

Nursery Medium Term Plan
Spring 1 2026

Once Upon a Fairy Tale...



Spring 1 2026 'Once upon a fairy tale..'

This half term we will be exploring a range of traditional stories- encouraging the children to join in with repeated refrains e.g. 'Who's been sleeping in my bed?' The children will listening to different versions of the same story, looking at similarities and differences. We will be encouraging the children to talk about the characters, how characters might be feeling and talk about the different settings within the stories. We will be using stories to introduce new vocabulary and exploring these new words within their play. We will continue to use Tapestry to communicate with families about our theme and vocabulary for each week.

Themes which will be planned weekly following the children's needs and interests...



Winter

Cold
Ice
Frost
Freeze
melt



The Billy Goats
Gruff

Ordinal
numbers: 1st,
2nd, 3rd
Big, small,
middle-sized



Rapunzel

Long
Short
Wicked
brave



The Ugly Duckling

Swan
Duckling
Cygnet
beautiful
Ugly
unkind



The Three
Bears

Big, small,
middle-
sized
Hot and
cold
Upset
bad



Chinese New year

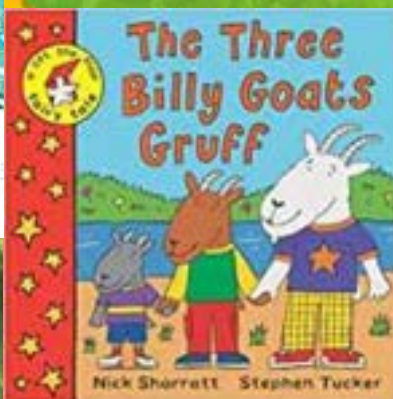
Celebrate
Fire
works
Dragon
China



Valentines day

Love
Family
friend
Kind

Books to help explore these themes...



Story time



Who is this?

What can you see in the picture?

Let's find another book by this author!

Sharing books

- Talk about different parts of the book: front cover, pages, writing, picture
- Talk about who wrote the book and relate the story to other books by the same author- 'this author also wrote Stickman that we read before'
- Explain that when reading we need to start at the front of the book and that the pages need to be turned one at a time in order.

Understanding print

- Support children to understand that print has meaning- 'this says your name'
- Look at print in different contexts- 'this label says Lego bricks'
- Show children that in English the text is read left to right and top to bottom

Developing vocabulary

- Engage children in extended conversations about stories
- Talk about any new words/vocabulary
- Repeat new words in the children's play or to experiences- 'look there's ice on the grass like in the story of Jack Frost'

What can you see on the cover?



This word means...

Where are they going?

Communication and Language

Key knowledge

To listen and attend to questions being asked of them, stories being read and vocabulary being used.

Skills

Understand a question or two part instruction e.g. get your coat and wait at the door.

Understand why questions e.g. why is the troll angry?

Sing a wide repertoire of songs

Enjoy longer stories and remember much of what happened

Use a wide range of vocabulary, developed through topics and play.

Vocabulary

Who?	What?	Where?
Why?	feelings	characters

Key Questions

What might happen next?

Who can you see in the picture?

Why did that happen?

How is the character feeling?

Where is the gingerbread man going?

What is it like in the winter?



Phase 1 Phonics

Key knowledge

To discriminate between different sounds

Skills

- To develop an awareness of sounds and rhythms
- To distinguish between sounds and to remember patterns of sounds
- To distinguish between musical instruments and vocal sounds
- To recognise that sentences are made up of individual words
- To develop awareness of the syllables in words

Songs and rhymes

- The Grand Old Duke of York
- When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears
- Wind the Bobbin up
- Five little ducks

Key Questions

- Can you copy my pattern?
- How many claps (syllables) in your name?
- What made that sound?

Adults will model clapping, stamping, tapping the syllables in words such as the children’s names. We will encourage the children to repeat these back.



Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Key knowledge

How to make new children in nursery feel welcome

Be able to manage activities and tasks independently e.g. putting away toys, hanging up their coat

Be able to identify and name how they are feeling

Understand that nursery is a safe environment with adults they can trust

Skills

Understand basic road safety

Create role play around familiar traditional tales

Explore the feelings of characters in books: identifying similarities and differences

Become more confident in different social situations and around unfamiliar people

Key Questions

Who is in our group?

How can we stay safe when we cross the road?

How are you feeling?

How is your friend feeling?

Who are you going to play with?

Vocabulary

stop

listen

look

safe

friends

same/different



Physical Development

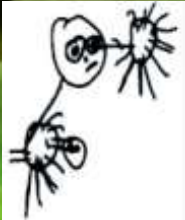
Fine motor Skills

- Use one-handed tools and equipment e.g. cutting along a line with scissors
- Use a comfortable grip with good control when using pens and pencils
- Show a preference for a dominant hand when mark making

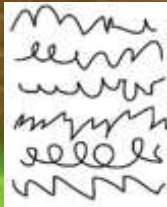
Mark making progression in Nursery



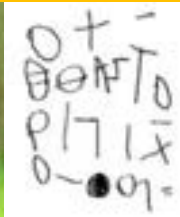
Complete random scribbling



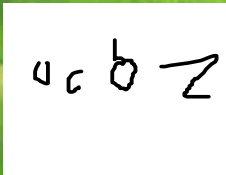
Draw pictures to represent an idea.



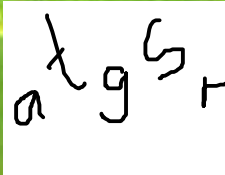
Complete drawings which mimics writing



Use symbols which represent letters



Makes marks to represent name



Form random letters with no meaning.



Represent initial sounds in a familiar word.

Vocabulary

cut	picture	skip
hop	balance	move

Key Questions

- Who can hop, jump etc?
- Can you change direction
- Can you jump down?
- Can you make lines/circles etc.

Gross motor Skills

- Collaborate with others to carry large items such as blocks
- Skip, hop and hold a pose
- Engage in dance activities which involve moving in different ways e.g. like an animals
- Continue to develop independence at dressing and undressing e.g. putting on and taking off coat and shoes



Physical Development continued...

Supporting the development of mark making

Provide children with a range of activities that help develop their fine motor skills such as threading, playdough, using tweezers etc.

Provide children with a range of engaging mark making activities; mark making with chalks on the grounds, using paper on clipboards as part of their role play, painting etc.

Encourage the children to hold the pencil/pen in a comfortable grip

Support children to hold the pencil/pen near the point to increase their control

Encourage children to give meaning to their marks

Give lots of positive praise

Adults to model being a writer and how writing can help e.g. I'm going to write a shopping list so I can remember everything I need.

		
		
1- ½ years Cylindrical Grasp	2-3 years Digital Grasp	3 ½ – 4 years Modified Tripod Grasp

