I got a house"

	<p>Sentence writing – sentence formation, most words are spelt correctly.</p>	 <p>“He was sad one night”</p>
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When deemed appropriate by staff, children will be taught to write their names. This will include:

- Using their knowledge of initial sounds, progressing onto medial and last sounds.
- Experiment with letter formation using a multi-sensory approach.
- Some copying/tracing for letter formation purposes.
- Opportunities to recognise and read their name across the Curriculum.
- Using different tools to write their name.
- Name puzzles.






In addition to the above, children:

- Are introduced to a range of marking tools.
- Are encouraged to use tools in an explorative way before becoming more purposeful.
- Have opportunities in other parts of the curriculum to mark make and ascribe meaning to them.
- Have talk-time with adults about their marks. If a child is pre-verbal, this will be done with visual supports (PECS, choice board).
- Will have the opportunity to share mark making successes with their peers.
- Have exposure to high quality reading texts so they understand how a text is arranged on the page.

Gripping Writing Tools

Children are taught how to change their grip overtime. Fine motor skill lessons are taught daily to develop strength.

The developmental stages below are used:

Stage	Example
Palmar grasp, also known as fist grip	
Digital pronate grasp	
Digital grasp	
3-Jaw chunk grasp	
Tripod grasp	

Maths

The Maths topics are split to cover key areas; number and using and applying Maths. Skills covered include:

Number	Using and applying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and responding to number rhymes/songs • Engages in counting like behaviour such as making sounds, pointing to or saying some numbers in sequence. • Touch count objects in a regular pattern. • Orders numbers • Points to a number when asked • Matches amounts to a number • Knows that the last number reached when counting a set of objects is how many there are in total. (Cardinal number) • One more than/one less than • Continue to rote count onwards from a given number • Recognise numerals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers • Handles shapes • Notices how things move e.g., swipe to spin a wooden wheel • Experience 2D shapes in a range of situations • Experience 3D shapes in a range of situations • Post a simple shape into a large hole e.g., very simple shape sorter or inset puzzle • Notices difference in shapes e.g., sorting balls from socks. • Build with a range of resources • 4 piece inset puzzle matching picture • Begin to pick out named shapes from a collection • Names 2D and 3D shapes • Begins to describe the properties of 2D and 3D shapes • Recalls shapes in the real world • Shows understanding of position • Explore weights • Explore measurement by filling and emptying containers • Uses weighing scales • Is able to order two or three items by length or height. • Orders two or three items by weight or capacity. • Sort items by colour or shape • Follow and repeat a simple pattern • Can sort objects/pictures by two or more given criteria

Alongside, children are taught Maths that they will experience in everyday life:

- Order days of the week
- Points to a day of the week when asked
- Can select clothes appropriate for the season
- Joins in sequencing symbols/photos in time order
- Can order the seasons throughout the year
- Begins to use non-standard measures of time e.g., hand claps or music in pass the parcel.
- Shows understanding of the routine of the day

Mainstream Support

Some children access their Mainstream classes in the afternoons, where work is adapted to meet their needs.

If we feel a child is not yet ready to access Mainstream for the whole afternoon session, they will have interventions in The Nest. These include:

- Music Therapy
- Social skills
- Sensory awareness
- OT sessions
- Mark making
- Speech and Language
- Food exploration
- Fine motor skills

Please see progression for Foundation Subjects in a separate document.

Assessment

For pupils who are who are working below the standard of the national curriculum assessments and not yet ready to engage in subject specific learning, pupils will be assessed using the Engagement model. The Engagement Model has 5 areas of engagement; exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation. Each area provides a focus on how well pupils are achieving a specific outcome or individual development target as set out in their EHC plans. We also assess children against our specifically designed curriculum, The Nest, which has targets in each area of learning; Language and Communication, Social Understanding, Routines, Keeping Healthy and Sensory Awareness.

Where pupils are able to access national curriculum programmes of study, progress of pupils is also informed using school wide assessment measures.

Themes

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Let's Celebrate		People Who Help Us Growing and Changing		All About Me Under the Sea	
Reading and Writing	Children will work on skills relating to reading, writing and communication explicitly, implicitly and as part of the theme. This can be in small groups or 1:1 tasks.					
Phonics	Depending on need: Children learn songs, rhythm and rhymes. Participate in Intensive Interaction to build oral muscle strength. Children progress through Set sounds. Children begin to blend CVC words.					
Maths	Number – counting, number recognition and matching numerals.	Using and applying - Sizing, ordering and patterns.	2D shapes – manipulate, recognising and naming shapes.	Recap Using and applying - Sizing, ordering and patterns.	Capacity and Measuring – exploring weight and measurement	Recap Number