

Early Years Curriculum Overview at Amblecote

At Amblecote, we want every child to feel happy, confident and excited about learning. Our Early Years curriculum is carefully designed to give children the strongest possible start to their education.

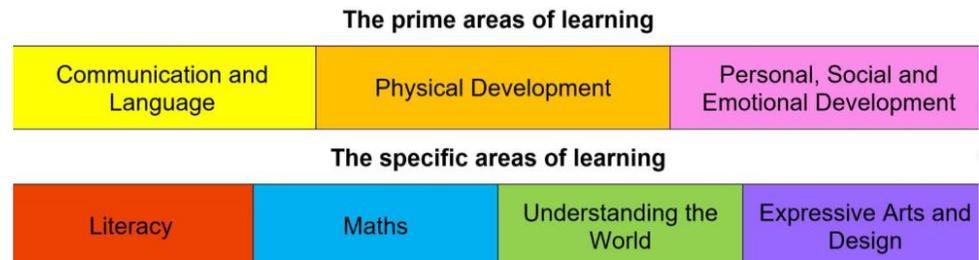
How our curriculum works

We follow a spiral curriculum, meaning children revisit key ideas throughout their time at Amblecote. Each return to a concept allows them to build on what they already know. This approach supports strong recall, deepens understanding, and helps children make secure progress.

What children learn

Our curriculum is rooted in the EYFS 7 areas of learning.

We also respond to children's interests and to events in the world around them, ensuring learning is meaningful, engaging and relevant.



How we teach

Children learn through a balance of adult-led activities, high-quality play and carefully planned continuous provision. Stories from our Early Years Book Spine enrich vocabulary, develop communication skills and nurture a love of reading.

The difference it makes

By the end of Reception, children are confident, independent learners with the knowledge and skills they need for a successful transition into Year 1.

	Pre-School	Reception
It's Good to be Me	<p>Focus: Early awareness of self, emotions, and relationships.</p> <p>What children learn Begin to talk about themselves and what they like. Recognise key family members and talk about who is important to them.</p>	<p>Focus: Deeper understanding of identity, emotions, resilience, and community.</p> <p>What children learn Describe themselves in more detail, including interests and strengths. Understand that families can be different and all are valued.</p>

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	<p>Notice similarities and differences between themselves and others.</p> <p>Identify simple emotions (happy, sad, scared) and begin to express them.</p> <p>Start forming early friendships through play.</p> <p>Begin to keep trying with small challenges.</p>	<p>Talk about how they have grown and changed since being a baby.</p> <p>Use a wider emotional vocabulary and begin to manage feelings in different situations.</p> <p>Build friendships; understand what makes a good friend.</p> <p>Show resilience when things are difficult and celebrate achievements.</p> <p>Understand what it means to be part of a class community.</p>
<p>Celebrations Around Us</p> <p>Our Community/Our World</p>	<p>In Pre-School, children begin to explore the idea of celebrations by looking at special events in their own lives and in the lives of others. They learn that people celebrate for different reasons and in different ways, helping them develop an early understanding of the diverse community they belong to. Through stories, music, dance, decorations and simple food-tasting activities, children experience celebrations from around the world, including those important to families within our setting—such as celebrations from Turkey. These experiences help children recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, building respect and curiosity about the wider world. As part of our community links, Pre-School children also take part in an Easter performance, learning simple songs and dances to share with their families, strengthening their sense of belonging and connection to the school community.</p>	<p>In Reception, children build on their earlier learning from Pre-School by exploring a wider range of celebrations from both their own community and the wider world. They learn about events that are special to them—such as birthdays—and celebrations that are important to others, including Diwali, Chinese New Year, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day and Children in Need. Through stories, dance, decorations, food tasting, music and song, children discover how people across the world celebrate in different ways. This helps them develop curiosity, respect and appreciation for the diverse cultures and traditions that make up our community and our world. Reception children also take part in a Christmas assembly, learning to sing together and perform confidently as a group, strengthening their sense of belonging and their understanding of how communities come together to celebrate.</p>
<p>Past and present</p>	<p>In Preschool, children can learn about people who help us, such as doctors, nurses, firefighters, police officers, vets, and postal workers. They explore the vehicles these</p>	<p>In Reception, children build on their early understanding of vehicles and community helpers by exploring transport from the past and present. They learn how</p>

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	<p>helpers use — like ambulances, fire engines, police cars, and postal vans — through stories, roleplay, small world toys, and real-life photos. This helps children build early vocabulary, understand simple roles in the community, and begin noticing that different vehicles have different jobs. These early experiences give children an introduction to the idea that people and transport have changed over time, preparing them for Reception’s Past and Present learning.-school, children can learn about -play, small-world toys, and real-life photos. This helps children build early vocabulary, understand simple roles in the community, and begin noticing that different vehicles have different jobs. These early experiences give children a</p>	<p>cars, trains, and other vehicles have changed over time, looking closely at old photographs and modern examples to spot similarities and differences. Children talk about why transport has changed and how this affects the way people travel today. Stories such as <i>The Train Ride</i> and <i>Mr Gumpy’s Motor Car</i> help children compare old and new forms of transport, understand how journeys have changed, and develop rich vocabulary linked to travel and movement. These books also support children’s storytelling skills and deepen their understanding of past and present through familiar, engaging characters and events.</p>
<p>Nursery Rhymes Traditional Tales</p>	<p>Children in Preschool will enjoy learning a range of well-known nursery rhymes. Singing together helps them develop early language skills, build confidence, and learn to listen and join in with others. Nursery rhymes also support early reading by helping children hear rhyme, rhythm, and repeated patterns in language. Through actions, props, and simple roleplay, children begin to understand characters and events, laying the foundations for future storytelling. These shared experiences help children feel part of a group and support strong communication skills that are so essential in the early years.-school will enjoy learning a range of well-known -play, children begin to understand characters and events, laying the foundations for future storytelling. These shared experiences help children feel part of a group and</p>	<p>In Reception, children build on their nursery rhyme foundations by exploring traditional tales. Through stories such as <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> and <i>Goldilocks</i>, children learn to retell longer narratives, sequence events, describe characters, and use rich story language. These tales broaden children’s cultural capital and help them understand story structure, problem solving, and moral themes. Children develop confidence speaking in full sentences, acting out stories, and discussing characters’ choices. This progression strengthens early reading and comprehension skills, ensuring children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.-solving, and moral themes. Children develop confidence speaking in full sentences, acting out stories, and discussing characters’ choices. This progression strengthens early reading and comprehension skills,</p>

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		ensuring children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
<p>Growth and change</p> <p>Lifecycles/ planting and growing</p>	<p>In Pre-school, children begin to explore lifecycles through hands-on, meaningful experiences that support early scientific understanding and communication. Children watch eggs hatch into chicks, helping them learn that animals grow and change over time. They also plant sunflower seeds and help to grow strawberries, discovering that plants need water, light, and care to survive. These activities build early vocabulary such as <i>seed, soil, water, hatch, grow</i>, and encourage children to talk about what they notice. Caring for living things helps children develop responsibility, curiosity, and a secure understanding of the natural world—key foundations for future learning.</p>	<p>In Reception, children build on their earlier experiences with more detailed and structured learning. Children observe caterpillars turning into butterflies and tadpoles growing into frogs, learning the stages of each lifecycle and using more specific vocabulary such as <i>chrysalis, butterfly, froglet, adult frog</i>. They also learn where food comes from by growing their own vegetables, helping them understand how plants develop from seed to harvest. Children compare different lifecycles, talk about similarities and differences, and record their observations through drawings and early writing. These experiences deepen their scientific knowledge, strengthen communication skills, and build confidence in exploring the world around them.</p>
<p>Animals</p>	<p>In Preschool, children learn about farm animals, exploring the names of different animals, the sounds they make, and how we care for them. Through stories, small world play, and hands on experiences, children begin to understand that animals have needs and that humans play an important role in looking after them. This supports developing early language, building new vocabulary, and helping children make sense of the world around them. -school, children learn about -world play, and hands-on experiences, children begin to understand that animals have needs and that humans play an important role in looking after them. This</p>	<p>In Reception, children build on this knowledge by learning about zoo animals, including animals from different habitats and countries. They explore similarities and differences between farm and zoo animals, deepening their understanding of the natural world. As part of this learning, the children visit Dudley Zoo and Castle, giving them real-life experiences that strengthen their curiosity, vocabulary, and cultural capital. During the visit, Reception children also learn about castles, discovering what they were used for, who lived in them, and how they were built. Back in class, children explore castle features such as towers, drawbridges, and battlements through role-play,</p>

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		construction, and storytelling. This progression helps children develop a broader understanding of history, geography, and the wider world.
Noticing Nature	In Pre-School, children begin to develop an early understanding of the natural world through rich, hands-on exploration. They spend time outdoors observing what they can see, hear, smell and touch, and they record their ideas through drawing and talk. Children learn about simple seasonal changes and start to notice how their environment alters over time. Through daily routines and guided discussions, they begin to understand how to care for their surroundings and develop a sense of belonging within their local environment.	In Reception, children build on their early experiences by exploring the natural world in greater depth and with increasing curiosity. They compare their local environment with contrasting places and countries, developing an awareness of ecological diversity. Children make more detailed observations, using drawings, talk and simple investigations to record what they notice. They learn about the seasons and the changes they can expect to see, and they begin to understand how people can help protect and respect the world around them.
Transition	<p>Supporting Transition at Amblecote We recognise how important smooth transitions are for young children. Whether they are moving from Pre-school to Reception or from Reception into Year 1, all children move at the same time, and we have a carefully planned programme in place to support them. Our transition processes are reviewed and adapted each year to meet the needs of each cohort, reduce any worries, and help children understand how their learning connects as they move through school</p>	
	<p>Pre-school → Reception</p> <p>Starting School A detailed transition plan is in place and reviewed annually to support children moving from Pre-school into Reception. This plan is adapted each year to reflect the needs of the specific cohort. We use the text <i>Starting School</i> by Janet and Allan Ahlberg as a shared topic to help children explore and talk about the move.</p>	<p>Reception → Year One</p> <p>A transition plan is also in place for children moving from Reception into Year 1. This is reviewed and adapted annually to ensure it meets the needs of each cohort. Link texts will be used as a cross-over topic to provide continuity and support children’s confidence. Children in Reception are gradually introduced to aspects of KS1 life. This may include joining KS1 for</p>

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	<p>We also recognise that many children join us directly into Reception without attending our school-based Pre-school. To support these families, we hold parent induction meetings, stay and play sessions and offer 1:1 meetings before children start. This enables staff to gain a strong understanding of each child's experiences, interests and needs, allowing us to tailor the induction process effectively.</p>	<p>assemblies and playtimes, visiting their new classroom, and creating work or artwork to display in Year 1. Year 1 staff share key information with parents and children, helping everyone feel prepared and confident for September.</p>
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