

Early Years Progression for Scientific Skills

The teaching of scientific skills and knowledge begins in Early Years at Swansfield Park Primary School. Alongside this progression grid, effective communication and language skills are an essential part of scientific development for our youngest learners.



Understanding The World

Optimum Learning Point	Skill
Pre-School	Acquire and begin to use key vocabulary to describe what is seen in the natural world.
Pre-School	Through a variety of first hand experiences, explore a wide range of objects of interest, acquiring and using associated vocabulary. For example, when exploring ice: “cold”, “slippy”, “frozen” “melting”
Nursery	Acquire and begin to use key vocabulary related to explorations of materials and living things in short phrases and sentences. For example, “This ice is really cold.” “This leaf is going brown.”
Nursery	Explore a range of natural materials linked to weather and seasonal changes through hands on experience
Nursery	Sort a range of materials according to a suggested criteria. For example: hard and soft, rough and smooth.
Nursery	Find and add own selections to a given group. For example “Can you find anything else shiny to go in this group?”
Nursery	Begin to sort according to own criteria and start to develop reasoning. For example: “I can’t squash these things but I can squash the ones over here.”
Nursery	Know, through practical experience that plants need soil and water to grow
Nursery	Through practical experiences and stories, begin to know and explain lifecycles. For example: Seed to plant Frogspawn to tadpole to frog Egg to caterpillar to butterfly
Nursery	Show care for living creatures and plants when playing and exploring

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Nursery	Through play experiences, begin to investigate and describe: Pushes and pulls Turns Twists Squashes and stretches Bounce Stops and starts and accelerating
Reception	Observe seasonal changes occurring in the outdoor environment and begin to explain and link what is going on. For example, linking different examples of new life to springtime (leaves, frogspawn)
Reception	Use senses of seeing, hearing and feeling to describe the natural world and make links to seasonal changes. For example: “I need to take my coat off because I’m too warm as the sun is shining.”
Reception	Begin to make comparisons between different local habitats. For example, seashore, woodland and garden.
Reception	Make observations, demonstrated in accurate drawings which include key features, of living things
Reception	Sort a variety of objects or living things into two groups from own criteria. For example, wings/no wings, leg/no legs