

Understanding the Natural World

ELG: Children at the expected level of development at the end of reception will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Reception		
Building blocks to achieve		
PLANTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that a flowering plant consist of roots, stem, leaves and flowers, • Know the concept of growth, change and decay • Know what a plant needs to grow • Know that some trees especially pine trees are evergreen 		
ANIMALS INCLUDING HUMANS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know that a pig is a farm animal, a rabbit can be a pet, an elephant is a wild animal and a whale is a sea creature, a ladybird is an insect • To understand a simple lifecycle eg. Frog/chick • Must take care when observing and handling animals • To know what factors contribute to a healthy lifestyle 		
EVERYDAY MATERIALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know an object is made from a type of material • Know that materials can be hard, soft, strong, weak, absorbent, heavy, light, solid and runny, smooth and rough • To know how to group materials according to own criteria 		
SEASONAL CHANGE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know a year is split into 4 seasons and the names of the seasons 		
From own observations and books, be able to name changes caused by seasons eg know that the weather changes, hotter in the summer, colder in the winter		
Continuous Provision	Opportunities for exploration and enquiry	Links to science curriculum
sand/water	Collect information through senses how liquids and solids behave under different conditions (eg adding other things to the water or sand to cause a change) sieving(filtration) dissolving floating and sinking movement How water pushes up when try to push boat underneath water	To understand animals and humans Forces Materials
Construction/ creative/ fine motor table	Properties of materials (rigid, flexible, stable, fragile) Mixing paint, viscosity in liquids Exploring how things work	Materials Forces
Cooking/baking	Heating, cooling, melting, dissolving, mixing, changing, healthy eating	To investigate living things To understand animals and humans
Outdoor large play	Climbing frame	To understand animals and humans

	Pushing and pulling Friction of different surfaces Weight Use of wheels	Force materials
Outdoor garden	Planting, growing, seasonal change, changing materials (mud kitchen), mini beast hunts, looking at decay eg change in an apple core when left Exploring environment, comparing to other environments Observing and naming plants and animals Sound walks- distinguishing environmental sounds Forest School Activities	Understanding plants Investigating living things Sound Earth, space and Seasonal change
Small world play	Animals Buildings Settings (pond, beach, swamp, forest, space, field, sea etc) Vehicles (magnetic attraction and repulsion with trains) Natural and man-made materials (pebbles, cones, shells, bark etc) Using magnifying glasses, torches(can the light shine through the material?) Exploring how things work	Investigating living things Earth, space and Seasonal change Materials Force
Mid morning snack, lunchtime	Different types of food, healthy eating	To understand animals and humans

Role of adult:

- **Encourage children to talk about what they see.**
- **Model observational and investigational skills. Ask out loud: “I wonder what will happen if...?”**
- **Plan and introduce new vocabulary, encouraging children to use it to discuss their findings and ideas.**

Vocabulary

PLANTS: growth, evergreen, flower, plant, tree, roots, stem, leaf, trunk, same, similar, different, sort, language to describe colour, shape, comparative language of size.

ANIMALS INCLUDING HUMANS: life cycle, growth, habitat, fish, bird, mammal, offspring, skeleton, same, similar, different, sort, language to describe colour, shape, comparative language of size, health, names of body parts, exercise, sleep, water, healthy, unhealthy, food, teeth.

EVERYDAY MATERIALS: Object, material, wood, plastic, glass, metal, water, rock, paper, fabric, elastic, foil, card/cardboard, rubber, wool, clay, hard, soft, stretchy, stiff, bendy, floppy, waterproof, absorbent, breaks/tears, rough, smooth, shiny, dull, see-through, not see-through

SEASONAL CHANGE: Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer, grow, evergreen, flower, plant, tree, leaf, sun, wind, freeze, melt, ice, hibernate, migration, weather, same, similar, different, language to describe colour, shape, clothes.